BETWEEN POISE AND POWER: EMBODIED MANLINESS IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH CULTURE*

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ABSTRACT: This article explores representations of the manly body and the ways in which its relationship with masculine identity and embodied selfhood changed over time and class. It spans a period in which different types of masculinities were dominant, from the later eighteenth-century man of feeling to the later nineteenth-century muscular Christian, and proposes that an embodied approach offers a more nuanced consideration of the ways in which ideals of masculinity were culturally viewed and utilised. First, it provides a chronology of the manner in which the ideal manly body changed over the two centuries, demonstrating that abstract masculine values were always rooted in male bodies. Secondly, it proposes that although most idealised masculine identities were elite, attention to the more corporeal aspects of gender offers evidence that there were features of the manly body, for example hardness, that appealed across social ranks[1] Elite men valorised idealised working-class men's bodies and saw in them something to emulate. Moreover, working-class men used classically-inspired figures to represent themselves when formulating class and gender identities.

Samuel Johnson defined exercise in his 1755 *Dictionary of the English Language* as 'Habitual action by which the body is formed to gracefulness, air, and agility'.[2] A century and a half later, Eugen Sandow explained his exercise regime to readers of *Strength and How to Obtain It* (1897) in rather dissimilar terms:

> Exercise, indeed, without using the mind in conjunction with it, is of no use. It is the brain which develops the muscles. Physical exercise must be commenced by degrees first bringing into play one muscle, then two, then three, and so on, being careful all

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[1] Stuart Hogarth, 'Reluctant patients: health, sickness and the embodiment of plebeian masculinity in nineteenth-century Britain. Evidence from working men's autobiographies', unpublished PhD, London Metropolitan University, 2010, chapter 1.

[2] Cited in Julia Allen, *Swimming with Dr Johnson and Mrs Thrale: Sport, Health and Exercise in eighteenth-century England* (Cambridge, 2012), 5.

> the time to put the mind into every movement. Let me strongly advise every student to study well the anatomical chart which is published with this book. By its aid you will be able not only to receive a useful lesson in anatomy, but you will be able to see at a glance the exercise which each muscle may be developed.[3]

Exercise produced two strikingly different bodies: one produced a body that was graceful, poised and agile, the other a body that was muscled, powerful and strong. Although Sandow noted the importance of brain and will power in developing a body, it was increased size that was the desired result. Indeed Sandow included his own spectacular bodily measurements in the book, and offered prizes to readers for the greatest strength or the best development from using his physical culture regime, determined by before and after measurements of their biceps, triceps, thighs, and chest.[4] This article traces these ideal bodily styles for men, to argue that poise and power were two, not always oppositional, aspirational models of manly bodies across the two centuries, which could be used by men from different social classes to construct individual and collective identities.

To date, scholars have scrutinised male bodies in a number of ways. Those who investigate the culture of war show that the state and nation literally and figuratively shaped men's bodies. Military demands and techniques of war required certain types of manly form, shaped by uniform, training, and drill.[5] Moreover, the idealised male body came to represent abstract notions such as the strength of nation and progress, and symbolised ideologies

[3] Eugen Sandow, *Strength and How to Obtain It* (1897), 'Introduction'.
[4] Sandow, *Strength*, 27.
[5] Padhraig Higgins, '"Let Us Play the Men": Masculinity and the Citizen-Soldier in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750–1850*, ed. Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack, (Basingstoke, 2013), 179–99; Catriona Kennedy, *Narratives of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Military and Civilian Experience in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2013), chapter 2; Matthew McCormack, *Embodying the Militia in Georgian England* (Oxford, 2015), particularly chapter 4; George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford, 1990).

underpinning empire and various political movements.[6] In most cases, these were idealised, whole bodies. The damaged male body, however, has also been scrutinised. Historians of emotions, war, labour, health and safety, and disability reveal the many ways in which fighting and working men were psychologically and physically damaged by their activities. All reveal the significance of bodies to masculine identity, since maimed or incapacitated men were unmanned in their own and society's eyes.[7] Histories of sex and reproduction also provide insights into changing medical understandings of bodies and the ways in which gender attitudes shaped them.[8] Scholars of the print culture of erotica and pornography, and work on same-sex desire, address the eroticised male body to reveal its cultural force.[9]

