“LET HONOR FALL”: GEORGIA FOOTBALL AND LOST CAUSE MENTALITY, 1892 TO 1925

by

VICTORIA BERKOW

(Under the Direction of STEPHEN BERRY)

ABSTRACT

As the New South flourished and the region’s culture situated itself into modernity after the Civil War, southern men discovered a new activity to express their masculinity: football. The game was violent, honorable, and physical, which seemed to align with a Lost Cause mentality that sprouted in tandem with the sport’s popularity. This thesis explores the role of Lost Cause thinking (an appreciation of the antebellum days) through gender, spectacle, and football in the state of Georgia by examining two peculiar incidents, including a football death and an athletic rivalry that turned unsavory. The sport’s beginnings were not as stable as they would later become in the South, and the men and women who supported football questioned how the activity would function in a society that straddled ways of both the Old and New.

INDEX WORDS: Football; Georgia; Lost Cause; Gender; Violence; University of Georgia; Georgia School of Technology; Sport

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DEDICATION

To Von and Rosalind

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The past few years have been quite a trip for me, and not just in the sense of moving from Chicago to the Deep South. I have found my pursuit for a master's degree to be extremely stressful and challenging, and I questioned on multiple occasions how in the world I ended up here. But at the same time, I have become enlightened, and mature, and adventurous, and learned that I do have worth in doing this. I grew as an academic and as a person, all because I wanted to write. It is my passion, and it has been rejuvenated with this thesis. Thankfully, through the ups and downs in this very strange period of my life, many people rallied behind me and told me to keep writing. I owe my thanks to them.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: PAGENTARY AND PIGSKIN IN THE NEW SOUTH

By the time the two young women presented the glimmering silver cup to a clan of bloody, bruised, and smiling young men, the night sky had cast a darkness that made the spectacle difficult to see. Yet the crowd remained scattered about Atlanta's Piedmont Park on a late November evening in 1894 to witness the victory ceremony that rattled the bones of the Georgia faithful. Seated prettily on a grand carriage latched onto four white horses and dressed with red and black ribbons, the ladies waved flags that supported those men as the surge of spectators drew closer. Then spoke Miss Mamie Lou Hinton of Athens, one of the female athletic sponsors chosen to inspire and support the Georgia football eleven for its game against Auburn that day.[1]

"'Permit, me, Captain Butler…to present to you and the Athens team this beautiful gift. It was nobly and worthily won," Hinton beamed as the Red and Black leader accepted the prized cup. The game itself was a hard-fought battle, where Georgia ground out a narrow 10 to 8 victory against its early rival, translating to sweet revenge for its initial loss to the Tigers in 1892. The *Atlanta Constitution* recalled that the crowd provided a "lusty" yell at the trophy exchange, cheering for the active, public male components that helped secure the victory – the captain, the managers, the trainer, the chancellor, and the faculty – yet also for the two passive, attractive ladies who waved and blushed and politely clapped as the football warriors slugged one another

[1] "The Clans Gather: The Two Teams and Their Friends Take the City," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 November, 1894, 16; *Red and Black*, 1 December, 1894, 1.

on the field that day. The *Constitution* noted that the "Auburn boys also rallied round their sponsors and escorted them from the gates in a body, shouting also. They had been defeated, but they knew how to take it."[2]

The sponsors were not there for only the trophy ceremony; they were an integral facet of the pageantry that encompassed an entire gridiron game, from early train arrivals to bonfire parties back on campus, and common for squads throughout Dixie before the First World War. Miss Lollie Thomas and Miss Allie Shropshire represented Auburn for the match, causing the Alabamian students to whoop and whistle as their orange and blue carriage passed the grandstand prior to kickoff. The men gave a hearty, Auburn-spirited cheer, and the women responded with compliments to those lucky enough to come close to the horse-drawn vehicle. Hinton, whom was "recognized as one of the most beautiful young ladies in the state, and is always popular with the college lads," followed shortly after with her fellow Red and Black sponsor, Miss Mildred Cabaniss, who was "a favorite with the Athenians and especially with the 'Varsity boys." A pair of gentlemen escorts accompanied the sponsors, as well.[3] Though these acts of spectacle remained limited to the sidelines, and though the action on the field ultimately drove fans to purchase tickets, female sponsors became a normal aspect of football festivities below the Mason-Dixon as the game matured and entangled itself into southern culture.

Beginning in the 1890s, football steadily captured the attention and spirit of Georgia residents. As a New South activity, the fast-paced and physical gridiron game offered the opportunity for men of Dixie to underline traditional masculine characteristics, but through a modern outlet. It also allowed their devoted women to recognize and praise men for their

[2] "The Clans Gather: The Two Teams and Their Friends Take the City," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 November, 1894, 16
[3] Ibid.

abilities and athletic feats. This was especially prevalent in post-Reconstruction years, when the Lost Cause became a dominant Georgia theme as a way to fondly remember the Confederacy and deem its decision to fight in the Civil War as noble. The ethic influenced men and women of the New South to fondly remember and revisit the antebellum period, especially its traditional gender roles. For men, Old South values emphasized the defense of honor through physical violence, assertive dominance, and public displays of masculinity. For women, dependence on and public praise of their men reigned supreme. Such acts of communal pageantry concerning valiant football warriors and loyal sponsors reflected this notion, as the *Red and Black* student newspaper stated about an 1893 game that lacked ladies: "The Vanderbilt men seem to be independent of the inspiration of the fairer sex…Athens is far superior to Nashville in this respect, as the 'Lucy Cobb' and 'Home School' have become almost as essential to the game here as the referee and umpire."[4] Lost Cause mentality picked up speed in the 1880s and continued well into the twentieth century, in tandem with the popularity of football on college campuses below the Mason-Dixon. The following essays examine the coincident cultural rise and impacts of football, gender, and the Lost Cause mentality in the New South.

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Before football became romanticized as the sport that galvanized the South, it was a game riddled with disorder, violence, and elementary play. When the inaugural match took place in 1869 in New Jersey, squads from Princeton and Rutgers fielded 25 men a piece, who favored kicking "goals" in a game that resembled modern-day soccer more than rugby.[5] By 1926, the Yankee sport had significantly matured, incorporating familiar elements such as the forward pass, structured formations, safety rules and precautions, and more points awarded for

[4] *Red and Black*, 24 November, 1893, 3.
[5] Amos Alonzo Stagg and Wesley Winans Stout, *Touchdown!* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co.) 1927, 31-3.

touchdowns than field goals. Fantastic outings by the "Big Three" of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton flashed across national headlines, and by the turn of the century, Michigan and Chicago joined the mix. This is the familiar history of the evolution of early football: a game of Yankee origins played and transformed in contests between Ivy League and Midwestern powerhouses.

Yet the gridiron game's popularity and its growing pains were not limited to the North; southern elevens also went through the motions of chaotic football, including the high points of victory and the low points of death and disaster. Although intercollegiate play in those early days often remained divided by region, the sport managed to infiltrate the South in the 1890s and built a strong foothold on its campuses. How and why then, precisely, did collegiate football become the peculiar obsession of the South? The present work argues that, despite its Yankee origins, the game of football grew like kudzu south of the Mason-Dixon line for a particular reason at a particular time and in particular ways that are largely unappreciated in the current historiography.

Most football histories do pay attention to the moment when underdog Alabama Crimson Tide captured the 1926 Rose Bowl victory from the University of Washington, a moment that established the South's credibility, athletic prowess, and perceived regional dominance. Yet the crucial opening era from the 1880s until the 1920s has seemed to slip through the cracks. But why? The South hosted a number of respectable programs in those days, including Vanderbilt, Sewanee, Auburn, Virginia, Georgia, and, most notably, John Heisman's Georgia Tech. Although the vast majority of matchups remained limited by region, southern men still lined up for games, southern reporters still chronicled play-by-plays, southern sponsors still arrived in carriages, and southern spectators still formed "lung brigades" in an effort to will their teams to

victory. Because the context of football in the New South – and its burgeoning Lost Cause sentiment – differed significantly from the North in this period, the game and its impact on culture deserve attention from historians today. The state of Georgia hosted two successful and prominent (both in positive and negative ways) programs—the University of Georgia and the Georgia School of Technology – that offer a way to examine the New South's masculine culture. The overall argument maintains that college football catalyzed and was catalyzed by the rising Lost Cause mentality and new male norms in the state.

To be sure, there are a handful of scholars who have examined early football in the South. Most significant is Andrew Doyle, who specializes on the University of Alabama. His timeline extends throughout the twentieth century, including fantastic work about Bear Bryant's impact during the Civil Rights Movement, but much of his work emphasizes the Crimson Tide in the 1920s and 1930s. Aside from his articles about Alabama, Doyle also considers other southern teams in more general articles and makes strong arguments about the influence of the South in shaping football in this era.[6] Patrick B. Miller also takes this approach (as opposed to focusing on one team or state) for his articles about football in the New South, including an excellent piece on the role of religion in the culture of the gridiron.[7] However, Miller is best known for his work on race and sport. Along with historian Charles H. Martin, Miller offers an array of research about the color line in college athletics, especially in the South. While this research is important for the sport historian in general, it again focuses mainly on sport after World War I. And although this thesis is very much about race, its focus remains on white masculinity, its

[6] See: Andrew Doyle, "Turning the Tide: College Football and Southern Progressivism," *Southern Cultures*, 3 no. 3 (1997); "Foolish and Useless Sport: The Southern Evangelical Crusade Against Intercollegiate Football," *Journal of Sport History* (1997); "Fighting Whiskey and Immorality at Auburn: The Politics of Southern Football, 1919-1927," *Southern Cultures* (2005); "Bear Bryant: Symbol for an Embattled South" in *The Sport World of the Modern South*.
[7] Patrick B. Miller, "The Manly, the Moral and the Proficient: College Sport in the New South," *Journal of Sport History*, 24 (Fall, 1997). See also *The Sport World of the Modern South*, a collection of essays in which Miller edits and Doyle and Martin contribute.

overall argument contending that football was a vehicle to reinforce the dominant Lost Cause culture. The state of Georgia's all-white teams, with the exception of Native American Joe Guyon at Tech during the Great War, did not play against non-white teams.

There are also broader general histories of college football that have contributed context to my argument. Brian M. Ingrassia, for example, published an excellent monograph about the power struggle between the ivory tower and football teams from the late nineteenth century onward, as universities exploited the sport in an attempt to salvage academia in popular culture.[8] Where Ingrassia settles on the role of establishment (in this case, universities), John Sayles Watterson surveys instead more than a century of issues football teams encountered that were, oftentimes, brought on by societal standards.[9] While his work is valuable in tracing the controversies of safety reform in the early twentieth century (because death and injury plagued gridirons throughout the nation), its scope is so massive that the issues are not explored as deeply as they could be. Another important scholar is Michael Oriard, a former college and professional football player who specializes in American literature and culture. His book analyzes the sport in context of the media and other publications in this period, from the first game played in New Jersey until the First World War.[10] While each of these scholars contributes to the historiography about early football, southern historians must also contribute by analyzing the sport's presence and impact below the Mason-Dixon. This paper does not argue that Dixie football was completely distinct from Yankee football; rather, it attempts to point out a few

[8] Brian M. Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University: Higher Education's Uneasy Alliance with Big-Time Football* (Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 2012).
[9] John Sayles Watterson, *College Football: History, Spectacle, Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).
[10] Michael Oriard, *Reading Football: How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1993). His follow-up work, titled *King Football: Sport and Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio and Newsreels, Movies and Magazine, the Weekly and the Daily Press*, is another interesting read, but falls outside the scope of this work's timeline.

peculiar moments surrounding the gridiron game in Georgia, and illustrate the significance of New South and Lost Cause culture on those football incidents.

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The first official intercollegiate football match took place on 6 November, 1869, though it fell more on the barbaric, free-for-all kicking match spectrum than modern day standards of play. Rutgers defeated its state rival Princeton by a score of 6 to 4 goals in a fashion quite similar to contemporary soccer. Both soccer and rugby originated in Great Britain, yet it was most likely Canadians who introduced northeastern students to a quasi-version of American football, incorporating elements from those traditional sports. In an autobiography and history about the game, famed University of Chicago coach Amos Alonzo Stagg recalled the elementary matches on Ivy League campuses during the antebellum period. Casual class games at Harvard, beginning in the 1840s, divided men into two teams, with the objective of kicking a ball at a wall – and not using one's hands. Even in those early days, the players seemed more determined to maul one another than score a "goal," stated Stagg: "At some period a reformer seems to have tossed a football into the fray in the hope of distracting some of the violence from the persons of the participants to the ball."[11] By the 1869 meeting, the teams consisted of 25 men a piece and a score was worth one point. To add to the confusion, each university had its own version of rules, where Rutgers banned using hands except for catching a "free kick," and Princeton allowed the use of hands to "bat" the ball.[12] A decade later, northeastern institutions adhered to similar rules while playing one another, yet the opening match displayed just how chaotic the Yankee game's origins truly were.

[11] Stagg, *Touchdown!*, 21-2.
[12] Ibid., 32-3.

Stagg himself was a phenomenal player at Yale, the leader of the nineteenth century Big Three football powerhouses, along with Princeton and Harvard. His tenure came after Walter Camp, the so-called Father of American Football, led Yale to constant victory and modernized the game in a way that reflected the industrialization of United States society. In the 1870s and 1880s, Camp's innovations included establishing individual positions for an eleven-man squad, "downing" the football instead of a rugby "scrum," and regulating three downs per offensive possession. These changes propelled the game from casual, post-class play into organized, serious business, historian Brian M. Ingrassia maintains: "It was, in other words, rational – just like the rest of American society, and just like the universities in which it was taking root."[13] Alongside these Gilded Age changes in the workforce, scientific inquiry and structured play also grew in popularity, as Camp himself noted in his 1891 game guide and rulebook *American Football*. Whereas rugby prioritized the fracas of a scrum, football allowed a quarter-back to call signals and shape every play. "What is, therefore, in the English game a matter of considerable chance is 'cut-and-dried' in the American game; and the element of chance being eliminated, opportunity is given for the display in the latter game of far more skill in the development of brilliant plays and carefully planned (maneuvers)," Camp explained.[14] Similar to the era's American spirit for hierarchal work and specialized positions, historian Michael Oriard describes, the game took on "a clearly demarcated structure and chain of authority derived from the exigencies of football action."[15] Thus the sport shifted its pedestal to display football men of talent, not of luck, and thus the game grew more physical and tactical, too.

[13] Brian M. Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University: Higher Education's Uneasy Alliance with Big-Time Football* (Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 2012), 34-6.
[14] Walter Camp, *American Football* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1891), 9-10.
[15] Michael Oriard, *Reading Football: How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 41.

Yet this push to regulate college football did not erase the viciousness of the game itself. The last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth saw arguably the most brutal style of play, as historian John Sayles Watterson has researched. During that period, for example, Harvard faculty threatened to shut down its program because of the overwhelming presence of violence among the players and fans, and the officials' failure to stop it. Spectators tended to amplify the violence, states Watterson, as they "seemed incapable of recognizing or reacting to fair play, and their reaction discouraged sportsmanlike conduct."[16] In addition, the 1890s to the 1910s saw a rampant amount of football-related deaths, including Georgetown's George "Shorty" Bahen in 1894, Georgia's Von Gammon in 1897, Union College's Harold Moore in 1905, and Army's Eugene Byrne and Virginia's Archer Christian both in a bloody 1909, which took the lives of 10 college players that year.[17]

On top of the deaths were scores of injuries, sometimes to the extreme. President Theodore Roosevelt became involved in reform strategies in 1905 after his son Ted, a freshman at Harvard, required surgery from a game where the Yale eleven seemed to target the boy.[18] A Harvard physical education professor published in the early twentieth century a study that revealed one-third of the participants, who were former college players, had suffered at least one concussion from football.[19] Reformers pushed for the use of the forward pass, which became legal in 1906, due to the amount of injuries from popularized "mass plays" such as the flying wedge or flying V. In such formations, offensive players jumped forward and huddled around their ball carrier, running over the singular defensemen out of sheer force and numbers. Though

[16] John Sayles Watterson, *College Football: History, Spectacle, Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 24.
[17] Ibid., 36, 72, 111-12, 401.
[18] Ibid., 72.
[19] Ibid., 137-8. The professor sent out the survey in 1917, and published its results in 1929. Watterson notes that the study did not list the years the participants played football, but he surmises it was in the early 1900s, when the national debate of head injuries from sport began. Nearly 400 men participated in the survey.

Camp and other northeastern reformers took steps to eliminate the wedge in 1894, mass plays were still prominent throughout the next decade, especially in areas outside the Big Three's sphere.[20] Stagg chronicled an array of nauseating injuries he witnessed as a fan, player, and coach, such as bashed in noses and swollen eyes and gashes that could not be contained with stitches. He recalled practices in the 1880s in which his offensive line stuck their arms out to block the defense, which colored their appendages black and blue. Lineman Sam Cross' arms were so bruised that the team trainer "laid a wet towel over them and ironed them with a hot sadiron. Cross was such an Indian that he said nothing, but when (the trainer) removed the towels the skin came with them. Cross went on playing just the same."[21] Such toughness and masculine calmness in face of injury were common spectacles for athletes across the nation.

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Even though the Yankee game faced a delayed start on southern gridirons, the region still boasted a variety of athletic activity prior to the 1880s. In many ways, Dixie culture enforced competition and physicality as a channel for men to exercise their masculinity, displayed in organized matchups or impromptu play stretching before the Revolutionary era. These sorts of activities – from horse racing to fist fighting to early vestiges of team sport – solidified a culture of violence, showmanship, and brutality in order to achieve success in the community, which dominated nineteenth century masculine ideals and continued in the twentieth century on football fields due to the Lost Cause and its appreciation of the past.[22]

Elite males of the colonial coastal states, especially Virginia, reveled in horse racing, card games, and gambling in original arrays of masculine prowess, as historian T. H. Breen has

[20] Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University*, 47-8.
[21] Stagg, *Touchdown!*, 94-5.
[22] The South also experienced a wave of religious appreciation in the post-Reconstruction era. The struggle to balance violent sport and Christianity troubled some football fans, including those during the Gammon affair.

researched extensively.[23] Breen examines the early concept of honor within southern sport, where gentlemen wagered money, property, and even tobacco plots as expensive buy-ins. These high-stake affairs reflected the gentry lifestyle of risk and reward and echoed the unpredictable business of plantation farming. They also represented "the great planters' competitiveness, independence, and materialism, as well as the element of chance."[24] The reason why elite-exclusive sport became prevalent in Virginia and other southern states was because of the region's social context: a slaveocracy. While black laborers and poor whites toiled over hard work, the gentry paraded their freedom and high status through leisure activities, historians Elliot J. Gorn and Warren Goldstein explain.[25] Despite the obvious class system, horse racing affairs evolved into community events, where "the gentry gave humbler folk a leisure model to emulate, (and) rich and poor came together to share a common male culture, yet boundaries of status never fully dissolved."[26] While early southern sport functioned as a reminder of class structure and the social dominance of the wealthy, it also reveled in the tradition of male community.

