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Voices in the Storm: Confederate Rhetoric, 1861-1865.

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VOICES IN THE STORM:
CONFEDERATE RHETORIC, 1861-1865

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	v
CHAPTER I: ORATORY IN THE CONFEDERACY	1
CHAPTER II: METHODS OF ANALYSIS	22
CHAPTER III: UNCERTAINTY AND DEFINITION: THE RHETORIC OF 1861	42
CHAPTER IV: FROM SACRED TO SINISTER: DEPICTIONS OF NATURE	61
CHAPTER V: SLAVERY AND SLAVES: A GROWING UNEASE	88
CHAPTER VI: GENTLEMEN ALL: THE QUESTION OF CHARACTER	114
CHAPTER VII: TOWARDS A RHETORICAL UNION	144
BIBLIOGRAPHY	160
VITA	186

ABSTRACT

From 1861 to 1865, as white southerners waged their unsuccessful struggle for independence, they experienced shattering calamities. With the Civil War mostly fought on southern soil, Confederates witnessed the destruction of their environment, the deaths of their friends and family members, and the demise of their slave labor system. This study concerns the effects of this experience on the southern mindset. In short, this is an examination of discovery and transformation through ordeal.

The Confederacy has been the subject of many a historical study. However, this interpretation approaches the subject from a slightly different perspective. Departing from the traditional reliance on letters, diaries, and newspapers, it is instead based on the analysis of Confederate speeches. Oratory played a fundamental role in the southern nation, and citizens described encountering it almost daily at military functions, before battle, in church, and even while lying in hospitals or strolling on city streets. This work effects a blending of rhetorical and historical scholarship, adopting theories by rhetoricians

Lloyd Bitzer, Waldo Braden, Edward Corbett, and Ernest Bormann.

Rhetorical analysis suggests that the Civil War had a highly revolutionary effect on the South. It forced white southerners to reconsider or even jettison cherished beliefs about themselves, their environment, and their slaves. Confederates began the war by outlining a detailed and idealized portrait of their nation and its people. However, during the conflict, they gradually altered the depiction, increasingly adding references to the grotesque and discordant. By the end of the war, Confederate orators were speaking of their nation in savage terms, applying to it expressions and characteristics once reserved only for the North. Rhetorical analysis therefore suggests that, caught in the maelstrom of Civil War, southerners actually drew closer to the culture and behavior of the North. Separation, in other words, effected reunion.

I: ORATORY IN THE CONFEDERACY

According to historian Richard Harwell, "the flow of Confederate history has never ceased." "First," he wrote, "it was motivated by desire for vindication. Soon every Confederate general was easily convinced that it would be a dereliction of his duty should he deny the public his memoirs." And in the twentieth century, Harwell concluded, "continuing interest in the war has justified continued examination . . . and has made the American Civil War the best documented of all wars."¹ Modern scholars of the Civil War and Confederacy grapple with an estimated 100,000 works on the South, the North, and the conflict. There exist, according to one harried writer, "as many explanations . . . as there are historians."²

One might question, therefore, the need to add yet another interpretation to a field already so saturated. However, an examination of Confederate historiography reveals that the tide of scholarship has not provided as thorough a portrait as its volume might suggest. Indeed, it shields a surprising conservatism in regard to source materials, for Confederate historians, and to an extent historians in general, have structured their analyses around a limited set of manuscript and printed sources. This

is, of course, understandable; diaries, letters, official records and newspapers exist in great numbers and are easy to use. As James Robertson, Jr. pointed out in the introduction to Soldiers Blue and Gray, the "largest single bloc" of Civil War documentary evidence "consists of letters, diaries, and reminiscences." Faced with such bounty, many scholars have followed the example of Bell Wiley, who, according to Robertson, approached the Confederacy through manuscripts, his "first love in research."³

However, this partiality means that historians have produced an incomplete portrait of the southern nation, incomplete because their analyses rest on a narrow foundation of evidence. Currently, virtually identical collections of source materials are used to address disparate aspects of the Confederate experience, meaning that studies of slavery, women, and the Confederate Congress can be traced to the same foundations. And subjects of importance to Confederates, but which are open to interpretation and constraint from domains outside of history, have been largely ignored. In Confederate scholarship, for example, there are few works on southern fine arts, despite evidence that music, theater, and poetry played substantial roles in the war effort.⁴

But most surprisingly, historians have failed to engage in any substantial examinations of Confederate oratory, a remarkable oversight given the widespread assumption that verbal discourse played a central role in nineteenth-century southern culture. Most historians, as well as most rhetoricians, characterize the antebellum South as a wellspring of oratory. Rhetorician Waldo Braden, as part of his extensive studies of antebellum discourse, noted that southerners heard oratory frequently, in every setting "from the cabin to the statehouse," and in forms as varied as "storytelling, courtroom pleading, revival preaching, and, of course, electioneering."⁵ Similarly, Bertram Wyatt-Brown called the South "an oral society," in which "the scarcity of lending libraries, books, and literature societies, [and] the low state of education" came to invest spoken words with tremendous significance. "The opportunity," according to Wyatt-Brown, "to exchange . . . words or hear them eloquently pronounced was deeply cherished" throughout the antebellum South.⁶

When one examines the Confederacy from a purely rhetorical standpoint, it becomes evident that the circumstances of the Civil War actually caused the level of southern discourse to increase. Many scholars of rhetoric agree that speeches play a responsive role in society, that they come into existence, in the words

of Lloyd Bitzer, to address "a specific condition or situation which invites utterance." Such a condition Bitzer calls an "exigence," or an imperfection of some type "marked by urgency . . . a defect, an obstacle, a thing which is other than it should be."⁷ The Civil War, with its battles, death, destruction, ceremonies, shortages, political changes, and acts of bravery contained countless exigencies and thus generated countless opportunities for discourse.

And Confederates responded fervently. On the homefront, even as orators reprised their antebellum roles as the spokesmen for lecture societies, holidays, graduations, and elections, they also took on a variety of new engagements that, barring secession and war, would not have existed. In the Spring of 1861, for example, the creation of the Confederate government provided abundant opportunities for speakers to talk about the new system and its advantages. Accordingly, a number of politicians shared the experience of Howell Cobb. Cobb participated in the writing of the Confederate Constitution and, like many of the framers, traveled home upon its completion, when the provisional government removed from Montgomery, Alabama, in May. The trip proved exhausting. Though he meant to hurry back to his native Georgia in order to raise a volunteer regiment, Cobb nonetheless stopped frequently to address

roadside crowds. Between Alabama and Georgia, he said he orated "at every town on the road," standing on stairs and balconies, shouting news about the government and talking about the Confederacy's future until he damaged his voice. At one of his last stops, Cobb could only rasp a few words and excuse himself, explaining to the disappointed crowd "I have spoken enthusiastically . . . and am quite hoarse."⁸

Indeed, if civilian diaries, letters, and recollections, and the records of newspapers are perused for speech evidence, these sources suggest that orators responded to Civil War exigencies with incessant speechmaking. Speakers presided after battles, gave patriotic addresses in public theaters, bloviated at mass rallies, or took tours in which they bolstered popular feeling and promoted their new country. Wartime conditions did not retard this activity; having to address troops or crowds in the open air, orators climbed onto whatever was available, making podiums out of wagons, boxes, or even train cars. They spoke amid shellfire and bombardment, before angry soldiers and through civilian unrest. When frantic Richmond citizens rioted for bread in April, 1863, speakers faced the mob and talked it down. And Senator Williamson Oldham recalled a colleague who, as Union forces overran Virginia in March, 1865, ruefully made plans to travel

alone from Georgia into Tennessee, braving broken roads, enemy troops, and highwaymen, in order to keep a speaking engagement.⁹

In the military, levels of discourse elevated to the point that speechmaking infused nearly every phase of service. Officers and men told of enlistments inspired by orations and of training sites subject to a constant procession of speakers. As soldiers learned to drill and march, politicians visited; military orators spoke at dress parades, and preachers provided sermons. Treated to local barbecues and parties, troops enjoyed food, dancing, and socializing along with an array of optimistic and encouraging orations.

In training, two ceremonies in particular involved impressive amounts of oratory: the flag ceremony and the departure for war. Of the two, the flag ceremony generally took more time and included more speeches, rooted as it was far back in the enlistment process. Confederate men often joined the army in local units of company strength. Custom dictated that when these units went into training, their community of origin provided them with a battle flag, a decorative banner behind which they would rally and from which they might later hang tassels and campaign ribbons. Few, if any Confederate companies went to war without such a banner and, upon its bestowal, to honor the flag and to express

their thanks for the gift, troops often put on showy drills and parades, held dances and banquets, and invited speakers to address the occasion.

The experience of the Delta Rifles of West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, illustrates the centrality of oratory in such a ceremony. On April 20, 1861, the Rifles received a banner from parish ladies in what a local paper called a "brilliant ceremony." Festivities started in the morning when the troops formed up near the Mississippi River ferry depot, joined by two companies from Baton Rouge. Dressed in full uniform and standing in straight ranks with "martial bearing," the units first drilled before a large, admiring crowd, then marched to a prearranged location where they were to receive their banner. Excitement grew as the troops demonstrated more maneuvers, then froze in precise formation. Shortly thereafter, according to a local paper, "Mr. C. Sidney Lobdell advanced to present the flag. . . . When all was ready, he addressed the Rifles."¹⁰

Lobdell's speech was not lengthy, but it was only the first of three orations delivered that afternoon. Lobdell spoke of the "bravery, honor, and chivalry" of the soldiers, of their duties and the reasons for war, and then presented the flag to the company Captain. The latter, in turn, spoke briefly on behalf of the

soldiers and gave the flag to his color-bearer. The color-bearer, a corporal, added a few words on the duties of southern men to defend their country and promised to protect and honor the banner. Following the presentation, celebrations continued into the night, and by the "late hour" at which festivities concluded, six more speeches had taken place.¹¹

Departure ceremonies, though slightly less ostentatious, also involved a fair amount of oratory. Coming at the end of training, when soldiers moved into regular army service, this ritual typically involved high emotion, large crowds, and several speakers. In one case, the embarkation of an elite artillery unit drew a crowd of 2,000 and prompted an hour of speechmaking. This particular farewell, held for the Athens, Georgia, Troupe Artillery, began with a sermon at the Methodist Church, followed by a procession to the train depot. There, Chancellor Lipscomb of the University of Georgia made a farewell oration, and the company's Captain, Marcellus Stanley, replied. The ceremony finally concluded with what a local paper called a "most touching prayer," after which the artillerymen boarded and left for camps and battlegrounds in Virginia.¹²

Mustering into the regular army generally involved a degree of trauma, for camp life involved substantial

changes in lifestyle. Away from home and among thousands of strangers, men dealt with homesickness, deadly diseases, filth, and constant exposure to vices such as gambling or drinking. Daily life also involved orders and discipline, boring routines, and long periods of what one man called "inglorious inactivity" that led to depression and sickness.¹³ However, despite the social changes involved in military service, one aspect of life remained unchanged; in the regular army orators were nearly as constant a presence as they were in training or on the homefront.

Indeed, some accounts actually suggest that the Confederate army was as devoted to rhetoric as it was to fighting. Captain Henry Chambers, a student who left Davidson College in 1861 for service in Virginia, wrote of hearing some forty sermons, several speeches, and even a few lectures during a two-year period.¹⁴ Likewise, Lieutenant Richard Lewis, a South Carolinian serving in Virginia, frequently wrote about oratory in his letters home. Writing to his mother in July, 1861, he mentioned listening to a "few very stirring strains . . . very loudly applauded" after a dress parade in Leesburg. In early 1863, a speaker reprimanded his unit for drunkenness, while in July of that same year, a General Hill delivered a "very stirring and eloquent address, complimenting the brigade very highly."¹⁵

A variety of people spoke before the Confederate armies; soldiers mentioned visits from politicians (including President Jefferson Davis) and generals, as well as from lesser officers, preachers, chaplains, and civilians.

Oratory even accompanied soldiers into battle, and a fine illustration of the connection between speechmaking and fighting emerges in the experience of Mississippian Robert Moore. On October 20, 1861, Moore's Mississippi infantry regiment marched towards Union forces near Leesburg, anticipating a fight within hours. "Battle and Yankees near," he wrote in his diary, adding "we are not expecting a fight today but would not be surprised if something was done tomorrow."¹⁶ Surprisingly, though, Moore's thoughts then turned elsewhere, for in the anxious hours before the fight he had apparently found a diversion. "When we halted here," he said, "Gen Evans and Col Featherston made us a short speech. The Gen said if we would die here he would die with us." Moore ended up in a frontal assault against a twelve-pound Federal cannon, but emerged from the battlefield unscathed. Returning to his diary, he noted how the experience ended for him in exactly the same way it began. We "have had a great day," Moore wrote, "speeches were made by nearly all of our officers. Colonel Evans first addressed us and

after all the officers had given an account of themselves and Co's, Rev. V.K. Marshall of Vicksburg addressed us."¹⁷

Eyewitness accounts thus reveal that tremendous amounts of discourse accompanied the creation and development of the Confederate nation. And, if one shifts focus from speakers to audience, one finds that oratory served a central function in the southern Civil War experience. In fact, the Confederate citizenry seems to have together constituted a huge, informed assemblage of listeners, a group that examined speakers with a critical eye, and was comfortable and conversant in the technical language of discourse.

This audience also craved oratory, whether in spoken or printed forms. Kate Cumming, an Alabamian who served as a military nurse, recalled how she and others hungered for discourse during the secession crisis. Looking back from 1895, she pointedly recalled how "we read with avidity the political speeches made North and South, and commented unsparingly upon their merits. We would leave our most important work to attend a speech."¹⁸ Mary Chesnut commented from Richmond, Virginia, that crowds roamed the city for two nights after the first Battle of Mannassas, seeking out officials for their comments on the occasion. During the second night, she wrote that "the crowd came to get [President

Jefferson] Davis to speak to them. They wanted to hear all about it again."¹⁹

As their journals and letters indicate, soldiers also sought after oratory, their appetite for discourse unaffected by their military fortunes. Arriving in New Orleans after fighting in a severe and losing battle downriver at Fort Jackson, Captain William Seymour noted with pleasure that two speakers were present when he and his tired troops reported to the mayor.²⁰ And private Benjamin Freeman indicated that even extreme reversal could not dampen the enthusiasm for discourse. In March, 1865, Freeman wrote his wife a gloomy letter from the ruin around Petersburg, Virginia. Freeman was maimed; one of his arms hung "crooked" and useless from a recent wound and all about he felt growing depression in the ranks. Still, amid the carnage of the siege of Petersburg, he had kept up with Confederate oratory well enough to request an account of a speech planned by North Carolina Governor Zebulon Vance. "I herd the other day," he wrote, "that [he] was to make a speach in Louisburg if he do[es] I want you to write in your next letter what sort of speach it was."²¹ Freeman's request for a written analysis was not unusual; when denied the opportunity to witness an oration personally, many citizens sought a printed rendition of the words. In respond to this demand, orators

willingly provided texts upon request, and newspapers devoted substantial amounts of copy to snippets from speeches, paraphrases, and orations in their entirety.²²

The Confederate fascination with oratory also drove citizens to adopt a variety of behaviors that made them sophisticated listeners. Southerners did not limit their involvement in oratory to mere passive listening or reading. Rather, during speeches, they often behaved aggressively, inserting their own opinions into the discourse by shouting, and attempting to direct the speaker to specific subjects. An orator had to have strong nerves in order to stay calm before southern audiences, for, depending on the speech and the occasion, they might pepper him with questions or demands, constantly interrupt to applaud or cheer, or even drown him out entirely. And, perhaps most unnerving, they studied him in great detail, taking note of every nuance, every flaw, every bit of awkwardness in delivery, and inspecting dress and bearing so thoroughly that even objects held in a speaker's hand did not escape scrutiny.

Few speakers escaped harassment or inspection, even well-respected, popular figures. In 1861, Alexander Stephens was beloved and honored in his native Georgia, but even so, before he could deliver his now famous "Cornerstone" speech in Savannah, he first had to order

rowdy elements in the audience to quiet down.²³ And, when Robert E. Lee addressed his army in September, 1864, the soldiers did not let idolatry interfere with their examination of his delivery. He spoke, according to one, "very plainly . . . trying to get up a better feeling in his corps."²⁴ From time to time, southerners even let their judgments about ability on the podium guide them in their judgments of character and persona. Some of the South's harshest criticisms of Abraham Lincoln stemmed from unfavorable evaluations of his speaking ability. An Alabama politician suggested in 1861 that southerners "compare the speeches of the President of these Confederate States with those of the President of the United States to feel proud of the contrast between statesman and the narrow-minded partisan."²⁵

Indeed, oratory appears to have been of such fundamental cultural importance that speech analysis actually helped southerners to interpret their surroundings and to express their opinions. When writing about the people and events around them, they repeatedly used oratory as a means of description. Discussing the people he encountered while fighting in New Mexico, enlisted man A. B. Peticolas frequently represented them through their characteristics of speech. John Schmidt, Peticolas said, was "the oracle of his mess"

and "talk[ed] incessantly." Philip Mayer, "another character," was "free of speech and . . . quite interesting," while "Kit Carson was a "low, square-set, old plain farmer-looking man with a slow, quiet speech."²⁶

The tendency to describe and understand others through speech characteristics affected men and women, upper and lower classes alike. Pauline Heyward used speechmaking as a means to illustrate her brother's popularity in the army. "The men all **loved** Tonio so much," she wrote, "whenever any speech . . . was to be made or done, they all wished him."²⁷ Virginia Clay, wife of a wealthy Confederate senator, called her husband Clement a "great orator" as a means of accentuating her feelings in a tender letter.²⁸ And James Nisbet, an educated young officer, in trying to compliment a fellow soldier, noted that he was "tall and handsome. He was a brilliant orator but without military education. By nature, he was a commander among men."²⁹

Confederates even used speech analysis to describe subjects that did not directly involve discourse. Mary Chesnut defined one woman's hero-worship of General Joseph Johnson as a "stump speech, if ever there was a stump speech."³⁰ And Richard McCalla, an engineer on railroad projects in North Carolina and Tennessee used a speech metaphor to describe warfare. In March,

1864, he wrote to his wife that "The Yankees run like deer before the hounds. . . . Our soldiers are speaking out in trumpet tones to northern vandals. They will fight to the bitter end rather than be subjugated."³¹

To the historian, the centrality of oratory in Confederate culture has several implications. It indicates, first, that Confederate historians need to adopt a greater appreciation for speeches and speechmaking and to acknowledge its significance in the South's Civil War culture. Second, however, it proves that the Confederacy provides the basic ingredients to support a new approach to historical scholarship, an approach based on rhetorical analysis.

Speech analysis imposes certain restrictions on subject matter. A viable topic, for example, has to involve a large number of speeches, but, in order for the analyst to best evaluate themes and contents, this oratory has to be directed at a well-defined audience. As illustrated, the Confederacy provides for both criteria, and this work takes advantage of an abundance of complete speeches printed in newspapers or released as published documents. Paraphrases and extracts have been largely, though not completely, ignored.

In addition, the southern nation makes a suitable topic because it is eminently manageable, having existed

for only a short period of years. Its lifespan can be precisely demarcated, and its citizens left an impressive record of original sources against which a scholar can test theories about the Civil War South. But most significantly, the Confederacy represents a unique creative activity. Between 1861 and 1865, as southerners attempted to establish a new nation, they faced a variety of novel issues and problems. They had to redefine themselves as Confederates, form a new government, and switch their loyalties to a new President, all the while fighting a war that constantly threatened their independence.

Confederate rhetoric, therefore, offers something that United States Civil War rhetoric does not, a window into the triumphs and travails of a developing and endangered American nation. However, to unlock the information within Confederate oratory, one must first know the techniques and methods of rhetorical analysis.

ENDNOTES:

1. Richard B. Harwell, ed., The Confederate Reader: How the South Saw the War (New York: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1957; Dover Publications, Inc, 1989), xxiv.
2. W. Buck Yearns, ed., The Confederate Governors (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 1.
3. James I. Robertson, Jr., Soldiers Blue and Gray (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), vii.
4. For fine examples of works dealing with Confederate music and poetry, see Richard B. Harwell, Confederate Music (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,

1950), and Esther Ellinger, Southern War Poetry of the Civil War (Philadelphia: The Hershey Press, 1918). Harwell determined that Confederate songs mirrored developments in the southern nation, reflecting lingering ties to the North in 1861, celebrating southern independence in 1862, conveying sorrow as the war continued. Ellinger, through an analysis of changing trends in Confederate poetry, determined that the South passed through three stages during the war. First came a period of defiance in which southerners defined their reasons for fighting and emphasized their unity of purpose. Second, in 1862, their focus shifted to battles, deeds, and heroes. Third, in late 1863, there emerged a final period of depression in which Confederates addressed their grief and sorrow. More recently, Drew Faust studied how Confederates forged a sense of national identity by examining their war poetry, music, cartoons, hair ornaments, magazines, and theater. See Drew Gilpin Faust, The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South. The Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures, Louisiana State University, 1987 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988).

5. Waldo W. Braden, The Oral Tradition in the South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), ix;

6. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 330.

7. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 1 (1968), 6.

8. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, Georgia, delivered May 22, 1861, in Echoes from the South. Comprising the Most Important Speeches, Proclamations, and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 187.