Histories of consumption and material culture indicate that men's bodies were the site of debates about luxury and anxieties over effeminacy.[10] Similarly, historians of fashion and clothing explore the ways men dressed and fashioned their bodies and hair as external markers of sex, virility, maturity, civility, and masculinity.[11] In the history of art and literature, men's bodies are discussed as part of varying aesthetics, genres, and gender. Though these studies are predominantly representational, more recent scholarship on personal, class, and racial identities exposes the ways working men used their bodies as a

[6] Michael Brown and Chris Lawrence, 'Quintessentially Modern Heroes: Surgeons, Explorers, and Empire, c.1840–1914', *Journal of Social History*, published online 2016; Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers,* passim; R. A. Nye, 'Review Essay: Western Masculinities in War and Peace', *The American Historical Review* 112 (2007), 417–38.
[7] Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (1996); A. Callen, 'Man or Machine: Ideals of the Labouring Male Body and the Aesthetics of Industrial Production in early twentieth-century Europe' in *Art, Sex and Eugenics*, ed. F. Brauer and A. Callen (2008); S. Koven, 'Remembering and Dismemberment: Crippled Children, Wounded Soldiers, and the Great War in Britain', *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994) 1167–1202; Arthur McIvor and R. Johnston, *Dangerous Work, Hard Men and Broken Bodies: Masculinity in the Clydeside Heavy Industries. Labour History Review*, 69 (2004), 135–52; Michael Roper, *The Secret Battle: Emotional Survival in The Great War* (2008); David M. Turner, *Disability in Eighteenth-Century England: Imagining Physical Impairment* (New York, 2012).
[8] Mary E. Fissell, *Vernacular Bodies: The Politics of Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2004); Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA, 1990).
[9] Karen Harvey, *Reading Sex in the Eighteenth Century: Bodies and Gender in English Erotic. Culture* (Cambridge, 2004); Matt Houlbrook, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis, 1918–1957* (Chicago, 2005).
[10] Matt Houlbrook, 'Queer Things: Men and Make-up Between the Wars', in *Gender and Material Culture in Britain since 1600*, ed. Hannah Grieg, Jane Hamlett and Leonie Hannan (Basingstoke, 2016), 120–37.
[11] K. Honeyman, 'Following Suit: Men, Masculinity and Gendered Practices in the Clothing Trade in Leeds, England, 1890–1940', *Gender & History*, 14 (2002), 426–46; D. Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity. England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley, CA, 2002); Christopher Oldstone-Moore, *Of Beards and Men: The Revealing History of Facial Hair* (Chicago, 2016).

canvas. For example, by the early nineteenth century nearly all seamen were tattooed to illustrate identity, travelling experiences, sense of belonging, and also manliness, since it demonstrated their capacity to withstand pain.[12] Historians of sport expose the changing shape of men's bodies and expectations associated with them, as they chart the diets, training, 'civilising', and professionalisation of sports like boxing, rugby, and cricket.[13]

Given this apparent plenitude of scholarship on men's bodies, why do we still need to critically engage with male bodies and masculinity? It is necessary because there is a tendency to see some attributes of masculine identity as largely associated with abstract qualities rather than bodies, and with specific classes. Acknowledging that manliness could be defined as merging the ethical and the physical, Tosh argues that nineteenth-century writers nonetheless located it in the mind rather than the body. Thus, he observes that, 'the Victorian code of manliness made scant acknowledgement of the body,' for its predominantly elite cultural form gave it a 'cerebral and bloodless quality.'[14] He suggests that it was not until the later nineteenth century that the manliness of muscular Christianity incorporated the hearty, sturdy, male body.[15] This was a style of masculinity that associated virtue and morality with a healthy body cultivated through sport and piety, which prevailed throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Admittedly, manliness was an ideal and an aspiration, conveying prized values including virtue, piety, courage, endurance, honesty, and directness. John Tosh has identified manliness as a 'cultural representation of masculinity