Interestingly, cockfighting also functioned in this way. Conventional wisdom deems the brutal sport popular among just poor whites below the Mason-Dixon – who did, in fact, eagerly participate, cheer, and wager at the ring – but in reality, it was again elite southerners who organized events and trained their own birds. Southerners who engaged in cockfighting did so for prize money or entertainment, but more often to bask in the societal glory and honor that winning brought them. Victory required strong, vicious birds, which men personified through masculine language in contemporary cockfighting periodicals and journals, as historian Ted

[23] T. H. Breen, "Horses and Gentlemen: The Cultural Significance of Gambling among the Gentry of Virginia," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., vol. 34, no. 2 (April, 1977), 239-257.
[24] Breen, "Horses and Gentlemen," 247.
[25] Elliott J. Gorn and Warren Goldstein, *A Brief History of American Sports* (New York: Hill and Wang Publishers, 1993), 21.
[26] Gorn and Goldstein, *A Brief History of American Sports*, 24.

Ownby describes. Articles rated birds based on gameness and fighting abilities, using phrases such as "hero," "noble," "disgraceful," and "dead but not dishonored."[27] Cockfighting, in all of its blood and gore and demise, enthralled men of Dixie because it embodied Old South honor, and reflected its violent, hegemonic society. These traditional sports became an outlet for southerners to exercise this sort of manhood in front of an audience, in hopes of establishing a heroic reputation among their peers. And although horse racing, card games, and cockfighting in some ways tested manly skills, the main purpose of these antebellum activities was to reinforce social order within a collective community.[28]

Hunting provided an egalitarian setting in that all classes could participate, and it also offered more blood and guts where men individually killed animals. Hunts were imperative in both the Old and early New South for subsistence reasons, yet men also adopted them for sport and competition, Ownby maintains. During Reconstruction, some men prioritized fair play, but the majority preferred blood baths, and considered a hunt "good" based on the number of kills. "A survey of the methods employed in hunting demonstrates the thrill Southern white men and boys found in the self-indulgence of binge killing and ambush. No doubt these methods originated from need, but most had, [between 1865 and 1920], become sports," Ownby adds.[29] Southern hunters took pride in drawing blood and exercising physical dominance in a more direct way than horse racing or cockfighting. For these hunts, organized sport and free-for-all attacks blurred into one activity, resembling the chaos and bite of early Dixie football. Naturally, hunting and its gory characteristics acted as a model to gridiron behavior, as well.

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[27] Ted Ownby, *Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, & Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 78-9. Note that while Ownby's study focuses on the postbellum era, cockfighting was still a popular activity prior to the Civil War, as well.
[28] Gorn and Goldstein, *A Brief History of American Sports*, 27.
[29] Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, 32-4. Hunting methods included "fire-lighting" to scare birds and make for easier shots; using bait to attract animals; "driving" animals toward a waiting group of hunters; and using seine poles to catch mass amounts of fish.

While this scholarship is significant to outline sporting culture in the antebellum and Reconstruction eras, it is important to note that these activities emphasized *individual* physicality, talent, and dominance. Indeed, even the most romanticized activity associated with Old South men – dueling – centered on a dispute of honor between two men alone. Duelers' "seconds" provided moral support and vowed to step in if the "first" fell, yet as historian Kenneth S. Greenberg notes, duels represented the defense of personal honor in a public format. Bertram Wyatt-Brown defines honor with three components: "the inner conviction of self-worth," "the claim of that self-assessment before the public," and, simply, "reputation."[30] Therefore, while a man's perception of himself was important, perhaps more important was the community's response to that perception. When men dueled, the insulted man hoped the public would view his fighting as noble, and that his opponent actually embodied the insult instead.[31] And because honor required community input, audiences spectated the one-on-one disputes with the role of judge (or, as Wyatt-Brown calls it, a "mirror") of those men and their masculinity.

This sort of one-man showing of violence for honor also translated into fist fights, a more common form of squabbling between non-elites. While many fist fights were random affairs that consequently drew in audiences, scheduled antebellum fights occurred on occasion, before boxing and prize-fighting took off during the Gilded Age.[32] Unlike those boxers, the goal for "rough-and-tumble" backcountry fighters was to literally disfigure the opponent in any way possible – busted lips, chipped teeth, broken fingers, gouged eyeballs. Gorn maintains that these kinds of vicious resolutions were common because men of Dixie held their honor so dearly: "Men were so touchy about their personal reputations that any slight required an apology. This

[30] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 14.
[31] Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 360.
[32] Gorn and Goldstein, *A Short History of American Sport*, 18.

failing, only retribution restored public stature and self-esteem. 'Saving face' was not just a metaphor."[33] The brawlers (including those who lost the brawls) wore their bloody wounds like a militaristic badge of pride and heroics. In a culture in which community reputation played an impactful role, tangible evidence of a man's bravery, loyalty, and aggression proved his masculine worth without exchanging a word. By the turn of the twentieth century, southern rooters would fawn over bloody and bruised elevens in a similar matter.

This tendency to resolve insults of honor through bloodshed was commonplace in Old South slaveholding and New South Jim Crow societies, which encouraged white males to behave with physical dominance toward African Americans, women, and children. Wyatt-Brown credits the rampant amount of nineteenth century physical force to the fact that there "was the social necessity for men of all ranks to preserve white manhood and personal status in the fraternity of the male tribe to which all belonged."[34] So while gentry sport such as horse racing, cockfighting, and dueling was popular for spectating in this period, the accessibility of fist fighting allowed ordinary southern men to also participate in the "social necessity" of individual honor defense. Greenberg maintains that whenever "Southern men exchanged harsh words in a certain form, they were involved in a confrontation that demonstrated their adherence to the same set of values as men who exchanged shots."[35] Such an innate masculine tendency to protect one's honor through violence carried on until the Civil War, before a shift occurred in the 1860s and beyond. In the postbellum era, inspired by battalion comradery of the war, men instead formed manly

[33] Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 90, no. 1 (February, 1985), 28.
[34] Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 368-9.
[35] Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor & Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, The Pro-Slavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), xi-xii.

associations to protect the honor of a *group*, which was seen in the rise of social organizations, the Ku Klux Klan, and, indeed, team sports.

Perhaps the activity most similar to Dixie football – in terms of established teams, structured rules of play, and friendly, defined victories as opposed to arbitrary "victories" in fights or hunts – was America's pastime: baseball. Just like the gridiron game, baseball took root as a Yankee activity, evolving in the decades before the Civil War out of early versions called "rounders," "stoolball," and "town ball." By 1845, the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club in New York outlined rules similar to modern play.[36] While Yankees eagerly crafted diamonds throughout the antebellum era, baseball dipped below the Mason-Dixon only during the wartime, which left historians with fabled tales of gray versus blue games at prison camps. Historian George B. Kirsch notes that southerners also played games such as town ball prior to the war, yet the established New York version's presence at camps, in addition to Yankee men who moved south following the war, augmented the sport's popularity in Dixie immensely. "Regional rivalries and intersectional matches accelerated the national growth of baseball and also had a significant impact on North-South relations during the postwar period," Kirsch explains, citing noteworthy matches with clubs throughout the Confederate states, including teams with ties to the Ku Klux Klan who played "Carpetbaggers."[37] As towns such as Richmond, Louisville, and New Orleans hosted club teams filled with war veterans, state universities also welcomed baseball nines, including the University of Georgia in 1886 and the Georgia School of Technology in 1889.

[36] William J. Ryczek, *When Johnny Came Sliding Home: The Post-Civil War Baseball Boom, 1865-1870* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 1998), 10-11.
[37] George B. Kirsch, *Baseball in Blue and Gray: The National Pastime during the Civil War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 118, 116.

It is important to note that these sports and activities were not exclusive to the South; indeed, horse races, cockfights, hunting, brawling, and dueling all occurred above the Mason-Dixon, even if their historical legacy is remembered more as part of southern culture than that of the North. In addition, it was Yankees who introduced massively popular, organized sports to the nation, including baseball in the antebellum era, football in the 1870s, and basketball before the turn of the twentieth century. Northern athletes too championed the virtues of physical strength, bravery, and skill, and they played for intangible prizes like honor and loyalty.

Yet while blood sports were not completely distinct in the region, the tradition of an overbearing, hegemonic white masculine culture may have led some men of Dixie to reflect on the gridiron game differently. This was because violence was so commonplace in both Old and New South society. As already mentioned, slavery, segregation, and racism dominated the section during the century, propelling white men to the top of the social hierarchy. These men needed to maintain a united racial front to keep their status, and oftentimes did so with physical dominance, be it fist fights, intimidation, or lynching. This sort of behavior emulated the skills required for gridiron battle, states historian Patrick B. Miller: "Football possessed enormous metaphorical value concerning the rites of passage toward southern manhood, and it clearly corresponded with the region's martial culture and tradition of blood sport."[38]

Perhaps southerners embraced the connection between sport and martial culture in this period because Lost Cause culture stressed the idolism of the Civil War, as well Old South militarism in general. It is true that Yankees participated in warlike activities from the 1880s to the 1920s, including joining their southern comrades in the Spanish-American and First World wars. But the Lost Cause placed an intense importance on southerners' participation in the Civil

[38] Patrick B. Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient: College Sport in the New South," in *The Sporting World of the Modern South*, ed. Patrick B. Miller (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 24.

War, and its goal of maintaining a society of white supremacy, choosing to celebrate the Confederate effort as opposed to viewing it as a "tragic failure," historian Gaines M. Foster explains.[39] Additionally, the Old South played home to a significant number of military academies, offering young men education with lack of state-funded schools. Thus the non-elite students who attended academies learned both militaristic submission to authority, and eventually carved out their independence by abiding by the regional rules of honor, historian Jennifer R. Green maintains.[40] Even if New South football players never participated in a war themselves, the Lost Cause's emphasis on these antebellum martial characteristics easily converged on the gridiron. Gorn and Goldstein argue that football acted as an "initiation ritual" for masculinity in a way similar to military combat, while Miller offers that "athletic exploits thus could give (southern) young men a sense of exhilarating contest and conflict in battle. This was a shadow, perhaps, of what their fathers might have recalled from their exploits at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, but it was a deeper experience than marching on a parade ground might ever provide."[41] Football elevens surely must have recognized the connection of the sport to warfare, as did the sportswriters who frequently used martial language in calling games "battles," athletes "warriors," and hard-fought plays "slugging" or "fighting."

This presence of violence and warlike behavior that inundated the South in the nineteenth century fit perfectly into the region's honor culture. In *Southern Honor*, Wyatt-Brown maintains

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[39] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 196. Note that Foster claims the North celebrated the Union Army just as strongly as those below the Mason-Dixon; however, I contend that the vast amount of southern organizations devoted to memorialization, and the longevity of these organizations as opposed to those in the North, display how widespread and strongly the South chose to glorify the Confederacy.

[40] Jennifer R. Green, "'Stout Chaps Who Can Bear the Distress': Young Men in Antebellum Military Academies," in *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, eds. Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 174-195.

[41] Gorn and Goldstein, *A Brief History of American Sports*, 163; Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient," 289.

that northern and southern societies held similar ideals, especially during the Revolutionary era, but their greatest divergence occurred in the antebellum period over slaveholding culture, ethics, and the role of the community. "To put the matter as simply as possible: Southern mores did not change, at least not very fast; Northern conventions did," Wyatt-Brown argues.[42] In the 1800s, northern men were deemed honorable when they acted respectable, domestically and civically virtuous, and "(free) from licit vices that once were signals of masculinity," such as lynchings, community violence, and, indeed, slaveholding.

The South did not evolve in this manner, Wyatt-Brown states, as "the crucial difference between (the regions) remained a matter of ethical more than economic priority. As much as the regions shared a common legacy, they yet parted to some degree on the perceptions of right and wrong."[43] Much of this stemmed from southerners' tolerance of a white male-dominated society (and the use of violence to enforce it), and also the role of the community in defining masculine honor. This violent honor culture was not limited to the antebellum era – in fact, its legacy continued well into the twentieth century. In a 1996 study about violence in the region, psychologists Richard Nesbitt and Dov Cohen noted "Cases of southern violence often reflect a concern with blows to reputation or status – with 'violation of personal honor' – and the tacit belief that violence is an appropriate response to such an affront".[44] This scholarship connects recent southern men to their nineteenth century ancestors, and legacy of bloodshed for honor. Thus a team blood sport, such as football in the 1890s, created an excellent opportunity for New South men to display and defend their honor in a modern outlet, given the normalcy of the gory honor culture below the Mason-Dixon.

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[42] Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 19.
[43] Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor*, 21, 24.
[44] Richard E. Nesbitt and Dov Cohen, *Culture of Honor: The Psychology of Violence in the South* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 2.

This notion grew stronger as Lost Cause sentiment blanketed the region following Reconstruction, just when football really took hold in the South. By the turn of the century, men noticed a connection between football and the value of modern, (and northern) industrialized values, historian Andrew Doyle explains. Yet some southerners were hesitant of this contemporary way of life, including a middle class that scoffed at laborious, physical work; and thus, they held onto pigskin as "an effective means of keeping the essence of traditional masculinity alive in a region undergoing the final transition to liberal capitalism." Although southern men eventually joined modern society, including the modern work force, adds Doyle, this last stand effort to embrace the physical, the hard-working, and the dominant augmented Lost Cause feelings that embraced those same masculine antebellum ways of life.[45]

Parallel to this resistance to Yankee-dominated work methods was the South's desire to prove Dixie football as just as strong as that above the Mason-Dixon, whose teams garnered the attention of national sportspages for decades. Doyle explains the 1926 Alabama Rose Bowl win was a watershed moment in this regard, in which the entire region rallied behind the Crimson Tide as living testament of the South rising once again. "Alabama's display of masculine strength and virility in Pasadena was interpreted as proof that the martial prowess and chivalric dash of their mythologized ancestors were still alive in the modern world," Doyle continues. "Southerners had long held that one Confederate soldier was worth five Yankees on the battlefield, and Alabama's proficiency in a sport with strong martial overtones reinforced this belief."[46] So while northern football elevens played violently, participated in military-like

[45] Andrew Doyle, "'Causes Won, Not Lost': College Football and the Modernization of the American South," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* vol. 11, no. 2 (1994), 238-40. Doyle centers his argument around the University of Alabama's (and a southern college's) first Rose Bowl victory in 1926.
[46] Andrew Doyle, "Turning the Tide: College Football and Southern Progressivism," *The Sporting World of the Modern South*, ed. Patrick B. Miller (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 110.

training, and sought to defend their institutions' honor on the gridiron, southern squads, influenced by Lost Cause nostalgia, reflected on the sport in a different cultural manner. Because football channeled many of the masculine and gendered characteristics and traditions that occupied the Old South, a revival of antebellum appreciation meshed well with a blood sport that required those same characteristics and traditions in order to play.

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The game first organized, played, and celebrated by Yankees dominated northern college campuses in the late nineteenth century, with Ivy League schools garnering the most attention. Yet football did not remain confined to the region, nor did men of Dixie scoff at the sport their Civil War enemies cherished. Despite its late start, universities across the South adopted football programs, soon latching onto the game as a masculine activity that drew in and upon certain aspects of the region's culture. As these institutions resumed operations and started to expand in the postbellum period, faculty who studied in the North (including southerners) descended below the Mason-Dixon, bringing along with them football rulebooks and stories of a new sport.[47] A few college programs organized in the late 1880s, such as Virginia, Trinity (later Duke), and Wake Forest. However, most programs took off in 1890 and beyond. An early interregional game occurred that year, where Princeton mercilessly bludgeoned Virginia 116 to 0. Acclaimed sportswriter and Alabamian Fuzzy Woodruff noted in 1928 that the "South's start was not brilliant. In that game, the Virginians found that they had a long, long way to go and a lot to learn before they could compete successfully with the teams of the East."[48] Although interregional play remained uncommon before the 1920s, the Cavaliers' woeful defeat did not

[47] Ingrassia, *Rise of Gridiron University*, 41.
[48] Fuzzy Woodruff, *A History of Southern Football, 1890-1928*, volume 1 (Atlanta: Georgia Southern Publishing, Co., 1928), 8.

deter other southern schools, and soon enough state universities across the South fielded elevens of their own. For the state of Georgia, the gridiron game gained popularity in the early 1890s, and captured the attention of the state's men in the decades to come.

Football in this period cemented itself as part of southern (and white masculine) culture, and as an integral facet of college life that would continue into modernity. Though the game closely resembled northern football, other aspects of pageantry and spectacle unfolded below the Mason-Dixon in a distinct manner. Southern teams adopted nicknames, some glorifying a martial legacy: the Virginia Cavaliers, the Vanderbilt Commodores, the Ole Miss Rebels. From the 1920s onward, teams utilized "gentleman agreements," forcing Yankee squads to bench African American players as a sign of respect toward southern racial customs. As the female athletic sponsor role faded, women joined men on the sidelines as cheer leaders, and continued to wear their Sunday best in the grandstands. Universities arranged homecoming affairs around the "big game," where fraternity men dressed as soldiers, sorority women wore hoop skirts, and Confederate flags flew proudly. The North held onto similar football traditions during this era, including special parties and dress, yet Dixie's appreciation for the Old South through the pomp of a college football setting remained steady well into the twentieth century.

The following essays examine the intertwined themes of gender and honor through New South football. The first analyzes the interactions between the sexes in context of the manly gridiron game, exploring how postbellum gender roles influenced men and women to celebrate football warriors and mourn fallen players. The second essay delves deeper into the debate over New South masculinity, asking how men defined the requirements of manhood and struck the balance between a modern male activity and the traditional notion of gentlemanliness.

CHAPTER 2

"BLOODY CRIMSON AND SOMBER BLACK": A FOOTBALL DEATH AND THE GENDER OF HONOR

"Big Pete threw himself on the ground and sobbed. It was my first sight of a man crying at an athletic contest. I have seen hundreds weep since."[49]

-Amos Alonzo Stagg, legendary University of Chicago football coach, describing a member of the Yale football team after a loss to Princeton in 1885.