9. For mention of a speech delivered from atop a train see Kate Cumming, Kate: Journal of a Confederate Nurse, ed. Richard B. Harwell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), 160. For mention of a sermon delivered under shellfire, see Rev. James B. Sheeran, Confederate Chaplain: A War Journal, ed. Joseph T. Durkin (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1960), 72. Williamson Oldham, "Last Days of the Confederacy," 1869, typed manuscript, University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas. Perhaps one of the most striking examples of a speaker going to tremendous lengths to respond can be found in the experience of Louisiana Governor Henry

Watkins Allen in 1864. Elected in November, 1863, Allen was crippled and in pain from a battle injury received one year earlier. Charging towards a federal cannon in the Battle of Baton Rouge, Allen was struck point blank by an artillery shell. His horse disintegrated beneath him, his legs shattered, and, a year later, he still could not move without assistance. Even so, in January, Allen decided exigence necessitated his taking a speaking tour. Recent events had not been kind to his state. Parts of it lay under the control of the enemy; its finances were in disarray and its citizens afraid, poor, and uncertain. Allen told friends and family that these conditions compelled him to travel, to speak, "to arouse the people and see what he had to do." Despite his condition, he traveled 450 miles and stopped for 14 engagements, thus sacrificing his own comfort for the obligations of the orator. Sarah Dorsey, Recollections of Henry Watkins Allen: Brigadier-General Confederate States Army, Ex-Governor of Louisiana (New York: M. Doolady, 1866), 235.

10. C. Sidney Lobdell, Speech at the Flag Presentation to the Delta Rifles, delivered April 20, 1861, in West Baton Rouge Sugar Planter, April 27, 1861.

11. Ibid.

12. Kenneth Coleman, Confederate Athens (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1967), 35-36.

13. Gerald F. Linderman, Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 119.

14. Henry A. Chambers, Diary of Captain Henry A. Chambers, ed. T. H. Pearce (Wendell, NC: Broadfoot's Bookmark, 1980)

15. Richard Lewis, Camp Life of a Confederate Boy of Bratton's Brigade, Longstreet's Corps, C. S. A.: Letters Written by Lieut. Richard Lewis, of Walker's Regiment, to his Mother, during the War: Facts and Inspirations of Camp Life, Marches, Etc. (Charleston: The News and Courier Press, 1883; reprint, Gerthersburg, MD: The Butternut Press, n. d.), 11, 38, 51.

16. Robert Moore Diary, October 20, 1861, Manuscript, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi.

17. Ibid., October 24, 1861.

18. Kate Cumming, Gleanings from Southland, 19, 27, in Kate Cumming, Kate: Journal of a Confederate Nurse, ed. Richard B. Harwell (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1959), xi.
19. Mary Chesnut, Mary Chesnut's Civil War, ed. C. Vann Woodward (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 700.
20. William J. Seymour, The Civil War Memoirs of Captain William J. Seymour, ed., with an introduction, by Terry L. Jones (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 37.
21. Benjamin Freeman, The Confederate Letters of Benjamin H. Freeman, comp. and ed. Stuart T. Wright (Hicksville, NY: Exposition Press, 1974), 62.
22. The contents of newspapers, tell of a high demand for printed discourse; between January, 1861, and January, 1865, for example, the Hillsborough Recorder of Hillsborough, North Carolina, printed all or parts of 34 speeches, some of them quite lengthy. Included were the words of Yankee politicians, a number of sermons, a graduation address, and one speech from the ancient Roman empire. Papers from larger cities carried an even greater number of speeches. The Charleston Daily Courier, from April 11 to July 6, 1861, ran thirteen selections, an average of one per week. Even in Bellville, Texas, the Bellville Countryman carried speeches of northerners, generals, politicians, and foreigners. The Confederate audience, in other words, was not simply a listening audience, but also an assemblage of readers.
23. Alexander Stephens, Speech delivered on the 21st of March, 1861, in Savannah, known as "The Corner Stone Speech," reported in the Savannah Republican, in Henry Cleveland, Alexander Stephens in Public and in Private. With Letters and Speeches before, during, and Since the War (Philadelphia: National Publishing Co., 1866), 719. What Stephens warned was that "I cannot speak so long as there is any noise or confusion. I shall take my time - I feel quite prepared to spend the night with you if necessary."
24. Hubert Dent to wife, September 7, 1864, Letters in Dent Confederate Collection, Auburn University Archives, Auburn, Alabama.
25. Hon. Robert Smith, An Address to the Citizens of Alabama, on the Constitution and Laws of the Confederate States of America by the Hon. Robert Smith at Temperance

Hall, on the 30th of March, 1861 (Mobile: Mobile Daily Register Print, 1861), 6.

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II: METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Speech analysis may offer a fresh approach to history, but the historian who adopts this method soon learns it is difficult to implement. Deficiencies in available source materials often hamper analysis; in the Confederacy, though many speeches survive, they constitute only a fraction of the orations delivered from 1861 to 1865. Furthermore, the collection that remains is weighted in favor of the first two years of the Civil War. Few election or campaign speeches survive, and some complete orations have limited value due to gaps or inaccuracies in their content. Speech analysis also involves some technical considerations; rhetoricians have developed a number of theories about their field and a number of different approaches to oratorical analysis. To extract cultural and social information from a speech, the historian must understand the principles of discourse and choose a suitable method of examination from the many possibilities available.

Like historians, rhetoricians often disagree about their scholarship and frequently revise each other. However, they recognize certain basic principles of discourse. Of significance to this study is the presumption that speeches are persuasive devices. Rhetoricians generally agree that when an orator

interacts with an audience, his speech serves as a means of influence, as the instrument through which he unveils his ideas, arguments, plans of action, and through which he urges the audience to accept his thoughts. This premise does not change in regard to subject matter; scholars have identified influential elements not only in campaign speeches and political discourse, but also in less coercive forms of oratory, including funeral and ceremonial addresses. Much of rhetorical analysis, therefore, involves examination of the art of persuasion.

But if scholars agree about the influential nature of oratory, they disagree over the specific factors that shape the persuasive effort and over the methods employed by the speaker. This work, as it seeks a blending of rhetorical and historical scholarship, holds to theories put forward by rhetoricians Ernest Bormann and Lloyd Bitzer. Writing in the 1960's and early 1970's, both men dealt with the relationship between oratory and society and concluded that the contents of a speech are greatly affected by the cultural and social traditions surrounding its delivery. Bormann, concerned with the interaction between speaker and audience, challenged scholars who dismissed the value of spoken words as sources for cultural analysis. Public speaking, he wrote, like all forms of human communication, involves an attempt to create a common

identity within a group of people. The orator may test various beliefs, attitudes, and values as he seeks to connect with the listeners, but he will not purposefully create "dissonance." In other words, the words of a successful speaker do not challenge or come from outside the social context of the audience. Instead, according to Bormann, they **"are the social context."**¹

Lloyd Bitzer, writing about the circumstances that generate rhetorical discourse, agreed with Bormann on several points. Bitzer argued that a speech, in order to be persuasive, must "fit" the situation in which it is delivered. In part, that means it must provide an appropriate response to whatever occurrence is being addressed. But also, and of significance to the application of rhetoric to history, it must interact properly with the audience, taking into account their "sources of constraint," including "beliefs, attitudes, . . . traditions, images, interests, motives, and the like."² A speech which incorrectly responds to occasion, audience, and constraints, or one in which one of these areas is flawed will fail to convey its message.

The arguments of Bormann and Bitzer suit Confederate study because they agree with what historians know about nineteenth-century southern oratory. Southern speakers, frequently students of rhetorical theory, were minutely aware of the importance of both audience and situation

in speechmaking. Some altered their wording, expressions, and even their dress in order, as Bitzer might say, to fit the surrounding environment. They even used a colloquial expression to describe how connections were established between themselves and their listeners. Itinerate orators talked openly and sometimes boastfully about "going down to the people," the practice of pre-speech handshaking and mingling with members of the audience in order to learn their dialect, beliefs, and values. Bormann and Bitzer merely apply technical terms to behavior that southerners practiced both before and during the Civil War.

Unlocking the social and cultural information within a speech requires rhetorical analysis on several levels. Such examination can be a highly esoteric and theoretical activity, but, in this study, methods are fairly simple. Starting with speeches from 1861, I first examined the orator's technique in some detail, determining his overall tone of delivery and the argumentative and stylistic devices he employed. In oratory, every technical method or device has a different function as well as a unique set of advantages and limitations. Studying their use can provide insight into how the speaker approached his audience, internalized his surroundings, and conceptualized his arguments.

Technical examination was not intended as an end unto itself, but instead as a means of uncovering veiled details in contents. However, it produced some larger insights into the overall nature of Confederate discourse, which in turn raised questions about how historians have characterized southern oratory. Historically, the activity has been described as dramatic, flamboyant, and marked by excessive gesturing and verbosity. This is a long-standing assessment; in 1943, Merle Curti described southern speeches as inflated with "embroidered oratorical rhetoric as ephemeral as it was florid."³ Nearly 50 years later, a biographer of Alexander Stephens used "impassioned," "forceful," and "furious" as terms to describe the rhetoric of Stephens and his contemporaries.⁴ If historians are correct, one might expect the Confederacy, given the dramatic events surrounding its lifespan, to feature nothing but florid, grandiose oratory, oratory based largely on techniques designed to manipulate the emotions.

But it did not. Technical examination indicates that Confederate speakers were not wedded solely to grandiloquence. In general, speakers employ one of three strategies of persuasion. They may confront the emotions, relying on vivid descriptions and florid language to arouse feeling in the listeners. An ethical

appeal might be selected, allowing the speaker to approach the audience person-to-person, seeking to sway by portraying himself as a man of good character. Or, an orator might choose an appeal to reason. Each strategy affects the overall tone of a speech; an oration based largely on appeals to the emotions will sound very different from one that is founded on reason and logic.

In Confederate oratory, no single approach completely dominated, and many orations contained mixtures of the three. A few examples illustrate the range of appeals. In January, 1865, Texan Williamson Oldham spoke before the Senate in a vain attempt to rekindle the South's fighting spirit. He chose to accost the emotions with dramatic language, at one point invoking a string of grotesques images, a series of exaggerated pictures of the wreckage of war:

Can we forget our slaughtered sons, brothers, and countrymen? Can the father forget his murdered boy; and will not the mangled form, the mutilated limb of the remaining one be ever before him? Can the widow, "with all her household goods shattered around her," and her helpless and unprotected orphans, cease to become deaf to the plaintive moans of her once pure and intellectual, but now violated maniac daughter? . . . Can that gulf between the North and the South, dug by hostile bayonets, wide and deep, extending from the ocean to the mountains of the west, filled with the reeking blood of our slain martyrs, from

which the wailings of our people ever issue forth, and over which the fires of our burning homes are ever blazing . . . be closed and forever obscured?
 . . . We can but die! Better to die ten thousand deaths than to live in such a union, of wrong, of hate, of scorn, of shame, of infamy, and degradation!

For this occasion, Oldham spoke vividly and dramatically about the war and its consequences. But Confederate orators did not always echo his dramatic tone. Alongside examples of grandiloquence, there were also studies in calm, methodical delivery, appeals lightened with humor, and serious orations emphasizing reason rather than emotion. Furthermore, subject matter did not determine the tone of appeal. In November, 1864, just a few months before Oldham delivered his address, another Confederate Congressman also attempted to raise morale, this time as part of a speech against drafting slaves into military service. Arguing that the South was fully capable of defending itself without black assistance, Henry Chambers of Mississippi spoke calmly and smoothly, citing statistics about the army and appealing to reason and logic:

we are not yet reduced to extremity. Although our territory is more limited, supplies of food are more abundant than ever; our soldiers suffer from disease much less than formerly; acting chiefly on the defensive and behind works, they must suffer much smaller losses in battle than the enemy, and being in their own country and climate, must suffer also much less from disease; and this day, I repeat, the South is

displaying more of original vigor than
 the North. If exhaustion approaches,
 its advance is too slow to be alarming
 . . . At least we are still strong
 enough to afford to watch and wait . .
 . .

Segments phrased for the ethical appeal also offer evidence contradictory to the historical interpretation of southern oratory. This type of appeal often appears in the beginning of a speech and usually contains generous use of the first person. It also involves careful attention to wording and expression, for, as it is the speaker's own person and character that is discussed, his offending or confusing the audience risks their alienation. Therefore, if Confederate orators believed audiences consistently expected flamboyance and drama, they would have shaped all ethical sections accordingly. An analyst might then expect every such appeal to sound the same.

However, the level of drama, intensity, and flowery language in ethical appeals varied greatly from speech to speech, and speaker to speaker. Sometimes orators shouted up their own abilities in exaggerated language. On other occasions, they connected with the audience quietly and serenely. Speaking about himself in a speech about the South's new Constitution in March, 1861, Robert Smith delivered a fine example of an ethical appeal that did not exaggerate his abilities or sound dramatic.

Toning down his approach, Smith presented himself as a common, unremarkable individual:

I have invited your attendance this evening to lay before you, so far as an observance of the secrecy of our proceedings will admit, the course and action of the Congress of the Confederate States of America and to express my views of the destiny of our New Republic. I shall seek to discharge the task plainly and simply; for my object is not to entertain you with a speech, but to converse with you as a neighbor.

If examination of overall appeal suggests that Confederate oratory cannot be characterized exclusively, taking the technical analysis to an even greater depth, into the individual devices of argument and style within a speech, further challenges existing notions about southern public speaking. All speeches are collections of specific forms of argument, figures of speech, stories, and planned digressions through which the speaker establishes the tone of his discourse and develops his ideas and arguments. As each element functions differently, to fully understand the contents of an oration, one must study their deployment and use. Determining, for example, when a speaker chose a particularly strong means of persuasion can reveal much about his confidence in his subject, and about what he thought was most important to convey.

In Confederate speeches, this examination confirmed the multidimensional nature of southern oratory, for

in their use of the basic methods of argument and style, Confederate speakers assumed a variety of different lexicons. Arguing from devices of argument like precedent and expert testimony, Congressmen and preachers sounded like lawyers. Using definition to discuss the role and designs of God, politicians adopted the wording and lofty expressions of ministers. And sometimes, especially through the use of stylistic elements such as hyperbole and metaphor, orators were flamboyant, grandiose, and pompous.

Again, several examples illustrate speakers' versatility. First, an 1861 oration by Alexander Stephens illustrates a deliberate effort from a man often described as a charismatic orator. Discussing the need for cotton planters to invest in the Confederacy, Stephens did not speak furiously or attempt to charm, but supported his arguments through less pretentious means. He drew comparisons, he spoke syllogistically, and he cited statistics, assuming at various points the dry language of a banker or accountant:

if we are not subjugated, I feel no hesitation in telling you it is the best Government stock in the world that I know of. It is eight per cent interest; and if we succeed in a short time, in a few years, if not more than one hundred millions or two hundred millions are issued, I have but little doubt they will command a considerable premium. The old United States stock (six percent. bonds) five years ago

commanded fifteen and sixteen per cent., and went as high as twenty percent. Take the Central Railroad. The stock of that company commands fifteen per cent. premium now. These bonds pay eight per cent. semi-annually. Therefore, if there is a short war, these bonds will command fifteen or twenty per cent.⁸

Other speakers made use of more compelling devices of persuasion, but not always to the same effect. For example, repetition is a key factor in many rhetorical devices, for the systematic recurrence of a single word, series of words, or even an individual sound generally stirs some type of reaction. Though repetition techniques can be and often are made to address the emotions, Confederate orators used these devices for a variety of purposes. Politician Henry Wise, discussing the character and techniques of the fighting man of 1861, inserted several different forms of repetition into his speech in order to add rhythm and additional energy to an already emotional discourse:

Collect **yourselves**, summon **yourselves**, elevate **yourselves** to the high and sacred duty of patriotism. **The man who** dares to pray, **the man who** dares to wait until some magic arm is put into his hand; **the man who** will not be content with flint and steel is worse than a coward-he is a renegade. . . . If their guns reach further than yours, reduce the distance; meet them **foot to foot, eye to eye, body to body**, and when you strike a blow, strike home.
[Emphasis added.]

On another occasion, though, Robert Smith used a particularly powerful type of repetition for a purpose

more subtle than brash. In his speech at Mobile, Smith briefly turned to anaphora to describe one advantage of the South's new Constitution. Anaphora involves pattern repetition; in a series of statements, the orator will maintain the same grammatical structure for each and will begin each with the same word or group of words. When an analyst reads an oration, the recurrence of the same words in the same place again and again makes anaphora easy to identify. Of its use, one rhetorical scholar says that whenever it appears, "we can be sure that the author has used it deliberately. Since the repetition of the words helps to establish a marked rhythm . . . [it] is usually reserved for those passages where the author wants to produce a strong emotional effect."¹⁰

Smith's use of anaphora, though, illustrates that the device does not always have to assault the emotions. Attempting to teach the contents of the new Constitution, he employed anaphora simply to make an otherwise dry passage more catching:

By refusing to a mere majority of Congress unlimited control over the treasure, and **by** requiring the years and nays to be taken whenever two-thirds assume to vote away money not asked for by the Executive; **by** placing upon the administration the duty and responsibility of calling for appropriations; **by** virtually excluding Congress from passing upon claims against the Government; **by** prohibiting extra compensation to employees; **by**

enabling the Executive to be heard on the floor of Congress, and by giving the President the power to veto objectionable items in appropriation bills, we have, I trust, greatly purified our Government, and, at the same time, placed its different parts in nearer and more harmonious relations. [Emphasis added.]

Revising the notion that southern oratory always involved drama and flamboyance does not require examples from every device adopted by Confederate speakers. Indeed, such a thorough treatment would change the purpose of this work. Technical analysis contributes to the interpretation of Confederate society by revealing a level of seriousness in the culture. That orators did not always speak dramatically suggests that southern audiences regularly wanted to hear more than entertaining grandiosity or bombast. If speeches are to uncover a more complete social and cultural portrait of the Confederacy, the analytical perspective must expand to encompass not only how arguments were formatted, but also to address what was said and why. The speaker's choice of words and his use of metaphor, colloquialisms, and descriptions must come under scrutiny. Subjects developed through strong techniques need to be differentiated from those that were not. The analyst should also identify the objects and behaviors condemned in a speech, those defined as desirable or good, the consequences threatened, and

the objects compared. I refer to this aspect of examination as content analysis.

It is when technical and content analysis combine that a full account of the cultural and social constraints mentioned by Bitzer begins to emerge. An oration cited earlier may be used to illustrate the process. At one point in his 1865 discourse, Williamson Oldham urged citizens to follow the strength and example set by his home state:

Texas is prepared "to take no step backwards," . . . she will do her whole duty and will share with her sister States any and every fate but that of submission and re-union; . . . should any of the States, in an hour of adversity, desert the common cause, which pride, manhood, and honor forbid, or should all desert her, she will, single-handed, maintain the contest and continue "to tread the wine-press alone," and never cease it while there is an arm to strike a blow of resistance; never, until the bright, smiling prairie homes of her people shall be made desolate wastes, and her last son¹² lie an immolated martyr upon her soil.

Technical analysis of this short passage reveals it was designed to convey its message aggressively. First, Oldham placed it very near the beginning of the discourse, suggesting he wanted this point about strength and determination to stand out. Phrasing the section as an ethical appeal on behalf of Texas, Oldham tried to convince the audience of her

good character and strength by exaggerating her devotion to the war effort. Texas, he said, would "single-handedly" keep fighting, and "never cease" until all her citizens were dead. This was hyperbole, a device that enhances the effect of the speaker's words so as to make them memorable.

Content analysis reveals the cultural identity reflected in this passage. Oldham equated the end of the war and re-union with "submission," a word suggesting lack of power and complete obedience, and then stated firmly that Texas would not accept this condition. Of the forces keeping the South in the fight, Oldham chose to name "pride, manhood, and honor" as the prime motivators, indeed as the factors that actually "forbade" any state from leaving the Confederacy. These words indicate that Oldham believed Confederates still valued and responded to the concept of honor even as their war effort failed, their armies weakened, and their morale crumbled. The passage also reveals a concern with nature; he chose to cite the destruction of natural beauty, the transformation of "bright, smiling prairie homes" into "desolate wastes," as a supreme sacrifice, choosing this over economic or material losses.

Speaking before the Confederate Congress, Oldham had to select words and themes that would appeal to people from across the South. His choices from an

especially powerful section tell the analyst that he felt he could persuade southerners to keep fighting by convincing them that surrender would destroy their honor and manhood. In addition, that he included a passage about the destruction of natural beauty rather than a discussion of economic crises indicates where he believed the audience placed their concern. Of course, it is possible that Oldham's assessment is incorrect or, as one school of rhetorical theory might argue, merely a reflection of his own interpretation of the South. Analysis carried to its fullest extent would test his words by comparing them to the contents of contemporary speeches and by studying the popular reception given this oration.

Cultural insights can also be gained from what the speaker does not say. Henry Chambers, in his 1864 speech against arming slaves, had this, among things, to say about black soldiers:

if, as our despairing friends declare, we have approximated to final exhaustion, and must find some extraordinary source of re-inforcements -- will negro troops answer the purpose -- will the African save us? . . . in what form of organization is it proposed to use them? It can hardly be designed to intermingle them in the same companies with out citizen soldiers; no one has yet had the audacity to propose that. Would it be safe to confide to negro troops so much of the line of battle as would be occupied by a regiment or a brigade-much less a division or a corps? . . . one

alternative remains; it is to form them into companies and place these in alternation with white companies in the same regiments. The electric current of mutual confidence and devotion . . . no longer passes from company to company. The silence of distrust broods along the line, which hesitates, halts, wavers, breaks, and the black troops fly-perhaps to the embraces of the enemy.³

Technically, this passage involved rhetorical questions and a type of probability argument. Rhetorical questioning provides one of the most effective means of influence, for it offers the orator a certain amount of control over the audience. When people hear a question, they tend to formulate some type of response. When a speaker knows how the audience is likely to respond, rhetorical questions can be used to persuade obliquely in place of a direct statement. In Chambers' case, he did not believe black soldiers could benefit the South, and his blunt, even sarcastic "Will the African save us?" indicates that he thought his audience did not believe this either. Had Chambers any doubt about their answer to the question, he would not have allowed them the freedom of response. Instead, he would have directly argued for his opinion.