[12] Claire Anderson, 'Empire, Boundaries, and Bodies: Colonial Tattooing Practices' in *A Cultural History of the Human Body. Volume V. In the Age of Empire*, ed. Michael Sappol and Stephen P. Rice (London, 2014), 171–90; Matt Lodder, '"Things of the sea": Iconographic Continuities between Tattooing and Handicrafts in Georgian-era Maritime Culture', *Sculpture Journal*, 24 (2015), 195–210.
[13] Roberta J. Park, 'Muscles, Symmetry and Action: "Do You Measure Up?" Defining Masculinity in Britain and America from the 1860s to the early 1900s', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 22/3, (2005), 365–95; Roberta J. Park, 'Biological Thought, Athletics and the Formation of a "man of character": 1830–1900', *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 24 (2007), 1543–69.
[14] John Tosh, 'What should Historians do with Masculinity? Reflections on nineteenth-century Britain' in John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth-Century Britain. Essays on Gender, Family, and Empire* (Harlow, 2005), 32–3.
[15] Ibid., 33.

rather than a description of actual life'.[16] Yet, as the survey of studies of male bodies above shows, bodies symbolised abstract values and thus it is important to question how far manliness was primarily cultural rather than embodied.[17]

Furthermore, this scholarship is scattered across diverse fields of history, making it difficult for the historian of masculinity to construct an overarching chronology of embodied manly identities. Moreover, discussions of the gendered body in this corpus of work are only one element of a wider investigation. Historians of art, for example, focus on the male form in several types of art, but are predominantly interested in genre conventions, the origins of the iconography utilised, and the ways in which the visual product was interpreted, rather than its role in shaping masculinities.[18] Other scholars treat men's bodies as idealised, aesthetic forms, or positive stereotypes and symbols of normative meaning and values. Where this scholarship engages with or contributes to the embodied turn in history it is driven by other agendas.[19] Michael Budd's ground-breaking work on physical culture c. 1850–1918 is an early example of this field, but is predominantly concerned with a Foucauldian body politics, and the ways in which nations control, shape, and oppress human bodies.[20] This is crucial, but there is more to be said about the formulation of gender identities.

Alternatively, scholars see some men as bearers of stigmatised inadequate bodies that mark them as ethnic, racial, sexual, or class outsiders. For example, working-class men's bodies are treated collectively, for the most part, as passive objects of surveillance by authorities and discipline in work and institutions from schools, to prisons, to insane

[16] Ibid., 32.
[17] For an overview of the value of embodied history to understanding masculinity see Christopher Forth, 'Manhood Incorporated: Diet and the Embodiment of "Civilized" Masculinity', *Men and Masculinities*, 11 (2009), 578–601, at 582.
[18] For example, Tim Barringer, *Men at Work: Art and Labour in Victorian Britain* (New Haven, 2005).
[19] For an overview of the history of the body, see Michael Sappol, 'Introduction: Empires in Bodies; Bodies in Empires' in *Cultural History of the Human Body*, ed. Sappol and Rice, 1–35.
[20] Though it should be noted that he is also interested in the way individual men viewed and deployed their own bodies, such as Eugen Sandow. Michael Budd, *The Sculpture Machine: Physical Culture and Body Politics in the Age of Empire* (Basingstoke, 1997).

asylums.[21] They identify the utility of manhood, which led to attempts to control men through manipulating their health, physical shape, and fitness.[22] As Matthew McCormack observes, for example, eighteenth-century militia authorities deliberately attempted to improve the militia's 'physical stock', categorising recruits on their physical appearance, health, and wholeness of bodies.[23] By the twentieth century, as Joanna Bourke argues, men's bodies were the objects of state and employers' surveillance to keep them useful and functional. [24] This raises questions about the scrutinised men and how they saw their own body 'type' and the extent to which they were simply passive victims of corporeal politics.[25]

Moreover, partly because of the fragmented nature of the work described, the vexed relationship between representation and experience remains unresolved. It is only recently that men's somatic experience is being examined. An embodied approach potentially offers a better understanding of individual men's personal experience of their bodies and health, since, as Karen Harvey argues, the body is 'an instrument that performs socially or culturally constructed sexed or gendered identities.'[26] Gender is not only performed, it is inhabited through one's body. As such, scholars are increasingly endeavouring to achieve a more corporal understanding of experience. Thus, Harvey aims to 'study the lived, embodied experience of gender'.[27] Elsewhere she advocates drawing on one's 'own material experiences,' combined with documentary evidence, to investigate the physical experience of