On a grassy battlefield occupied with bruised up boys and littered with dirt and blood and vomit, her son lay defeated, struggling to spit whispers past his lips. By 3:45 the next morning, he was dead. The valiant seventeen-year-old from the Appalachian foothill town of Rome fought his heart out – and made the ultimate sacrifice – for the university, for the state of Georgia, for New South manhood. His mother would not let his death go to waste.[50]

Mrs. Rosalind Gammon penned a letter to the *Atlanta Constitution* on 2 November 1897, in an effort to silence the masses that schemed to take away her son's greatest love, and thereby render his life (and death) less meaningful. Richard Vonalbade Gammon, her boy, was killed in a college football game. He was a star fullback for the University of Georgia eleven, hot off an undefeated '96 season that Von Gammon quarterbacked. But his gridiron courage was not enough to save his life during a 30 October 1897 match against the heavyweight University of Virginia. In his quest for glory, Gammon fell roughly on his head, or his head got whacked unintentionally. No one was quite sure. All anyone knew was that he stayed sprawled,

[49] Stagg, *Touchdown!*, 96.
[50] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.

horizontal, and motionless once the pile cleared in Atlanta's Brisbane Park.[51] Sympathy poured in through a noisy uproar for the gentleman and "hero of the college," as the student newspaper the *Red and Black* described him.[52] In the meantime, politicians and newspaper editors and university bureaucrats demanded the end of the brutal sport. Yet two days after her son's soul left the earth, Mrs. Gammon was determined to drown out the anti-football buzz that hastened to outlaw pigskin.

"Dear Mr. Nevin" – her editorial was directed at a James B., her Floyd County state representative who would cast a vote on an anti-football bill – "It would be the greatest favor to the family of Von Gammon if your influnece (sic) could prevent his death from being used as an argument detrimental to the athletic cause and advancement at the university." Football's banishment would extinguish an honorable activity young men desired, and dishonor her son's legacy, Mrs. Gammon maintained: "His love for his college and his interest in all manly sports, without which he deemed the highest type of manhood impossible, is well known by his classmates and friends, and it would be inexpressibly sad to have the cause he held so dear injured by his sacrifice. Grant me the right to request that my boy's death should not be used to defeat the most cherished object of his life."[53] Surely the state of Georgia, which so rapidly embraced the late nineteenth century college football craze, would not allow Von Gammon's "sacrifice" to destroy the new venue for the exercise and display of southern masculinity?

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[51] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7; for more on the violent tendencies and call for reform of nineteenth century college football nationwide, see: Christopher C. Meyers, "'Unrelenting War on Football': The Death of Richard Von Gammon and the Attempt to Ban Football in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 4 (Winter 2009), 388-407.
[52] Scrapbook, "Death of 'Von' Gammon," 1897, MS 1578, box 25, folder 3, S. V. Sanford Papers, Hargrett Special Collections Library, the University of Georgia. (This belonged to Charles Herty, who collected newspaper clippings about Gammon's death. It is referred to as "Gammon Scrapbook" in subsequent footnotes.)
[53] "LETTER FROM GAMMON'S MOTHER," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 Nov. 1897, 5.

The collapse of traditional southern society after the Civil War offered an opportunity and necessity to redefine masculinity, but some traits from the romanticized antebellum South carried over neatly into Reconstruction. Many of the violent and public aspects of Old South masculinity were rejuvenated under a flood of Lost Cause thinking. Whether they owned slaves or not, prewar white men of Dixie were accustomed to a society that revolved around the "peculiar institution," and thus embodied certain characteristics: dominance, assertiveness, control, and physical mastery. Antebellum men were manly in their ability to govern others who were deemed submissive, including blacks, women, and children, according to historian Craig Thompson Friend.[54] This trait of supremacy continued in the New South with the popularity of lynchings, where white males reaffirmed their status on top of the social pyramid, and displayed through these community outings their desire to protect white womanhood from the usually baseless threat of African American sexual assault.

Rebel fighters returned home full of anxiety, fearing that they failed in their masculine duty for their women, Foster argues. More alarming, southern men dreaded the thought that Yankees ravished their belles – not just with rape, but also by entering and ransacking plantations, allowing blacks to roam freely, and, worst of all, seducing belles into consensual affairs because the victorious Yankees appeared more manly.[55] This made it all the more critical in the years after that women fell comfortably back into male dependency and loyalty. "The women adjusted quickly to their old role, as their homage to the soldiers testified…Their public signs of support for the men and their failure to attack the patriarchy reassured the former Confederates and began the process of easing their anxieties about their manhood," states

[54] Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover, editors. *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), ix.
[55] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 26-8.

Foster.[56] Though postbellum martial commemoration also occurred above the Mason-Dixon, historian Edward L. Ayers points out, these instances in the South brought generations of folks together under the larger theme of the Lost Cause, and bolstered the nineteenth century Dixie values of community, kinship, and public appreciation of manhood.[57]

Women were vital in using their voice (albeit limited) to accelerate Lost Cause ideals that cherished and glorified white men of Dixie. Reconstruction proved to be an increasingly violent period in the South, as the white male crusade targeted African Americans through lynching and the Ku Klux Klan. White women joined into political discussions for segregation and Jim Crow tactics, lending support by testifying their fears of blacks and desire for male protection.[58] Dozens of women-led organizations formed in dedication to idolizing the Confederacy, casting a sense of pride rather than embarrassment in remembering the war. Memorial Day celebrations glorified the "common solider," verifying his wartime effort as an honorable and necessary duty.[59] Women also organized parades and town rallies for new monuments through groups such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy and Ladies Memorial Associations. With these actions, women of Dixie preserved the Lost Cause mentality of a romanticized Old South, including women's devotion to and celebration of white men. "Out of the raw, abraded ends of their attachment to their fallen husbands, fathers, and sons, out of the massive carnage that the Civil War represented for them, they committed themselves to perpetuate what they, at least, still had the power to perpetuate, the binding tie of 'mother love,'" historian LeeAnn Whites

[56] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 33.
[57] Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 334-5.
[58] Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 98-9.
[59] Foster, *The Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 124.

explains.[60] Considering the abundance of these organizations, Rosalind Gammon's pleas to preserve the manly gridiron game as a tribute to her dead son echoed the line of thinking of her female contemporaries who lost sons on a different kind of battle field.

This sort of mutual gender loyalty – where Johnny Reb fought to protect womanhood, and Mrs. Reb glorified his efforts with concrete memorials and submissive devotion – manifested itself in postbellum athletic outings. Historian Paul Christopher Anderson notes the rise of ring tournaments immediately following the war, where "spectators and participants alike expressed ideal visions of manhood and womanhood, of chivalry and honor, of virtue and order."[61] Carousing in the antebellum South's fondness of Sir Walter Scott, ring tournaments involved lance-toting "knights" who rode horses across a field dotted with ring-suspended poles. Beautiful female spectators cheered on the competition and display of masculine prowess as the knights attempted to hook the most rings. Though a postbellum phenomenon, Anderson explains, ring tournaments epitomized features of the Old South that were celebrated under Lost Cause mentality, such as honor, public displays of masculinity, and affirmation of the noble, manly South and its wartime defense of its women. While men of Dixie participated in tournaments for sport reasons, these ritualized events seemed to function more as a social outlet to recognize and glorify traditional southern manhood and womanhood, and strengthen the bonds between the two in order to maintain those roles.

Even with its Yankee origins, southerners managed to ritualize early football in a similar manner. Throughout the country, men worried about the "New Woman," who gained more

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[60] LeeAnn Whites, "'Stand By Your Man': The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood," in *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader*, ed. Christie Anne Farnham (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 137.

[61] Paul Christopher Anderson, "Rituals of Horsemanship: A Speculation on the Ring Tournament and the Origins of the Ku Klux Klan," in *Weirding the War: Stories from the Civil War's Ragged Edges*, ed. Stephen Berry (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 216.

independence outside of the home and in the public sphere. This Victorian woman was especially disconcerting to southern men where any slip in sexual control was fraught with racial tensions. While females increasingly attended games in the 1890s, men sought to minimize their influence at the affairs. Scholar Oriard notes that contemporary media wrote mostly about their beauty and womanly sympathy for gory injuries, and as "spectators and admirers of male prowess, women in the newspaper reports both reaffirmed a traditional gender relationship and announced a new model of sexual relations that did not subvert it."[62] Eventually, the North loosened up on the threat of women attending and genuinely enjoying the manly game – Oriard describes a prominent female sportswriter in the 1890s, as well as increasing use of "Football Girls" imagery in periodicals that depicted women playing the game – but the South remained less open to this.

Instead, football elevens below the Mason-Dixon reveled in performing for female athletic sponsors, selected by the universities, who sported fashionable attire and arrived to games in grand carriages (and later automobiles) dressed in college colors. Unlike more progressive female spectators in the North, sponsors embodied the tradition of an Old South belle. In a way similar to ring tournaments, men used the women's presence as a tangible point of pride, fighting opponents to please the sponsors and defend their womanly honor. The sponsors spectated and fawned over the eleven's use of physical dominance, approving of their masculine feats. Miller suggests that men desired female audiences because they brought dignity and festivity to the rowdy affairs, though the invitations "measured substantial differences between the young men of the white South and those whom they were supposed to protect, or

[62] Oriard, *Reading Football*, 251. See chapter 4 for more on the northern press' interpretation of women and football.

guide, or control."[63] Georgia welcomed sponsors in tandem with its first teams, usually women of prominent Athens or Atlanta families. A 1912 state newspaper, for example, printed large photographs of Sally Cobb Johnson and Martha Phinizy, who sponsored the Red and Black during a game with Vanderbilt. Alongside the pictures was a poem describing their benign, ceremonial role:

> Now comes the fair young football fan, with ribbons gay and coat of tan, to cheer her heroes as they run and shout. Oh, gee, it's fun. She little knows of football dope, but still she's full of noise and hope; she cheers a run that wins the game, she cheers a fumble just the same; she thinks the game is awful rough, but still she never has enough. She's there with bells on in the stand, with cries of "Ripping! Darling! Grand!" And when her Harold's team is licked and when Harold's ribs are fiercely kicked, she pouts and cries, in language heated, "Oh, fudge, we'd beat them, but they cheated."
>
> She yells for all; it little boots whose flag she bears, for whom she roots. When Georgia plays, she's Red and Black; when Mercer comes she changes tack. She'll split her throat and raise a racket for Auburn team or Yellow Jacket…
>
> The female fan pays little heed to science, teamwork, beef or speed. She's at the game to hear the band, to see the crowd which fills the stand, to be where other girls are at and show her brand-new autumn hat; to drag the last lone silver scad from some Fresh who's got it bad. He'll wire his father now for cash to pay his bills for college hash. He'll hock his Socrates and Caesar to hire a taxi; some poor geezer has to dig the iron man to rush his skirt, the female fan.[64]

Football elevens did not view sponsors as sport savvy, nor think of them as observant cheer leaders (who were only male students in this era). Rather, they were a beautiful, collective prize the institution's men could lust over. As discussed in the poem, the sponsors remained loyal to the general masculinity of football warriors, if not to a specific man or team. What mattered to the squads was simply receiving that beaming adoration and recognition from the sponsors, which in turn reassured their perceptions of themselves. "However flexible on some subjects,

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[63] Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient," in *Sporting World of the New South*, 33.

[64] "Her Hero Defies Fear; She Spurs Him on with Valiant Cheer. Miss Football Fan is Here." Publication and date unknown. Bob McWhorter Scrapbook, 1912, uncatalogued, Hargrett Special Collections Library, the University of Georgia. McWhorter was an All-Southern halfback for the Red and Black from 1910 to 1913, and left behind four scrapbooks with clippings of every Georgia game.

men believed that women were supposed to bear witness to male becoming, to cheer men to greatness, and to comfort them along the way," historian Stephen Berry explains about antebellum men. "Every free white man had a personal empire to build, whether it was a private plot on a scrubby canebrake or a personal dominion on a vast tract of good earth. And each man had another empire to build in a woman, through whose eyes he could see himself succeed."[65] Though Old South plantation-building differed from the "empires" the football elevens sought to build, New South athletes reflected on their sponsors in a similar manner. Even if the sponsor struggled to understand gridiron "dope" and rules and strategies, she at least understood her position as a motivational mirror in the grandstands.

It is true that women of Dixie participated in gridiron affairs, but their presence was mostly secondary and for ritual purposes. Especially before the First World War, football functioned solely around manhood: the display of masculine power and skill, an exercise to confirm male hegemony through violence, a public ritual to celebrate the man. Indeed, female sponsors were simply silent spectators and objectified trophies in the male-dominated athletic and university arenas. With this in mind, Rosalind Gammon's actions in advocating for the manly sport take on a powerful meaning. Though she was not a sponsor, the elder Gammon shaped the legacy of Georgia gridirons more than Sally Cobb Johnson or Martha Phinizy ever did. Today, her son is remembered as a martyr and athletic hero for dying in an ultra-masculine way. If Rosalind Gammon had not fulfilled her feminine duty to support, memorialize, and honor her slain boy, as did so many women in the New South, the projection of football in the state of Georgia may have been altered or even eliminated. This chapter mainly examines New South masculinity, blood sport, and death, as told through the narrative of Von Gammon. It also

[65] Stephen W. Berry II, *All That Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 85-6.

examines femininity and its postbellum role in glorifying slain heroes from Dixie, as told through the narrative of Rosalind Gammon.

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The University of Georgia hosted its first intercollegiate game in 1892, but students engaged in loose interpretations of the sport in the decade prior. Historian John F. Stegeman chronicled the beginnings of Georgia football in a 1966 book, *The Ghosts of Herty Field,* and writes that in a barren pitch behind New College "student infantry companies, still dressed in Confederate gray, formed their battalion" for casual games in the 1880s.[66] Organized play did not occur until late 1891, when twenty-four-year-old Charles William Herty, a Georgia graduate, returned to Athens as the new professor of chemistry and founded its first football team. He would become a loud voice in fighting for the sustainment of the manly sport after Von Gammon was killed six years later.

Herty received his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University and, influenced by the northeastern boys' fondness for football, decided to introduce his beloved alma mater to the latest athletic craze. "Thin as a reed and wearing glasses, the new instructor hardly looked like a football man," but the chemist used his football smarts, and a Walter Camp rulebook, to train the newly formed Red and Black squad.[67] (Georgia, along with other schools, would adopt the "Bulldog" moniker in the 1920s as a tribute to Yale, after the "most famous football institution of the era" did so in 1889.[68]) The Athens team learned the basics and sought intercollegiate play, but a dearth of opponents that fall delayed Georgia's first game until 30 January 1892, when the

[66] John F. Stegeman, *The Ghosts of Herty Field* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1966), 2.
[67] Stegeman, *The Ghosts of Herty Field*, 2.
[68] Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient," 299.

Red and Black routed Mercer 50 to 0 at home. The inaugural match had its impact: "Georgia was hooked for good."[69]

In the next decade, the *Red and Black* student newspaper characterized early football culture in its pages, documenting an atmosphere in which loyalty was vital for Georgia's existence. An 1895 front page article criticized players who abandoned the state university for other squads: "athletic men will recognize the fact that it is useless, as well as unpatriotic, to go out of their state…for the sons of no state excel those of Georgia in endurance, agility, and strength."[70] Another article in 1900 echoed these sentiments: "The duty and privilege of the team is plain, and the whole University, nay, the whole state, is looking to them to meet these teams from other states and wrest from them honorable victory."[71] H. C. Moreno, the 1894 team manager, assured Georgia fans that his fluid lineup would not deter the state university from its winning destiny: "…we will have a team, which, though light, will do battle for the old U. of G., determined to leave a record of which she will be proud."[72]

In such battles, the eleven often endured serious injuries, but the *Red and Black* commended their toughness. "In a scrimmage Smith has his nose broken and face badly bruised. He is plucky and in a few minutes centers the play again," stated an 1893 play-by-play article.[73] During a November game that same year, a coincidental incident left Smith with his nose broken in two places, and Brown was injured when (ironically) a Savannah fan's bulldog got loose and "battled" with his hair. The Athens men considered this a conspiracy from their opponents to jolt Georgia's efforts, but the Varsity continued playing.[74] "On the Georgia team, every man

[69] Stegeman, *The Ghosts of Herty Field*, 7.
[70] *Red and Black*, 28 September, 1895, 1.
[71] Ibid., 6 November, 1900, 2.
[72] Ibid., 20 October, 1894, 1.
[73] Ibid., 1 December, 1893, 1.
[74] *Red and Black*, 30 November, 1893, 1.

went into the game to win or die," the paper proudly declared about an 1899 matchup. It awarded the game's best player as "Finnegin, in spite of serious injuries, (who) remained in the game to the very last, displaying most marked grit and endurance."[75] In writing about southern soldiers, Wyatt-Brown explains those who died in war were remembered fondly with "inextinguishable glory."[76] The *Red and Black* certainly glorified those who brushed off broken bones, bumps, and bruises in the fight for the state university's honor.

Students who did not meet the Varsity's standards for physical toughness still owed their faithfulness – and pocketbooks – to the football team. "Every boy who is endowed with the proper college spirit" needed to assist the Athletic Association, treasurer Edward E. Dougherety pleaded in 1894, just before the start of a new football season.[77] He insisted that each student donate to the organization, which would cover trainer salaries, new equipment, and the upkeep of the gridiron, and thus the football warriors in tip-top shape.

Red and Black editors also urged students in 1895 to volunteer for the "scrub" team, a squad that took beatings for the first-stringers during practice. "A great deal of glory redounds to a member of the 'Varsity team; but the 'scrub' who is not even a 'Varsity possibility, is seldom thanked. This love for his old college, and the satisfaction that he feels when doing something for her, are his inspiration."[78] The paper made another desperate call for "scrubs" less than two months later, as Georgia was due to play Alabama. "It is hard work and there is very little glory in it but at other colleges men are willing to make even greater sacrifices if by so doing they can help to make a winning team," the editorial board beseeched. "The game is tough and it does

[75] *Red and Black*, 2 December 1899, 1.
[76] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 210.
[77] *Red and Black*, 29 September, 1894, 1.
[78] Ibid., 28 September, 1895, 1.

require a great deal of college spirit to make a man willing to be battered about when there is no reward in sight, yet the Varsity must have practice."[79]

The football eleven needed support from all university men to achieve its goals. A weak team resulted from dishonorable students who shied away from the university's athletic cause. But the *Red and Black* made it very clear that those who simply aided the football team in the form of cash or practice were not part of the elite social strata. In a January 1900 editorial, the paper chastised students who wore the sacred "G" that was meant *only* for athletes: "Perhaps they do not realize the injustice they are doing to those who have won the privilege by their hard work on the gridiron, diamond, or track," the editorial mocked. "Those men who battle on the athletic field for the honor of their University receive a reward sufficiently small, as it is, and no one should be so debased as to be willing knowingly to detract from this small return for their work in athletic lines."[80] The student newspaper evidenced how integral athletics, particularly football, were to the university's pride from 1892 onward. Von Gammon surely must have felt tremendous pressure to defend the state of Georgia's honor each time he lined up on the gridiron.

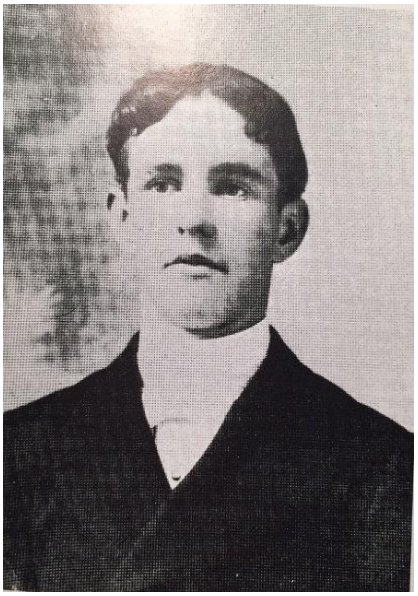

Photo of Von Gammon.
Stegeman, Ghosts of Herty Field.