Content analysis reveals that Chambers meant for this passage to convey a very high level of racist feeling. He called the suggestion that blacks serve in the army "extraordinary," differentiated them from the "citizen soldiers," and expressed horror at the

"audaci[ous]" notion of blacks being "intermingle[d]" with whites. To close this section, Chambers turned to themes of slave runaways and slaves in rebellion. Claiming that black soldiers would destroy the "electric current of mutual confidence" among the troops, he described a mixed army that wavered and hesitated in battle. The lines, he said, halt, then break, and the "black troops fly, perhaps to the embraces of the enemy." Chambers did not flatly state that these troops would then turn back against their masters, but hinted as much through his last statement. Again, the oblique reference indicates he did not feel he had to explain this fear completely, but felt that his audience understood what he meant.

Most historians would agree with the cultural and social information gleaned from Oldham's and Chambers' speeches. Honor, racism, and the fear of slave rebellion were significant themes in the South before and during the war. The point of this paper, though, is not to promote a new method for identifying the obvious. Rather, in order to gain insight into southern society, speech analysis is employed to identify the central themes of Confederate rhetoric, to analyze what these reveal about the Civil War South, and to determine the extent to which they were altered by the war. Paired with information gained from historical scholarship,

this approach should offer insights about the extent to which four years of violent conflict and the experiences of secession and nation-building reshaped the mentality of the American South. The examination begins with the speeches of 1861, with the oratory delivered as southerners embarked on their struggle for independence.

ENDNOTES:

1. Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," in Quarterly Journal of Speech, 58 (1972), 400.
2. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," in Philosophy and Rhetoric, 1 (1988), 8.
3. Waldo W. Braden, The Oral Tradition in the South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), 20, quoting Merle Curti, The Growth of American Thought (New York, 1943), 440.
4. Thomas E. Schott, Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia: A Biography (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 91.
5. Williamson Oldham, Speech On the Resolutions of the State of Texas, Concerning Peace, Reconstruction, and Independence, delivered in the Confederate Senate on January 20, 1865 (n. p.), 12.
6. Honorable H. C. Chambers, Speech in the Confederate House of Representatives on the special order for that day, being the resolution offered by him on the first day of the session, delivered November 10, 1864 (n. p.), 3.
7. Robert Smith, An Address to the Citizens of Alabama on the Constitution and Laws of the Confederate States of America by the Hon. Robert Smith, At Temperance Hall, on the 30th day of March, 1861 (Mobile: Mobile Daily Register Print, 1861), 3.
8. Alexander Stephens, Speech at Augusta, Georgia, delivered July 11, 1861, in Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events with

Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, Etc., vol. 2 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1866), 9.

9. Henry Wise, Speech in Spring, 1861, date unknown, location unknown, in Echoes from the South. Comprising the Most Important Speeches, Proclamations, and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 153.

10. Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, 3d edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 438.

11. Smith, Address at Mobile, March 30, 1861, 10-11.

12. Oldham, Speech on Resolutions, January 20, 1865, 3.

13. Chambers, Speech on his resolution, November 18, 1864, 4.

15. Clement Eaton, A History of the Southern Confederacy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1954), 54.

III: UNCERTAINTY AND DEFINITION: THE RHETORIC OF 1861

In the Spring and Summer of 1861, before the Civil War unleashed its extreme violence and bloodshed, before economic deprivation and territorial loss sapped morale, the citizens of the Confederate States of America exulted over their new country and boasted of their abilities. They rejoiced that military victories in Virginia and Missouri substantiated claims of Confederate inviolability and speculated about how quickly and painlessly the South might attain complete independence. Furthermore, as events unfolded in favor of the Confederacy, the fear-mongers and the reluctant secessionists came to terms with and to support the dissolution of the old United States. Men like Sam Houston of Texas, whose strong opposition to secession had once earned him the label "traitor," by Spring was speaking favorably for the South and its actions. On May 10, before an audience in his home state, Houston acknowledged that "the time has come when a man's section is his country." He also called for the South, "chivalric, brave, and impetuous as it is," to maintain its position until its independence was recognized.¹

Euphoria translated into expressions of confidence and defiance in several modes of communication. Diarists boasted of the southern fighting ability while other, more gregarious writers filled newspapers with fiery editorials. William Nugent, a Mississippi planter, expressed his feelings in a letter. "I feel that I would like to shoot a Yankee," he wrote to his wife, " . . . The North will yet suffer for this fratricidal war she has forced upon us."² Dramatic and emotional words also came from hundreds of itinerant southern orators who amplified popular enthusiasm through energetic speeches. "Talk about **subjugating** us!" screamed one Georgia speaker, "Why we might lay aside the men, and all Abolitiondom **couldn't run down the women even!**"³ Together, the writers and speakers of 1861 produced a clear message; the South, united, able, and strong would not be defeated.

Defiance, though, came packaged in bold statements that were at once exhilarating and misleading. When Robert Smith told a crowd at Mobile in April that "We are now a nation" and predicted the future held "the development of commerce, of manufactures, or arts," he misconstrued the actual conditions facing the country.⁴ The South had not yet faced a major test of its strength, ability,

or its conviction to the cause. That would come in Fall and Winter, 1861, as it faced growing economic problems and supply shortages, and in 1862, with the first territorial losses. Like those who made unthinking boasts that the South could "never be conquered," Smith expressed presumptions that some Confederates were willing to believe, but that were completely without foundation.⁵ In the Spring and Summer of the first year, southern rhetorical energies were often focused on vain hopes and chimerical accomplishments.

But the words were effective. They drew cheers in 1861, and, decades later, have beguiled historians into misinterpreting the Confederate mindset at the start of the war. Judging from what southerners said about themselves, historians have often depicted this period as a time of innocence, when a spirit of unity and a naive optimism emerged from several winter months of regional disagreement, uncertainty, and suspicion. Paul Escott incorporated this interpretation into After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism. Writing about May, 1861, he said that "A wave of excitement and enthusiasm replaced the hesitation which had gone before as men welcomed the prospect of action. During the secession crisis, many southern leaders

had boasted that any war with the North would be brief and victorious. Encouraged by these predictions, southerners now organized for war." In agreement with Escott, James Robertson, Jr., in Soldiers Blue and Gray, wrote that "Northerners and Southerners went off to war with dreamy enthusiasm and youthful innocence. A nationwide belief existed in the Spring of 1861 that one or two battles . . . would settle the whole issue." And Richard Beringer said that a "mass psychology" initially enabled southerners to stand "at the brink of the unknown and jump . . . resolutely and unsoberly." Through these works and many others, the year 1861 has been organized into a neat pattern in which initial disharmony gives way to enthusiasm, which eventually yields before grim reality. In the pattern, Confederates act with remarkable clarity of purpose. Secessionists express complete confidence in southern invulnerability. Moderates like Sam Houston hesitate to join in defiance against the North, and by Spring, all unite in an optimism and an innocence soon to be shattered by war.⁶

But 1861 was a more bewildering and disordered year for Confederates than historians usually suggest. Though southerners did write and speak generously of themselves for several months, pontification

amounted to only part of their message. Their second purpose, quieter than the exaggerated optimism expressed in Spring and Summer, involved instruction and attention to uncertainty. Properly analyzed, the same words that proclaimed victory, shouted praise, and broadcast defiance also described a nation fraught with doubt and confusion. They tell that southerners did not suddenly and confidently transform themselves into Confederates, but assumed the new identity slowly, cautiously, and with many questions.

This is especially evident in the oratory from mid-1861. Confederate speakers assuredly recognized the uncertainty in their society, for much of what they said sought to clarify issues and settle confusion. This side of Confederate oratory is easily lost amid emotion and hyperbole, but analysis locates it in phrasing and technique. Rhetorical examination reveals that the speeches of Spring and Summer were saturated with definition, a technique of argument designed specifically to clarify information. Definition generally appears as a straightforward classification like Robert Smith's "we are now a nation," mentioned above, or "a vindictive war is about to be inaugurated" from a speech in Texas.⁷ One noted scholar of rhetoric describes the technique as "a way of unfolding what is wrapped up in a subject

being examined. One of the rhetorical uses of [definition] is to ascertain the specific issue to be discussed" in order that the audience will clearly understand the arguments of the orator. Instances of definition, therefore, may serve as markers for subjects the audience is uncertain about or has trouble understanding.⁸

That Confederate speeches from 1861 were packed with definition suggests that many things were unclear during the new nation's first year. Indeed, speakers' use of the technique was so pervasive that even the simplest of speeches -- a few words in response to a serenade, the brief pep talk of the third speaker at a rally -- generally included several attempts to explain one or more issues. The degree to which definition could encompass and complicate the message of an oration is illustrated in a speech from Richmond, Virginia. In the early Summer, 1861, a unit of Maryland volunteers arrived in Richmond to receive a battle flag from a group of ladies. On June 8, during the flag ceremony for "Soldiers of the Maryland Line," Mr. J. Mason spoke to the assembled troops.

Because Mason was to honor the men with a "soldier's welcome," he addressed them with praise and enthusiasm. "By your enterprise, your bravery,

and your determined will," he began, "you have escaped from the thralldom of tyranny." Throughout the oration, he lauded their courage and the unselfish devotion that brought them out of Maryland and into Virginia. He asserted that their sacrifice would be known to history, and their legacy one of honor. "When history records the transactions of this epoch," Mason said with confidence, "when the passions of men shall have subsided, and the historian can take a calm and philosophical view of the events which have led to the present collision . . . he will write that the people of the Southern States understood and protected civil liberty." And soon, he added, the Marylanders could expect to take their flag back to Baltimore, "unfurl it in [the] streets, and challenge the applause of [the] citizens."⁹

Mason's optimistic words enlivened his audience and provoked cheers and outbursts of clapping. The soldiers enthusiastically accepted his praise and predictions of victory; they shouted back to him in agreement. And between ovations, they also absorbed his instruction, for as he praised, Mason explained to a group of men away from home what was happening to them and to their world. This is the part of 1861 oratory that has been neglected, the quiet side that taught and soothed, all the while

overshadowed by hyperbole and excitement. Properly analyzed, the tenor of Mason's words change. Many of his cheerful statements were, in fact, definitions, attempts to clarify recent events and address the uncertainty brought about by change.

Early in the speech, Mason attended to any doubts the soldiers might have had about Virginia. Speaking on behalf of the citizens of Richmond, Mason defined the attitudes the Marylanders could expect to encounter in the city: "We all know who you are. We all know what brought you here, and we are all ready, as I trust you have experienced, to extend to you a soldier's welcome." Paragraphs later, he expanded this definition to depict the city itself as the perfect station for incoming soldiers. "You are in Richmond," he said, "What is Richmond? It is a large city -- a city of gallant men and refined women. . . . At the present moment Richmond is a huge camp, where but one mind, one heart, and one determination animates every occupant, man, woman, and child."¹⁰ These words taught that though the soldiers were in a new place, the people around them were united in their support and approval. The Marylanders apparently agreed, for at this point, they momentarily stopped the speech with applause.

Mason then turned his attention to the soldiers themselves. "Why are you here?" he asked abruptly, "What has brought you across the border? What is your mission to Virginia?" His defining answers were equally straightforward: "You have arms in your hands; . . . You are here not merely to fight our battles. No I am not so selfish as to presume that; but to fight the battles of civil liberty on behalf of the entire South. You are on a high mission." He explained their new identities as soldiers, making sure he did not inflate the level of change in their lives: "you are volunteers in the war, and you are volunteers for the great cause of the South against the aggressions of the North. You are no strangers; you are our neighbors." Finally, he defined what lay ahead, pointing out "you will have no child's play" and urging them to "endure the trials of the camp, the weariness of the forced march, the vigilance of day and night, the restraints of discipline, and the patience to bear with discomforts and disappointments." "This," he stated, "is the test of real courage."¹¹ Mason's speech thus illustrates the dual nature of 1861 oratory. Its stirring words promoted enthusiasm and confidence, but its definitions addressed uncertainty and doubt. People with questions about

the presence of Maryland soldiers and soldiers themselves uncertain about their surroundings and actions could find answers and resolution within the discourse.

Many other speeches and sermons were similarly structured; the defiant and boastful words that rang from podiums, pulpits, and lecterns across the South were but cheerful facades that disguised the serious work of explanation and instruction. To expose completely the level of uncertainty in Confederate society during the so-called optimistic months of Spring and Summer, one need only study the astonishing array of definitions contained in the oratory. Reacting to perceived doubts and confusion, speakers ended up defining a complete portrait of their country, a portrait that included everything from abstract political philosophies to the role of the lady in war.

These definitions reflected how speakers conceived of the Confederacy and what they felt their audiences would accept. For example, regarding the South's role in the breakup of the Union, a number of orators cast the South as the blameless victim. Many sounded like Alabama minister H. N. Pierce. In a June sermon titled "God Is Our Only Trust," he established the South as a victim and defined

how disunion actually reflected responsibility. "We claim our rights -- nothing more," he said, "We have separated ourselves for peace-sake. Thirty years of misunderstandings, heart-burnings and bickerings, have shown that it is far better for all concerned, that we should be no longer one people. We have quietly withdrawn, and relieved them from all responsibility with regard to Southern institutions. . . . We ask only to be left in quiet. If war comes, it is of their own seeking."¹²

And war seemed inevitable, for, as many speakers pointed out, the South, gentle and peaceful as it was, did not exist in a world of its own choosing. It had an enemy, a powerful foe made up of "Vandals," "barbarians," and hordes of abolitionists "seeking to extend the folds of oppression."¹³ This was the North, a region of fellow Americans less than a year earlier, now redefined as a "dastardly," oppressive antagonist, hunkered in "frozen wastes" and plotting insidiously against the South. The North must have been a subject of particular concern, for many southern speeches on many different occasions involved its discussion. Henry Wise, in simply trying to say a few words to some serenaders, could not resist providing a lengthy definition of northern aggression: "They have undertaken to annul laws within your own

limits. . . . They have abolitionized your border, as the disgraced North-west will show. They have invaded your moral strongholds and the rights of your religion. . . . They have invaded the sanctity of your homes and firesides, and endeavored to play master, father, and husband for you in your households. . . . [And] now the armies of the invader are hovering around the tomb of Washington."¹⁴ These and other, similar words resolved uncertainty over the new relationship between North and South. No longer two parts of one country, in the orators' portrait the South became a peaceful, quiet land and the North a vicious and unrelenting predator.

Concerns over how to defeat such an enemy were addressed in detail. Orators defined a variety of strengths and a complete range of behaviors and attitudes that, if properly implemented, ensured success. They spoke bluntly about conduct, often sounding like Howell Cobb when he flatly told a Georgia audience "I'll tell you what you can do and what is expected of you."¹⁵ Across the South, audiences learned that independence from the North came with terrific demands on their conduct. Speakers defined temperance, obedience to authority, virtue, frugality, bravery, pride, discipline, sacrifice, and fortitude as some of the many traits evident

in the model Confederate citizen. Strength of character made the South unconquerable, for, as one speaker explained, "Nothing but convictions of truth and devotion to right ever yet gave, in the long run, victory to a nation or an individual. Leaving out of the question the mere power by which it is supported, falsehood contains the elements of its own dissolution."¹⁶ Northerners might have economic strength and great manpower, but southerners would always prevail, their superior nature an eternal advantage.

Speakers also bolstered southern morale by defining the Confederate cause as superior, even ethereal. Southerners fought a "holy war," a "war of purification," completely just and supremely right.¹⁷ "[You] are," stated one Virginian in April, "contending for everything dear to the hearts of freemen and fair women . . . for liberty, for right, for manhood, for truth. [You] are contending for the heritage of freedom transmitted . . . by the revolutionary forefathers."¹⁸ The righteousness of the southern cause attracted two powerful allies that sanctioned the South's actions and prevented misfortune. Describing southerners as protagonists in a battle between liberty and tyranny, speakers linked their actions to those of guardians of freedom

dating back to ancient times. "I have chosen a text once prayed by a man who often was in a similar situation as ours," said a minister from South Carolina, in reference to David, the Biblical hero.¹⁹ Others described how Christians defied Roman emperors and suffered for their faith, noting that the religion nonetheless survived and eventually prospered. And many spoke of the Revolutionary War, when a few American patriots stood against the might of the British empire and achieved independence for thirteen North American colonies. For centuries men had fought for and achieved what was just and right, sometimes against tremendous odds. Speakers defined these individuals as heroes, cast southerners as the heirs to their tradition of courage, and garnered the support of history for the South.²⁰

Paired with the might of history, divine sanction also benefited the South. The Confederacy received the protection and support of God, and in turn, tried to carry out His measures. "Such is the condition of this country!" explained the Reverend John Gierlow in an August sermon, ". . . True, the Lord is 'our help and our shield.' We have put our trust in His holy name, and He has fought our battles. . . . O, let us stand in awe before His throne of Mercy!"²¹

Evidence of divine blessing was said to come from the many favors God bestowed on the South, such as its natural abundance and the slave labor force, described as a "blessing to mankind."²²

This, then, was the image orators sought to impart to audiences across the South, an image that not only addressed uncertainty over their nation's past and future, but also helped them to establish a new identity as Confederates. In 1861, South and North were in many ways similar, "one people," in the words of a Union officer, "[with] the same language, habits, and religion," as well as a common agricultural tradition.²³ Speakers sought to define a new nation, a Confederacy that arose from the responsible efforts of a victimized people. They talked of how it existed peacefully and quietly, blessed by God, full of rich land and happy labor, populated by a brave, giving, and united people. Danger loomed from the North, where a savage and powerful enemy lurked, but southerners were confident of their ability to prevail, bolstered by their place in history and sanctioned by God. The portrait also included definitions of the Confederate government, Confederate women, weapons, fighting techniques, farming methods, and the nation's economic status,

all subjects speakers believed were clouded in confusion and uncertainty.

Rhetorical analysis thus revises some long-standing historical interpretations of the Confederacy. High levels of definition in the oratory from 1861 suggest the presence of a fair amount of confusion and doubt. Had Confederates felt supremely confident and completely resolute in their actions, they would not have had any need for speakers' repeated definitions. But the need was there, and Confederates by the thousands flocked to hear the words and explanations of their orators.

The next step in studying Confederate oratory involves expanding the analysis to involve all the rhetorical techniques available, including figures of speech, and the full array of arguments. An examination of Confederate rhetoric in general through 1865 will test the image from the first year to determine how well it withstood four years of warfare, as well as social, political, and economic upheaval.

ENDNOTES:

1. Sam Houston, Speech at Independence, Texas, May 10, 1861, in Echoes from the South. Comprising the Most Important Speeches, Proclamations, and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 178.

2. John K. Bettersworth, ed., Mississippi in the Confederacy as they saw it (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), 63.

3. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, Georgia, May 22, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 186.
4. Hon. Robert H. Smith, An Address to the Citizens of Alabama on the Constitution and Laws of the Confederate States of America by the Honorable Robert H. Smith at Temperance Hall, on the 30th of March, 1861 (Mobile: Mobile Daily Register Print, 1861), 23.
5. Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, May 22, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 187.
6. Paul D. Escott, After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 44, 52; James I. Robertson, Jr., Soldiers Blue and Gray (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988), 4; Richard E. Beringer, et al, Why the South Lost the Civil War (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 82. Also refer to works by W. Buck Yearns, and Richard B. Harwell. Yearns, in The Confederate Congress (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1960), 8, builds the picture of early enthusiasm inside the Confederate government: "James Harrison of Mississippi reported that they were 'all in good spirits and firm in the faith,'" Howell Cobb spoke of "general good feeling and disposition to unite and harmonize on whatever may be found the best policy." Both quotes were from February, 1861. Richard B. Harwell, in The Confederate Reader: How the South Saw the War (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1989), 9, wrote as part of his introduction to 1861 that in the lower South, "enthusiasm and emotion overrode wise admonition. The wisdom and love for the old Union . . . could not prevail against the ambition-fired confidence and irresponsible claims of the fire-eaters."
7. Smith, Speech at Mobile, March 30, 1861, 4; Houston, Speech at Independence, May 10, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 187.
8. Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 98-99.
9. J. M. Mason, Speech at Richmond, June 8, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 166-178.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.