[21] Ava Baron, 'Masculinity, the Embodied Male Worker, and the Historian's Gaze', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 69 (2006), 143–60; Craig Heron, 'Boys Will Be Boys: Working-Class Masculinities in the Age of Mass Production', *International Labor & Working-Class History*, 69 (2006), 6–34.
[22] For the focus on improving the health of men's and women's bodies see Pamela K. Gilbert, 'Popular Beliefs and the Body: "A Nation of Good Animals"', in *Cultural History of the Human Body*, ed. Sappol and Rice, 125–48,
[23] McCormack, *Embodying the Militia*, 86–7.
[24] Bourke, *Dismembering the Male*, passim.
[25] Also see Mark Jenner and Bertrand Taithe, 'The Historiographical Body', in *Companion to Medicine in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Roger Cooter and John Pickstone (eds), (New York, 2003), passim.
[26] Karen Harvey, 'Men of Parts: Masculine Embodiment and the Male Leg in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of British Studies*, 54 (2015), 801.
[27] Ibid., 800–1.

labour skills in the past.[28] These are noble aspirations, but problematic. How can the historian divest herself of her own somatic sense, her own social and cultural context, to imagine herself into an actor's very different body and mentality? This article therefore focuses instead on representations of gendered male bodies, gathered from analysis of the term 'manly' and 'manliness' across a range of publications and visual genres. It aims to assess their impact upon individual and collective masculine identities, in order to offers insights into change over time for historians of masculinities.

This article deliberately spans conventionally discrete periods in its survey of ideals of manly bodies. Most work, for example, considers either the age of the man of feeling and Christian sensibility from the 1750s to the 1830s or the age of muscular Christianity from the 1840s to the end of the century. This broad chronology also bridges other ways of categorising bodily eras, such as Michael Budd's divisions between the 'epoch of the glorified body' (early-modern period to the end of the eighteenth century), and the epoch of 'the age of the sculpture machine,' (1820s to 1930s).[29] Instead, this survey of bodily ideals suggests that a range of male body styles have co-existed, which varied between poise and power, often influenced by classical statuary, either of which could be acceptable, depending upon context and prevailing fashions. Secondly, it considers the issue of social classes, since research, whether addressing art, or labour, rarely studies both elite and working-class male bodies, to show that the two shared some features and were constitutive of each other.

A Chronology of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century Manly Bodies

One could infer from scholarship on muscular Christianity that the focus on the male body in the post Crimean war period was new, the result of militarising and imperialising forces and

[28] Karen Harvey, 'Craftsmen in Common: Objects, Skills and Masculinity in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries' in *Gender and Material Culture*, ed. Grieg, Hamlett and Hannan, 83.
[29] Budd, *Sculpture Machine*, xii–xiii.

'new athleticism'.[30] In fact, men's bodies were just as central to formulations of masculinity in the previous century, although the idealised male form and related masculine values were mutable. Changing practices in war, empire, and labour, understandings of science, sports, and aesthetic fashions all influenced the relationship between physiques, minds, and gender identities.[31]

Despite considerable diversity, the Classical body influenced by Greek antique sculptures was at the core of all formulations of male physical beauty and health.[32] Two Classical male body-types were especially potent models: the young, slim athleticism of the Ephebes, and the mature hefty, heroic Herculean form.[33] These images of poise and power were influential throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and were widely held aesthetic concepts across Europe, since as Michael Hau observes, classicism promoted transnational aesthetic considerations among artists and cultural elites.[34] Martin Myrone's study of masculinities in British art, for example, suggests that Georgian ideals of manly beauty focused upon the less brawny Greek model. Citing a series of history paintings of Virgil's hero Aeneas by Nathaniel Dance, 1766, he comments that unlike the 'brute' Achilles, who killed Hector, and is depicted as a physically massive Herculean, Aeneas bore a form that 'could be recommended for his genteel accomplishments, sheer physical beauty and his dutiful patriotism, which fitted with a moderate image of masculinity in civil society'.[35] The poised bodily form was associated with manners. David Hume, for instance, observed that readers were on the side of Trojans 'now,' rather than Greeks, and were much more interested in the 'humane and soft manners of Priam, Hector, Andromache, Sarpedon, Aeneas, Glaucus,