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Gammon was destined to be an athletic god at the state university; it seemed only fitting he would travel from Rome to Athens, the Georgia cities named after ancient metropolises that brimmed with gladiators and Olympians. Born a decade after the first intercollegiate football game, on 4 December

[79] *Red and Black,* 9 November, 1895, 2.
[80] *Red and Black,* 20 January, 1900, 2.

1879, he immersed himself with physical activity and competition at an early age. His classmates commented frequently on the skill and strength of the young man. "Von Gammon was a born athlete. He was almost a perfect man physically, and he had not a vice to weaken the splendid body which God had given him, and which was truly the sound home of a sound mind," the *Red and Black* gushed in its obituary of Gammon a week after his death.[81]

In his hometown of Rome, Gammon was likened as the best wrestler, bicyclist, and footballer; his parents' contributions to his sporting abilities surely abetted him. "His father has always taken a most unusual interest in the young man's athletic career and was never so happy as when the young man emerged from some contest covered with glory, as was, in fact, almost always the case," the *Atlanta Constitution* explained.[82] The Gammons provided their sons with the latest athletic equipment, including parallel bars, punching bags, skates, baseball bats and mitts, football togs, and tennis racquets. In their backyard sat an impressive set-up: high-jump and pole-vaulting apparatuses, a 16 pound shot and field, a flying trapeze in the barn. The boys practiced French and American style wrestling on a grassy spot near the front of their home. "Of his age, Von Gammon…was best at everything he tried – a typical Greek god, and admired extravagantly as such without exception anywhere," George Magruder Battey, Jr. declared in his 1922 work *A History of Rome and Floyd County*.[83]

Gammon may have been influenced by the strong, successful men in his life, including his grandfathers and siblings. One of his younger brothers, William G. Gammon, was a

[81] Gammon Scrapbook.
[82] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 October, 1897, 7.
[83] George Magruder Battey, Jr., *A History of Rome and Floyd County, Including Numerous Incidents of More than Local Interest, 1540-1922* vol. I (Atlanta: The Webb and Vary Company, 1922), 344.

sportsman too, but was "killed…at Cartersville after playing a game of baseball with the Rome team by falling under a freight train." William was buried in Myrtle Hill Cemetery beside Von.[84]

There was also, of course, John Aiken Gammon, his father. Born in Tennessee in 1844, the elder Gammon enrolled at Princeton University in the fall of 1860. By the next April, he left school to join the Confederate Army. He entered as a private, earned a second lieutenant rank, and eventually became a captain during his four years of service. After the war, the elder Gammon was held in Johnson's Island prison in Ohio for four months. He studied law briefly but never practiced, engaged mostly in the clothing industry, and served as a councilman in Rome. In 1873 he married Rosalind Burns, and fathered five sons and a daughter. Summarizing his life in 1903 for an alumni booklet dedicated to the Princeton class of '63, Gammon did not mention the death of his son, Von. But under the "Events, travels, etc." section of the questionnaire, he noted: "I have been shot quite numerously, and carry some very uncomfortable lead about me constantly."[85] John Aiken Gammon was clearly a tough man.

That toughness passed on to Von, who became a natural role model for the boys of Georgia. He was the "idol and pride" of the Young Men's Athletic Association of Rome. A teenage Gammon wore his "training costume" about town often, and happily answered questions on exercise techniques and athletic inquires.[86] (He embodied the ideal football persona legendary University of Chicago coach Amos Alonzo Stagg laid out in 1893. Among keeping a good diet and enough sleep, and avoiding pipes, booze, and profanity, Stagg noted that "the young collegian of to-day, who secures a position on any one of the college teams, and obtains a

[84] Battey, *A History of Rome and Floyd County*, 344.
[85] Henry U. Swinnerton, editor, "JOHN AIKEN GAMMON," *Princeton, Sixty-Three: Fortieth-Year Book of the Members of the Class of 1863* (Albany: Fort Orange Press, 1904), 46-7.
[86] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.

seat at the 'training table,' is an object of envy rather than of compassion to his classmates."[87] Stagg saw the morality of football and considered the object of the sport as "man-making."[88]) The state university students, whether jealous or idolizing, noticed these traits in Gammon. "'To be as good an athlete as Von Gammon,' was the Ultimate Thule of the class-mates of Von Gammon," the *Red and Black* affirmed.[89]

The student newspaper deemed Gammon a "hero" multiple times in its obituary, but beyond superficial reasons of athletic ability. "His traits of character would have made him no less of a hero to those who knew him if he had the body of a dwarf," it insisted. He had no enemies; he did not engage in immoral vices. He played third base for the state university baseball nine and was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. He quarterbacked the Red and Black to an undefeated 1896 season. The *Constitution* wrote that Gammon was reliable in all athletics, a dedicated scholar, and a better friend. The *Red and Black* provided a tear-jerking sentiment at the end of the obituary:

> He has gone from among us, but his memory will never go from the hearts of those who knew him. It is a bitter feeling of helplessness that even now comes to us when we think of the manner of his death; but we are comforted in the reflection that if he had the choice, we believe Von would rather have died thus than in any other manner, brave to the last. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man give his life for his friends." May God enable us all to live so that our characters shall be more and more like that of Von Gammon, who is in Heaven.[90]

And so the university lost its epitome of a perfect New South man, who sacrificed himself while fighting for the honor of Georgia.

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[87] Amos A. Stagg and Henry L. Williams, *A Scientific and Practical Treatise on American Football for Schools and Colleges* (Hartford: The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company, 1893), 15-7.
[88] Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 60.
[89] Gammon Scrapbook.
[90] Ibid.

The Varsity rolled into Atlanta on 30 October 1897 in anticipation of their most significant mêlée of the season. It was not going to be easy, not by any means. Their opponents, a terrifying collective of "great big, burly" Cavilers, "made the Georgia team look very small."[91] This game would be difficult. But the Georgia eleven were determined to fight down to their bare knuckles to defend their pride against arguably the South's greatest football squad of the year. "The Georgia team played a gritty, hard game and fought against the odds with a bravery and pluck that was inspiring to see," the *Constitution* professed. "They would brace themselves like men for the terrible bucking of their heavy opponents, but they could not hold them back…"[92]

The Georgia rooters came along for the ride to Atlanta, bringing a fiery spirit and an unbreakable devotion to the state university. "The scene at Brisbane park was brilliant," the *Constitution* continued. "The day was perfect and the warm October sunshine poured down…The balmy air made every one light-hearted and glad."[93] "Glad" could be an understatement of the mood of the jovial Athens boys and their gorgeous guests and sponsors from the Lucy Cobb School, donned with red and black getups and cheering for the football warriors on the field.

If the Varsity brought the muscle, its fans brought the noise. The Athens faithful gathered in a pre-game battle cry, screaming insensibly into tin megaphones, vigorously ringing cowbells, and blowing horns, until the noise amalgamated into an undecipherable mash: a loud, loud, loud Georgia roar. The "Lung Brigade" led the faithful through renditions of college songs which, according to Miller, was a common tactic of New South students "to boast of the prowess

[91] "Georgia Falls Before Virginia," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[92] Ibid., 7.
[93] Ibid., 7.

of their own teams and to denigrate their opponents' courage or ability."[94] Songs from the Varsity's first decade were printed in the student newspaper and yearbooks for maximum exposure, and composed with lyrics dripping in violence, such as ALABAM ("Alabam – see us slam, For you're in a mighty jam, Alabam. There will be a sickening thud; You are full of tacks and mud, And we're out for Auburn's blood."); RAH, FOR GEORGIA ("You know how late old Wofford died, It looked just like a suicide."); and another unnamed tune targeting the same college ("We are the jolly Georgia boys, And Wofford's scalp we'll take… Until the ball has been touched down – Then Wofford, you will die.").[95] The atmosphere was ripe for a bloodbath.

The city newspaper played it up, too. "There were nearly 5,000 people gathered to see the battle," the *Constitution* stated.[96] Although a handful of Virginia fans dotted the masses, they were quickly swallowed up by the "human sea of the bloody crimson and somber black."[97] The Georgia men, and young Gammon, may not have realized how significant their university colors would soon become.

The game in itself was vicious, but that was to be expected of most college matchups in the year 1897. Ingrassia explains that by the last decade of the century, the sport had become absolutely brutal, backed with "mass plays" that ensured damage in ruddy, bone-crushing clashes.[98] Harvard President Charles William Eliot criticized football harshly in an 1894 report after one particular injury-filled game between his university and Yale, to which Walter Camp responded. Perhaps because of the deep-rooted rivalry with Harvard, the father of American football was not at all pleased with Eliot's report, and published that same year *Football Facts*

[94] Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient," 300.
[95] "The Weapons of Georgia's Lung Brigade," *Pandora* yearbook, 1897, 189; "A New Song," *Red and Black,* 10 November 1894, 4.
[96] "Georgia Falls Before Virginia," *Atlanta Constitution,* 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[97] Ibid., 7.
[98] Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University*, 45-6.

and Figures: A Symposium of Expert Opinions on the Game's Place in American Athletics. Complying interviews from physicians, university leaders, and former players of the Big Three, Camp's work was, in reality, "a book of sympathetic testimonials and doctored statistics," Ingrassia maintains.[99]

It certainly seems like *Football Facts and Figures* was composed of supporters only, who applauded the sport's positive impact on young men. Testimonials included Yale professor Eugene Lamb Richards, who wrote that instead of teaching violence, "a good claim can be made of a necessary connection between good character and good football in its best development."[100] C. A. Waldo, an instructor at DePauw University, insisted that football inspired discipline among men, in that it "(revolutionized) the moral tone of our college during the fall term and made hazing practically a thing of the past."[101] Former Yale player William W. K. Nixon explained that "although I have been thrown often and have contributed to the overthrow of some, no one ever hurt me nor did I ever injure anyone (except myself, by twisting my knee)."[102] Padded with opinions such as these, football supporters across the country relied on Camp's book to swat away any backlash against the sport during 1890s, despite some rumblings of worry about its physical dangers.[103] Georgia fans would witness firsthand how Camp's book, although claiming that football saved men morally, could do little to save a man bleeding out on the gridiron.

It was rough going for the Red and Black that Saturday afternoon. "It was, tersely summed up, a free for all fight," the *Atlanta Journal* bluntly noted.[104] The *Constitution* described the Varsity as "young warriors" as they paced up and down the pitch before kickoff,

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[99] Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University*, 48.
[100] Walter Camp, *Football Facts and Figures: A Symposium of Expert Opinions on the Game's Place in American Athletics* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1894), 2, 5.
[101] Ibid., 114.
[102] Ibid., 163.
[103] Ingrassia, *The Rise of Gridiron University*, 48.
[104] "VIRGINIA DEFEATS GEORGIA ON GRIDIRON," *Atlanta Journal*, 1 Nov. 1897, 5.

cheered on by the Athens faithful despite the size and stature of their Old Dominion opponents. To prevent dirty plays and cheap shots, the umpire conferred with both squads' captains before the start. "(He) did not want any slugging," the *Constitution* recalled. "He said there had been too much of it for the good of the sport and that the first man caught would be put out of the game."[105] Both captains, W. B. Kent of Georgia and James Morrison of Virginia, confidently replied that their men would play clean.

Georgia took a beating in the first half, trailing 11 to 4 by the end of it. Just as the Red and Black managed some sort of rhythm during the start of the second half, Reynolds Tichenor went down. (The Georgia quarterback was a transfer from Auburn; Gammon agreed to change his position to fullback so the smaller Tichenor could take over his job at the helm.) The prideful Tichenor, surely drawing upon his sense of duty to the state university, resisted leaving the field. "In battle," Wyatt-Brown writes, "where honor is the only 'law' available, its mandate required fidelity to one's fellow soldier. To let them down was tantamount to ostracism and contempt."[106] The Georgia play-caller sustained "two raps on the head and it was necessary to take him out of the game, but he did not want to go by any means and when he was led off of the field, he broke down and wept," the *Constitution* reported.[107]

Another player subbed in for "Tic," but by that point the "side lines were being used as beds for the wounded." The *Journal* labeled the collisions as "fearful to behold, and men were dragged from the field, bloody and exhausted."[108] With Tichenor sidelined and spirit somewhat depleted, the Georgia eleven huddled together. They desperately needed a defensive stop. Von Gammon stepped up for the challenge.

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[105] "Georgia Falls Before Virginia," *Atlanta Constitution,* 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[106] Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture,* 209.
[107] "Georgia Falls Before Virginia," *Atlanta Constitution,* 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[108] "VIRGINIA DEFEATS GEORGIA ON GRIDIRON," *Atlanta Journal,* 1 Nov. 1897, 5.

Virginia took over possession near midfield. The Cavalier quarterback signaled for a run on the left, then shoveled the ball off to his halfback. Gammon watched the play unfold and "rushed into the mass of humanity and collided with the Virginia interference."[109] But Gammon's determination to stop the run, to bring the momentum back to the Varsity and ultimately the victory to Georgia, was a mammoth task even for the athletic god. Instead, the mass of humanity halted him. And then it killed him. "As to how Gammon received the injuries that produced his death accounts differ widely," the *Journal* surmised. "In endeavoring to stop (the Virginia player), Gammon missed his mark and fell heavily on his head, his chin striking the ground first. The two teams tripped and fell on him."[110] The *Constitution* reporters were also unsure of what exactly happened in the pile: "He missed his tackle and was thrown violently to the ground. He fell with a thud, and the strong, heavy men tumbled over on top of him. Some say Gammon's head hit his shoe as he almost doubled as he was thrown. Others claim his head struck the ground hard."[111]

The pile untangled itself, revealing one man suctioned to the ground. Gammon was dazed, barely alert. He vomited. The color drained from his face, as did consciousness. A pair of doctors, spectating in the grand stand, ran onto the field when it became obvious that there was something entirely wrong with the star of the Varsity. "Those who saw the ashen pallor of Gammon predicted the worst. His breath came fitfully and laboriously," the *Journal* explained. "A comrade stopped over Gammon and begged that he would say something. He raised his eyes in mute appeal, his lips quivered, but he could not speak."[112] Dr. Bizzell, of Atlanta, injected morphine into Gammon's chest. He discovered a steady gush of blood dripping from the back of

[109] "VIRGINIA DEFEATS GEORGIA ON GRIDIRON," *Atlanta Journal*, 1 Nov. 1897, 5.
[110] Ibid., 5.
[111] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[112] "VIRGINIA DEFEATS GEORGIA ON GRIDIRON," *Atlanta Journal*, 1 Nov. 1897, 5.

his patient's head. Dr. Jack Benedict, of Athens, joined Bizzell, and together they examined Gammon, concluding a concussion plagued him. As they worked on the dying boy, the doctors determined Gammon was in a much too serious state, and signaled for an ambulance, quickly.[113]

"It was a pathetic scene – the contrast of two pictures," the *Journal* solemnly stated. "One was life, the beauty and gaiety of the grand stand and carriages, teaming with brilliant colors and happy faces. The other was the dying face of a beloved boy."[114]

Bloody crimson, somber black.

At Grady Hospital, Dr. William Perrin Nicholson attended to Gammon. His parents boarded a train in Rome. "Gammon lingered between life and death for several hours," the *Constitution* reported. "All worked hard to save the life of the injured player, but no change in his condition was noted." He died at 3:45 a.m. 31 October 1897. The physician confirmed that Gammon suffered a concussion and hemorrhage at the base of his brain. Nicholson, who was not present at the game, recalled what a spectator told him, that Gammon was "lifted suddenly high into the air and then hurled forward upon his head with terrible force. It was done in a scramble and must have been, of course, an accident."[115] Accident or not, seventeen-year-old Richard Vonalbade Gammon was dead. As news of the tragedy spread across the peach state, university officials, local politicians, and sports fans anxiously contemplated what would become of their newfound, manly, honorable game.

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"The scene at Brisbane Park in Atlanta last Saturday and the killing of young Mr. Gammon, of Rome, has awakened the attention of the public to an outrage which should have

[113] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.
[114] "VIRGINIA DEFEATS GEORGIA ON GRIDIRON," *Atlanta Journal*, 1 Nov. 1897, 5.
[115] "FROM GRIDIRON TO THE GRAVE," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 Oct. 1897, 7.

been stamped out long ago," determined the *Athens Weekly Banner* six days after the slaying.[116] The hometown paper of the state university was not alone in its sentiments. Von Gammon's death lit the fuse of embarrassment, disgrace, and panic across the state. Georgians questioned how they could allow, let alone encourage, a barbaric activity at college campuses, a place for young men to bolster their minds, not deteriorate their bodies. "…the unanswerable and insurmountable reasons why (football) should not be tolerated are so overwhelming that a humane and intelligent civilization is absolutely astounded that it ever should have been permitted," the *Banner* lectured.[117]

Football matches in the state took a very sudden halt. The day after Gammon died, university Chancellor William Ellison Boggs immediately scratched the Varsity's schedule for the season. The players did not protest; Captain Kent gathered his squad, and they unanimously voted to disband, turning in their Varsity uniforms right away. The Mercer and Auburn elevens disbanded the next day.

The state university hosted a memorial service November 2 at the chapel. At 11 in the morning, the famous campus bell rang out against the silence that covered Athens, in tribute to the start of the funeral happening concurrently in Rome. Representatives of four prominent campus organizations, the athletic council, the Demosthenian Society, the bicycle club, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, joined together at the front of the university chapel and read a tribute in memory of Von Gammon, noting that "He came to his death in his voluntary efforts to maintain the honor and good name of our university." The student leaders emphasized how

[116] "More about Football," *Athens Weekly Banner*, 5 November 1897, 4.
[117] Ibid., 4.

significant the loss of Gammon was: a loving friend to classmates, a devoted member of the university, and a promising citizen to the state of Georgia.[118]

The funeral in Gammon's hometown was just as gloomy. Folks stuffed the First Presbyterian church, vying to pay their respects to the family. Mathematics professor Colonel Charles Mercer Snelling, captain Kent, and football manager Frank Mitchell, along with a delegation from Sigma Alpha Epsilon, traveled to the dead player's city. "Beautiful floral offerings from Von Gammon's fraternity, the football team, faculty and students decorated the church chancel," the *Banner* recalled. "Every seat in the large church was taken. It was perhaps the most impressive funeral service held in Rome."[119]

As Georgia began to memorialize its fallen hero, prominent men around the state vehemently called to banish the blood sport. Despite rhetoric in the 1890s that praised football as a man-making game, older professionals feared the frequency of gridiron mishaps that disfigured the state's finest young men. Though football warriors fought valiantly for their colleges in a manner like soldiers for their countries, the risk of gridiron death seemed foolish for just an athletic activity. The *Constitution* reported the mood shift in Athens against football, while the *Journal* questioned how a dangerous sport that killed six men in one season was tolerated.[120] A group of Atlanta ministers met November 2 and publicly expressed outrage over the game's importance at universities. Rev. W. A. Candler, president of Emory College and a longtime opponent of college football, wrote a letter to the *Journal* that same day demanding an anti-football bill. "(Games) are worse than slugging matches in that more pugilists engage in the fights, and they are damaging to a class of people never injured in the prize ring," Candler wrote.