12. Reverend H. N. Pierce, Sermons Preached in St. John's Church, on 13th of June, 1861, the National Fast Appointed by his Excellency Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America (Mobile: Farrow & Dennett, Book and Job Printers, 1861), 6. For other examples of the South defined as a victim see Rev. L. Muller, Sermon at Institute Hall, on Fast Day, June 13, 1861, Delivered Before the German Military Companies and German Population, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 17, 1861.
13. Sergeant Welch, Speech in response to General Simmons at the Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Moultrie, Charleston, South Carolina, delivered June, 28, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 29, 1861.
14. Henry Wise, Speech at Richmond, June, 1861, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 11, 1861.
15. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, May 29, 1861, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 4, 1861. For a similar statement ("Permit me to depict the character of a model soldier"), see E. T. Winkler, Duties of the Citizen Soldier. A Sermon Delivered in the First Baptist Church of Charleston, on Sabbath Morning, January 6, 1861, before the Moultrie Guards. (Charleston: A. J. Burke, 1861), 10.
16. Reverend A. M. Randolph, Address on the Day of Fasting and Prayer appointed by the President of the Confederate States, June 13, 1861, delivered in St. George's Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia (Fredericksburg: The Recorder Job Office, 1861), 9.
17. Wise, Speech in Richmond, June, 1861.
18. Roger Pryor, Speech at Charleston, April 10, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, April 11, 1861.
19. Reverend L. Muller, Sermon before the German Military Companies, June, 13, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, June, 17, 1861.
20. For other examples of historical figures cited as role models, see Reverend Muller, Sermon before the German military companies, June 13, 1861. Muller also cited Gustavus Adolphus who came "to the assistance of the oppressed Protestants of Germany, and land[ed] with only 15,000 Swedes in Pomerania." J. Mason, on June 8, 1861, 8, glorified the Maryland

soldiers of the Revolution, stating, "We had, in the days of the first Revolution, a Maryland line, whose name has passed into history without one blot upon its fair escutcheon - a Maryland line who illustrated upon every field in the South their devotion to the civil liberty of that day. . . . They were your ancestry. They traveled barefooted, unclothed, without blankets or tents, and but few muskets, and you came after them."

21. Reverend J. Gierlow, A View of the Present Crisis. Sermon delivered in St. James Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 17, 1861 (n. p.), 7.

22. Reverend W. H. Watkins, The South, Her Position and Duty. Discourse Delivered at the Methodist Church, Natchez, Mississippi, January 4, 1861 (n. p.), 5.

23. Edward Pessen, "How Different from Each Other Were Antebellum North and South?," American Historical Review, 85 (December 1980): 1149.

IV: FROM SACRED TO SINISTER: DEPICTIONS OF NATURE

By the summer of 1861, with secession complete and open warfare with the North underway, Confederate orators began the process of developing a detailed image of their nation, a task which noticeably altered the character of their discourse. In the atmosphere of excitement and uncertainty during March through May, speeches had been bluntly prescriptive, relying on the exorbitant and forthright use of definition to provide an immediate, if inelegant, explanation of the Confederacy and its people. But as southerners proved themselves in battle, grew accustomed to their new status, and realized an abundant Fall harvest, the intense feelings of the Spring abated and familiar emotions returned to the region. Soldiers wrote of how their initial excitement for military service faded, and boredom took its place.¹ One South Carolinian noted in August that "the spouters, the furious patriots who were so wordily anxious to do or die for their country" seemingly vanished after the battle at First Mannassas.² And, in oratory, variety in argument and style joined the mostly instructive rhetoric of early 1861.

The expanded style of discourse involved, among other things, an increase in the use of metaphor, a figure of speech through which items of different nature

and significance are joined in order to create an image for the audience. Metaphor was one of the most common devices in Confederate oratory, one that appeared in all types of discourse and in regard to a wide array of subjects. Therefore, in order to fully apprehend the words of southern orators, one must understand how metaphor functions in discourse. For the analysis of Confederate rhetoric, I have focused primarily on scholarship that concerns metaphor's effects on a speech audience and that supports the idea that rhetoric mirrors society. A 1983 article by rhetorician Michael Leff has been of particular value.

Studying how metaphor works upon human thought, Leff pointed out that scholars have traditionally classified it as a mere ornament, a device suitable for briefly sparking the imagination, but not as weighty or complex as the forms of argument. In argument, it was believed, a speaker drew his audience through various steps of logic and reasoning, raising their thought, and helping them to order and understand his beliefs and conclusions. With metaphor, he merely set up a striking juxtaposition that briefly fixed attention on an unusual comparison, thus decorating his prose with an imaginative aside. In Leff's words, the traditional interpretation erected a "wall of separation" between metaphor and argument.³

With the development of interaction theory in the 1960's, however, rhetoricians, though not detracting from metaphor's stylistic aspects, began to suggest that the device did not simply decorate, but instead functioned in a complex manner similar to that of argument. Summarizing the ideas of several scholars, Leff wrote that speech analysts have come to believe audiences comprehend a metaphoric statement as the two juxtaposed items "interact with one another, and various aspects of these subjects are selected, emphasized, suppressed, and ordered."⁴ In other words, interaction theorists postulate that when people hear a metaphorical statement, instead of receiving it superficially as a type of ornament, they comprehend the imagery only after studying and ordering the associated objects much in the same way that they analyze the points of an argument.

Interaction theory is significant to this essay because it illustrates the link between metaphor and society. The idea that audiences select, emphasize, and order "various aspects" of the items juxtaposed suggests that they bring a collection of personal ideas and images into their interpretation. According to rhetoricians, audiences surround each item in the metaphor with a number of "associated commonplaces," images and beliefs that automatically come to mind when

the item is presented. In order for a metaphor to be effective, therefore, the speaker must juxtapose items that fall within the common experience of his audience or risk their misinterpreting his meaning. Leff made this point succinctly. "Metaphor" he stated, "draws its materials from communal knowledge."⁵

When this interpretation is applied to Confederate oratory, it indicates that southerners readily understood imagery about two subjects in particular: slavery and nature. Slavery will be the topic of a later chapter. This chapter concerns the rhetorical treatment of the southern landscape and of the region's natural phenomena, for references to these subjects, framed metaphorically or otherwise, occurred frequently in Confederate oratory.

In fact, a survey of southern Civil War discourse reveals that speakers mentioned the natural environment in virtually every type of oration. In speeches before the army, they compared soldiers to flowers, to "trees transplanted into another soil," and warned of the approaching "storm of battle."⁶ Standing in the halls of state legislatures and in the national Congress, political orators spoke of green fields, the sea, howling storms, and mountains, often pairing natural imagery with serious argument. And in church, ministers spoke readily about soil, water, mountains, storms, and fire. The Reverend John Parks, for example, attempted to raise

spirits in 1864 by pointing out that though the wicked might "flourish as a bay tree for awhile, yet the eye of God is upon him and retribution must and will overtake him."⁷ References to the natural environment even appeared in some of the desperate orations delivered late in the war. At a mass meeting in March, 1865, Governor Watts of Alabama cried that the Confederate army rejected "ignominious terms of peace presented to us by Lincoln" with "the sound of mighty waters."⁸

Such consistent inclusion of the natural environment produced a type of rhetoric in which detailed references to the southern landscape, climate, and even rare phenomena were quite common. In their use of metaphor, for example, speakers expected listeners to properly interpret juxtapositions involving specific types of trees, as well as pebbles, whirlpools, thunderstorms, galaxies, clouds, the ocean, mountains, bears, locusts, "white-winged birds," and aspen leaves. They also referred directly to distant rivers, mountains, unusual vegetables, climatic conditions, and soil. In rhetoric, the frequency with which orators mention a subject registers their confidence about its suitability. Judging from the pandemic occurrence of the environment in Confederate rhetoric, southern speakers apparently felt that their

countrymen understood the South's landscape and weather conditions in detail.

And, given the mentality of many southerners before the war, this was not an implausible assumption. A number of historians have pointed out that antebellum southerners, because they lived primarily in rural settings, became acutely sensitive to their surroundings. Bertram Wyatt-Brown portrayed them as inexplicably linked to the natural cycles of "death and birth - the violence of hog-killing, the tasks of calving." Southerners, he said, interpreted these events as "all part of the same comforting routines and duties. They were life itself."⁹ And William Freehling described how residents of the Deep South so internalized their surroundings that their conversations inevitably turned to "hurricanes and floods, the price of cotton and slaves, cost of land and yield per acre, making a killing before cotton killed the soil."¹⁰

Southerners, in fact, not only talked incessantly about their natural environment, they also discussed the subject in their letters, diaries, and newspapers. Traveling in the North, as was fashionable before the war, they studied and wrote about the landscape, feeling, according to historian John Hope Franklin, "well qualified to comment on the physical features of the northern countryside. . . . their own plantations or

other rural connections . . . had sharpened their powers to observe any rural scene."¹¹ In addition, planters kept journals about crops, soil conditions, and climatic developments, noting periods of drought and rain and recording their thoughts about the appearance of their crops and their countryside.

In many cases, these journals provide in-depth information about the physical characteristics of the American South, for some writers, like farmer David Golightly Harris, were prolific note-takers. Harris, from the South Carolina piedmont, has been described as an average slaveholder, a man who farmed 100 acres and owned only ten bondsmen, most of whom worked outdoors in field and lumber work.¹² Despite, however, the relatively small size of his operation, Harris took great interest in his lands and crops. He wrote daily about the weather, taking note of clouds, rain, and cold spells, even differentiating between "light frost" and "really white . . . frost and ice." He studied his corn, wheat, and oat crops, recorded the growth in his gardens ("had wattermelons [sic], roasting corn, and a few nutmeg melons"), discussed hunting for turkeys, foxes, beehives, and wild fruits, and generally agonized over his soils and the condition of his lands. His journal entries typically included information about both weather and crops. For April 28, 1858, for example,

he noted, "Last [night] was quite cold. . . . All of our beans have been killed and some potatoe, cabbage. . . . Two hands planting corn at the Mountain. This corn is much frost-bitten, but I think it will come out again. The day is quite cold."¹³

Southern novels and newspapers further illustrate regional interest in the natural environment, for these mediums also described the countryside and took note of a variety of natural occurrences. Opening the Memphis Daily Appeal on January 10, 1857, readers found not only a report of "snow!" in Mississippi, but also a short, metaphorical filler juxtaposing the climatic condition known as "Indian summer" with human life. "In the life of a good man," it read, "there is an Indian summer more beautiful than that of the seasons; richer, sunnier, more sublime than the most glorious Indian summer."¹⁴ Chapter one of the popular antebellum novel Swallow Barn offered a lengthy description of a Virginia landscape, of an "extensive tract of land which stretches some three or four miles along the river, presenting alternately abrupt promontories mantled with pine and dwarf oak, and small inlets terminating in swamps."¹⁵ According to literary scholar Jan Bakker, antebellum southern writers wrote of their region as "a beautifully cultured rural place of sunny green repose and

contemplation. Birds sing in the groves . . . streams and fountains are sparkling, clear, and musical."¹⁶

But the pre-war South was not altogether beautiful and fertile, nor was it a particularly easy place in which to live. Visitors noticed that swamps, mud, thick undergrowth, and the presence of deadly reptiles rendered certain areas virtually impassable.¹⁷ Some sections looked ugly and presented enormous difficulties for farming. According to environmental historian Albert E. Cowdrey, logging often reduced expansive forests to barren, eroded fields, while inattention to drainage allowed floods and rains to reduce lands to muddy wastes. Cowdrey also adds that southern soils were often mediocre, more sandy than rich, and that "melodramatic weather," including tornadoes, hurricanes, and hailstorms ravaged the landscape.¹⁸

Southerners acknowledged the limitations and destructive forces of their natural environment in several ways. Newspapers found dramatic value in lightening strikes and terrible storms, and farmers spent a fair amount of time complaining. Harris griped about high heat and droughts, about "these awful, dark thunderstorms . . . so common I am getting tired of them," and about rains and frost that spoiled his crops.¹⁹ And some also took steps to remedy the shortcomings of their region. Farmers and planters

attended agricultural lectures and read journal articles describing ways in which increased output might be wrung from what one man called "the little remnant of fertility still left in our lands."²⁰ States assisted by passing laws restricting burning and logging activity.

Like antebellum southerners, Confederate orators acknowledged the paradoxical nature of the environment. As Silas Bunch pointed out, "these skies, now so balmy and benignant, shall, 'ere we are scarce aware, be terrible with the rush of the hurricane, and the dismal blaze of the forked lightening, and the awful roar of the thunder."²¹ However, in 1861 and 1862, many speakers declined to place environmental limitations or dangers within the Confederacy. Instead, they attached these features to other areas of the world, often with the implication that natural disturbances and instability visited regions tainted by social improprieties.

The North, therefore, was frequently defined as a land of "icy wastes" and "frozen seas," as a frightening region threatened by snakes, deadly lightening, walls of fire, and the "storm clouds of Abolition fanaticism."²⁴ Mexico was an inhospitable desert of "burning sands."²⁵ Europe, according to one South Carolina speaker, rocked under the "throes of earthquakes, shook before the "sweep of ten thousand storms," and lay in waste from the "gloomy track of

the tornado."²⁶ Italy contained a dangerous volcano, and India was described as "ravaged as with a storm of fire!"²⁷

In contrast, orators spoke of the South's gentle climate and terrain of unmatched beauty and majesty, only occasionally referring to its tired soil and unpredictable weather. In speaking of their own environment, orators defined its size and variety of vegetation, but often exchanged instructive language for a more jubilant style of communication.²⁸ "What a noble and inviting country!" cried a North Carolinian in April, 1861. "What a soil, and climate, and variety of productions . . . almost everywhere an inviting soil, capable of every variety of production and, in many portions of the Confederacy, still of virgin fertility -- with every good climate of the world, and very little of the bad."²⁹ In Georgia, Howell Cobb avoided telling his listeners what to think about their environment and only urged them to recognize its plenty. "Heaven has smiled upon us from the first," he shouted from a hotel balcony. "Go look at your crops; you may call it a good season or whatever else you may, but I tell you that it is the blessing of God upon us at this time."³⁰ Cobb's link between the environment and the divine was not unusual; many speakers claimed that natural grandeur reflected the blessings of God.³¹

Having dispatched frightening natural occurrences beyond the borders of their country, orators focused more on the Confederacy's bounty and beautiful features, often linking natural abundance to national power and strength. "The wealth of our country is immense and its prospective resources are inexhaustible," stated a Virginian in March, 1862, "we shall see that our power is unbroken and substantially unimpaired. . . . Our country presents many natural advantages for defense. . . . Climate contests an invasion of our country. The roads themselves swallow up the power of an invader."³²

In seeking to link the environment and the nation, most speakers tried to be as detailed in their descriptions as possible. None, however, approached the level of specification reached by Richard Yeadon in an August, 1862 speech in Aiken, South Carolina. Before the war, Aiken's fame rested primarily in its congenial climate and beautiful setting. Citizens from Charleston spent summers there, exchanging their city's heat and humidity for clean air and a gentle climate. Invalids visited as well, hoping to recover their health amid the town's hundreds of trees, flowers, and orchards. Plants of all types grew wonderfully in Aiken; fruit did especially well, and plums, apricots, nectarines, and strawberries were available in abundance. In 1858,

recognizing their good fortune, town citizens formed an agricultural society to "promote the culture and improve the quality of fruit in general."³³ It was this society that asked Mr. Yeadon, editor of the Charleston Courier, to speak.

Addressing the South Carolina Vine Growing and Horticultural Association, Yeadon argued that gardening illustrated a high level of civilization. And, in order to prove that the South exemplified advanced cultural development, he launched into an exhaustive portrait of Confederate cultivation, a portrait that drew on the gardens, crops, and orchards of Aiken:

we have the apricot, the nectarine, the pear, the apple, the plum, the cherry, the fig and the quince. Here too, the strawberry, bordering beds with green and rich leaved fringe . . . aided by the dairy supplies the delicious bowl of strawberries and cream . . . the raspberry, and the grape vine, twining the frequent arbor with its curling tendrils, like a woman's love to a man's support.

Nor must I omit to mention the kitchen garden and its store of vegetable wealth. The exquisite asparagus, the **hard** headed cabbage, . . . the golden carrot, the richly colored and well flavored watermelon, and the luscious muskmelon and cantaloupe, the curious kohl-rabbi, with its turnip bulb above ground, . . . the delicate squash, common and cushaw, the Guinea squash or egg plant, the green corn in the ear, okra and tomatoes . . . are among the vegetable treasures, which careful and assiduous culture wrests in great perfection from our sandy soil.³⁴

Confederate speakers celebrated and aggrandized their environment through 1861 and well into 1862.

Audiences, according to newspapers, responded enthusiastically with the "wildest applause" and vociferous cheers.³⁵ But, there was a danger in placing such emphasis on natural beauty and bounty during a time of war, a danger relating to the character of war and its effects on the natural world. Military conflict changes the environment in devastating and shocking ways; smoke from the guns and fires of battle obscures the sky; fields are laid waste, and trees scarred by bullets. Waters run with blood and choke with bodies, while gentle breezes turn acrid from the effects of gunpowder and explosives. During the early stages of conflict, in 1861 and 1862, by envisioning and celebrating their country solely in terms of its majesty and plenty, southerners failed to prepare themselves for the possibility of its destruction, or for an existence in surroundings made ugly by combat.

To be sure, a few speakers had warned that natural disturbances could appear in the South should the region depart from the correct path. John A. Gilmer, a North Carolina unionist who considered secession illegal, described the South in January 1861, as in the clutches of a "raging storm." The Reverend H. N. Pierce cautioned Alabamians that if they were to lose their respect for God, "the rain of heaven should be withheld for a few months." Or, "instead of a drought, [the] showers of

Heaven . . . [would] descend much more copiously than usual, [and] the worm might make its appearance." A few speakers also pointed out that war could affect their nation's beauty and alluded to the possibility of environmental destruction. However, a greater number focused enthusiastically on their country's natural majesty and strength, and this behavior indicates that audiences did not gladly receive warnings about the future.³⁶ Confederates apparently did not care to hear suggestions that they might suffer or fail in war. They preferred words like those delivered by a graduation speaker in Richmond, Virginia, statements that the South, with "a broad and fertile land with many a mountain pass for a Thermopylae, and many a plain for a Marathon," could not be defeated. "The attempts to subjugate such a country," he said, "must be as futile as an attempt to subdue the waves of the ocean."³⁷

However, in 1862, southerners were forced to confront the destruction and loss of their territory. Large tracts of land burned in the battle of Shiloh (April 6-7), and areas of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Louisiana fell to the North. The Mississippi River, once called a "mighty stream" of "majesty, grandeur, and power," became a northern waterway and, in Baton Rouge, a garbage pit for the remains of cotton burned in advance of the approaching Union army (May 9).³⁸

For Virginians, the Peninsular Campaign (May-July) turned their "sacred soil" into fodder for pillaging northern forces, while fighting in Fredericksburg (December 13) turned the battlefield into a "horrible spectacle" of bodies and blood.³⁹ Soldiers tore into the land to make trenches, showered it with shells, fired crops, and trampled gardens. After the war, a northerner traveled to an 1864 battle site in Virginia and noted the devastation of the land, how "only a ghostly grove of dead [tree] trunks and dreary dry limbs remained." Riding near the site of the "bloody angle" at Spotsylvania Court House, he noticed a "hacked and barkless tree . . . in the midst of graves."⁴⁰ In 1866, farmers plowed skulls from the ground at Antietam.

Discourse from late 1862 and to the end of the Civil War indicates that the war forced southerners to reconsider what they believed about their surroundings. Initially, speakers were unable to unite on a single solution or set of instructions as to how citizens should react to their changing world. Governor Zebulon Vance of North Carolina told the people of his state to "suffer and endure" and to rethink their concept of the environment as a land of plenty. "All the fruits of the earth," he said, "should be saved most carefully; retrenchment and reform should begin in our households."⁴¹ William Yancey suggested that

Confederates transform their surroundings into a battlement, "to make of each hill-top a fort, of each pass an ambuscade, and of each plain a battle-field."⁴² And Benjamin Hill offered no plan of action at all, preferring instead to maintain the image of a beautiful and strong environment, reassuring his listeners that "we [have] a territory not surpassed by any nation -- large, compact, and fertile," and describing the land as the "flowing gardens of beautiful Pensacola . . . the wave-washed shore of surf-beaten Hatteras . . . the banks of the classic James and York."⁴³

However, through 1863, with warfare growing more destructive and northern forces moving relentlessly into Confederate territory, orators devoted increasing attention to a new, darker concept of their environment. And, in a speech from September, 1862, Williamson Oldham expressed himself in a way that anticipated this change in attitude. Oldham urged southerners to make bloodshed and destruction their impetus to fight harder. Noting that Confederate soldiers had "met the enemy on a hundred bloody fields," he used a metaphor suggestive of natural destruction, the metaphor of fire, to press for increased fighting spirit and bloodlust. Urging his countrymen to "fan the flame to brighter burning," he subtly indicated that natural destruction did not matter, that flames, the natural enemy of forests and plains, should

be increased and more "bloody fields" created.⁴⁴ With these words, Oldham presaged a coming shift in Confederate thought, for, faced with the destruction and loss of their land, southerners began to speak against their natural environment. In many cases, they ceased to describe natural beauty and began casting the environment as ugly and antagonistic.

This change in attitude is manifest in several aspects of rhetoric. In their use of metaphor, for example, speakers increasingly began joining unfriendly elements of nature with the Confederacy, a process that suggests audiences were becoming more aware of the dangers in their surroundings and less interested in flowers, plants, and sunbeams. In late 1862, one man said that the nation was caught in the "whirlpool of Revolution" and threatened from within by the "flames of an almost fanatic enmity."⁴⁵ The following year, a speaker in Congress referred to an "ocean of blood" that threatened to swallow the South's republican government, leaving anarchy in its place.⁴⁶ In 1864, Governor Vance of North Carolina spoke metaphorically about a "roaring flood" that nearly drowned the citizens of his state, while a minister in Richmond, Virginia talked of how "monsters as moral sharks, vultures, and vampires flourish[ed] upon the ruin of the land."⁴⁷

Other speakers juxtaposed the Confederacy with hoar-frost, reptiles, and dangerous animals.