[30] James Mangan and James Walvin, 'Introduction', in *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800–1940*, ed. J. A. Mangan and J. Walvin (Manchester, 1987), 3; Joseph A. Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting* (Aldershot, 1995).
[31] For the diversity of bodily ideals 1800–1920, see Michael Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal, and the Beautiful: Perfect Bodies during the Age of Empire' in *Cultural History of the Human Body*, ed. Sappol and Rice,149–50.
[32] This was common across Europe. Ibid., 150, 152.
[33] Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, 54.
[34] Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal', 152, 164.
[35] Martin Myrone, *Body-building: Reforming Masculinities in British Art, 1750–1810* (New Haven, 2006), 70.

nay, even of Paris and Helen, than for the severe and cruel bravery of Achilles, Agamemnon, and the other Grecian heroes.'[36] By the second half of the nineteenth century, power prevailed as the Herculean body-type came to symbolise muscular Christianity.[37] Nonetheless, by the early twentieth century the two ideal Greek male body types were increasingly linked with specialised forms of physical fitness and sports.[38]

In the eighteenth century, manners, feelings, and utility dictated men's ideal physiques and associated styles of bodily deportment and ideals. These were influenced by polite sociability, the cult of sensibility, and eighteenth-century military techniques. All required a male body that was graceful, slim, and able to move in dance-like forms. This dexterous idealised man fitted a commercial, colonial society whose interests were protected by an army trained in linear tactics.[39] Thus the Georgian manly body was graceful and strong, but not burly. In 1804 the *Lady's Magazine* explained that 16 year old Selina was wooed by Edward whose 'form wore every manly grace; his manners were soft, persuasive, elegant'.[40] This manly body was well proportioned and composed of 'manly' 'parts', which like musical notes, formed a satisfactory whole. [41]

Poise and grace, were not coded as feminine, although men needed to be cautious that softness of manner did not become softness of body. In 1783 a newspaper defined effeminacy in men as 'the absence or debilitation of masculine strength and vigour, or the happy metamorphosis of the gentleman turned lady; that is, female softness in the male discovered by outward signs and tokens, in feminine expressions, accent, voice, gesture, dress, and

[36] Hume, 'Letter to the Authors of the Critical Review Concerning the Epigoniad of Wilkie' cited in Myrone, *Body-building*, 71.
[37] For the continuing popularity of the classical forms see Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, p. 48. An example is Leighton's 1871 *Hercules Wrestling with Death for the Body of Alcestis*.
[38] Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal', 165.
[39] McCormack, *Embodying the Militia*, 99–102.
[40] *The Lady's Magazine*, 35 (1804), 146.
[41] John Armstrong, *Miscellanies*, 2 vols (1770), II.

deportment.'[42] Grace and refinement had to be combined with strength and dexterity. Indeed, David Hume described a man as having 'beauty and vigour' because he possessed 'dexterity in every manly exercise … farther adorned with a blooming and ruddy countenance, with a lively air, with the appearance of spirit, and activity in all his demeanour'.[43]

Physical exercise produced this nimble manly body through exertion or recreation. This included walking, riding, and dancing, rather than a specific organised game.[44] In 1750 the *Youth's general instructor* recommended '*Dancing* … which gives a graceful motion, and above all things, Manliness, and a becoming confidence to young children, I think it cannot be learned too early, after they are once of an age and strength capable of it. But you must be sure to have a good master, that knows and can teach, what is graceful and becoming, and what gives a Freedom and Easiness to all the motions of the body.'[45] Physical exertions were important to masculinity for two reasons. Firstly, they trained men to be skilful and light on their feet. Secondly, outdoor activities hardened the body which would lead to manliness since physical hardiness was equated with male virtue. In his *Code of Health and Longevity*, published in 1807, John Sinclair observed that air was essential to athletic exercises since the more men 'are in the air, the firmer their flesh becomes'.[46] This was also classically inspired, for example, Samuel Johnson's definition of manly included Juvenal's *mens sana in corpore sano* (via Dryden), meaning a 'sound mind in a sound body'.[47]

The idealised manly body was in transition from the 1790s into the first half of the nineteenth century becoming solid, broader, rugged, and perhaps less elegant. There were numerous causes of this shift. The resurgence of classical ideals in neoclassicism influenced