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[118] "UNIVERSITY ACTS ON TRAGEDY," *Atlanta Constitution*, 2 November 1897, 3.
[119] "BENEATH THE FLOWERS," *Athens Weekly Banner*, 5 November 1897, 6.
[120] "ATHENS PEOPLE ARE AROUSED. They Cry Out Against Football and Mourn Gammon's Death," *Atlanta Constitution*, 1 November 1897, 2; "ENOUGH OF FOOTBALL," *Atlanta Journal*, 1 November 1897, 4.

He urged the Georgia legislature to act swiftly. "Other states will follow. Perhaps these evils may be expelled from the entire south eventually."[121] The *Banner* editors hoped that "University authorities will act promptly in stamping out the evil, rather than place themselves in the unenviable position of having to do so after the law of our State has placed an inhibition upon such barbarous and ruinous introductions at our institutions of learning."[122]

For its part, the state university worked right away. Its faculty passed on November 5 resolutions urging the Athletic Association to discourage students "from engaging in such athletic contests as are not reasonably free of liability to serious physical injury." The faculty also applauded the football team for disbanding without prodding from adults. W. D. Hooper, a Latin professor and secretary of the faculty committee, smugly noted that he sent a copy of the resolutions to Herty, who seemed to be the alone at the state university in panic about the probability of the sport's demise.[123]

Lawmakers also stepped up. A day after Gammon's death, state Senator Allen introduced an anti-football bill with a charge of a misdemeanor for those who played. Shortly after, a similar bill went through each side of the legislature.[124] The city of Atlanta's general council enacted its own anti-football bill, prohibiting the game within city limits, with penalties of a fine or jail time. "The end of football playing in Georgia seems to be in sight," the *Constitution* announced during the fracas. "Its death knell has been sounded and the game is in a fair way to take its place along side of shinny, townball and other sports of the past that now seem to have been forgotten."[125] On November 8, the statewide anti-football bill passed the

[121] "Rev. Warren A. Candler WRITES OF THE Anti-Football Bill," *Atlanta Journal*, 2 November 1897.
[122] "More about Football," *Athens Weekly Banner*, 5 November 1897, 4.
[123] "FACULTY ACTS ON FOOTBALL," *Athens Weekly Banner*, 5 November 1897, 5.
[124] "BILL TO STOP FOOTBALL, Senator Allen Introduced It Yesterday in the Senate," *Athens Weekly Banner*, 5 November 1897, 6; Meyers, "'Unrelenting War on Football'", 400.
[125] "The Game of Football," *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 November 1897, A2.

House by a vote of 91 to 3. Ten days later, it passed the Senate by a vote of 31 to 4. The bill landed on Governor William Y. Atkinson's desk, where he had two options: sign it, and ring the "death knell" of the New South activity that its young men prided themselves on; or veto it, and contribute to the revival of Lost Cause masculinity manifested in the game. Fortunately for the governor, a hoard of gridiron supporters, including a convincing woman, urged him to remember Gammon's sacrifice for southern manhood while making his decision.

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As a member of the Red and Black eleven, Von Gammon understood the duty of death before dishonoring the state university. Men of the Old South defended their personal and familial honor with duels and fist fights, while men of the Confederacy charged Union battle lines to defend the honor of Dixie. Such was the tradition that perpetuated a culture of honor among the nineteenth century South's men, where violence and reputation oftentimes met in quarrels. This notion was not spared on gridirons. Football was the most dangerous before 1906, when the lack of safety precautions, equipment, and rulebooks left vulnerable men open for a bruising mass play or accidental shots to the head. Southerners eagerly joined elevens, despite this deadly risk. Men played for athletic or fitness reasons, to blow off steam from school stress, or simply to have fun. But, as evidenced in Gammon's story in particular, football also represented a channel for young men below the Mason-Dixon to offer their innate masculine characteristics of defense and physical dominance to honor something else they loved: their colleges and institutions. So Gammon sacrificed his body for the state university and its football squad, and he died an honorable man. Many folks, probably taken by Lost Cause mentality, recognized and applauded this parallel, and thus advocated to save the sport.

Perhaps the most well-known voice was the founder of Red and Black football, Charles Herty, who published his opinions in Atlanta newspapers. Taking a scientific approach, which was a vastly popular stance for pro-football supporters in the 1890s, he argued that college men who neglected physical activity would "become sluggish in brain and torpid in liver, without muscle or energy." He also criticized the university for failing to provide students a proper gymnasium, where men could train safely to avoid ghastly game injuries. "Is the young manhood of Georgia worth nothing?" Herty desperately asked. "It would so appear from the neglect which is given it…The great want, which I have already said, of every college is physical exercise." [126] Aside from building men in muscle and bulk, football also strengthened the morality of young men, according to Herty. He stated that the "moral condition of the students of the university during the past ten years all bear witness to the wonderfully fine influence exerted by athletics upon the morals of the student body. This I consider the chief glory of the honorable record our boys have made in athletics contests." Athletics incited young men to devote their time and bodies to training, practice, and loyalty to the team, as opposed to unhealthy and unsavory college activities such as loitering, gambling, drinking, smoking, or chasing loose women. Again reprimanding the state university for the lack of a proper gymnasium, Herty reminded readers that college men would surely decline physically, mentally, and morally if football disappeared. [127]

Other male proponents came forward, such as George W. Miles, headmaster of St. Albans school in Virginia. Miles argued that other sports and everyday activities posed more deadly risks, and that football was no less hazardous than any random accident: "Yes, it is dangerous to be alive. In that sense, and in chiefly that sense, is football dangerous. Walking

[126] "PROFESSOR HERTY ON ATHLETIC SPORTS," *Atlanta Constitution*, 2 November 1897, 3.
[127] Letter to the Editor, *Atlanta Constitution*, 7 November 1897, 16.

along the street a brick may fall off a chimney and kill you," he told the *Constitution*. The professor explained that his students played the game properly, and therefore were never hurt. Only when non-gentlemen stepped on the gridiron did footballers need to worry. "It is not a game for hoodlums, rowdies and toughs," he stated.[128] Pleasant A. Stovell agreed with this line of thinking, claiming that those who played fair and as *manly men* would never face death. "I believe football has made more men than it has marred," the Georgia alumni, university board of trustees member, and editor of the *Savannah Press* told the *Journal*. "It seems absurd to outlaw a game which has been played for forty years because of an occasional causality. Our boys are not milk-sops." Stovall agreed some of the game's rules could be altered for safer play, and suggested dividing teams by weight, much like boxing. Still, he commemorated Gammon as a "manly boy who played a clean, strong game, who fell with the university colors and who died like a true sportsman and gentleman."[129]

Even Georgia's most heated rival of the decade came to football's defense, speaking critically about the Atlanta city council's actions against the game. The Auburn *Orange and Blue* editorial board conceded that Gammon's death was indeed heartbreaking, "but in truth and soberness these city father have turned tragedy into comedy by their spasm of goodness." Sarcastically, the editorial suggested prohibiting hunting, open-air speaking, and trolley cars, as all had produced accidental deaths in one way or another.[130] As a showing of the gentlemanly spirit that Herty also recognized in football players, the Auburn eleven donated a floral arrangement for Gammon's funeral. Rosalind Gammon wrote back to Tiger captain, stating that

[128] Gammon Scrapbook.
[129] Ibid.
[130] *Orange and Blue*, 10 November 1897, 2.

"Coming from a rival team, it showed that generous spirit of sorrow for one we all loved. Such acts give us renewed faith in Southern manhood and comradeship."[131]

Indeed, Rosalind Gammon was a notable advocate for football and manhood in the weeks following her son's death. For all of the men involved in the matter – Von, his brothers and father, his teammates, managers, and coaches, the dozens of football elevens across the South, the doctors, university officials, newspaper editors, and state politicians – a short letter penned by a woman made quite the impact. Tall, with auburn hair, a keen sense of humor and a kind smile, Rosalind Gammon was well-liked in her hometown, and she encouraged Rome's young men in their athletic pursuits. The Gammon household welcomed the town's athletes, where Rosalind oversaw her sons and the neighborhood boys practice: "under her watchful eye a splendid spirit of sportsmanship and play was developed; and in a large degree she was responsible for the spirit that Romans have shown in the years that have followed." More than anything, Battey wrote, she "urged her boys to do their best, no matter the consequences, and on every athletic field they excelled."[132]

Rosalind Gammon's letter was curt, but she made her point. She supported Herty's request for a suitable gymnasium "so that the students can be properly trained in athletic work and developed in physical manhood."[133] She expressed the worth of football to her son's happiness, who died a month before his eighteenth birthday. She pleaded to her county representative to shut down the bill, requesting that the death of her son would not result in the death of a sport so culturally significant to the state university and to the South. Apparently, her letter influenced a trio of Floyd County representatives, including the recipient of her letter,

[131] *Orange and Blue*, 10 November, 1897, 2.
[132] Battey, *A History of Rome and Floyd County*, 344-5.
[133] "LETTER FROM GAMMON'S MOTHER," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 5 Nov. 1897, 5.

James B. Nevin, who "made strenuous efforts" to defeat the bill after her pleas were published in the Atlanta newspaper.[134]

Others supported Mrs. Gammon's request. The *Constitution* published a column that admitted "The bill was passed in the heat of prejudice." Colonel Thomas P. Branch, brother to a state representative, suggested that prospective college students would leave the state if football was banned. More importantly, for the students who did stay, an absence of football would send boys running in the direction of cigarettes and hijinks. "So great is this spirit in students to attain success and distinction as football players that they submit to the severest discipline and greatest self-denial, and in many cases where all moral suasion and college regulations have entirely failed," Branch contended.[135] A day later, the *Constitution* opined that Atkinson should veto the bill. "It is a species of paternal legislation that is not only unjustifiable but ridiculous. It is a matter with which the legislature has no concern whatever," but instead should be left to parents and university authorities to decide if boys should play, the paper argued.[136]

The governor agreed. On 8 December 1897, more than a month after Gammon's death, Atkinson struck down the anti-football bill. He sent a lengthy letter to the House of Representatives explaining his decision, noting that the bill went "beyond the proper limit of legislation" and heavily infringed on parental rights. He supported Herty in that football had great value "in the physical, moral and intellectual development of boys and young men." The game was rough, but it needed to be: "Such games are helpful in the development of the highest and noblest type of our race." He stressed that football inspired young men toward the ultimate academic and gentlemanly standards, and away from debauchery. Most of all, barring football

[134] Battey, *A History of Rome and Floyd County*, 349.
[135] "GOVERNOR ATKINSON AND THE ANTI-FOOTBALL BILL," *Atlanta Constitution*, 4 December 1897, 6.
[136] "A Good Place for a Veto," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 December 1897, 18.

would bar the development of what Atkinson called "aggressive manliness": "a quality amalgamate of courage, endurance, restraint, and the power to act surely and unfalteringly in an emergency. It is a quality which football tends to foster and keep alive," the governor wrote.[137] His words echoed Rosalind Gammon's by stressing the importance of manhood, highlighting the woman's rhetoric in supporting and honoring her fallen son and his masculine quest.

That same day, the house moved to override Atkinson's veto, but fell short of the two-thirds requirement.[138] The *Banner* expressed disappointment in the governor's decision, while the *Red and Black* thanked him "for the wisdom and conservativeness he displayed in vetoing a bill begotten of excitement, for leaving the matter to those who should have it in charge, and that in (Atkinson) we recognize a friend."[139] The chaos that unfolded from Gammon's death expired considerably. The Varsity remained off the field for the rest of the season. The Spanish-American War stole away the university's attention to other matters. By fall 1898, the Georgia boys were back on the gridiron. They won four, lost two. All was back to normal.

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Seven years after her son was killed, Rosalind Gammon died. That meant she was unable to attend a memorial service at the state university on 5 November 1921. In attendance were the University of Virginia's football eleven and Dr. Albert LeFerve, who presented to Georgia's S. V. Sanford and his Varsity a gift. It was a bronze plaque, depicting a mother cradling a dying son. The mother held a shield, which read: "The cause shall live in which his life was given." An inscription at the bottom read: "A MOTHER'S STRENGTH PREVAILED." And it listed Rosalind's name above Von's.[140]

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[137] "GOV. ATKINSONS REASONS FOR FOOTBALL BILL VETO," *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 December 1897, 5.
[138] Meyers, "'Unrelenting War on Football'", 404.
[139] Gammon Scrapbook.
[140] Gammon Scrapbook.

It fell along the commonplace nature of monument ceremonies in this era that dominated the South with confederate memories for many sacrifices. By the early twentieth century, the pomp and circumstance became drenched in Lost Cause rhetoric, in rituals of parades and speeches and "memorial" days, oftentimes organized by women. Thus the honorable "memorial movement helped to ensure that the Confederate dead became powerful cultural symbols within the New South – gave power, in other words, to the ghosts of the Confederacy," Foster explains.[141] Although Gammon expired on an 1897 gridiron as opposed to a 1860s battlefield, his community found his cause noble enough for a tangible bronze sphere and a public recognition of his legacy. Memorializing his football death just did not seem so out of the ordinary, given the increasing amount of memorials dotting the region from 1900 onward. An *Athens Banner Herald* reporter deemed the plaque "an eternal tribute to the athlete who represented in all his qualities, even to his last great sacrifice, the idealism of Southern manhood."[142] The university would later suspend it in the newly-constructed Alumni Hall, bestowing Athens another monument that a recognized brave, loyal man, similar to the Confederate veteran memorial installed near campus in 1872.

At the ceremony, Sanford emphasized the valiant effort of the *woman* who continued that Dixie legacy. He recalled a mythic tale about an army of a distant past, who endeavored to capture an enemy fortification to end a long and grueling war. The army tried once to charge up the hill, and failed. It tried again, and the standard bearer was killed. In the moment of despair emerged a plucky Irish lad, who gathered the men, sparked their confidence, guided them up the hill, and captured the fort before he lost his own life. Afterwards, the winning battalion marched

[141] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 37.
[142] Oliver S. Morton, Jr., "HISTORY OF THE MEMORIAL TABLET," the *Athens Banner-Herald*, 6 November 1921, 4.

toward a village in celebration of the victory. Once in town, a woman grabbed a broom and jumped into the formation, to the dismay of several men. When the colonel questioned her, the woman sputtered out through tears that she was the slain boy's mother. At that, the colonel announced that a woman who could raise a brave warrior deserved to march in his battalion.

"Such a mother was Mrs. Gammon. Such a son was this Irish lad was Von Gammon," Sanford concluded. "Surely the life and example of this mother and son will inspire thousands to fall into line and march to the strength and glory of our higher institutions of learning and of the nation."[143]

After the ceremony, the university elevens lined up for a game of football. It appeared that the spirit of Von Gammon – one that encompassed masculinity, honor, devotion to state and university – was present at the matchup between two old foes. And so too "was the spirit of his broadminded, faithful, and Spartan mother," the woman who saved the fate of New South masculinity.[144] While Von Gammon paid the ultimate sacrifice in fighting for the honor of Georgia, his mother's devotion to memorializing her son under a haze of Lost Cause mentality ultimately saved the place of gridirons in the state.

[143] Speeches by Sanford, box 12, folder 15: "Athletics." Steadman V. Sanford Papers, UA97-097, University Archives, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.
[144] Oliver S. Morton, Jr., "HISTORY OF THE MEMORIAL TABLET," the *Athens Banner-Herald*, 6 November 1921, 4.

CHAPTER 3

DIVIDING THE LAST MINT JULEP: GENTLEMEN, RIVALS, AND DEFINING MASCULINITY

"Rube Tate, Tom Beasley and (Elliott) Braxton, three of the noblest of Georgia's sons, had made the supreme sacrifice. They had answered the referee's whistle and gone over the top, not wearing the coveted 'G,' but for better in those perilous times, wearing the olive drab of service."

– W. A. Cunningham
World War I Army veteran
Georgia football coach, 1910 to 1919.[145]

He was a hero on the ground, and in the air, bestowing glory on the Georgia School of Technology in both instances. As for the former: Tommy Spence, the All-Southern rough-and-tumble fullback, was an unprecedented force on a football line. When he joined the Tech eleven in 1914, Spence simply could not be contained. No man could better crash through a gang of blockers and break free for the endzone, leaving the enemy team sputtering in his wake. He was the reason the Golden Tornado, as sportswriters dubbed the successful Tech team in those days, went undefeated in the 1916 campaign. That included a major victory against Tech's most-hated rival, the University of Georgia, where Spence led his Yellow Jackets to a 21 to 0 win in Athens. "Spence's work against Georgia was nothing short of marvelous," summarized the *Atlanta Constitution*. "His courage was unfaltering, his spirit tremendous and the drive to his attack beyond description. It was a great day for Tech and an even greater day for Tommy Spence."[146]

[145] W. A. Cunningham, "Review of the Football Season of 1919," the University of Georgia *Pandora* yearbook, 1920. Tate, Beasley, and Braxton were members of the disbanded 1916 team who died in war service.
[146] "Tommy Spence to Captain Jackets," *Atlanta Constitution,* 20 November 1916, 8.

Spence's performance that year was so convincing that Coach John Heisman named him captain of the 1917 Golden Tornado.

But Spence would never fulfill that honorable role; and hence he gained a legacy of heroics in the air. Just as the Tech eleven garnered national attention, the Great War pulled the United States into its trenches, siphoning from colleges the strongest, pluckiest football men. Despite Tech's decision to maintain a team in 1917 (where men still trained militarily on campus, awaiting the conscription call should Uncle Sam ever come calling), Spence volunteered directly in a tribute to his country. He was one of many young men from the state of Georgia sent "over there" to France, and he succeeded as a member of the Air Corps. About two weeks after the armistice in 1918, Spence boarded his aircraft in route to Saint-Florent, to visit a Tech classmate. But the aeroplane experienced some sort of malfunction, and endeavoring to land safely, Spence instead crashed and died on the spot. During the Second World War, a Georgia air base adopted the slain fullback's name, and the *Constitution* noted "the Army is honoring a gallant Georgia boy, great on the gridiron and greater in the services of his country. It's just another example of that fact that football teaches what we so badly need in times like these."[147] Indeed, Spence's heroics were fluid on the ground and in the air because of the lessons the game of pigskin drilled into him. To early twentieth century rooters, who watched their favorite players walk seamlessly from gridiron to battlefield and back again, football produced gentlemen-warriors, brave and resilient – just what the nation, and the state of Georgia, expected from its best men in times of unrest.