Besides metaphor, other elements of rhetoric also indicate that southerners became increasing gloomy about their natural environment as the war progressed. Rhetorical questions evocative of natural destruction and deterioration began to appear. While a speaker in 1861 cheerily asked "has not South Carolina holy ground for you?" a military officer in late 1863 sought to convey a very different feeling. "How is it with us?" he asked. "Half our territory overrun. . . . smoking ruins, and plantations abandoned and laid waste, meet us on all sides, and anarchy and ruin, disappointment and discontent lower over all the land!"⁴⁹

Speakers used comparisons to examine the devastation around them in detail. Mr. Perkins, of Louisiana, contrasted the state of the Mississippi River before and after the war, pointing out that the destruction of its "immense" levees, once of such great magnitude as to attract foreign tourists, now allowed the waterway to rampage through fields nearly fifty miles outside of its regular route.⁵⁰ And finally, the words associated with the environment began to change. In many speeches, the land that was "sacred soil" or "holy ground" in 1861 and 1862 was downgraded to the status of mud or dirt. In October, 1863, General E. W. Gantt

of Arkansas even cast the southern environment as the Confederate soldier's enemy. Its snow and ice froze his "half-clad" body, and he "shivered under the bleak sky." Furthermore, its "scene of blackness, of anguish, and desolation . . . where wealth, happiness, and plenty [once] smiled" destroyed confidence and bred depression.⁵¹ As Albert G. Brown of Mississippi acknowledged in late 1863, the environment was becoming a source of despair. Studying the land, he sighed, only brought him images of the "thousands and tens of thousands who have given up their souls to mammon."⁵²

During the last years of the war, northerners made good on their threats to "starve, drown, burn, shoot the traitors." Southerners wrote of finding roads clogged with dead horses, of fields burned, graves disturbed, and of important cities like Columbia, South Carolina, doused with noxious chemicals and set afire. One man described the burning of Columbia in February, 1865, as if terrible volcanoes had erupted within the city: "here was Aetna," wrote the city's mayor, "sending up its spouts of flaming lava; Vesuvius, emulous of like display, shooting up with loftier torrents, and Stromboli, struggling, with awful throes, to shame both by its superior volumes of fluid flame." "The winds," he wrote, "were tributary to these convulsive efforts and tossed the volcanic torrents hundreds of feet in

the air. Great spouts of flame spread aloft in canopies of sulfurous cloud . . . edged with sheeted lightnings."⁵³

Faced with such calamities, some orators so increasingly disparaged their surroundings that it might be said they were engaging in a celebration of destruction. Benjamin Hill, in March, 1865, described the South's "balmy" climate, fruitful soil, flowing rivers, and land "flowing with milk and honey," but then devalued this image by asking "What will it be to us that our skies are bright and our climate balmy, if the spirits of our people are bowed and broken?" He concluded that natural beauty might have to be sacrificed for the war effort. Rather than let Northerners occupy and enjoy the South, he said, "I could pray that God would curse these lands until not a seed could vegetate, and darken these skies until not a ray of light could penetrate the blackness!"⁵⁴

Rhetorical analysis indicates, therefore, that during the Civil War Confederates experienced a profound change in their attitudes about the environment. In 1861, they had celebrated the beauty and plenty in their surroundings. However, when faced with the destructive effects of military conflict, they were abruptly forced to reconsider their beliefs, to temper their idealized concept of their environment. Audiences still

appreciated references to the "bright sun that has blessed us," to "mountains and . . . valleys." But, by the end of the war, they also understood that much of their region had become "cruelly blighted, 'like Dead Sea fruits, Which turn to ashes on the lips.'"

"Do you love your property?" asked Howell Cobb in 1864, "It has been destroyed and trampled under foot."⁵⁵

In other words, the Civil War forced southerners to exchange an idealized portrait of their environment for one that reflected the grim realities of war.

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25. Williamson S. Oldham, Speech upon the Bill to Amend the Conscript Law, delivered in the Confederate Senate, September 4, 1862, (n. p.), 8.

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29. Hon. Daniel Baringer, Speech on the importance of an agricultural education, extract, location unknown, date unknown, in Milledgeville Federal Union, April 16, 1861.

30. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, delivered May 28, 1861, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 4, 1861.

31. For an example of an orator linking natural beauty to the divine, see Reverend J. Gierlow, A View of the Present Crisis. Sermon delivered in St. James Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 19, 1861 (n. p.), 4. Gierlow said, "He keeps the ocean sweet with the breath of His tempests, and He purifies the stagnant atmosphere with the fire of His forked lightnings."

32. Hon. Charles W. Russell, Address Before the Richmond Medical College, date unknown, in Richmond Enquirer, March 28, 1862.

33. Aiken, South Carolina: A Description of the Climate, Soils, and the Nature of the Products in the Vicinity of Aiken, South Carolina, Especially Fruit, Cereals, Cotton, Corn, etc. Including Extracts from Letters of Distinguished Visitors, Correspondents, Action of Town Councils Inviting Emigrants, etc., etc. (New York: J. C. Derby, Pub., 1870), 21.

34. Richard Yeadon, esq., The Garden and the Vineyard. Anniversary Address Before the Aiken Vine-Growing and Horticultural Association, date unknown, in Charleston Daily Courier, August 30, 1862.

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36. For a speaker hinting at future difficulties, see Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, May 22, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 183. Cobb warned that Virginia's "soil is to be the battle ground, and her streams are to be dyed with southern blood." See also Henry Wise, Jefferson Davis, Speeches at Public Meeting, location and date unknown, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 11, 1861. Wise predicted that southerners would have

to walk through "fire or through a river of blood," while Jefferson Davis suggested that the South was threatened by a "tide of despotism." Finally, the Reverend J. Gierlow also spoke on the subject. Gierlow, Sermon at Baton Rouge, August 11, 1861, 5. Gierlow added that, like Hercules, though the South had "throttled the serpents that were sent to strangle him . . . there are also Lernean hydras yet to be destroyed . . . before the golden fruit in the garden of the Hesperides can be gathered."

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38. C. Sidney Lobdell, Speech at the Flag Presentation to the Delta Rifles, delivered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, April 20, 1861, in West Baton Rouge Sugar Planter, April 27, 1861.

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V: SLAVERY AND SLAVES: A GROWING UNEASE

Though descriptions of the South's landscape and natural phenomena occurred frequently in Confederate oratory, the resulting environmental portrait contained one striking omission. It lacked inhabitants, for orators often neglected to include a human presence in the "fields clothed with the rich glories of the harvest" or to acknowledge the role men played in developing the region's natural features. Furthermore, on those occasions when they mentioned human handiwork, speakers often employed generic, unspecific language, rarely identifying the exact people who cultivated, built, and toiled. In the rhetoric of Alexander Stephens, for example, "we" often sufficed to explain who "dug down the hills and filled the valleys."¹ In another case, a speaker referred to unspecified "laborers" who harnessed the waterfalls of North Carolina.²

The portrait, therefore, rendered virtually invisible millions of white cultivators, but also the estimated four million slaves who constituted a third of the southern population. And given the significance of slavery in the antebellum South and in the creation of the Confederacy, the omission of the institution seems particularly remarkable.

Historians agree that slavery had tremendous, far-reaching effects on the South, that its influence, as Kenneth Greenburg has written, "echo[ed] endlessly through all areas of Southern thought and behavior."³ According to William Cooper, Jr., it was the central issue of antebellum politics, permeating not only the rhetoric of southern statesmen, but shaping their political battles into contests over its defense.⁴ And, Greenburg adds, because many politicians were slaveowners, the institution also affected their style of leadership. In office, many behaved in a manner reminiscent of that of a master, at once authoritarian, independent, concerned, and just.⁵

The influence of slavery has also been noted in some of the South's most distinctive social characteristics. The region did not experience widespread industrial development, for example, in part because many southerners believed that slaves could not work effectively in a factory setting. Fears that slaves could not be controlled in an urban environment helped to slow the growth of southern cities. And whites, confronted daily with the effects of enslavement, developed a distinctive and passionate devotion to freedom, a passion they curiously paired with a powerful desire to maintain black slavery at all costs. Though only one quarter of all southerners owned slaves, whites

nevertheless united behind the institution, whether because it conferred a degree of superiority on even the lowliest of their race, or because most aspired to ownership. Southerners bought slaves to display their prosperity and achievements. As one Union officer noticed from his Civil War post in middle Tennessee, "All the people who had obtained any sort of success . . . had owned slaves."⁶

But the greatest impact of slavery lies in its role in the breakup of the United States and in the creation of the Confederacy, for the events of early 1861 were rooted in decades of disagreement over the nature of the institution, its future, and its place in the Union. From 1830 to 1860, in conflict over territorial rights, and faced with accusations of immorality in their slaveownership, southerners responded by developing a "systematic and self-conscious" proslavery ideology.⁷ In so doing, they came to focus increasingly on slavery as they approached the 1860's.

Southerners constructed the new ideology from foundations established in the eighteenth century. They reiterated the regionally-accepted notion that slavery operated under divine approval, but added historical and scientific data as additional supports. They also appended a humanitarian element aimed directly

at free labor activists, an argument that slavery actually benefited the bondsman by showering him with more advantages and kindness than he could expect as a free worker. And, they explained in detail the benefits that slavery offered the nation, noting how slave labor enabled the South to produce tremendous numbers of food crops. During the antebellum period, as the South faced increasing opposition to the institution, this ideology came to occupy not only the contents of its speeches, sermons, and lectures, but also the pages of its novels and lines of its poetry. Citizens responded enthusiastically, confirming the salience of slavery in their lives by purchasing some twenty-five thousand copies of James Henry Hammond's 1858 "Mud-Sill" speech and leading Edmund Ruffin to remark, in 1859, that his most recent slavery pamphlet had attracted more notice "than . . . anything I ever wrote before."⁸

The South, therefore, faced the divisive issues of 1859 and 1860 with a strong pro-slavery attitude and a strong desire to defend the institution. In late 1860 and early 1861, this mentality translated into action as fears generated by the election of Abraham Lincoln, a man condemned specifically for his "opinions and purposes . . . hostile to slavery," prompted the lower South to leave the Union.⁹ The New Orleans Bee

explained the significance of the institution to disunion. "As long as slavery is looked upon by the North with abhorrence," read one editorial, "as long as the South is regarded as a mere slave-breeding and slave-driving community; as long as false and pernicious theories are cherished respecting inherent equality . . . there can be no satisfactory political union between the two sections."¹⁰

Given the intensity of proslavery feeling present at the birth of the Confederacy, one might expect the rhetoric of the new nation to have dealt specifically and extensively with the institution, to have celebrated its role in the independent South, and to have openly and consistently mentioned slaves. Surprisingly, though, this is not what happened. In Confederate rhetoric, past the first few months of 1861, direct references to slavery or to slaves appeared infrequently and often in nothing more than a single statement or sentence. Furthermore, an examination of how such references changed over time and of how Confederate orators included slavery in their language reveals two striking insights. Rhetorical analysis indicates that Civil War southerners, far from celebrating the institution, actually felt uncomfortable with its presence. And, rather than embracing slaves as vital and precious assets,

Confederates developed a keen sense of hatred for their bondsmen.

Evidence that Confederates had reservations about slavery appears in their rhetoric as early as Spring, 1861. In this first year, orators spoke directly and favorably about the institution fairly often, a factor that, at first glance, suggests southerners maintained their antebellum pro-slavery enthusiasm. But direct references constituted only one of the rhetorical means through which speakers discussed slavery. They also alluded to the subject by weaving its terminology into their discourse, using words and phrases associated with the institution to describe subjects as varied as the economy, the North, and conscription. In this behavior one finds that slavery almost always had negative connotations. Orators unerringly joined slave terminology to subjects they felt could be harmful and should be avoided, indicating that, as Confederates, southerners easily associated slavery with trouble, problems, and disorder.

Indirect references to slavery took many forms. For example, the physical objects and instruments used in controlling the slave population were often mentioned in reference to the North. The Reverend L. Muller, in a June, 1861, sermon before German military companies, described northern aggression in terms of slave catching,

noting that the North had turned loose "bloodhounds" on the South "to blot our honor and annihilate our existence." The northern press, he added, the "vile slave of their brutal public opinion," applauded this action.¹¹ Other speakers condemned Yankees for attempting "to play master" in southern households and for seeking to "chain the hands and close the mouths" of southern citizens.¹²

Speakers also associated slavery with behaviors and activities in their own country that they sought to discourage. When arguing against certain government actions, for example, they again used reference to chains and masters as a means of expressing their displeasure. In North Carolina, Robert Dick, concerned with the growing power of the military, phrased the issue to suggest that too much army authority would amount to the exchange of northern tyranny for a "new master."¹³ Likewise, speaking out against the suspension of habeas corpus in 1864, a Mr. Grissom also raised the threat of mastery, this time at the hands of Confederate politicians. "We thought they were our servants," he said, "how did they become our masters?"¹⁴

By 1862, the negative image of slavery conveyed in allusion and imagery was beginning cloud some direct statements as well. The year 1863 found E. W. Gantt of Arkansas referring to slavery as a "cankering sore."¹⁵

And, in a January congressional oration, John Baldwin of Virginia noted that slavery actually harmed the southern war effort. Because the Confederacy, he said, "was founded on the institution of slavery . . . the sympathies of the world were against us."¹⁶

However, though Confederate orators did scorn slavery on occasion, their rhetoric indicates that Civil War southerners never completely renounced their appreciation for the institution. Throughout the war, orators continued to voice antebellum proslavery arguments, describing the institution as beneficial and as a blessing from God. In January, 1861, the Reverend W. H. Watkins of Natchez, Mississippi delivered an extremely charitable portrait of slavery in which he acknowledged its role in developing the South. "African slavery," he said, " . . . has done more for civilization, commerce, wealth, and the uplifting of human society, than any other political institution known to man." God, Watkins concluded, made slavery "a blessing to mankind."¹⁷ South Carolina Governor Pickens, celebrating the fall of Fort Sumter in April, also praised slavery as "a source of strength in war," while, in 1864, Henry Watkins Allen stated that "this institution will triumph because it is right and just in the sight of Almighty God."¹⁸ Even as the Confederacy crumbled in March, 1865, Benjamin Hill of

Georgia still insisted that slavery was vital to the well-being of the black American. "Slavery," he stated, "is the only civilizer of the negro [sic]."¹⁹

Rhetorical analysis thus reveals that though Civil War southerners may have felt a degree of unease in regard to slavery, they were nonetheless unwavering in their support for the institution. Such consistency in thought, however, does not appear in regard to slaves. Instead, on the occasions when orators spoke either directly or indirectly of the bondsmen, their words describe a dramatic transformation of sentiment and opinion, a transformation in which feelings of care and good will gave way to vicious hatred.

Before the war, and through the first months of conflict, southerners recognized both the close relationship between master and slave and the slave's contribution to the southern way of life. A writer in 1859 pointed out that "the **first** and **kindest** outgoings of our Christian compassion should be toward them. They are not only near us, but also entirely **dependent** on us."²⁰ And, in 1861 and 1862, Confederate orators described slaves as "a source of wealth incalculable," as "one of the unmistakable elements of a great nation."²¹ They were "civilized, hardy, and happy laborers," the men and women whose labor "has made the

wilderness a garden," and which "enrich[ed] the civilized world."²²

But as Confederate fortunes declined, orators shifted from describing their slaves as happy laborers to depicting them as savage enemies capable of "burn[ing] your home and murder[ing] your family."²³ Blacks became "flat-nosed, thick-lipped sons of Africa," "naturally adverse to labor" and expert thieves.²⁴ Their "slavish subserviency," once celebrated as perfectly natural and acceptable, was recast as an abject form of behavior, which, in Governor Vance's words, "injures both giver and recipient [and] is to be avoided and despised."²⁵ Actions specifically associated with slaves were joined to behaviors southerners wanted to discourage. Condemning the problem of desertion, one man said that runaway soldiers "[took] to the woods," thereby applying to them an expression antebellum masters reserved for runaway slaves.²⁶

Most importantly, though, black slaves were described as tools of the North intended to take over the South, enslave white men, and outrage white women. In January, 1864, Governor Allen warned that Louisiana blacks were already starting to experiment with powers granted to them by northern forces. During his inaugural address, he noted that one of the great outrages of "Butler the Beast" involved his accepting the "false

accusation of a negro woman" as an excuse for dragging from a sick bed one of the "most respectable citizens of New Orleans" and throwing him in jail.²⁷ Likewise, Governor Vance described the "dreadful" happenings in Beaufort, South Carolina. Whites had been expelled from this sea island, Vance noted, and its lands put up for sale. "Colored men," he said, "are the principal buyers," resulting in "Your lands confiscated and sold to your own slaves!"²⁸

Given that speakers seek to orate the beliefs of their listeners, this information suggests that, in regard to black slaves, southern thought underwent a tremendous upheaval between 1861 and 1865. And faced with the basic question of why such a transformation took place, one finds insight by examining where slaves and slavery appeared in Confederate rhetoric. As mentioned, both received limited attention. However, a content analysis of slave rhetoric suggests that this oversight was calculated.

Throughout the conflict, orators carefully segregated the Confederacy, clearly indicating that certain areas were the rhetorical domain of whites alone. Slaves, for example, were not even remotely associated with the military. Instructing soldiers in the sacred trappings of their country, speakers cast homes, firesides, liberty, soil, and southern civilization

as worthy of defense, but completely ignored slaves and slavery. Nor did they include a slave presence in depictions of soldiers' loved ones. In Confederate oratory, as Howell Cobb made very clear in 1864, the military family did not admit blacks. Arguing that Georgians should care and provide for soldiers' families, he twice made certain his audience understood exactly whom he meant: "When I see a soldier's wife whose little ones are dependent upon her labor for support . . . I am compelled in my heart to say there is some great wrong somewhere. . . . See to it that no soldier's wife or child shall suffer."²⁹ Nathaniel Boyden of North Carolina similarly limited the family. Describing conscription in 1864, he noted its terrible effects on southerners, how it "enter[ed] the dwelling of the poor widow, whose father and husband have fallen in battle; it finds there the one son . . . and the helpless and dependent daughters. The son is the only one on the farm capable of following the plowshare."³⁰

Faced with proposals to draft slaves into the Confederate army in 1864, a number of orators responded forcefully, arguing at length that such actions would not only destroy the South's military might, but also ruin the institution as well. Many expressed horror at the idea of blacks serving alongside white soldiers. Thomas Gholson of Virginia, a lawyer and judge before

the war, pointed out through a precisely-ordered speech that "our soldiers have been brought up to believe . . . the negro an inferior race. Will they then consent to march and fight with this inferior race, on terms of equality?"³¹ H. C. Chambers believed the answer would always be the negative, claiming "even victory itself would be robbed of its glory if shared by slaves."³² Speakers also argued against arming slaves, claiming that such actions would alter their submissive nature or eventually cause food shortages as bondsmen were removed from the fields. In all of Confederate rhetoric, one message emerged clearly: slaves had no place in the army. As one man said, "we are not reduced to the necessity of staking our salvation on the capacity . . . of negro troops. We have 'stout hearts and strong arms' enough to drive back our enemies."³³

That southerners disassociated slaves from the military does not seem surprising in light of how orators defined and described the army. The Confederate fighting man, according to many a speaker, had a "brave heart," an abundance of courage, a sense of personal honor, and a strong determination to defend his nation's rights. He was moral, temperate, and merciful, but also steeled to the tasks of war. A South Carolinian called soldiers the "flower[s]" of their communities, while the Reverend John Parks concluded that such men

were "never born to be slaves."³⁴ Thus, throughout the war, many orators treated the very idea of "a negro officer walking the streets" with scorn and contempt.³⁵ Several raised the specter of black Union soldiers to dissuade interest in peace and surrender. "How are we to obtain peace?" asked Parks, speaking after the execution of of twenty-two Confederate deserters, "we of course will have to endure the deep and untold mortification of having bands of negro soldiers stationed in almost every neighborhood."³⁶

But just as speakers did not associate slaves with the Confederate military, they also declined to define a role for their bondsmen in the civilian war effort. In 1861, even as southerners found war-related functions for items as obscure as chicken feathers and straw, speakers generally did not outline a province for slaves, or even hint that they had a function in the cause. Fast-day speakers did not include blacks as they praised the Confederacy and spoke of the importance of morals and devotion to God. Secular orators urged planters to grow food staples and to sell their cotton and rice crops to the government without so much as an allusion to the slaves responsible for the harvest. Slaves almost completely vanished from the political speeches of 1862 and 1863 and did not reappear with any strength until 1864, in controversy

over whether to employ black troops in the Confederate army. Again, part of the reason for the exclusion of slaves may lie in the initial definitions of Confederate character. Southern civilians, speakers said initially, "breath[ed] freely the air of independence . . . and maintain[ed] our claim to manhood."³⁷ They were patriots, working together with "warm hearts and busy fingers" in the defense of their rights, acting with courage, gallantry, wisdom, and self-respect, and, therefore, nothing like simple, inferior slaves.³⁸

In addition, analysis also reveals that slavery itself had a limited role in Confederate oratory. Though speakers occasionally voiced positive comments about it, an examination of how and where these comments appeared reveals that speakers often relegated the institution into a rhetorical function. Rather than uniformly celebrating or mentioning it for its own merits, as had been the practice before the war, they more frequently employed slavery as a means of persuasion, attaching it collaterally to another, primary issue.

Accordingly, in speeches from early 1861, as orators sought to convince upper-South states to unite with lower or to persuade their own citizens of the merits of the new Confederacy, they spoke of slavery frequently. A speech by Henry Benning of Georgia illustrates, though

with a more thorough integration of slavery than most, the relationship the institution and argument often assumed. On February 14, 1861, Benning, in company with orators from Mississippi and South Carolina, addressed the Virginia State Convention. He sought to convince the Virginians that their only viable option was to secede from the Union and, in this argument, he cast slavery as the decisive issue.