[42] 'Further Gleanings from the late English Newspapers' in *Independent Journal or the General Advertiser*, Wednesday 28 January 1784, 2. I am grateful to Dane Morrison for directing me to this.
[43] David Hume, *The History of England. From the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the Revolution in 1688*, 12 vols [1789], V, 2.
[44] Allen, *Swimming with Dr Johnson*.
[45] William Richards, *Youth's General Instructor: or, a Short and Easy Introduction to the Arts and Sciences* (1750?).
[46] Cited in Allen, *Swimming with Dr Johnson*, 35.
[47] My thanks to Stephen Gregg, Matt McDowell, Elaine Chalus, and Freya Gowrley for a discussion on this quotation.

clothing fashions, which evoked nude sculpture, and ideal bodily types.[48] This was a more outdoors, less 'feeling' version of the idealised manly body. A 'young man's' letter to the *Lady's Monthly Museum*, 1801, criticising men of fashion, hints at this: 'I have not scrupled to wear brown paint, like other gentlemen, to increase the manliness of my appearance; nor to gape and stare at the women; nor to walk past them without deigning to look at them; nor to assume pride and reserve, or apathy, or rudeness, as suited the caprice of fashion: yes, Sir, all this I have done, but in vain. I never can be a man of fashion, because unfortunately, I am not devoid of feeling'.[49] The brown paint was make-up aimed at making men look more tanned and physically active.

A combination of expanding print culture, industrialisation, and consumption, along with the perception of national crisis during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, also influenced these ideas about the male body. Indeed, the slender, sensible manly form was viewed as less suitable to sustain and defend a nation. For example, thinness was increasingly associated with poverty and the French enemy. Problematically, while the portly English body of John Bull – the 'common man' – was emblematic of loyalist visions of manliness, he was hardly a fighter.[50] Perhaps unsurprisingly celebrated military and naval men were often depicted as large and/or robust and therefore appealing. Corporal John Shaw, a boxer and Life-Guardsman was feted for his bravery and sacrificing his life at Waterloo, stood over six feet tall, was admired for his size, and was nicknamed by his neighbours as the 'Cossall giant'.[51] Size became a corporeal vehicle through which masculine values were

[48] Harvey, 'Men of Parts', 812.
[49] To the Editor of the Lady's Monthly Museum, *The Lady's Monthly Museum* (London, England), [Wednesday], [April 01, 1801], 285.
[50] K. Downing, 'The Gentleman Boxer: Boxing, Manners, and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century England', *Men and Masculinities*, 12 (2010), 328–52.
[51] Michael Kirkby, 'The Redcoats of Nottinghamshire', https://nottinghamhiddenhistoryteam.wordpress.com/2013/09/03/the-redcoats-of-nottinghamshire/ Accessed 17/06/16; Henry Charles Moore, 'Shaw, John (1789–1815)', in Sidney Lee (ed.), *The Dictionary of National Biography : Supplement, 1901-1911* (1920); Edwin Trueman and R Westland, *History of Ilkeston: Cossall* (1899).

demonstrated.[52] In 1791 it was recorded: 'Before I had learned from the note the name and business of my Visitor, I was struck with the manliness of his person, the breadth of his chest, the openness of his countenance, and the inquietude of his eye'.[53] Similarly, an 'upright' posture conveyed both the sense of an ideal body and high moral behaviours. For instance, the periodical *John Bull*, 1822, paid a tribute to a London Lord Mayor and Member of Parliament, praising his 'manly and UPRIGHT conduct'.[54]

From the mid nineteenth century the ideal male body was increasingly large, robust, and overtly muscular with bulk, sturdiness, and stolidity offering bodily signs of fortitude. Physical power was the key to manliness. In 1847 *Bell's Life* commented approvingly on a cricketer of the newly formed I Zingari cricket club: 'he fought to win every inch of ground with mighty manliness.'[55] In 1896, a Macbeth actor was described as possessing 'rugged manliness'.[56] These mighty manly bodies were less likely to be smooth like their predecessors; indeed they were regularly described as rough, and faces were bearded. Those extremely corporeal adjectives – plucky and hearty – emerged to personify the manly body. Moreover, since the body was also understood to be related to the mind, it was assumed that strengthening the male body would strengthen the will and character.[57]