The following analysis delves into the debate white male football players imposed on themselves regarding New South masculinity – its boundaries, how to balance antebellum

[147] Johnny Bradberry, "Air Base at Moultrie is Named For Star Tech Fullback of 1916," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 January 1942, 8B.

characteristics and contemporary sport, when to behave as a gentleman and when to perform as a warrior. Though southern elevens grew comfortable with the pageantry of women and their loyalty in the grandstands, the players themselves struggled to express their manhood in a manner that respected the Old, but embraced the New.

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About 70 miles east of Tech lies the University of Georgia, the second half to the athletic rivalry called "Clean, Old-Fashioned Hate." Since the pair of institutions first met on the gridiron in 1893, their matches erupted in violence and unruliness among its players and fans alike. Certainly, each game was a competition for not just a football victory, but also the unofficial title of which institution housed the state's most excellent young men. "An intense rivalry between the University (of Georgia) and Georgia Tech along all athletic lines has been a well known condition from the very first games long years ago between the schools," Tech Director of Athletics and modern languages professor John Bascom Crenshaw wrote in 1919. And rivalries in those days were taken seriously, especially intrastate competitions in the South. These games meant more than just a gut rush from victory or the thrill of gambling, Miller argues: "The care and tending of an individual's honor many southerners had long understood; through athletics, some believed, the prestige of an entire institution might similarly need to be protected."[148] Disputes of this nature between Georgia and Tech were hostile and frequent whenever the peach state's men clashed on the field.

The opening 1893 game occurred in Atlanta where Tech grabbed the victory – and also an accusation of cheating because of a giant named Leonard Wood. As Tech drove up the field with ease, angry Georgia fans hurled rocks in frustration, nailing the Tech star and creating a

[148] Miller, "The Manly, the Moral, and the Proficient," 302.

bloody gash on his forehead. An opponent recalled that Wood "'would just reach up his hand, wipe his bleeding brow and then plaster the face of some Georgia player with a handful of blood.'" Indeed, the Tech left guard was respected for his toughness, but Georgia also grew suspicious since he seemed almost *too* tough. After some digging, a reporter uncovered that Wood was in fact a thirty-three year old captain who helped capture Geronimo during the 1885 Apache-United States dispute. He would later command the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War, "with Theodore Roosevelt as his subordinate officer." Despite the "ringer" scandal, slang for professionals who snuck onto college squads, the record books remained unchanged with a Tech victory, which cast a negative tone for the rivalry going forward.[149]

As the institutions continued play into the twentieth century, another ringer scandal emerged in 1907, this time from the state university. About 10 days before the annual Tech matchup, "four strange men with Northern accents suddenly appeared on the Georgia campus."[150] Tech still managed to win the game, and afterward two of the Yankees hopped on a train heading above the Mason-Dixon, while the other two returned to Athens and were "expelled." Yet again, newspaper reporters exposed the scandal, resulting in the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association suspending Georgia and the state university firing its coach.[151]

A dispute over a baseball game also in 1907 temporarily halted intercollegiate play. The Red and Black lost the match after a botched call by an umpire, which Georgia claimed was so obvious that Steadman V. Sanford, the athletic director, asked his Tech counterpart for a rematch. Apparently, the Tech director refused, claiming his baseball nine won the game fairly.

[149] Stegeman, *The Ghosts of Herty Field*, 14-20.
[150] Ibid., 79.
[151] "Georgia Suspension Raised by S. I. A. A." *Red and Black*, 30 November, 1907, 2.

"We have entered into all contests with a keen spirit of friendly rivalry and without bitterness, but under the circumstances we deemed it our duty to call a halt in the interest of pure athletics. There are some sacrifices that gentlemanly sport cannot afford to make," Sanford declared, noting he met with Georgia officials prior to his decision, agreeing lost profits and deposits were worth the decision.[152] The Techs argued that their adversaries lost the game simply because Tech was better, and that Georgia called for a rematch to hide their sore feelings. *The Georgia Tech* magazine recommended Sanford to join a "kindergarten class in the rules of real sportsmanship," while the *Atlanta Georgia and News* sports editor argued that "Georgia's attitude was childish and showed an inability to lose gracefully, which is always pitiable and never so sorry as in college sports."[153] Despite the short break in play, the bitterness on and off the field would continue.

Georgia took back the momentum in the football rivalry in 1910 after hiring a stellar Vanderbilt standout as its new head coach, William Alexander Cunningham. Coach Alec provided a steady presence and, with the support of a couple of knockout half backs, turned the Red and Black into a top southern team. Even with victories against the Yellow Jackets, which Georgia had failed to do since Heisman joined its ranks in 1904, along with a handful of upset wins, Cunningham still demanded the best from his squad. Soon enough, the Georgia rooters followed suit, encouraging their team to work diligently in order to ready the machine for the annual Tech game. The *Athens Banner* penned a patronizing editorial in 1912 when half a dozen players failed to follow the practice schedule. "The Georgia teams have been famous for their endurance and physical training. That touch of Georgia spirit which is famous the country over

[152] Speeches, on Athletics. Box 12, folder 8. Steadman Vincent Sanford papers, MS 1578. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.
[153] Brian S. Brown, "Athletics: Georgia 0; Tech 9 (by default)," *The Georgia Tech*, 1 June, 1907, 6-8.

has always been in evidence and there have been players who were ready to give their last breath for Georgia as did Vongammon in the Virginia game," it noted.[154]

In the South's greatest matchup that season, played in Atlanta between Georgia and Vanderbilt, the Techs gave a few lighthearted "rahs" for their in-state rivals, but made clear that they supported the Tennesseans more. "To those who have brought about and maintained the quasi-friendly relations between Georgia and Tech let honor fall but do not let yourself be deceived by thinking that these ties were strengthened any Saturday by any rooting that Tech lent to Georgia," the *Technique* student newspaper warned.[155] Alas, the Techs cheered for Georgia with the façade of gentlemanliness, while actually hoping for its demise. A few weeks later, Georgia defeated Tech for the third season in a row.

By 1916, Crenshaw claimed the rivalry was at "a breaking point." During the summer, both baseball nines met for a Young Men's Christian Association athletic retreat in North Carolina. The *Yellow Jacket* magazine bragged about Tech's second consecutive championship at the camp, using military language to emphasize its victory. "[W]hen the baseball teams began warfare, Tech stormed Georgia's fort and filled her trenches with dead, as well as those of all other enemies, and stood, on the last day of the conference, 'a Wellington at Waterloo,'" the *Yellow Jacket* recalled.[156] By autumn, Tech and Georgia alumni discussed ways to prevent fan violence at the annual football game, and Tech professors elected to supervise in the grandstands.[157] American studies scholar Allen Guttmann writes that grandstands were breeding grounds for gentlemen to shed their morals in an attempt to degrade their opponent. "College

[154] McWhorter Scrapbook, 1912. "Georgia Took First," *Athens Banner*, date unknown, likely 5 October, 1912. Note that the article incorrectly states Gammon's death in 1901, not 1897.
[155] McWhorter Scrapbook, 1912, *The Technique*, date unknown, likely 19 October, 1912.
[156] H. F. Comer, "Y. M. C. A. Camp at Blue Ridge, N. C.," *Yellow Jacket*, vol. 19, issue 1, October 1916, 18.
[157] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.

sports (in the 1880s to 1950s), especially football, provided a regular and socially sanctioned occasion for displays of manly courage, outbursts of drunken revelry, transgressions of the dean's rules and regulations, and the release of whatever impulses these rules and regulations had, from Monday to Friday, suppressed," he explains.[158] While some football heroes, such as Tommy Spence, apparently were above that debauchery, it was still prevalent at games with its fans and the usual haul of unsportsmanlike players. The violence and disorder that emanated from gridiron games mimicked aspects of another activity New South men were quite familiar with: war.

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Ever since Rutgers and Princeton lined up for the inaugural college football match in 1869, warfare became inseparable from the sport, in language and in practice. In fact, one of the reasons behind that maiden game was to settle a dispute over a Revolutionary War cannon that bounced between the campuses during the nineteenth century. The glorified hunk of artillery would belong to the game's victor, ratcheted up as a noble prize for noble winners.[159] Aside from that more literal example, football and warfare connected because both activities were utterly masculine – they involved formations of men who vied to beat one another to a bloody pulp, using physical dominance to protect the honor of their institution or country. The two activities sometimes resulted in "a blurring between sport and war, so that the killing of men can be sloughed off as tribute to athletic prowess," historian Michael C. C. Adams maintains.[160] For southern men and their communities, football arrived at a crucial moment for masculine culture; it was a vehicle to bolster the bruised egos of the men who lost to the North during the Civil

[158] Allen Guttmann, *Sports Spectators* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 157.
[159] Stagg, *Touchdown!*, 31.
[160] Michael C. C. Adams, *The Great Adventure: Male Desire and the Coming of World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 43.

War. Pigskin first invaded the South in the late 1880s, where players' fathers and grandfathers still regaled their Johnny Reb glory days in a haze of Lost Cause nostalgia. In those early football games, violence and honor were as vital for the elevens as they were for their ancestors, and accordingly, the sports pages read like war blotter.

By 1898, the United States eagerly engaged in imperialism, throwing its young men into the Spanish-American War and churning out a new hoard of veterans to join college squads at the start of the twentieth century. The war was necessary to shape American men for leadership roles, historian Kristin L. Hoganson writes, since the new generation of young males seemed to care less about traditional honor and more about modern industry. "(Jingoes) believed that war would benefit the state by reinvigorating the nation's male citizens," Hoganson explains, citing Theodore Roosevelt as the early 1900s masculinity champion. "Roosevelt praised military heroes as model citizens, every one of them equal to the greatest civilian statement."[161] Roosevelt was a boxer, a huge football proponent (he had a son on the 1905 Harvard freshman squad), and he shared with other *manly men* "their interest in a strenuous and rugged approach to life, in sport and athletics, and in a disciplined code of behavior which they thought would save the country from degeneration," states historian Donald J. Mrozek.[162] These necessary masculine traits were versatile enough to be utilized in any format a spry young man may find himself a part of during the early twentieth century, from athletics, to academics, to warfare, to peacetime civilian leadership, Mrozek adds.[163] And thus war and football shaped New South men into their ideal form: strong in body and mind; plucky on any field of battle against an

[161] Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 39. Both Georgia and Tech teams played the 1898 season, given that it started in October, and the Spanish-American War had concluded by August.
[162] Donald J. Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 40-1.
[163] Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality*, 61.

opponent; loyal to one's kin; violent as a means to prove loyalty; yet also upstanding, disciplined, fair, and decorous. Though he knew how to throw a pretty good right hook, a southern soldier or athlete or rooter was expected to also offer his right hand as a gentleman.

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Before the start of the 1917 season, Georgia needed to make a decision when the United States entered the world war. For the state university, abandoning the gridiron for the drill line was a logical decision. The Varsity could not compete. "And so the edict has gone forth – There will be no Georgia football team this year – no brave bunch of Red and Black warriors fighting their hearts out on the gridiron for their alma mater," the Georgia student newspaper declared that October. Although military activities took over the reins for both entertainment and a way to exercise physical manhood, the college campus simply felt peculiar without the clashing of men each Saturday on Sanford Field. The strongest cause of this "heartbreak" stemmed from the discontinuation of Georgia's favorite athletic rivalry: "No matter what events are scheduled at either school, they pale into insignificance in comparison with the Tech-Georgia games. Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Brown might be on the schedule, but the Georgia-Tech game is always the one game of the year," the *Red and Black* explained.[164] The Georgia boys felt strongly about their duty to the nation, which meant shipping off to France to battle with foreign men of strange tongue. And though they were content to fight and maim and kill those men, it just did not equate to their joy of watching a ruddy gridiron battle against their ultimate opponents, those who walked the grounds at the Georgia School of Technology.

American studies scholar Simon J. Bronner offers an interesting argument regarding the infatuation of football rivalries between neighbor universities. Aside from the physicality of

[164] "No Varsity Eleven for Georgia This Year: They Will Be Devoted to Extensive Military Training," *Red and Black*, 11 October, 1917, 1.

play, the structure and spatial features of the game embodied virtues akin to masculine United States traditions, such as frontier conquering and territory exchange. Football stood alone in this regard, compared to other popular sports of the early twentieth century. For baseball, offensive players controlled the batter's box and the bags, and defensive players claimed the rest of the field (but the teams switched positions every half inning, allowing an equivalent number of outs to play offense and defense). Basketball was more equal in literal terms of territory, with each team possessing a half court and its basket. In this regard, baseball and basketball teams never surrendered "their" part of the field.

But football was different – its elevens could capture or lose territory in a dash, and they did so frequently because the sport was less egalitarian in terms of offensive-defensive balance. During play, football squads attempted to gain 10 yards in four tries; conquering new territory not only aided offenses by allowing them more time of possession, it also bolstered masculine mentality through the historic action of snatching opponents' territory. "The context that makes sense to Americans is the property grab, so that owning land by eliminating its previous occupants is the sign of dominance," Bronner explains.[165] Although Ivy League and Midwest universities claimed their fair share of neighbor rivalries, this desire for land-grabbing applies more strongly to men below the Mason-Dixon. Presumably, it was their male ancestors who conquered the untamable Old South, breaking ground for plantations that exploited African Americans and chased out Native Americans to carve their own worlds at the expense of more inferior men. Certainly, the son of a New Englander could not appreciate the gridiron's connection to territorial possession as much as a decedent of Dixie could.

[165] Simon J. Bronner, *Campus Traditions: Folklore from the Old-Time College to the Modern Mega-University* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2012) 225-9.

Thus with the dearth of football in 1917, Georgia students found a suitable, organic alternative to flex this sort of masculinity by joining the war effort. The school in itself made that decision enticing, if not obligatory. Georgia implemented mandatory drill and gymnasium training. Students joined the Officers Reserve Corps and the Quartermasters Training Corps. Four hundred men trained at Atlanta's Fort McPherson, the most from any college in the South. Along with Sewanee, the federal government recognized Georgia as a "distinguished class in military training." "If one has not yet been called into the service of his country there is no place in the South where he may secure better training so that he will be prepared when called than right here," the *Red and Black* opined.[166] No other state in the Union operated more training camps than Georgia, and more than 100,000 citizens contributed to the war effort.[167]

Georgia's student body proved its dedication to the wartime cause through these programs, yet it was the symbol of the 1916 football eleven's volunteerism that verified the state university's manliness. On the gridiron, southern football players were loyal soldiers who labored and bled for their institutions' honor; the Georgia squad used its role as campus heroes to reinforce how desperately the United States needed its best men during a crisis. "The University of Georgia can feel justly proud of the patriotism of its 1916 football team," the *Constitution* reported.[168] While a few men had trouble joining branches right away, the student newspaper seemed quite pleased with Georgia's athletic warriors: "Our football team is on the firing line! Surely the college that returned a majority of their varsity players this year deserves no more credit than the college that sent almost its whole team to the firing line!"[169] While that comment

[166] "'Georgia' and the War," *Red and Black*, 11 October 1917, 4.
[167] Todd Womack, "World War I in Georgia." New Georgia Encyclopedia, 4 August, 2016. Web.
[168] "Every Member of Georgia's 1916 Eleven Now in Service," *Atlanta Constitution*, 17 December 1917, 10. The article notes that ten Tech football men had volunteered for service, even though the team was in action in 1917.
[169] "Georgia's Football Team is on the Firing Line: Fifteen Members of Last Year's Team Have Joined the Colors," *Red and Black*, 18 October, 1917, 1. Of the six who did not join the war effort, four did not meet physical standards

did not directly prosecute Tech, its message is explicit: Georgia perceived its men in jingoist fashion because of their game-playing sacrifice, men who honorably chose a firing line instead of the familiar line consisting of two tackles, two guards, and a center.

Perhaps Georgia's patriot spirt was augmented by the man who supervised the football squad (and supported its disbandment): Steadman V. Sanford. A Spanish-American War veteran, English professor, and eventual university president, his most influential role at Georgia was arguably that of athletic director. The *Constitution* explained that Sanford advocated for the football eleven's disbandment in 1917. "He also stated that he did not see how any college could turn out a winning team and look the public in the face at times such as this, and that Georgia, rather than tempt men to neglect their duty to country, had decided to abandon varsity football," it continued.[170] With such an opinion from their fearless athletic leader, it only made sense why Georgia rooters believed their destiny lay in France. The state's finest athletes recognized that their manly abilities would best be used in the game of war versus the game of pigskin.

Yet the Techs approached the issue of collegiate play during the worldwide crisis quite differently. In fact, some argued that football was a viable training technique to prepare men for "over there." Working as a war correspondent in Paris, *Detroit News* sportswriter E. A. Batchelor conveyed the troops' interest in the sport. "Football is a game that exactly suits the fighting man. He wants his sports with the bark on," Batchelor stated.[171] An Auburn man took this to heart, direly. While deployed in France, former quarterback Kirke Newell sacrificed his body when teaching new recruits the art of grenade-chucking and one went astray in the trenches. "Newell fell on the exploded grenade just as he used to smother a fumbled football,"

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or age requirements (but tried other channels to get involved in the war), one owned a local business, and one could not be tracked down by the *Red and Black*.

[170] "University Abandons Football This Year on Account of War," *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 September 1917, 10.

[171] E. A. Batchelor, "France Will See Plenty of Football" (wire story), *Athens Weekly Banner*, 27 October, 1918, 10.

wrote his comrade Quimby Melton. "When I tell you that they took thirty-six pieces of scrap iron out of Newell then you will understand just what a brave chap this Alabama boy was." Two men died from the explosion, but many more were saved. Upon recovering at Fort McPherson, he coached at Auburn after the war.[172] Newell was just one testament of football's versatile lessons of bettering boys physically – and, importantly, mentally – into becoming men.

Back on the homefront, the Atlanta newspaper called pigskin "the most warlike of sports," and claimed that "the government encourages the playing of football as it not only hardens the players, gives them splendid training for the service, but it awakens the fighting instinct and teaches the men never to quit under fire."[173] Jim Senter, star Tech football end and baseball pitcher, took on this fearlessness, reportedly using his air training in Chattanooga to learn to tail-spin, spiral, loop-the-loop, and whipstall, which "seem to possess no terrors for him."[174] Even Sanford agreed, adding in a prepared speech for a basketball game with Tech that if "anything has been clearly shown by the world war, it is that play and games, competitive games, bodily contact games, are immensely important in the making of an efficient man, whether he is going to be a soldier or whether he is going into the private life."[175]

Sanford's counterpart at Tech felt no guilt about a Yellow Jacket eleven during the war. Crenshaw noted in his annual report for the 1918-1919 season that the atmosphere in Atlanta had been unusual, given the overseas fighting and the Student Army Training Corps' presence and the authorities' seizure of campus, converting it to a military base. A 1917 board of trustees resolution offered the school's campus to the government, hoping its base could help protect the

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[172] Dick Jemison, "Kirke Newell Throws Self on Exploding Hand Grenade," *Atlanta Constitution*, 23 October, 1918, 14.
[173] "Every Member of Georgia's 1916 Eleven Now in Service," *Atlanta Constitution*, 17 December, 1917, 10.
[174] "Big Jim Senter on Way to France. Tech Star Passes Through Chattanooga – Friends Predict He'll Make an 'Ace' in the Air," *Atlanta Constitution*, 17 May, 1918, 13.
[175] Speeches, on Athletics. Box 12, folder 5. Steadman Vincent Sanford papers, MS 1578. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.