Benning gave three reasons for why secession was necessary, all of which related to the institution. First of all, he said, union with the North bound Virginia to a region whose people universally "hat[ed] slavery" as a moral and social evil. Second, northerners could not be trusted to leave Virginia's institution alone; for decades they had plotted and were currently plotting to destroy it. And, third, the North planned to politically empower the slaves, to provide for "black governors, black judges, black legislators, black juries, black witnesses - everything black." Of course, Benning added, such a development would result in the extermination and outrage of southern whites and in the destruction of southern lands. In black hands, the once "goodly land" of the South would degrade into a "howling wilderness."³⁹

Only by insuring the survival of slavery could Virginia save itself from such a fate, and, according

to Benning, secession was the only means of defense. "Separation," he said, "takes slavery out of the hands of its enemies, and puts it in the hands of its friends." It also ended problems with fugitive slaves, for Benning disclosed that northerners hated free blacks and would, once apart from the South, no longer welcome runaways. The slave who managed to reach the North, he said, would soon "sigh for the plentiful bread and 'hog meat,' the jolly companions, and the master and mistress bound to care for him in sickness" and return home. By way of conclusion, Benning compared the North and South on the issue of slavery, stating "with us you will have concord on the slavery question . . . with the North you will have increased discord."⁴⁰

Benning's speech thus interwove slavery into all points of his argument. However, for this reason, while it is a good illustration of the rhetorical context in which slavery usually appeared, it is not so effective at illustrating how slavery was employed. Few speakers made the issue such a comprehensive part of their work. Instead, most cast the subject into a rather ancillary role, often burying it deep in the oration as one of many factors in support of the argument, or downplaying its importance. More typical utilizations appear in Robert Smith's 1861 oration on the Confederate

Constitution and in Alexander Stephens' "Cornerstone" speech.

Smith, urging southerners to unite in accepting the Confederate Constitution, cited the document's recognition and protection of slavery as one proof of its efficacy. He talked at some length on the subject, mostly reiterating proslavery arguments -- that history sanctioned the institution, and that slavery benevolently transformed the "wild savage" into "a civilized appendage to the family." Turning to the Constitution, he noted with pride that "We have now placed our domestic institution, and secured its rights unmistakable, in the Constitution; we have sought by no euphony to hide its name -- we have called our negroes 'slaves.'" However, Smith downplayed the importance of slavery through his language, stating at one point, "let the subject pass," and at another, "so much for this question of strife."⁴¹ He also buried the issue in last third of his oration, inserting it just after a discussion of new postal policies, and just before a brief treatment of the policies for admitting states. Slavery therefore, appeared simply as one of many factors improved by the new document.

Such was also the case in a rather famous oration by Alexander Stephens. On March 21, 1861, Stephens gave what has been called the "Cornerstone" speech in

Savannah, Georgia. This particular work has been cited frequently as evidence that slavery was highly important to Confederates, for, at one point, Stephens claimed that the "cornerstone" of the southern nation "rest[ed] upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery -- subordination to the superior race -- is his natural and normal condition."⁴²

However, what historians have overlooked in this oration is that it did not primarily concern slavery. Instead, it was partly an analysis of the new Constitution, partly a discussion of southern strengths, and partly a set of optimistic predictions for the South's future, with condemnation of the North added for spite. Slavery was introduced as one of many constitutional issues and presented in a fairly unspectacular manner. Stephens led into the subject weakly, almost apologizing for including it in the oration. "Not to be tedious in enumerating the numerous changes for the better," he said, "allow me to allude to one other -- though last not least."⁴³ And once grappling with slavery, he simply reiterated accepted information about the divinely-ordained inferiority of the slave, the historical precedent for slavery, and the civilizing influence of the institution. His words did not generate any great applause (as did subsequent statements about southern independence and

wisdom) and were not particularly original; to some extent, in fact, he echoed the antebellum rhetoric of James Henry Hammond, who referred to slavery as a "cornerstone" of liberty in the 1850's. In 1858, Hammond also said that slaves constituted "the very mud-sill of society," a statement similar to Stephens' 1861 claim that slaves were the "substratum of our society . . . made of the material fitted by nature for [their position]." ⁴⁴ Stephens' "cornerstone" statement may have caught the attention of history, but slavery did not constitute the cornerstone of his speech. It was a secondary factor, abruptly dismissed with the curt statement, "But to pass on."

In all of Confederate oratory, slavery received no more than cursory attention except when speakers wanted to add a sense of urgency or force to their words. And even in cases when the institution received fairly lengthy treatment, such as in Smith's or Stephens' orations or in the 1864 inaugural address of Governor Henry Watkins Allen, speakers often neglected to explain what benefits slavery offered the South. Allen, speaking to Louisianians at a time when their future seemed bleak, reiterated several times that "We will carry the institution of domestic slavery with us through this war." ⁴⁵ However stirring these words may have been, they neglected, as did those of Smith, Stephens, and

even Benning, to explain or define the importance of the institution to the Confederacy.

Considering the limitations in the overall rhetorical treatment of of slaves and of slavery, it might be said that antagonism towards slaves developed because they were vulnerable. Southerners, as the words of their orators indicate, neglected to determine a role for slaves to perform in their new country, excluding them from the military experience and from contributing on the homefront. They spoke favorably of slavery without, in many cases, explaining or defining its importance. Southern Civil War rhetoric thus limited the Confederacy to whites only. Therefore, as the national situation grew more and more perilous by 1864, causing white southerners to turn on each other, it seems understandable that black slaves, not defined as vital to the country, became the subjects of scorn.

ENDNOTES:

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2. Samuel Hall, Esq., Speech before the General Assembly of North Carolina, February 13, 1861, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, February 14, 1861.
3. Kenneth S. Greenberg, Masters and Statesmen: The Political Culture of American Slavery (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), ix.

4. William J. Cooper, Jr, The South and the Politics of Slavery: 1828-1856 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).
5. Greenberg, 21.
6. Stephen V. Ash, Middle Tennessee Society Transformed, 1860-1870: War and Peace in the Upper South (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 44.
7. Drew Gilpin Faust, ed., The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 4.
8. For an example of a proslavery advocate describing the benefits of the institution, see E. N. Elliott, Cotton is King and Pro-Slavery Arguments: Comprising the Writings of Hammond, Harper, Christy, Stringfellow, Hodge, Bledsoe, and Cartwright, on this Important Subject (Augusta, GA: Pritchard, Abbott & Loomis, 1860), 65. Elliott wrote, "to fully comprehend our indebtedness to slave labor for groceries we must descend into particulars . . . of domestic slave grown sugar and mollasses, take, for home consumption, to the value of \$34,779,000." Of cotton production, Elliott added that the demand for cotton "must be met . . . this can only be effected by concentrating the greatest possible number of slaves upon the cotton plantations." Faust, Ideology of Slavery, 5.
9. Henry Benning, Speech before the Virginia State Convention, February 14, 1861, in Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc., supplement to vol. 1 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1866), 148.
10. Kenneth M. Stamp, ed., The Causes of the Civil War, revised edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1986), 114.
11. Reverend L. Muller, Sermon at Institute Hall on Fast Day, June 13, 1861, Delivered Before the German Military Companies and German Population, Charleston, South Carolina, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 17, 1861.
12. Henry A. Wise, Speech in Spring, 1861, location unknown, date unknown, in Echoes from the South. Comprising the most Important Speeches, Proclamations,

and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 151.

13. Robert P. Dick, Substance of remarks made on a motion to adjourn the North Carolina Convention, date unknown, in North Carolina Standard, May 14, 1862.

14. Mr. Grissom, Remarks upon the adoption of the Majority Resolutions in relation to Habeas Corpus, delivered in the House of Commons, May 25, 1864, in North Carolina Standard, June 1, 1864.

15. Brigadier-General E. W. Gantt, Address (Little Rock: publisher not named, 1863), 26.

16. John Baldwin, Substance of the Remarks of Mr. Baldwin of Virginia, on Offering "A Bill to Fund the Currency." Delivered in Confederate House of Representatives, January 16, 1863, (n. p.), 3.

17. Rev. W. H. Watkins, The South, Her Position and Duty. Discourse delivered at the Methodist Church, Natchez, Mississippi, January 4, 1861, (n. p.), 5.

18. Governor Francis Pickens, Speech at Charleston, South Carolina, April 13, 1861, in Charleston Courier, April 15, 1861; Governor Henry Watkins Allen, Inaugural Address to the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, delivered at Shreveport, January 25, 1864, (n. p.), 8.

19. Benjamin H. Hill, Speech at La Grange, Georgia, March 1, 1865, in Benjamin H. Hill, Senator Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia, His Life, Speeches, and Writings (Atlanta: T. H. P. Bloodworth, 1893), 277.

20. Elliott, Cotton is King, 159.

21. Governor Z. B. Vance, Inaugural Address, delivered in Raleigh, North Carolina, September 8, 1862, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, September 18, 1862. For a fine example of praise for slavery, also see Reverend C. C. Ionis(?), The Religious Instruction of the Negroes. An Address delivered before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia, December 10, 1861, (n.p.), 8. Arguing that slaveowners needed to ensure that their slaves had a proper religious education, Ionis stated, at one point, that "to the fruit of their labor we owe our education, our food, and clothing, and our dwellings, and a thousand comforts of life that crowd our happy homes . . . what could

we do without this people? how [sic] live, how support our families? And have they no claims upon us?"

22. Hon. Robert Smith, An Address to the Citizens of Alabama, on the Constitution and Laws of the Confederate States of America, by the Hon. Robert Smith at Temperence Hall, on the 30th of March, 1861 (Mobile: Mobile Daily Register Print, 1861), 19; Watkins, "The South, Her Position and Duty," 5.

23. Zebulon B. Vance, Speech on Washington's Birthday, delivered at Hillsborough, North Carolina, February 22, 1864, in Hillsborough Recorder, March 9, 1864.

24. Governor Thomas Watts, Synopsis of remarks before the Mass Meeting held in Montgomery, on February 25, 1865, in Montgomery Daily Advertiser, March 3, 1865; Honorable Thomas S. Gholson, Speech of Hon. Thomas S. Gholson of Virginia on the Policy of Employing Negro Troops, and the Duty of all Classes to aid in the Prosecution of the War. Delivered in the House of Representatives of the Congress of the Confederate States on the 1st of February, 1865 (Richmond: Geo. P. Evans & Co., Printers, 1865), 8.

25. Zebulon B. Vance, Inaugural Address, September 8, 1862, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, September 18, 1862.

26. Reverend John Parks, Sermon before Brigadier-General Hoke's Brigade upon the Execution of 22 Men for Desertion, 28 February, 1864, At Kingston, North Carolina (Greensboro, NC: A. W. Lincoln & Co. Book and Job Printers, 1864), 9. For an example of an antebellum planter's use of the term, see Eugene Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made Vintage Books Edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 649. Genovese quotes from an 1857 article on the value of whipping. A planter calling himself "Clod Thumper" wrote that "Africans are nothing but brutes, and they will love you the better for whipping, whether they deserve it or not. . . . To be sure, a half a dozen of them may take to the woods, but that is no loss to you." For a striking example of deserting soldiers compared to slaves, see Wilmington Daily Journal, September 18, 1862, in which a thirty-dollar reward was offered for the "apprehension and confinement" of Private H. Tredwell, who deserted from camp in August. This little notice was printed almost exactly like those for runaway slaves, and included much of the same information. Tredwell was described as "5 feet 11 inches high, sallow complexion; had on gray jacket when he left." In place

of the master's name in the lower right hand corner, the paper placed the name of Tredwell's captain, J. F. Moore.

27. Governor Henry W. Allen, Inaugural Address delivered to the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, Shreveport, Louisiana, on January 25, 1864, (n. p.), 4.

28. Governor Z. B. Vance, Speech on Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1864, in Hillsborough Recorder, March 9, 1864.

29. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, January 28, 1864, in Rebellion Record, Vol. 8 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1867), 344.

30. Nathaniel Boyden, Remarks delivered in the Senate of North Carolina, on the subject of the suspension of the writ of Habeas Corpus, date unknown, in North Carolina Standard, June 15, 1864.

31. Thomas S. Gholson, Speech on the policy of Employing Negro Troops, February 1, 1865, 6-7.

32. Honorable H. C. Chambers, Speech in the Confederate House of Representatives on the special order for that day, being the resolution offered by him on the first day of the session, delivered November 10, 1864, (n. p.), 4.

33. Gholson, 13.

34. Governor Francis Pickens, Speech at Charleston, delivered April 14, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, April 15, 1861; Reverend John Parks, Sermon Before Brigadier-General Hoke's Brigade, February 28, 1864, 14.

35. Zebulon Vance, Hillborough Recorder, March 16, 1864.

36. Parks, 10.

37. T. R. R. Cobb, Substance of an Address to his Constituents of Clark County, location unknown, delivered April 6, 1861, (n. p.), 2.

38. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, May 22, 1861, in Echoes from the South, 185.

39. Henry L. Benning, Speech before the Virginia State Convention, February 14, 1861, in Rebellion Record, supplement to vol. 1, 149, 150.
40. Ibid., 151, 154.
41. Robert Smith, Address at Mobile, March 30, 1861, 17, 18.
42. Alexander Stephens, "The Corner Stone" Speech in Savannah, Georgia, March 21, 1861, in Cleveland, 721.
43. Ibid., 721.
44. James Henry Hammond, "Mud-Sill" Speech, in Eric L. McKittrick, ed., Slavery Defended: The Views of the Old South (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 122.
45. Governor Henry Watkins Allen, Inaugural Address, January 25, 1864.

VI: GENTLEMEN ALL: THE QUESTION OF CHARACTER

In denying slaves a meaningful role in the southern war effort, Confederate orators indicated that the responsibility for their nation ultimately rested with whites. The rhetorical analyst, therefore, must next examine the beliefs that white Confederates entertained about themselves and their character. Technically, this is a difficult subject, one far more complex than the discourse on slavery or nature. In addressing the elements of character, including behavior, manners, skills, virtues, and personal accomplishments, orators turned from metaphor to less striking, more indirect forms of communication. Some hinted at acceptable traits through stories and ethical appeals. Some flatly defined appropriate standards of behavior. And, on occasion, some used comparisons or even single words of greeting to convey subtle messages.

Consequently, for the study of character, the method of examination must change again. The analyst may no longer rely on a limited number of techniques, such as metaphor and definition, to provide insight. Instead, the examination must expand to include virtually every element of style and technique of argument. The task is both difficult and time-consuming. However, if carried out properly, it reveals that southerners did

not assume the burdens of war and nation-building without first determining the personal traits, virtues, and manners they needed for success. And, speeches from the Confederacy's first years show that this creation of a wartime identity involved the disposal of several antebellum traditions.

The process began in early 1861, with assaults on the established convention of rank. Most historians agree that rank was an important factor in the antebellum South, one that ordered behavior and traits of character according to social position. In Dueling in the Old South, Jack Williams pointed out how rank controlled behavior on the field of honor, stating "A gentleman fought another gentleman with a pistol . . . a gentleman horsewhipped or caned a person of the lower estates."¹

No gentleman ever accepted a challenge from one not considered his social equal. But who was his social equal? . . . Laboring men and mechanics were not classified as gentry. Businessmen and merchants were suspect, except that bankers were usually highly considered. . . . College teachers were counted as gentlemen.² . . . planters were gentlemen.

Perhaps, though, the best illustration of how rank informed behavior and character comes from Daniel R. Hundley's Social Relations in Our Southern States. Writing in 1860, Hundley identified seven distinct groups among whites, each with its own habits, virtues, and traits. The poorest whites, for example, had "awkward

manners and a natural stupidity or dullness of intellect that almost surpasses belief."³ Common people, or yeomen, though poor and often illiterate, nonetheless exhibited an "independence of character," great skill with weapons, courage, hospitality, and a strong interest in politics and slavery.⁴ The doctors, teachers, farmers, storekeepers, and mechanics of the middle class were industrious, religious, generous, independent, and champions of slavery. And gentlemen manifested physical grace, education, fine manners, and great attraction to politics and the military arts. William Cooper, Jr. says that Hundley depicted a "society greatly influenced by the power and pretension of social class."⁵

But, when southerners became Confederates, their rhetoric reveals that they immediately dismantled the antebellum concept of rank, turning instead to a more homogenous portrait of their society. "We are brethren," Jefferson Davis told an Alabama crowd in February, 1861, "not in name, merely, but in fact -- men of one flesh, one bone, one interest, one purpose . . . at home we shall have homogeneity."⁶ In Georgia, Congressman Daniel Baringer told an April audience that "He can never be a true patriot who endeavors to array the poor against the rich . . . or any one class of society against another in a country like ours. . . . We have no 'ranks' in society."⁷ And, before the Sunday School Union of

Charleston, Congregational minister Thomas Rice used a natural metaphor to emphasize the importance of unity. "When we look into the natural world," he said, "we see an endless variety; but it is always combined with an order . . . though there is multiplicity, there is unity. The colors of the rainbow are numerous and strongly marked, yet they all unite and blend into one beautiful, grand arch. . . . Let us, in our hearts and efforts, be like these delightful works of God."⁸

Given the importance of rank in antebellum society, such calls for homogeneity and unity suggest that, in 1861, white southerners sought a fundamental redefinition of themselves and their character. They wanted, according to one Louisiana speaker, to become "a new people," bound by a "sacred love of country . . . fighting for our sovereign rights and bowing in adoration to the August Majesty on high."⁹ However, attaining this goal presented some difficulties. Hundley reveals that no one set of characteristics typified the southerner, a factor indicating that homogeneity had to be forged through a selective process. Furthermore, Confederate discourse shows that Civil War southerners invested character with a tremendous significance and believed that their chances for success hinged, in part, on the quality of their citizens. Rice voiced concern that without morality and intelligence "in the mass"

the Confederacy might crumble.¹⁰ Similarly, Jefferson Davis linked victory to the South's ability to show that "we are not degenerate sons" and that "Southern valor still shines as brightly as in the days of '76."¹¹

Not surprisingly, therefore, as southerners became Confederates, they chose to portray themselves as universally gallant and majestic. South Carolinians, according to their Governor were a "brave people . . . high-toned and chivalrous" and their soldiers beautiful, the "flower and the hope and the pride" of the state.¹² Other speakers celebrated Confederate strength, intelligence, and morality, and cheered "the noble-hearted, high-souled, chivalric women."¹³ "The best sentiments of our nature," said a soldier at a flag ceremony, included "a noble, lofty, manly patriotism, happily commingled with a gallant and commendable chivalry."¹⁴

Much of the early Confederate discourse contained similar words of praise, as both secular and religious speakers joined in extolling the southern character. If one were to engage such bombast in a purely rhetorical analysis, it might be dismissed simply as a function of discourse. In Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, Edward J. Corbett writes that orators universally associate the virtues of courage, temperance, justice, generosity, prudence, and loyalty with those

they seek to compliment. These "common virtues," he states, "figure in discourses of praise."¹⁵ However, when one places the rhetoric about character in its historical context, it becomes but one part of a larger purpose. Southerners, it seems, had a specific persona in mind for their wartime identity, one highly respected before the war. Their boasting and self-promotion were parts of an effort to unite the population under the qualities and attributes of the ideal gentlemen.

In the antebellum South, the gentleman was subject to strict codes of ethics and behavior. His status rested partly on his ability to display characteristics regionally associated with the "complete man," including wealth, education, integrity, courtesy, confidence, and humility. Ideally, a gentleman came of "aristocratic parentage" and exhibited "faultless physical development."¹⁷ He was educated in the classics, trained in the military arts, politically active, courteous, and, though generally well-off, uninterested in self-promotion or "mere money-getting."¹⁸ The model gentleman also felt strongly the concept of duty and the need to "seek temperance in all things"; he balanced humility against pride, prudence against courage, frugality against extravagance, and extended compassion and magnanimity towards his enemies and his slaves.¹⁹ In addition, Hundley noted, he was proudly independent,

"a man every inch, bold, self-reliant, conscientious, knowing his own convictions of duty and daring to heed them."²⁰

Before secession, these qualifications restricted membership in the gentry to a small percentage of the southern population. In Confederate rhetoric, however, there are striking instances in which speakers flatly advocated transforming the South into a land of elites. Thomas R. Cobb, for example, said in April that southerners had a duty to "develop in our own people that highest type of man, which combines physical endurance with cultivated intellect, provident forethought with enlarged benevolence, wise statesmanship with enlightened Christianity. . . . To that glory, let us aspire."²¹ Likewise, in May, Reverend Rice advocated the use of Sunday Schools specifically to raise the "poor, neglected child . . . quite above that grade in society to which his birth assigned him. . . to widen the scope of his pursuits . . . to what is good and honorable, philanthropic, and benevolent, and at last he is raised to glory, honor, and immortality."²²

Much of the discourse from 1861 involved the description and dissemination of attributes once associated with gentlemen. And not surprisingly, definition figured prominently, especially when speakers

elucidated behavior and virtues. The Reverend Henry Winkler, for example, instructed a Charleston military company to embrace what he defined as "the character of a model soldier," a character highly reminiscent of the model gentleman. Winkler advised the Moultrie guards to practice temperance, "a comprehensive virtue, especially worthy of the regard of the citizen soldier," as well as justice, heroism, devotion to God, and mercy. "Spare, wherever you can," Winkler stated, "because a sublime and peculiar dignity belongs to human nature."²³ Sam Houston took a similarly definitive approach in May when he demanded that a crowd of Texans assume "all the heroic virtues which characterize a free people. There must be that sacrificing spirit . . . which will yield private desires for the public good. There must be that fortitude which will anticipate occasional reverses." Most importantly, though, southerners needed temperance. "The South," Houston said, "chivalric, brave, and impetuous as it is, must also add to these attributes of success through discipline."²⁴ Many speakers called for southerners to adopt the gentleman's modesty and sacrifice for the war effort. They spoke of the need for "noble generosity" and self-sacrifice; one man went as far as to call ambition "unholy."²⁵

But definition was not the only technique orators employed for the promulgation of genteel qualities. In fact, some chose to educate through less authoritarian, more subtle means, an indication that audiences understood and assumed certain traits more easily than others. Few speakers, for example, flatly instructed their listeners to exhibit "manly independence," but preferred instead to promote this virtue through little vignettes or illustrative stories. In one case, a speaker cited Roger Taney to illustrate the glory of the individual act of courage. "A native Marylander," J. Mason said in June, "he remains at home to defend the last refuge of civil liberty against a remorseless tyranny. I honor him for it; the world will honor him. . . . there will be inscribed upon his monument the highest tribute ever paid to a man. He has stood bravely in the breach, and interposed the unspotted arm of justice between the rights of the South and the malignant usurpation of power by the North."²⁶

Similarly, in several speeches from Summer, 1861, Howell Cobb promoted independent action through a story about personal sacrifice. The character in this case was an old planter "whose trembling limbs had already borne him to his three score and ten years." The elderly gentleman, Cobb said, illustrated the "feelings of our people."