"welfare and honor of the American Nation." Drawing on Lost Cause sentiment, the board's secretary noted that "Especially, we believe, citizens of the Southern states should feed this call to duty, inspired as we are by the noble acts of utter self-sacrificing devotion displayed by the members of the Commonwealth of the South, both men and women, during the dark days of the Civil War."[176] Despite these notable changes, the Golden Tornado rolled on, with the exception of several of its 1916 players, including Tommy Spence, who volunteered for service. Tech even played a game against the University of Pittsburgh in 1918, donating all proceeds to the United War Work Campaign. After the armistice, "college athletics reverted to pre-war conditions, stimulated, however, immensely by the stress the government had placed on physical health and strength as the main factors in producing a good fighting machine," Crenshaw determined. If anything, the war effort benefited the football men, and the football men benefitted the war effort.[177]

Despite the rivals' history of hostility, Georgia and Tech students insisted they were the state's most courteous gentlemen, even if they sometimes gave into vices at athletic outings. In fact, rooters were expected to behave as gentlemen, given that (most of the time) the athletes themselves adhered to sportsmanship and fairness of play. Although some fans took joy in humiliating the opposing team, Guttmann writes, that "if the nineteenth-century sports crowd did not always behave as it was supposed to, at least it knew how it was supposed to behave."[178] As the twentieth century approached, college students began to prioritize "athletic competence" and social activities over academics, which included frequent bouts of drunkenness and rowdiness –

[176] Minutes of the Board of Trustees meetings, 4 October, 1916 to 5 January, 1920, volume 2 (UA215), Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.
[177] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology; "Tech-Pittsburg Game is Assured. All Arrangements Perfected – Game to Be Played in Pittsburg on November 23. For War Charities Fund," *Atlanta Constitution*, 31 October, 1918, 10.
[178] Guttmann, *Sports Spectators*, 88-9.

behavior that seemed to plague Athens and Atlanta whenever the rivals met for a game. "In some sense, they used their status as self-proclaimed gentlemen to justify their less savory antics. The public image of the gentleman was used as a shield to protect their other behaviors," states historian Nicholas L. Syrett.[179] That same shield was applied after the war, following a series of events between the two institutions that were quite ungentlemanly indeed. Some student-soldiers lay slain in France, but many returned to the state to pick up where they left off. That included the disorderly antics of the rivalry. It started with a baseball game, and a parade float, and mockery of manhood. It ended with severed athletic relations for six years.

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By May 1919, the multi-sport coach John Heisman no longer called the shots on the Yellow Jacket diamond. But excitement still surrounded Tech baseball. And why not – the war was over, spirits were high, and Tech was due to play its most intimate rival in a four-game series. "It will be a big time for Atlanta when the University of Georgia men hit the city," the *Constitution* reported a day before the first match. "They have been in death grapples with the Tech boys and have always fought to the end."[180] Crenshaw and Sanford were on friendly terms and looking forward to the battle, as both teams had promising records in the S. I. A. A. conference that year. The *Red and Black* called for the state university men to rally behind the baseball nine and travel to Atlanta for "the chance to beat our rivals who crowed over us with their Golden Tornado during the time of war." Yet it also reminded those men to behave, since "wherever you are…the good name of your Alma Mater is always in your keeping and that

[179] Nicholas L. Syrett, *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 126-7. While the main focus of Syrett's work is on college fraternity members, athletics held a strong influence in their culture and lives, both as players and fans.
[180] W. C. Munday, Jr. "University of Ga. and Tech Ready for Two Big Games," *Atlanta Constitution*, 8 May, 1919, 16.

anything that you do recklessly or thoughtlessly may detract from her good name. Treat 'em rough as you can – but always be a gentleman."[181]

Yet the Tech athletic director was wary if the rival students could actually adhere to the unspoken gentleman code. The first vestige of disorder erupted after Georgia won the opening game. Students intermingled, scoffed at one another, and snatched caps from freshmen's heads. "I myself with the aid of a policeman stopped this scrap, and got the students off the field," Crenshaw recalled. Then all hell broke loose. Crenshaw and Sanford watched helplessly as a former Georgia student, operating an automobile dressed in red and black, accelerated into the crowd and ran over a Tech. Although badly bruised, the student did not die; and Crenshaw acknowledged that one madman's action was not a reflection on the entire Georgia student body. But if "the Tech student had been killed we would not have been called upon to discuss Intercollegiate athletics any further, because state institutions would be denied the privilege of having intercollegiate athletics," Crenshaw stated. Students continued their brawling into downtown Atlanta, snatching caps and throwing punches in the streets.[182]

During the second game, Crenshaw tried to regain control. After hearing a Georgia cheerleader's scheme to march across the diamond post-game, the athletic directors instead rerouted their fans out separate exits. The again-victorious Georgia squad paraded outside, as opposed to in front of the Tech grandstand, somewhat more civilly. "The cap-snatching scraps, however continued, down town till the train left for Athens," Crenshaw noted.[183]

These hat-stealing scuffles seemed inevitable whenever a group of college boys met for a competition. At the opening of the twentieth century, first-year students at Georgia and Tech

[181] *Red and Black*, 8 May, 1919, 4.
[182] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.
[183] Ibid.

wore caps, which was quite common for men at universities across the country. Bronner analyzes the collegiate ritual behind freshman "beanies," "pots," "dinks," or green ribbons, a practice maintained at institutions large and small, North and South, from the late nineteenth century well beyond the Second World War. The distinctive apparel, accompanied by a handful of derogatory nicknames, made freshmen easy targets for campus bullies, and humiliated the younger students by visually displaying their inferiority in a public setting. "The persecution of the freshmen has origins in the master-servant relationship established between upperclassmen and first year-students, who were perceived as 'novice apprentices' in early American colleges," Bronner explains.[184] As the athletic rivals vied to beat their opponents through organized play on the baseball diamond, Georgia and Tech fans engaged instead in these sorts of unruly grandstand antics. Such was the nature of this rivalry, where games offered opportunities for rooters to prove their university's hegemony outside the field of play – by fistfights and strategic cheers, and by cap-snatching, in acting as "masters" over their rivals' "servants."

Given the frequency and violence of these spats during the series' Atlanta leg, Georgia men admitted that relations were not ideal. However, they also believed Crenshaw did not recognize how childish his own Techs acted. Georgia senior class president A. M. Thornton sarcastically concluded that the Techs had "splendid behavior and gentlemanly conduct." During the final inning of play, Thornton maintained, Tech purposely interfered: fans fired a Gatling gun and the band blared loudly with a Georgia pitcher on the mound, the rooters abandoned the grandstand and stood nearly on the field, and a Tech runner collided with the Georgia first baseman. Even though Tech lost, and even though the athletic directors rerouted the parading, Tech ruined the Georgia celebration. "This was another breach of sportsmanship

[184] Bronner, *Campus Traditions*, 115-7. His chapter titled "Rushes, Pranks, and Dinks: The Rough-and-Tumble Campus" is an excellent source about intra-class antics at universities nationwide.

afterwards admitted by Tech. But Georgia did not whimper. If Georgia were equally as anxious as Tech to construe every occurrence as an insult, then Tech furnished us many opportunities in Atlanta," Thornton argued.[185]

It is not entirely clear if the two student bodies desired a gentleman's agreement to dissipate the squabble; neither Thornton nor Tech senior class president R. S. Griffith claimed responsibility for initiating it. In his annual report, Crenshaw noted he telephoned Sanford after the disaster in Atlanta, admitting to the Georgia director that "if we could not reach some agreement between the students themselves, I would feel obliged to call off the games in Athens simply because I feared a clash might come just as easily from Tech students as from Georgia students should any provocation arise." Apparently, Sanford complied with Crenshaw, and they decided a formal gentleman's agreement was necessary. Each director ordered a pair of his students to visit their rival institution and pledge to an identical contract.[186] The agreement covered three points (narrated by Crenshaw):

> 1. That the games should be played in the true spirit of sportsmen and that Tech students should receive while in Athens the treatment accorded to gentlemen by gentlemen. And above all that nothing should be done to provoke a clash.
> 2. That as capsnatching had been the cause of the fights in Atlanta, this should be eliminated entirely. The representatives from Georgia used these words: "We have some Tech caps in Athens, you have some Georgia caps in Atlanta. We will leave our Tech caps in our rooms and not show even the smallest tip of a Tech cap in our pockets; You Tech men will leave Georgia Caps in Atlanta.(")
> 3. The victors were to be allowed to parade undisturbed.[187]

[185] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 May, 1919, A3.
[186] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology. In his personal papers at Hargrett Library, Sanford does not write about the agreement or the initial disputes in Atlanta. But because Georgia men went to Tech to discuss the agreement (multiple newspaper reports confirm this, on top of Crenshaw's report), it could be assumed that Sanford at least did not object the idea of it.
[187] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.

Students pose in front of a float part of the 1919 Senior Day parade in Athens.
Pandora yearbook, 1920.

All agreed. In Athens, the Tech representatives promised to act "as gentlemen and true sportsmen, and that neither by word, nor act, nor inference would they seek to disparage the colors of their adversary," according to Griffith. Meanwhile, the Georgia men swore to hospitality. The rivals seemed chummy with one another, and in an effort to prove their commitment to sportsmanship, the Tech band played its rival's battle song, "Glory to Old Georgia."[188] By agreeing to the contract, each institution proved it was home to respectable gentlemen; if they did not adhere to it, their honor and southern male qualities would be subject to criticism. Perhaps it is easy to predict that just a few days later, the rivals would wield that contract as a weapon to attack one another's manhood.

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The first ballgame in Athens fell on Georgia's annual Senior Day. As part of the tradition, students decorated floats for a parade that snaked its way throughout downtown and ended on the baseball diamond. A few floats were markedly a tribute to the state university men

[188] "Senior Class President Explains Tech Attitude on Georgia Controversy," *Atlanta Constitution,* 22 May, 1919, 12.

who sacrificed during the Great War, and it was timely given that 1919 was the first year in two seasons Georgia would field a football squad. One float was designed as a tank, flanked with students dressed as soldiers. A banner declared "Georgia in France, 1918," referencing the plight of the disbanded football team who landed overseas.[189] "Georgia is justly proud of the magnificent record of her athletes. Three of our 1916 football team lie buried in France, killed in action," senior class president Thornton explained. "We let these heroes themselves wearing the gold and silver stripes, and above some of those bodies have been raised the wooden crosses, tell in their silent manner the true patriotism of the Georgia team."[190] A fitting accolade indeed for the athletic warriors, but what followed the model tank produced varied reactions.

It was a Tech Old Gold-colored automobile, accompanied by three students wearing Old Gold sweaters, and a mule dressed in Old Gold. Crenshaw recalled that one student was "dressed up in Tech colors as a caricature of the Tech Sponsor, marked sponsor and with the young lady's name visible." According to a program, the students represented Tech football, Tech baseball, and the Tech student body; the mule was a "spirit" animal, given its dressings' color (yellow). The tank float symbolized the state university's men in France, while the Old Gold float was inscribed "Tech in Atlanta, 1918."[191]

The Tech float enraged its students and faculty, including the athletic director. "In other words this float stated…that while Georgia was fighting in the Argonne the whole Tech School was in Atlanta," Crenshaw wrote. As the procession made its way around the diamond, several

[189] Note that Crenshaw described in his documents the banner as reading "Georgia in Argonne, 1918," but a photograph of the float reads "Georgia in France, 1918." Either Crenshaw was mistaken in the wording, or the float contained two separate banners.
[190] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution,* 25 May, 1919, A3.
[191] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology; "Senior Class President Explains Tech Attitude on Georgia Controversy," *Atlanta Constitution,* 22 May, 1919, 12.

Techs exclaimed that this violated the gentleman's agreement. They demanded the Tech float to leave. According to Crenshaw, the Georgia parade leader replied "'Oh. Hell, we got the Georgia spirit, go on,' and they did move around once more before the inscription of Tech in Atlanta was removed by order of Dean Snelling (of Georgia)." The Georgia men continued parading after their baseball nine won the match, and some Techs threatened an Athenian business owner when they saw in his window a bulldog standing upon a Tech cap.[192]

How could Tech continue relations with men who violated not just the contract, but failed to uphold their own southern manhood by stooping so low morally? "This repetition of the same old insult and lack of courtesy after the gentleman's agreement makes the sceduling (sic) of contests between the two schools impossible because any future meeting would proably (sic) need a policeman to every player," Crenshaw argued.[193] Based on the past tension and the prospect that it could only become worse, the athletic director did not see any alternative going forward. He informed Sanford that the Georgia School of Technology would no longer compete athletically with the University of Georgia. "…no well-wisher of either school hesitates to express the belief that games should be discontinued entirely," Crenshaw concluded. "The feeling is nothing new; it comes to the surface on the slightest provocation and seems to be a deepseated symton (sic) that cannot be treated lightly. We have decided to use the surgeon's knife as a last resort."[194] And in the manner of a surgeon, the incision was made, and blood spilled over the top.

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[192] Ibid.
[193] "Football, 1919." Box 3, folder 2. Series 4, Subseries 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.
[194] Director Report, 1919. Box 1, folder 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.

As intricate as this rivalry and the events leading up to parade are, the breaking point exploded over the issue of the gentleman's agreement. Beyond the trio of (really, rather simplistic) rules laid out in the contract, the cessation can be seen as a reflection of Georgia and Tech students' intolerance of one another's unmanly, ungentlemanly, and unsportsmanlike behavior. No matter if they spectated in the grandstand or tussled on the gridiron, each man respected the role of southern gentlemen, which required morals and decorum, on and off the field, during battle against a foe. For this 1919 episode, three points of contention materialized in which Georgia and Tech men viewed their opponents as failures of masculine conduct: first, the issue of nationalistic patriotism and honor to the Deep South, in which each side defended or attacked the notion of sustaining a football team during a global war; secondly, the parade's inclusion of women and the theme of femininity, where the former was used to insult the female sponsor and thus by extension the male students' honor, and the latter was used to insult the opponents' masculinity; and finally, the expectation of acting as respectable hosts, a more "civilized" sector of the gentleman code, but still taken very seriously by men below the Mason-Dixon in the early twentieth century. While each school strived to outdo one another athletically, the students' ultimate goal reflected their desire to appear better than their opponents as males. The irony lies in the fact that as each side claimed to be "gentlemanly," their violent, cheating, and immoral behavior, intended to mar their opponents' image, proved they were ungentlemanly themselves.

More than anything, the Techs argued the parade was designed to cast a negative perception about Tech's patriotism, and hence question its students' manliness in choosing to play games over fighting in the bloodiest war to date. "We are compelled to criticize such an unfair, false, and cruel insinuation made against the patriotism of fellow Americans, fellow

southerners and fellow Georgians," *Atlanta Journal* sportswriter Morgan Blake opined, reminding readers that members of the Golden Tornado, such as Tommy Spence, indeed joined the war effort.[195] Senior class president Griffith agreed, asking "what more calumnious an aspersion could be cast than to question the patriotism of Georgia Tech; the inference was as false as it was cruel, and entirely unworthy of fellow Americans."[196]

To Blake and Griffith, the insult was about more than Spence's death: it was an attack from fellow countrymen, and, significantly, fellow white Deep South males. How could Georgia, in which Crenshaw along with Tech deemed "the two greatest institutions in Georgia and also in the whole South," question its brothers' masculinity in such a vicious manner? [197] The Georgia students were also quite conscious of the importance its male citizens placed on the state, and went so far as to personally attack Tech class president Griffith on the fact that he hailed from Kentucky; he was a "stranger," one who insulted the Georgia men who represented the "best state in the Union." "The people of this state will justly resent the statement that the boys in this institution are not gentlemen…This direct insult to the mothers and fathers of these boys can never be explained," Georgia senior class president Thornton retorted to Griffith's claims.[198] Clearly, men from both Georgia and Tech took great pride in carrying their state's name on their back, be it on a football uniform or stitched on the drab.

It is important here to consider time period and geographical location, since this incident occurred during the violent social milieu of the Jim Crow Deep South. In Georgia and other

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[195] Football, 1892-1968. Box 3, folder 7, series 4, subseries 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.
[196] "Senior Class President Explains Tech Attitude on Georgia Controversy," *Atlanta Constitution,* 22 May, 1919, 12.
[197] Football, 1892-1968. Box 3, folder 7, series 4, subseries 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.
[198] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution,* 25 May, 1919, A3.

southern states, white males struggled to retain the caste system that placed them on top, and any threat to that united front could jeopardize their position. Historian Kris DuRocher describes lynching, for example, as a ritualized, public act that sent "a message to the black community as well as white women and children to obey boundaries set up by white males."[199] While lynching was a communal activity for white men to confirm their dominance, the "Tech in Atlanta" insult jabbed at Tech in questioning if its men were part of that superior community. Georgia saw its football players as patriots because they showed off their male abilities and duties by jumping into the war – honor to country, pluckiness for volunteering, and physical mastery in battling opponents with real weapons. In fact, honor, pluckiness, and physical mastery were necessary for *all* white men to embody, during war or peace, in order to continue that Old South social structure into the New. By choosing football over warfare, Tech did not live up to these duties, threatening the white male community in the state and the racial and gender dominance these men enjoyed throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Indeed, the state university men questioned their opponents' commitment to those specific white male abilities and duties, and readily admitted it. It is true that football was a laudable outlet for New South males to express masculinity through violence and physical hegemony – and the less barbaric alternative to lynching blacks or eye-gouging whites. Perhaps the only other activity that could top the honor men received from football was legitimate warfare, where injury or death occurred frequently, and where a referee to sanction over fouls and time of play was unavailable. So, to the Georgia students, Tech failed as men by channeling

[199] Kris DuRocher, "Violent Masculinity: Learning Ritual and Performance in Southern Lynchings" in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South since Reconstruction*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009) 46.

its efforts into football instead of disbanding and joining the chaos in France. Stated Thornton about the wartime Tech team:

> Day by day we have been taunted by Tech students and supporters because we did not play football in 1917. They said that we showed the "yellow streak" by not having our team to play them. While the world war raged and the "Golden Tornado" ran wild over its opponents in Atlanta, Georgia was held up to ridicule because its athletic authorities refused to permit football to be played.[200]

When Georgia men used the parade to emphasize *why* they refused to play Tech during the war, they construed the Techs' offense as sensitive, gentle, cowardly – feminine, even.

In fact, the parade brought forth a number of gendered anxieties and insults. One aspect of male honor that survived the Old South into the New was the duty to protect and defend kin, especially women. And in the first quarter of the twentieth century, when the region was soaked in a Lost Cause mentality and fondly remembering the antebellum days, football maintained those traditional gender roles, historian Doyle explains. Thus was the character of the female athletic sponsor, who acted as a beautiful rooter, a physical representation of pride, and ultimately motivation for the gentleman-warriors to bring home a victory: "This chivalric vision of young aristocrats vying on the field of honor for the affection of young ladies linked the relatively new tradition of southern football with the hallowed and timeless values of the antebellum planter aristocracy and the cavalier tradition they supposedly embodied."[201]

Though obviously lower on the social ladder than white men, white women were active participants in community affairs and rituals throughout the New South, as historians have noted. Juxtaposing light-hearted social events such as football or baseball games, women also attended brutal lynchings. DuRocher explains that men relied on a female audience to justify their actions

[200] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 May, 1919, A3.
[201] Doyle, "Turning the Tide," 111.

– the protection of white womanhood against black rape and barbarism – and also to "approve their exhibition of masculinity."[202] So too were women used to boost men's egos at Confederate memorial ceremonies, where veterans selected beautiful, young women of well-known families to parade before the celebration, and displayed "on pedestals as representative women and treated almost as lovely little (barely-) talking dolls, the sponsors reinforced traditional images of womanhood," historian Foster explains.[203] Thus a public circus of female dependence on and appreciation of Dixie men continued through Lost Cause culture, as southern males shaped events to resembled affairs of the Old South, including football games.

With this in mind, the Techs looked at Georgia with contempt for disrupting the natural order: not only had Georgia made the Tech "aristocrats" look foolish and unmanly with the parade's message, the Athenians also intercepted the young lady as their own, dishonoring the entire kinship line in the process. Thornton flaunted that fact, explaining that a Georgia man claimed the sponsor as his guest, and that *she* caused the entire stunt by daring a parade member to include her name. Obviously, the Techs brushed off this explanation as nonsense, angered that Georgia crossed the unspoken boundary of bringing a woman into a man's fight; a woman, at that, who was a respected member of the Tech clan. "A grown man and a gentleman does not ask permission nor does he allow his lady friends to be held up before the public to laughter and ridicule," Crenshaw insisted, while *Journal* columnist Blake opined that the act "was of course not worthy of any college man."[204] Thornton and his Georgia classmates scoffed back: "What a pity Tech could not be manly enough to take their four straight defeats in the same courageous

[202] DuRocher, "Violent Masculinity," 54-5.
[203] Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, 137.
[204] Football, 1892-1968. Box 3, folder 7, series 4, subseries 1. Georgia Tech Athletic Association records, UA300. Archives, Library and Information Center, Georgia Institute of Technology.

manner, without attempting to hide behind the skirts of one of their loyal sponsors in their efforts…to put Georgia in the wrong."[205]

That insult exemplifies another gendered problem that came forth, in that Georgia regarded their rivals as feminine. It was all right for the Techs to defend their sponsor, but to "be soft like a woman was to play the coward," and to "be masculine was to be unemotional, in control of one's passions," historian Adams writes.[206] Hence the Georgia men regarded Tech's sensitivity to the parade, and the bigger action of discontinuing the rivalry, as more womanly than manly. A genuine southern gentleman would laugh off the jokes and respond by beating his opponent bloody – which Tech failed to do over and over again on the ball field, Georgia cheekily noted. This suggestion of feminine behavior from the Techs was a staggering insult to their masculine honor.

Certainly, in the Progressive Era where males feared females' more outspoken cries for equality, men did all they could to minimize feminization attempts in their traditionally-deemed "male" spheres, including colleges and football fields, historian Watterson writes. Some efforts included completely banning women from games and practices, or having segregated seating in the grandstands, as "Student leaders believed that male cheering sections served a vital 'twelfth man' role and argued that women could only detract from concentrated cheering."[207] Surely these fears were more prominent in Georgia and throughout the region, where traditional gender roles carried on more prominently in the Old South into the New than those in the North. To conquer the threat of the more-powerful female, men needed to emphasize women's subordinate

[205] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution,* 25 May, 1919, A3.
[206] Adams, *The Great Adventure*, 24-5.
[207] Watterson, *College Football*, 100. Watterson's examples focus on eastern and Old West institutions; there is still much work that needs to be done for the topic of football in the South before the 1920s.

role in society. The metaphors and suggestions of Tech's effeminate behavior in the manly world of contact sports only infuriated the Techs further.

Aside from the disputes over anti-patriotism and southern masculinity failures, and the use of gender roles as insults, the Techs also took issue with the state university's hospitality. As historian Wyatt-Brown explains, hospitality played an integral role in southern society because it "was meant to be a ritualized truce in the rivalries of men, but instead it was sometimes prelude to violence."[208] Apparently, the Georgia men exploited that prelude, according to Tech class president Griffith. "Georgia forgot her obligation as hosts and gentlemen in her slanderous assault on the patriotism, chivalry and spirit of her guest," he argued.[209] Griffith blamed the parade for creating a hostile, and assuredly unsportsmanlike, atmosphere. If the Georgia men chose to, for example, engage in a literal slugfest with the Techs, it would be seen as tolerable – such disputes harken back to the Old South days of duels and fist fights with seconds, urging some sense of fairness and "structure and ritual," as Wyatt-Brown comments.[210] But with the surprise of the parade, and by dragging the female sponsor into the matter, Georgia violated its role as hospitable gentlemen, smothering any attempt of a "truce." Tech would simply not sit back and let the insults slide by.

Yet Thornton, Georgia's fiery senior class president, had another defense for this: that the Techs originally failed in hospitality by allowing Atlanta to disintegrate into violence. Accordingly, the Georgia men strived to create an opposite atmosphere in Athens and "entertain

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[208] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 131. Wyatt-Brown's work focuses on the antebellum South, but he argues that "host-guest antagonisms long preceded the era of dynamic growth and continued long afterward." Indeed, the traditional masculine traits trademarked by the Old South, such as honor, violence, and gentlemanliness, simply did not disappear after the Civil War; men of the New South embraced them as well, as I argue in this essay.
[209] May 22, 1919 p. 12 "Senior Class President Explains Tech Attitude on Georgia Controversy: R. S. Griffith Replies to Constitution Editorial, Giving Views on Athens Parade and Reasons for Wishing Break with University."
[210] Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 144.

the Tech supporters in royal style." Though, Wyatt-Brown continues, hospitality among colleagues "was often exploited by one or the other party as a means of exercising personal power."[211] Thus the Georgia men used their inclusive cocktail parties as another method of dominance over their colleagues – as hosts, as athletes, as men. When the Techs arrived, the state university offered them free dining, Athenians took in boarders, and Georgia fraternity members invited them to a welcome ball. "We divided our last mint julep with our adversaries," Thornton recalled. "The Georgia team, of course, was not guilty of the slightest breach of sportsmanship. What more could we do?"[212] By opening the doors to their private spheres, Georgia men displayed ultimate respect toward their athletic rivals, and also asserted their power in appearing to let bygones be bygones. Again and again, Thornton maintained that the parade was simply a joke, and the Techs were just too yellow, effeminate, and ungentlemanly to accept that.

Cover of the 1925 *Yellow Jacket* football issue.
The Yellow Jacket, vol. 5, issue 3, December, 1925.

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Shortly after Crenshaw's announcement, the local media reacted to the break in the state's most beloved athletic rivalry. The *Constitution* asserted that the parade was nothing malicious, and that "Every one is of the opinion that Tech took the wrong meaning of the float, as the students of

[211] Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence*, 125.
[212] "Georgia Replies to Tech. University Seniors Answer Atlantans with Strong Letter," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 May, 1919, A3.

Georgia never for one minute questioned the patriotic spirit of their opponents from Atlanta."[213] A week later, Colonel William E. Simmons, a Confederate captain and trustee of both institutions, submitted an editorial to *The Lawrenceville News*. "We do not believe that either (Georgia) Chancellor Barrow, or Professor Sanford…would have knowingly permitted any visiting team to be so grossly insulted upon its athletic field, or that a senior class would be guilty of such outrageous impropriety and discourtesy and especially in view of the very friendly relations that have existed between the two schools for the last few years." Simmons stated that he wanted to be objective, but he believed Tech needed to discuss the matter with the Georgia administration before cutting ties in a hasty manner.[214] The *Constitution* opined that same day that both teams had guilty moments throughout the rivalry's history, yet relations should be restored to preserve the men's pride: "For two teams to wrangle and declare they will not play in one another's back yard any more, like a couple of children over a game of marbles, is not only undignified, but silly!"[215]

Yet the institutions had limited athletic contact over the next six years. By chance, they met a few times on the basketball court for the S. I. A. A. conference playoff rounds, and Georgia occasionally requested to use Tech's gridiron for widely publicized football games, such as the November 1921 matchup with Dartmouth. "(Georgia), regretting past differences trusts that this game will serve to obliterate all ill feeling and mark the beginning of a great cooperative effort on the part of the alumni and friends of Georgia Tech and Georgia toward the upbuilding of these two great state institutions," Sanford wrote to Tech president Kenneth Matheson. The

[213] "Tech Misunderstood Georgia Parade Idea, Is Athens Statement," *Atlanta Constitution*, 20 May, 1919, 13.
[214] "University and Tech," *Atlanta Constitution* (wire story by The Lawrenceville News-Herald), 27 May, 1919, 8.
[215] "The Georgia-Tech Row, *Atlanta Constitution*, 27 May, 1919, 8.

Tech athletic association secretary replied back, also admitting hope for "an enduring friendship founded upon mutual interests, respect and reciprocal consideration."[216]

By late 1924, Georgia and Tech had mended the gap, and announced the reestablishment of the annual rivalry game starting in the 1925 season. *Constitution* editor Clark Howell, who was also a trustee member for both institutions, offered a prize of a trophy and $500 for the eleven who won two of the three next matches. Howell wished the sentiment would encourage fair fights on the gridiron and the grandstands, avoiding problems such as the 1919 parade and each athletic scandal preceding it. "Representatives of both institutions should do their utmost to make each game a contest between friends and brothers, clean cut and hard fought, but always on the high plane of gentlemanly sportsmanship. If this spirit characterizes these games it will be of incalculable benefit to both institutions," he affirmed.[217]

Tech won the first game of the renewed rivalry in 1925 by the narrow score of 3 to 0. In the school's monthly satire magazine, *Yellow Jacket* editors penned a serious editorial welcoming back both institutions' fans, "the beauty and chivalry of the South," to spectate the state's most beloved rivalry. Though the Techs were eager to participate in intercollegiate play again, they warned that competition could spark feelings of resentment, as was the custom before the Great War:

> Irritating elements will be present, doubtless. Unfortunately, like the poor, they are always with us. The jingoes, the professional Tech haters, the professional Georgia haters, the tin-horn gamblers, the roughnecks with corn liquor courage, hurling insults at both sides, the old grad, slightly bibulous, crying for the old days when men were men, all will be singing their song of hate and attempting to rekindle old fires.[218]

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[216] Gammon Scrapbook, Minutes of Athletic Association. Box 30. Steadman Vincent Sanford papers, MS 1578. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.
[217] Correspondence, December 1924. Box 3, folder 12. Steadman Vincent Sanford papers, MS 1578. Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, The University of Georgia Libraries.
[218] "Welcome Georgia," *The Yellow Jacket*, vol. 5, issue 3, December, 1925, 15.

The editors had a point – those days of archaic, undesirable characteristics were not limited to just the nineteenth century, but evident in the scuffles from 1900 onward, where Old South culture and its violence continued to seep into the New. Yet the *Yellow Jacket* writers were also optimistic, noting that if torches were barred at rivalry games, so too would be signs of truce, where Georgia and Tech students could commiserate over their common gentlemanly ideals that amalgamated with athletics and warfare and southern masculinity in all of their New South spheres. The editorial continued:

> But in the great majority will be the students, blood brothers some of them, fraternity brothers many of them, Georgians all. We have been your guests in Athens and you have been our guests in Atlanta to our mutual pleasure. We have shared sweethearts with you and even ridden in the patrol wagon together. Binding friendships have been formed that can never be broken. A new relationship has been built on the ashes of the old.[219]

And so the adversaries were connected socially by their love of womanizing and hijinks and throwing grand parties, and sacredly by kin and loyalty to the state of Georgia and the joy of manly athletic victories. The rivalry at times brought out the worst in its students, which was followed by a publicized display of gentlemanly decorum to minimize the ugliness. But each side understood how this pattern worked, and its necessity in maintaining masculine culture. So the pattern continued, on gridirons and diamonds, from 1925 and beyond.

[219] "Welcome Georgia," *The Yellow Jacket*, vol. 5, issue 3, December, 1925, 15.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the Civil War interrupted southern society, its rituals, and its gender roles. The conflict scattered men of Dixie, laden in gray uniforms, around the country and into graves, while women of Dixie waited patiently and loyally for their return as Yankees ransacked plantations. Despite this disruption, and the lengthy Reconstruction process to physically and politically and economically upbuild the damaged South, men and women entered the postbellum era relying on traditional gender roles, which anchored some semblance of cultural familiarity as time marched on. Indeed, as the country modernized into the twentieth century, the South joined it – but at a different pace and with gratitude and respect toward the old days before the war, when times were simpler, and the decision to secede to preserve southern society seemed correct.

This Lost Cause ethic amplified those feelings of antebellum fondness, and in some ways gender traditions reappeared in the New South through alternate platforms. White men continued to use violence and intimidation to maintain their dominance, through Jim Crow discrimination and lynching. Women continued to celebrate men and their noble cause to protect female relatives, through ladies' organizations that mourned and enshrined Confederate soldiers. Both sexes engaged in these public spectacles which celebrated Dixie and its appreciation of rigid gender standards, and thus Old South ritualism also reappeared in the new era.

By the time football found its place on southern campuses in the 1890s, men and women ritualized the sport with similar Lost Cause gusto. Men viewed the gridiron game as an outlet to exercise traditional masculinity, including physical dominance, sanctioned violence, and a sense

of honor in protecting an institution's reputation. They also incorporated new feelings from the war that favored fighting as a group instead of an individual, working together for a shared goal. On the other hand, women eagerly supported from the sidelines, praising men for their manly abilities and display of force. While the women had much less impact on the action than the actual players themselves, they sat dutifully and handsomely in the grandstands to motivate their athletic protectors. And really, that dumbstruck, loyal presence was what football elevens desired, as the *Atlanta Constitution* recalled for an 1898 match:

> Whether they understood the game or not, the most excited spectators at the Georgia-Alabama football game yesterday were the pretty girls who made attractive the grand stand, and those who occupied carriages in the carriage 'row.' With their stylish toilets and cheeks made pink by the crisp, cool atmosphere, their eyes danced with delight, and they clapped their hands when everybody else did, regardless of the fact that their beaux were losing money and that the side whose ribbons they wore were not the winners. The very fact that so few of the fair creatures understood the game probably made them enjoy it the more.[220]

If the women acted as passive, polite ladies, the men need to act like gentlemen warriors. John Heisman proscribed to this philosophy while coaching Tech. Providing practical football tips for a newspaper, such as how to throw and catch the oval correctly, Heisman also noted "Never to forget that to be a gentleman is a much finer privilege, a much nobler right, than to be merely a great footballist, and that any one may still be such no matter how easy the winning, nor how badly the game is going – this is the most important of all things to remember."[221] Though football descended from Yankee origins, the exploit of female sponsors and illusion of "gentleman" athletes were perpetuated in Dixie for decades, unfolding alongside an ironic Lost Cause mentality that encouraged gentlemen to publicly bludgeon each other and women to cast approving and loving looks for the performance all the same.

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[220] "Woman in Club Work and Society," *Atlanta Constitution*, 25 November, 1898, 9.
[221] J. W. Heisman, "Lesson in Football," *Atlanta Constitution*, 19 November, 1905, C3.

Scholars can analyze this gender dynamic through accounts of devoted sponsors in the grandstands, and also with stories about women such as Rosalind Gammon. Sports historians include in monographs a paragraph or two about her son, and the thrilling hook of bloodshed, death, and tragedy. And while Von Gammon's unfortunate killing is important to understand just how and why New South athletes played with brutality and violence, Rosalind's actions bring out the reciprocal female side of the story: the duty to support, memorize, and cherish slain men. The language Rosalind Gammon used – deeming football "a cause he held so dear" and his death a "sacrifice" – accentuate her understanding of the game as a public exercise of masculinity. She dared not speak out against that activity, even though it took her own son's life. Just like warfare, or duels, or fist fights, football represented a channel for men of Dixie to physically fight for honor, recognizing the possibility of death in their quests for glory. Rosalind Gammon did not attempt to change this manly way of thinking in the postbellum days. Instead, she chose to mourn, then celebrate future football warriors, and thus fulfill her duty as a male support system.

Even though southern men controlled women's roles during football outings as soon as the first teams formed, they struggled with their own roles as athletes. Like their Yankee counterparts, Dixie elevens embraced physical play, loyalty to state and institution, and winning as a testament to manhood. At the same time, New South men questioned how to define their masculinity through football: whether to play like a modern athlete who appreciated straightforward sportsmanship, or play like an antebellum "gentleman" who feigned politeness while scheming through violent tactics. This masculine divide came to a boiling point in 1919 for the Georgia and Tech football rivalry. On the surface, the men argued over duty to the United States during World War One, but a handful of clandestine gender anxieties also

unraveled from the skirmish, including how to appear as a *manly man* and avoid effeminate characteristics. Under Lost Cause mentality, football players also strived to take on a gentleman-athlete persona, balancing decorum and hegemony in a manner that was typical in the Old South. Football, like other contemporary outlets before the Great War, challenged men of Dixie to either express themselves in a new way, or resort back to the old. It appeared that Georgia elevens preceded with a combination of both.

Football in Georgia was not completely distinct from that up North; the game itself and the reasons men chose to play were quite similar. Yet the South experienced a wave of Lost Cause mentality following Reconstruction, which did not occur above the Mason-Dixon. In an effort to preserve white male supremacy, the region embraced violence and patriarchy and ritualism in new outlets – and these themes were found, in some ways, through the new sport. Traditional gender roles directed women to the grandstands and lavish carriages, while men bloodied one another on the field. Female spectators and male players honored universities just like they honored one another. Men adjusted their New South masculinity and tested how expandable it could be on the gridiron. The above essays chronicled a few peculiar moments from early Georgia football, but those moments are not definitive of Dixie gridirons and southern men and women entirely, nor do they prove football in the South was distinct. What can be said is that football impacted New South culture in a strong way, resulting in characteristics that remained truly southern, and southern they remain today.

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