He was asked, what will you give to sustain our Government in this war? "Tell them," said he, with the fires of patriotism glowing over all his features, "when my cotton reaches the market, to give me enough for my expenses, and take all the rest." Noble old patriot! And there are thousands and tens of thousands like him all over the South!²⁷

Through 1861, orators gradually provided audiences with the information needed for refinement and elevation. Those who did not know the proper behavior were taught through definition and illustration. Those who lacked proper, "aristocratic" parentage heard themselves described as the sons of Revolutionary War figures.²⁸ And those who did not have the proper educational background were offered a fair amount of training by both secular and religious orators. Speakers explained contemporary developments and issues, including the reasons for secession, the Confederate government, and the fiscal details of war bonds, in great detail. They also peppered their discourse with references to the past, thus providing listeners with something of the classical education associated with gentlemen. Indeed, in 1861 alone, listeners were exposed to treatments of the ancient Greeks, the Roman empire, the American Revolution, Napoleon, the French Revolution, and to quotes from a variety of historical figures. In some cases, orators treated these subjects in great detail.

General James Simons, as part of an address at a flag ceremony, chose to provide a brief lecture on the "history and origins of the Zouaves," a subject he discussed for several paragraphs. "The Zouaves," he said,

were independent tribes of the province of Constantine in Algeria, who were in the custom of selling their military services to barbarian powers in Africa. The French, between the years 1830 to 1839 sought to make use of these Zouaves as part of the French army in Algeria, and by adding French soldiers to their ranks, and putting the corps under the command of French officers, they hoped to win over the Arabs from their love of country. This effort was attended with little success. The Zouaves deserted in great numbers, and the French could not rely on them, so that by the year 1839, the Zouave Corps²⁹ were composed entirely of Frenchmen.

Speakers' efforts to mold Confederates into model gentlemen indicates that southerners initially believed that they could assume such an elevated character. However, this activity also suggests that they made the same mistakes in regard to themselves that were made in their depictions of the natural environment. In casting natural beauty as a defining feature of their country, Confederates failed to prepare themselves for war and its potential for destruction. Similarly, in linking success with their ability to sustain the qualities and traits of the model gentlemen, they established unreasonable expectations for themselves

during a particularly trying and arduous period. Even at the best of times, sustaining the moderation, the confidence, the calm detachment, and the humility required of the gentleman was difficult, and a number of antebellum southerners committed indiscretions. Some, like Thomas King, a successful sea-island planter from Georgia, had problems with alcohol. Others, including James Henry Hammond, could not control their passions and were prone to sexual misbehavior and violence. As Bertram Wyatt-Brown notes, "Gentility involved mastery of quite subtle marks of status . . . rules not easy to follow with aplomb."³⁰

Thus, the first signs of Confederate declension appeared early, for wartime conditions put a tremendous strain on the civilian population. Shortages appeared almost immediately as the Union blockade restricted imports; by August, 1861, for example, supplies of coffee had dwindled to the point that southerners were drinking brewed okra, barley, or corn.³¹ Prices rose steadily until, by 1862, salt, fabrics, meats, tin, and copper were beyond the reach of average citizens. These problems, as one Virginia speaker recognized, made for the first test of Confederate character, the first challenge to their ability to unite, sacrifice, and exhibit the economic disinterest of the gentleman. "The time is past," said the Reverend Stephen Elliot in

November, "for levity, for dissipation. . . . We have now entered upon the work which demands all man's self-possession."³²

Southerners, however, failed the test. Instead of acting in harmony, promoting generosity, and disdaining "mere money making," many aggressively exploited the situation for personal gain.³³ Some hoarded badly needed food and supplies in hopes of controlling the market and reaping tremendous profits. Businesses fed inflation by continuing to release paper money into the saturated economy, and citizens counterfeited the national currency. In addition, some planters and farmers selfishly refused requests to grow more food than cotton, preferring the risk of grain shortages to decreased profits. As for the military, the flow of volunteers began to decrease by early 1862, stemmed in part by setbacks in Tennessee and North Carolina.

By 1862, Confederate citizens had come to recognize that they were not living up to expectations. In February, the Richmond Enquirer lamented the selfishness of Confederate citizens. Noting that horses needed by the military were tied up in cab service in Richmond, the paper asked if it were too much that the city population "consent to walk a few squares." It demanded that southerners "practice all the self-denial that

the crisis demands" and specifically begged the wealthy to contribute to the war effort through "a temporary sacrifice of useless pleasures."³⁴ By late 1861 and into 1862, however, with abuses continuing unchecked, Confederate governments embarked on what one historian calls a "radical departure from custom" and began legislating behavior.³⁵ States took control of agricultural activity and ordered farmers to grow food crops. Those who refused were fined or, in some cases, imprisoned.³⁶ The distilling of whiskey, a practice that made money for the individual but took food from the country, was restricted across the South. Civil and military officials seized and distributed the catches of speculators, thereby forcing recalcitrant citizens to share their goods and supplies. And, in April, 1862, the national government began conscripting soldiers, eventually forcing some 80,000 men to sacrifice their freedom and sometimes their lives in the army.

Government thus responded to civilian intransigence forcefully and dramatically. In contrast, the oratorical response was less trenchant and remained so throughout the balance of the war. Some orators continued to speak in the tones of early 1861, promoting genteel attributes, educating, stressing the importance of harmony, and praising their listeners as gallant and noble. Robert Barnwell Rhett, for example, reminded an October, 1862,

audience of the importance of moderation and justice. "We must," he said, "be dignified and firm among ourselves, but kind and forbearing to our enemies to the utmost limit."³⁷ That same year, Senator Charles Russell of Virginia, in a speech before students of the Richmond Medical College, added that southerners "never dream of submission and have no fear of subjugation . . . have resolved to be free, and have courage to sustain that high resolve." To Russell, such qualities granted Confederates the right, "therefore, to anticipate a glorious future."³⁸ In 1864, Gustavus Henry described Confederate citizens as "determined to suffer and endure, [feeling] that suffering and enduring but purify our hearts."³⁹ And early 1865 found Louisiana Congressman John Perkins stating that southerners would agree with the words of one of the Apostles: "we are troubled on every side yet not dismayed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed."⁴⁰ Speakers also continued to offer historical information and thorough explanations of political and economic developments.

But the discourse on character also included some noticeable changes, many of which first appeared in the oratory of the second year. In 1861, nearly every orator spoke optimistically about southerners' ability

to assume an elevated character. Many sounded like Alexander Stephens who, as part of his "Cornerstone" speech, told his audience that "Our destiny is in our own hands. . . . We have intelligence, and virtue, and patriotism. All that is required is to cultivate and perpetuate these."⁴¹ In 1862, darker words began to appear in the rhetoric as, for the first time, orators addressed their listeners with scorn and sarcasm. Indeed, as southerners demonstrated their inability to sustain the gentlemanly ideal, speakers responded with verbal assaults against the population. Stephens, in fact, in November called profiteering activity one of the "evils of war," and those who participated, "extortioners."⁴² A Georgia speaker said that while southerners went hungry, the distilling of grain into whiskey amounted to a "mockery of humanity."⁴³ In one of the most bitter attacks from 1862, Senator James Phelan viciously denounced the "army of officers whose services are useless, and who only consume the scanty substance of the land." Angrily concluding an oration on conscription, he cried:

. . . I protest, against a policy which shelters at home in slothfulness and repose, the pampered pensionaries of official patronage, when all other classes of our population . . . are bearing aloft the banner of the Confederacy, dripping with their patriotic blood.⁴⁴

Most significantly, the depiction of the ideal character also began to change. Starting in 1862, orators increasingly spoke against individuality, advocating that southerners forgo "manly independence" for unquestioning obedience and unity. Charles Russell demanded this forcefully in his speech before the Richmond Medical College. "Sustain your government firmly," he ordered the students, "however vigorous, or stern, or severe its measures may be for a time. Stand by it though it should demand the services of every citizen . . . and though it may exert the largest powers for the suppression of treason."⁴⁵ Likewise, Georgia Senator George Gordon stated that "we must all make sacrifices in this war." In Gordon's case, that meant "yield[ing] obedience" to a government measure he found unacceptable, relinquishing his right to mount a vigorous opposition.⁴⁶ Southerners, according to Governor Vance, needed to accept "a new order of things . . . whilst the contest lasts, let us see nothing, hear nothing, know nothing but our country and its sufferings."⁴⁷

Unthinking obedience was not a trait of the gentleman, and the celebration of this quality, combined with the scorn some orators were starting to direct at southern citizens, indicates that Confederates were beginning to seek a new behavioral

model. In his inaugural address on September 8, 1862, Vance indicated where the new model might be found. Having been elected governor while serving in Virginia, he mounted the podium only days after participating in battle at Malvern Hill. In his speech, Vance frequently referred to soldiers and, interestingly, began to use their actions as examples of proper behavior. Arguing for citizens to unite behind conscription, he pointed out that this act "fell hardest upon the patriotic soldiers in the field," men who desperately wanted to return home after already serving for a year. The soldiers, Vance said, might have rebelled or deserted, and their refusal to do so made them the most exemplary beings in the Confederacy. "An exhibition of purer patriotism," he cried, "has not been seen on the continent and our government can never sufficiently appreciate it." From here, Vance related a story in which soldiers were the principal actors, a dramatic tale about his own regiment's exemplary decision to stay in the army and continue to sacrifice.⁴⁸

The rhetorical changes of 1862 heralded an emerging trend in Confederate oratory, a trend that intensified as conditions within the southern nation deteriorated. One historian calls the the middle years of 1863 and 1864 the "weary days" of the Confederacy, when deepening

shortages and military reversals caused a noticeable corruption of the southern character.⁴⁹ In these years, some citizens abandoned all pretense of concern for their country and totally committed themselves to self-service. Sometimes their behavior was shocking, such as when Union forces took complete control of the Mississippi River in 1863. Many area planters quickly shifted their allegiance back to the United States and profited from selling cotton to the conquerors. Men evaded the draft or deserted the army for careers as highwaymen. State governors selfishly hoarded military supplies, refusing to share blankets and uniforms though soldiers went barefoot and cold. In Richmond, women rioted in the streets in 1864, demanding food and taking bread by force. Furthermore, in 1863 and 1864, Confederates began to question whether they wanted to continue fighting. In South Carolina, once the seat of zealous Confederate nationalism, 1864 found leading newspaper editors and Congressmen calling for a peace convention with the North and for the resignation of President Jefferson Davis.

Confronted with such a collapse of character, orators responded according to the rhetorical framework developed in 1862. They drew sharp distinctions between the civilian and military elements of their society

and wholeheartedly endorsed the soldier as the model being. Civilians, on the other hand, were generally treated harshly, subject to denunciations and insults that, prior to 1861, might have provoked challenges.

Before the war, southerners were sensitive to spoken insults and sometimes fought duels over minor offenses. Men issued challenges after being called puppies, shot each other in defense of wives and family, and even let absurd statements drive them to violence. On one occasion, two men took to the field after one called the other an "ugly, gawky, Yankee looking fellow."⁵⁰ However, some of their sensitivity seems to have faded during the war. Speaking in January, 1863, Mr. Baldwin of Virginia flatly stated that southerners initially "deceived themselves" and their country into thinking they could sustain the war effort, and had subsequently become nothing more than a "nation of speculators and extortioners."⁵¹ From Arkansas, General Gantt sneered nastily at Jefferson Davis, claiming that "This gentleman has proven himself totally unsuited." Gantt depicted the Confederate President as "weak, mean, . . . cold, selfish, and supremely ambitious."⁵² In a March, 1863, graduation address, an orator spoke sharply to his audience, warning them that their "selfish will[s]" were "the root of moral evil." If the people did not begin to exhibit "justice, virtue and humanity," he

warned, "they may become the prey of the most abject degradations and the most vulgar tyranny."⁵³

Towards 1864, Confederate speakers heaped increasing amounts of abuse on their listeners. In November, 1863, a North Carolinian warned that "if we are subjugated it is because of the parsimony of the people," a preliminary comment to the more serious attacks of 1864.⁵⁴ Audiences subsequently heard themselves likened to cowards and traitors, to a mutinous crew whose habit of assailing the President "[gave] aid and comfort to the enemy," and, in one colorful insult, to a "croaker."⁵⁵ Henry Watkins Allen, addressing citizen fears over the strength of the Confederate army, asked "Who is desponding? Let the croaker go to his wife, if he has one, and tie himself to her apron strings and nurse the children."⁵⁶ Not to be outdone, in April, 1864, Virginia Reverend D. S. Doggett described the wartime South as a "hot-bed of vice." "Rare examples of religion and virtue," he said, "as well as of patriotism, have shed their luster upon our country within the last three years." Doggett named such vices as "unblushing profanity, which, like a flood, has overflowed the land," drunkenness, addiction to entertainment, and greed, which, in a moment of grotesque imagery, he said turned citizens into "monsters as moral sharks, vultures, and vampires" that "gorged

themselves" with the blood of the nation.⁵⁷ Audiences apparently agreed with these assessments, for speakers were not attacked upon their delivery. Indeed, on one occasion in 1865, an audience member voiced disagreement only when the speaker tried to praise the Confederacy. "We hold more territory now than we did twelve months ago," said Governor Watts during an Alabama rally. A listener promptly challenged him, stating "Oh no," whereupon Watts unleashed several insults. He called the heckler a "croaker" and asked, "did I hear some tory deny it?"⁵⁸

By 1864, only soldiers were immune from denunciation and condemnation, having been carefully set apart as the new guardians of southern character. In the same 1863 speech in which a North Carolinian warned his audience that their "parsimony" would lead to subjugation, the speaker also noted that "the soldiers give their health, strength and lives to the country."⁵⁹ Soldiers were described as brave, skilled, patriotic, and obedient, able to forget, "for a time, all questions of complaint and grievance, to become more hopeful under disaster."⁶⁰ They "endured privations and sufferings without complaint, met danger and death without faltering, and snatched victory from the jaws of defeat. . . . They have been patient in suffering, defiant in danger, modest in victory."⁶¹ And when soldiers behaved

badly, their actions were blamed on the civilian population. Speaking after the execution of twenty-two deserters, a North Carolina minister stated that "I am fully satisfied that the great amount of desertions from our army are produced by and are the fruits of a bad, mischievous, restless, and dissatisfied, not to say disloyal influence that is at work in the country at home."⁶²

Rhetorical analysis thus indicates that southerners improperly prepared themselves for the difficult task of winning a war. In attempting to unify behind the qualities and traits of the gentleman, they established a set of unreasonable expectations from the start. And when they proved incapable of sustaining the image, southerners seemed to lose something of themselves. From 1862, audiences sat quietly while speakers assailed and denounced them, attempted to shame them into behaving properly, and explained how they were responsible for the downfall of the Confederacy. Civilians were cast as traitors, cowards, croakers, tories, and were told, in 1865, that those willing to surrender to the North were "base . . . coward[s], . . . unfit to live in a Southern land."⁶³ The only Confederates immune to such attacks were the soldiers.

Clement Eaton has written that by 1864 southerners had lost the will to fight, and his conclusion seems accurate. Certainly, the development of peace movements, the rising disloyalty to the Confederacy and its government, the sorrow expressed in diaries and letters, and the widespread desertions from the army indicate that southerners lost both fighting spirit and confidence during the final years of the conflict. Eaton attributed this development to the effects of extended political bickering, military reversals, economic woes, shortages, and from resentment over government impressment activities. Rhetorical analysis offers an additional explanation. Confederate discourse suggests that southerners, having failed their own expectations of character, turned on themselves. Unable to unite as gentlemen, they instead became traitors, cowards and croakers, titles they accepted without murmur.

ENDNOTES:

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2. Ibid., 26-28.
3. Daniel R. Hundley, Social Relations in our Southern States, ed. and introduction by William J. Cooper, Jr. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), 264.
4. Ibid., 199.
5. Ibid., xxviii

6. Jefferson Davis, Speech at Montgomery, Alabama train depot, February 16, 1861, in Charleston Mercury, February 18, 1861.
7. Hon. Daniel Baringer, Speech on the importance of an agricultural education, extract, location unknown, date unknown, in Milledgeville Federal Union, April 16, 1861.
8. Reverend Thomas O. Rice, Speech before the South Carolina Sunday School Union at their Forty-Second Anniversary, Charleston, South Carolina, May 12, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, May 16, 1861.
9. Reverend Mr. Gierlow, Fast-Day Sermon, extract, location unknown, date unknown, in Baton Rouge Gazette, December 7, 1861; T. R. R. Cobb, Substance of Address before his Constituents of Clark County, Georgia, April 6, 1861 (n. p.), 3.
10. Rice, Speech on May 12, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, May 16, 1861.
11. Davis, Speech at Georgia public meeting, location obscured, date obscured, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 11, 1861. The tendency to link success with character was not unique to the Confederacy, but, rather, an American trait. See Charles Royster, A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 25, 46. Royster states that colonists initially went to war confident that their confidence, virtue, and "'natural' or 'innate' courage" ensured victory against British automatons. Soldiers were at first expected, Royster says, "to perform miracles by force of personality alone." Similar behavior occurred in the Mexican-American War. In this conflict, Americans initially armed themselves with the belief that they were a chosen people crusading for liberty against a corrupt, immoral, and lazy enemy. See James M. McCaffrey, Army of Manifest Destiny: The American Soldier in the Mexican War, 1846-1848. The American Social Experience Series, Gen. Ed. James Kirby Martin (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 68-69.
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13. Mr Lining, Remarks at Fourth of July celebration, Charleston, South Carolina, July 4, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, July 6, 1861.
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15. Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, 3d. ed., (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 140.
16. Robert L. Rainard, "The Origins and Development of the Gentlemanly Ideal in the South: 1607-1865" (Ph.d. Diss., Louisiana State University, 1981), 141.
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21. T. R. R. Cobb, Speech to his Constituents, April 6, 1861, 6.
22. Rice, Address on May 12, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, May 16, 1861.
23. E. T. Winkler, Duties of the Citizen Soldier. A Sermon Delivered in the First Baptist Church of Charleston, South Carolina, on Sabbath Morning, January 6th, 1861, Before the Moultrie Guards (Charleston: A. J. Burke, 1861), 11, 12.
24. Sam Houston, Speech at Independence, Texas, May 10, 1861, in Echoes From the South. Comprising the most Important Speeches, Proclamations, and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1886), 180.
25. Governor Pickens, Speech at Charleston, April 14, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, April 15, 1861.
26. J. Mason, Speech at Richmond, June 8, 1861, in Echoes From the South, 168.
27. Howell Cobb, Speech at Atlanta, Georgia, May 29, 1861, in Milledgeville Federal Union, June 4, 1861.

28. General James Simons, Speech at the Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Moultrie, Charleston, South Carolina, June 28, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 29, 1861. See also Speeches before the Virginia Convention, February 14, 1861, in Frank Moore, ed., Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc., supplement to vol. I (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1866), 161, 145. John S. Preston called Revolutionary War heroes "your god-like sires." In the same meeting, Fulton Anderson of Mississippi referred to southerners as "we, the descendants of the leaders . . . who achieved our independence." As further evidence that speakers sought to shape their listeners into members of the upper class, one might cite the number of times that elite orators addressed audiences as "gentlemen." See Roger Pryor, Speech at Charleston, April 10, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, April 11, 1861. In this oration, Pryor, himself a wealthy Virginian, called a Charleston crowd "gentlemen" twice. On other occasions, speakers included their listeners in activities once reserved for the upper ranks. Senator Wigfall of Texas, for example, in speaking about the Confederate Constitution, admitted his audience into the group of gentlemen that created the document. "In this Constitution," he stated, ". . . you have in the preamble to your Constitution declared explicitly that this is a social compact . . . You had the wisdom to perceive and the courage to achieve this great work." See Hon. L. T. Wigfall, Speech at Charleston, April 3, 1861, in Montgomery Weekly Advertiser, April 6, 1861.

29. General James Simons, Anniversary Speech, Charleston, June 28, 1861, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 29, 1861.

30. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 88. Thomas King information from Steven M. Stowe, Intimacy and Power in the Old South: Ritual in the Lives of the Planters (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 225. For information on James Henry Hammond, see Drew Gilpin Faust, James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 29, 229. Faust describes Hammond's despair as a young man when he found he was unable to control his "lustful appetite." "With charming and flirtatious women," Faust says, "Hammond found resistance almost impossible. . . . In desperation, he decided to renounce romantic involvement altogether" to protect his self-control. As an adult, he struggled with a "longing for fame,"

a desire he sought to master by "rejecting ambition altogether."

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37. Robert Barnwell Rhett, Speech in the South Carolina State Convention, September 14, 1862, in Charleston Daily Courier, October 2, 1862.

38. Charles W. Russell, Address before the Richmond Medical College, date unknown, in Richmond Enquirer, March 28, 1862.

39. Gustavus Henry, Speech on his joint resolution, defining the position of the Confederate States, and declaring the determination of the Congress and the people thereof to prosecute the war till their independence is acknowledged, delivered in the Confederate Senate, November 29, 1864, (n. p.), 9.

40. John Perkins, Remarks on presenting from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Resolutions in regard to the Negotiations for Peace, delivered in the Confederate Senate, exact date unknown, 1865, (n. p.), 7-8.

41. Alexander Stephens, Speech delivered on the 21st March, in Savannah, Known as "The Corner Stone Speech," reported in the Savannah Republican, in Henry Cleveland,

Alexander Stephens in Public and Private. With letters and speeches before, during and since the War (Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, c. 1866), 725.

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46. George Gordon, Speech on the Constitutionality of the Conscription Laws Passed by the Congress of the Confederate States, Delivered in the Senate of Georgia on Tuesday, 9th December, 1862, (n. p.), 13.

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51. John Baldwin, Substance of the Remarks of Mr. Baldwin of Virginia, on offering "A Bill to Fund the Currency." Delivered in the Confederate House of Representatives, January 16, 1863, (n. p.), 9.

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VII: TOWARDS A RHETORICAL UNION

Speech analysis indicates that the Civil War had a highly disruptive effect on the South, for, over four years of conflict, Confederate rhetoric underwent dramatic changes. By 1865, subjects once said to evince southern superiority, including the natural environment and civilian character, had come under savage condemnation. And black slaves, once praised as sources of strength and wealth, became objects of scorn and hatred. The findings of rhetorical analysis therefore agree with those Emory Thomas reported in a seminal work published in 1971. In The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience, Thomas argued that between 1861 and 1865, "in the name of independence, . . . southerners reversed or severely undermined virtually every tenet of the way of life they were supposedly defending." For the Confederacy, he concluded, the Civil War produced nothing less than an internal revolution.¹

However, while Thomas sought little else than to expose the war's transformative effects, rhetorical analysis allows for a larger interpretation of the nature and direction of the Confederate revolution. It permits the analyst to place the southern experience within the larger framework of American intellectual history, for

Confederate discourse contains a shift in thought that corresponds to what David Shi recently suggested in Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, 1850-1920. Studying the origins and aesthetics of late-nineteenth century American realism, Shi argued that the Civil War played a pivotal role in directing American intellectuals and artists away from antebellum romanticism. The violence and gore of combat, so shockingly different from what Americans had pictured of war, "provided the impetus," Shi wrote, "for at least some writers, artists, critics, and members of the reading and viewing public to look at life through clearer lenses." This shift is strikingly evident in Confederate rhetoric, manifest in the appearance of whirlpools and storms in the natural environment, in the acknowledgments that slaves could be devious and menacing, that citizens were selfish and irresponsible. By 1864, orators had, as Shi suggested with regard to writers and artists, "grown more sober . . . and less patient of sheer artificiality."²

Rhetorical analysis also allows for some very specific conclusions about the effects of the Civil War. Throughout the conflict, southern orators spoke extensively about a limited number of subjects. They talked in detail about the South and its people, about the war, and about their enemies. And when one compares

the words and expressions Confederates adopted for themselves and their country to those they reserved for the United States, a clear direction to wartime change emerges. During the conflict, speakers progressively applied what were defined as northern qualities to the southern nation and its people. Their discourse, therefore, suggests that the South's experience with war and nation-building ultimately directed it back to the North.

Historians have disagreed as to the degree of separation that existed between Union and Confederacy. Many recognize that the war forced the South to develop several northern characteristics, including an industrial sector and an enlarged, active government, but disagree as to whether this circumstance actually drew the antagonists together. Some, like Thomas in The Confederate Nation, argue that North and South were dissimilar both before and during the war. Writing in 1979, he concluded that Civil War southerners, in their industry, society and politics, developed a unique Confederate identity, distinct from the North and "from the Souths that came before and after."³ Other historians, however, are not as certain. In Why the South Lost the Civil War, Richard Beringer argued that in the short period of Civil War "It would be unreasonable to expect Confederates to have developed

sufficient distinctiveness . . . to evolve into a separate nationality." As evidence of the close ties between Union and Confederacy, Beringer pointed out how the southern nation retained United States laws, adopted a near copy of the United States Constitution, and celebrated United States Presidents, including Andrew Jackson and Thomas Jefferson, on postage stamps.⁴

The findings of speech analysis fall directly in the center of this debate, for Confederate discourse suggests that southerners initially sought to distance themselves from the North, but failed to articulate a decisive separation. At times, orators spoke directly to the differences between North and South, contrasting southern characteristics with northern brutality, treachery, tyranny, and greed. J. Mason, for example, noted how avarice separated the opposing sides, stating "they are mercenaries fighting for pay, you are men fighting for your homes." Alexander Stephens postulated that North and South differed in their abilities to appreciate freedom. "They never understood it," he said in June, 1861; "constitutional liberty is a plant watered by Southern hands." And, after accusing northerners of terrible crimes, a Virginia Congressman concluded "we make mild-mannered war on armies only, and they make savage war on defenseless citizens."⁵ Under condemnation, northerners were said to support

rape, murder, and kidnapping, to trample the Constitution, and to ignore the word of God. Many a speaker further decreed that northern savagery caused irreparable damage to the future relationship between United and Confederate States. In January, 1865, Williamson Oldham questioned whether southerners could ever forget the crimes "against humanity, against God" or whether they could, "by any means be induced to live in reunion with the perpetrators."⁶

This bitter invective stands out clearly and thus can mislead the analyst into believing that southerners separated themselves from their enemies behind a wall of hatred. However, such was not the case, for, along with attacks and insults, orators also spoke fondly of their "former allies."⁷ From 1861, speakers acknowledged northern intelligence, bravery, power, and financial might. They talked of the discipline, ingenuity, and prosperity of the northern people and spoke sorrowfully of how the war pitted brother against brother.⁸ The Reverend Gierlaw of Louisiana even asked that southerners foster a degree of compassion for their enemies. In August 1861, during a sermon in Baton Rouge, Gierlow requested that his audience "defend our rights . . . with as little malice and hatred as the punishment of a malefactor by the judge." "Consider who our enemies are," he said, "are they not the workmanship of God's

hands?"⁹ As the war progressed, speakers praised their foe's "magnificent" armies, the "intelligent northern mind," and the North's ability to absorb the costs of war. "They scarcely feel the war at home," noted one man, ". . . Their villages and towns, their fields and country flourish as fresh as ever. They could sink their armies today and raise new levies to crush us and not feel it."¹⁰

The mixture of praise and condemnation Confederates bestowed on the North indicates that from the start of the war they felt a paradoxical array of emotions towards their enemies. After 1863, though, southerners began to resolve their feelings by seeking closer ties to the United States. In Texas, Sam Houston drew similarities between Union and Confederacy through a discussion of war weariness. Speaking of the desolation and lack of unity in the South, Houston noted that northerners also tired of the war. "There is discord and discontent in the North," he stated, adding that United States citizens would not "be so base and despicable" as to fight much longer.¹¹ Additional links were drawn through 1864 and 1865. Gustavus Henry claimed in November, 1864, that Confederates were "equals in all respects with our enemies," while North Carolinian Josiah Turner spoke of the "two colossal powers of the new continent . . . the North, old, rich, crafty, and

more perfidious than Carthage. The South, young, poor, robust, and brave as Rome. . . . Grant, the North man, bold, dashing and enterprising . . . Lee, God love him, patriot [sic], enduring and patriotic." In 1865, Congressman Daniel DeJarnette of Virginia even went so far as to suggest that North and South "can, by conventional agreement, be made with reciprocal good will, mutually to sustain and support each other."¹²

Indeed, the most striking evidence that southerners were moving closer to the North appears in their rhetoric from 1864 and 1865. Early in the war, Confederate speakers established a core group of characterizations they used to denounce the North: the region was cold and frozen, its people were ambitious, irreverent towards the Constitution, and lacking faith in and respect for God. These characterizations were applied to the North throughout the war, but, late in the conflict, they were also attached to the South. Rhetorical analysis reveals that as orators began castigating the South and its people, they did so through language once reserved for the North. Through their rebukes, Confederate speakers actually shaped their country into a copy of the United States.

The most obvious example of this behavior may be found in the manner in which orators discussed the environment. At first Confederates repeatedly linked

the North with cold and ice. In February, 1861, while urging Virginia to leave the Union, Henry Benning noted that southern "winters are shorter and winter days longer than those of the North." Similarly, in June a South Carolinian commented on the "frozen seas of the North."¹³ Several orators vividly described the bitter conditions at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, during the Revolution, and Albert G. Brown, in 1863, advocated driving northerners "back to the icy regions from which they come."¹⁴ However, by 1864 ice began to appear in reference to the South. General Gantt described defeated Confederate soldiers in Arkansas as "shattered columns," marching "over snow and ice," and Joseph Echols told, in 1865, of "our soldiers, who are now enveloped in mud and snow."¹⁵

Speakers also applied the northern lack of religious faith to the Confederacy. In 1861, North and South were cast as diametric opposites on the subject of Christianity and worthiness before God. Several orators said northerners were "faithless," while others equated the United States with the "demon," the "serpent . . . in our Eden," the "ungodly government" that "fears not God."¹⁶ The North, according to Alexander Stephens, fought an arrogant "crusade to make things better than the Creator made them, or to make things equal which He made unequal."¹⁷

In contrast, speakers described the South as a humble, pious, Christian nation. Thomas Cobb, who once held up the creation of the Confederate Constitution to debate whether government employees should work on Sunday, said that southerners cultivated "the most pure unadulterated simple Christian Faith that the world now contains."¹⁸ Aware of their "utter dependence upon Deity" and filled with "reverence for the word and the worship of God," southerners repeatedly proclaimed that God favored the Confederacy and would offer His protection and defense. "He will fight with us again," a Georgia Colonel stated flatly, addressing a regiment camped in Virginia. "He loves valor and He loves a valiant soldier. He will help us."¹⁹ In Charleston, a chaplain agreed. In battle, said the Reverend E. T. Winkler, "Heaven's glory and blessedness will be imparted," given that Confederate soldiers "resort to that God who reveals himself in the gospel as the Savior of his penitent and believing people."²⁰

But by the end of the war the rhetoric had changed, and southerners were said to have adopted the ungodly behaviors of the North. In March, 1863, a graduation speaker cautioned Charleston College students not to think of the war simply as a "struggle for selfish independence . . . blind to the indications of Providence" and warned that "When nations or individuals

violate those eternal principles of right which Providence has implanted . . . they must suffer the penalty."²¹ And, just as the North had been linked to an evil biblical figure -- the serpent -- Brown linked southern speculators with the "money changers" of the New Testament and to Judas who "betrayed the Savior, but . . . had the decency to hang himself."²² By 1865, with the Confederacy beginning to crumble, orators laid part of the blame on the "faithless, selfish hearts," of the people. "Is it not want of faith," asked a speaker in January, "which is the root of all that murmuring against God's providence, that impatience at delay and the frustration of our plans . . . ?" "In all this," he added, "there is no principle except our fickleness and unbelief; there is no firmness . . . certainly there is no faith."²³ A speaker in Alabama sadly concluded, "We have met with some serious reverses, probably owing to the sins of those of us at home . . . not showing sufficient dependence in God."²⁴

The transposition of language also included words about the abuse of constitutional liberties. Confederate orators initially cast northerners as despotic and tyrannical, so concerned with gaining power and control that they destroyed the Constitution and its guarantees of freedom. "It was their folly, their recklessness

and their ambition, not ours," said Fulton Anderson in Virginia in 1861, "which shattered into pieces this great Confederate Government, and destroyed this great temple of constitutional liberty."²⁵ Alexander Stephens agreed in July, 1861, that "the Confederate States today rescued the Constitution . . . a change of government has taken place at the North. The Constitution of our fathers has been trampled in the dust."²⁶

But by 1864, when the Confederate Congress granted President Jefferson Davis broad authority to suspend habeas corpus and declare martial law, a number of speakers accused the Confederate government of the same abuses they once assigned to the North. Just as the North was said to usurp "powers not delegated in the Constitution, which foreshadowed the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States," the Confederate government was accused of behaving in a "manifestly unconstitutional manner" and inflicting "an outrage upon the public justice of the country."²⁷ "How came the footsteps of Congressmen so suddenly diverted," asked one speaker, "from the pathway of freedom to the goal of tyranny? How came the goddess of liberty . . . to lie down, in the very midset of her devotees, in the lecherous embrace of the cloven-footed satyr of despotism?"²⁸ Nathaniel Boyden of North Carolina further warned that southerners needed to "maintain

and support" their Constitution "against all assaults, no matter from what source they come, and we are as much bound to maintain it against the assaults of Congress."²⁹

In conclusion, rhetorical analysis reveals a clear direction to the transformation of the Civil War South. Southerners began the war unable to thoroughly condemn and separate themselves from the North. As their efforts to achieve independence failed, Confederates reacted by moving closer to their enemy. They drew comparisons, equated themselves with the United States and, by 1864, freely applied what were defined as northern qualities to their own nation. In Confederate rhetoric, the North started the war condemned as a cold, faithless, tyrannical, ambitious nation. By 1865, the South was described as icy, faithless, and threatened by the tyranny of its own government. Southerners had also become as "ambitious and greedy" as their counterparts in the United States.³⁰ Just as speakers sneered at the North for its love of money and ambition, its "mercenaries fighting for pay," its search for "plunder and spoils," by the end of the war, they were condemning southerners for "seeking to make their fortunes at others' expense," and for "hoard[ing] up their riches with miserly care."³¹ The Civil War, in other words, effected a rhetorical union between North and South.

ENDNOTES:

1. Emory M. Thomas, The Confederacy as Revolutionary Experience (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), 1.
2. David E. Shi, Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, 1850-1920 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 65; second quote from "Editor's Easy Chair," Harper's Monthly 31 (July, 1865): 267.
3. Thomas, The Confederate Nation: 1861-1865, New American Nation Series, eds. Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1979), 147, 212. Thomas says, for example, that Confederate war industries were developed in a distinctly southern manner. Most importantly, the South's industrialists did not resemble their northern counterparts, being, in Thomas' words, "traditional intellectuals," such as schoolteachers and military scientists, rather than industrial managers or engineers. Thomas writes, "the relatively small group of men who managed the South's short-lived economic transformation were hardly entrepreneurs whose acquisitive instincts fit the Yankee stereotype."
4. Richard E. Beringer, et al, Why the South Lost the Civil War (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 75.
5. J. Mason, Speech at Richmond, Virginia, June 8, 1861, in Echoes from the South. Comprising the most Important Speeches, Proclamations, and Public Acts Emanating from the South during the Late War (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 171; Alexander Stephens, Speech at Augusta, Georgia, July 11, 1861, in Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc., vol. 2 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1866), 281; Charles W. Russell, Speech on Retaliation, delivered in Confederate House of Representatives, October 1, 1862, in Richmond Enquirer, October 10, 1862.
6. Williamson Oldham, Speech on the Resolutions of the State of Texas, Concerning Peace, Reconstruction, and Independence, delivered in Confederate Senate, January 30, 1865 (n. p.), 12.
7. Thomas R. Cobb, Substance of Address before his constituents of Clark County, April 6, 1861, location unknown (n. p.), 2.

8. For examples of praise for the North, see Reverend H. N. Pierce, Sermons Preached in St. John's Church, Mobile, Alabama, on the 13th of June, 1861, The National Fast, Appointed by His Excellency Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America (Mobile: Farrow & Bennett, Book and Job Printers, 1861), 5. Pierce said "Our foe is more wily, powerful and brave than the men of this generation and this land have previously been called upon to meet. . . . It is ever dangerous to despise an enemy." See also Sam Houston, Speech at Independence, Texas, May 10, 1861, in Echoes From the South, 180. Houston claimed that "The Northern people . . . are capable of great endurance and a high state of discipline. A good motto for a soldier is, Never underestimate the strength of your enemy."

9. Reverend J. Gierlow, A View of the Present Crisis. Sermon delivered in St. James Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August, 1861, (n. p.), 6.

10. Governor Zebulon Vance, Inaugural Address, delivered in Raleigh, North Carolina, September 8, 1861, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, September 18, 1862; H. C. Chambers, Speech on the special order for that day, being the resolution offered by him on the first day of the session, delivered in Confederate House of Representatives, November 10, 1864, (n. p.), 4; Brigadier-General E. W. Gantt, Address (Little Rock: publisher not named, 1863), 19.

11. Sam Houston, Speech at Houston, March 18, 1863, in Memphis Daily Appeal, April 16, 1863.

12. Gustavus Henry, Speech on his joint resolution, defining the position of the Confederate States, and declaring the determination of the Congress and the people thereof to prosecute the war till their independence is acknowledged, delivered in the Confederate Senate, November 29, 1864 (n. p.), 3; Josiah Turner, Remarks on Resolutions Proposing Negotiations for Peace with the Enemy, delivered in Confederate Congress, in Hillsborough Recorder, January 4, 1865; D. C. DeJarnette, Monroe Doctrine Speech, of Hon. D. C. DeJarnette of Virginia, in the Confederate House of Representatives, January 30, 1865, Pending Negotiations for Peace (n. p.), 8.

13. Henry L. Benning, Speech before the Virginia State Convention, February 14, 1861, in Rebellion Record, supplement to vol. 1 (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1866), 152; Reverend L. Muller, Sermon at Institute Hall, Charleston, South Carolina, on Fast Day, June 13, 1861,

Delivered Before the German Military Companies and German Population, in Charleston Daily Courier, June 17, 1861.

14. For a description of Valley Forge see Reverend A. M. Randolph, Address on the Day of Fasting and Prayer Appointed by the President of the Confederate States, June 13, 1861, Delivered in St. George's Church, Fredericksburg, Virginia (Fredericksburg: Recorder Job Office, 1861), 10. Randolph cited "that memorable winter when the little army . . . crouched naked and starving upon the bleak snows of Valley Forge . . . only the winter's wind rattling through the bare trees . . . a cheerless landscape and a leaden sky." A. G. Brown, State of the Country Speech of Hon. A. G. Brown, delivered in the Confederate Senate, December 24, 1863 (n. p.), 1.

15. Gantt, 12; Joseph Echols, Speech in Confederate House of Representatives, January 19, 1865, in opposition to report a bill to seize all the cotton and tobacco of the Confederacy (n. p.), 3.

16. Samuel Hall, Remarks before the General Assembly of North Carolina, February 13, 1861, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, February 14, 1861; Master Silas Bunch, Address Delivered at the Anniversary of the Charleston Orphan House, Charleston, South Carolina, October 18, 1861, in Charleston Mercury, November 15, 1861; Reverend A. M. Randolph, Fast Day Sermon at Fredericksburg, Virginia, June 13, 1861, 7; Reverend W. H. Watkins, The South, Her Position and Duty. Discourse Delivered at the Methodist Church, Natchez, Mississippi, January 4, 1861, (n. p.), 6.

17. Stephens, Speech at Augusta, Georgia, July 11, 1861, 281.

18. Thomas Cobb, April 6, 1861, 6.

19. Bunch, Speech at Charleston, October 28, 1861; E. T. Winkler, Duties of the Citizen Soldier. A Sermon Delivered in the First Baptist Church of Charleston, South Carolina, on Sabbath Morning, January 6th, 1861, before the Moultrie Guards. (Charleston: A. J. Burke, 1861), 13; Colonel Thomas, Speech at camp near Centreville, Virginia, October 17, 1861, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, November 7, 1861.

20. Winkler, Sermon before Moultrie Guards, January 6, 1861, 10.

21. Reverend James Miles, God in History. Extract from a discourse delivered before Graduating Class of the College of Charleston, March 29, 1863, in Hillsborough Recorder, May 20, 1863.
22. A. G. Brown, State of the Country Speech, December 24, 1863, 14.
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24. Governor Watts, Synopsis of remarks before the Mass Meeting held in Montgomery, February 25, 1865, in Montgomery Daily Advertiser, March 3, 1865.
25. Fulton Anderson, Address before the Virginia State Convention, February 14, 1861, in Rebellion Record, supplement to vol. 1, 144.
26. Stephens, Speech on July 11, 1861, 281.
27. Henry, Speech on his joint resolution, November 27, 1864, 4; Nathaniel Boyden, Remarks in the North Carolina Senate, on the subject of the suspension of Habeas Corpus, date unknown, in North Carolina Standard, June 15, 1864.
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29. Boyden, Remarks in North Carolina Senate, June 15, 1864.
30. Muller, Sermon at Charleston, June 13, 1861.
31. Mason, Speech at Richmond, June 8, 1861, 171; Joseph Echols, Speech on January 19, 1865, 3; Major Ennett, Speech at Turkey Creek School House, September 17, 1864, in Wilmington Journal Weekly, October 27, 1864.

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