Motion and posture were again critical, but significantly different from grace and nimbleness. The manly movement was powerful and brisk. In 1889 *The Fishing Gazette* declared that Norman Fraser of Kildonan, a 'household word throughout the whole of

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[52] McCormack, *Embodying the Militia*, 88–9.
[53] *Proceedings of the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa* (1791).
[54] TO JOHN BULL. *John Bull* (London, England), Monday, July 29, 1822, Issue 85, 677.
[55] 'Cricketer's Register', *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* (London, England), Sunday, September 12, 1847, 6. This club was founded 1845 by men educated at public school; today it still bears the club rule: Keep your Promise – Keep your Temper – Keep your Wicket up. http://www.i-zingari.com/history Accessed 12/07/13
[56] John Johnson Collection, Theatre programme, The seventh performance given by Mr. E. Glossop Such, in aid of the 'Home of Rest for Horses', Venue: St. George's Hall, [London], Langam Place, W. Date of Event: May 6th, 1896
[57] Roberta Park, 'Biological Thought, Athletics and the Formation of a "man of character": 1830–1900' in *Manliness and Morality*, ed. Mangan and Walvin, 7–34.

Sutherlandshire' was a 'brisk and manly Highlander'.[58] Such an upright, straight posture was partly influenced by a military carriage and 'New Athleticism'. An advert in 1888 in *The Sporting Times* announced 'the Grandest Show of Manly Sports ever presented to the public' at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket.[59] In the 'cult of sporting manliness,' organised sports and games were judged especially likely to produce manliness.[60] They displayed masculinity through physical prowess and skill, manly values through team spirit, and drew links between physical strength, health, and moral wellbeing.[61] The classically-inspired physique also dominated the physical culture movement. Eugen Sandow, for instance, was inspired by classical statues in building his own musculature, and posed as a 'living' classical figure for artists and on stage.[62]

Again nation and empire were critical to these developments.[63] Plucky, hearty male bodies supported an industrialised, imperialised and, increasingly, militarised Britain where new weaponry led to skirmish and light infantry battle techniques.[64] The muscular classical body in an age of empire was deployed to construct hierarchies of race and tied to concerns of imperial power.[65] It was also related to changing economic conditions when new technology and mechanisation, and the rise of sedentary jobs such as salaried office workers, clerks, and deskilled manual labour appeared to challenge men's 'physical significance'. All

[58] 'Famous Fishermen', *The Fishing Gazette: Devoted to Angling, River, Lake & Sea Fishing and Fish Culture* (London, England), Saturday, 31 August 1889, Issue 645, 129.
[59] *The Sporting Times* (London, England), Saturday, 8 December 1888, Issue 1316, 4.
[60] James Walvin, 'Symbols of Moral Superiority: Slavery, Sport and the Changing World Order, 1800–1950' in *Manliness and Morality*, ed. Mangan and Walvin, 246.
[61] Pamela Gilbert, 'Popular Beliefs and the Body: "A Nation of Good Animals"' in *Cultural History of the Body*, ed. Sappol and Rice, 142–4.
[62] Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, 54.
[63] The ideals were also harnessed to notions of racial purity when they were framed within a Darwinian evolutionary framework by the later nineteenth century, see Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal'.
[64] Michael Brown, 'Cold Steel, Weak Flesh: Mechanism, Masculinity and the Anxieties of Late Victorian Empire', *Cultural and Social History*, forthcoming.
[65] Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal', 161.

were potentially emasculating and thus physical, rough, tough muscularity outside the workplace was re-emphasised.[66]

The Class Dimensions of Manly Bodies and Masculinity

The idealised bodies outlined above were elite: primarily aimed at and understood by educated genteel society. Indeed, the pervasive ideal of muscular Christianity is often envisaged as a middle-class creation; that middle-class and gentry boys engaged with through their public school education, and which was imposed upon lower-ranking men as a way to reform them and society. Thus the corporeality of Victorian working-class men appears most frequently in scholarship that considers endeavours to 'remake' lower-class men by improving their bodies. The combination of social Darwinism and urban industrialisation led to fears that working-class men were physically deficient, which reached crisis point in England during the South African wars. In his 1905 'Introductory Address on Efficiency' to Charing Cross Hospital, the celebrated Scottish alienist Sir James Crichton-Browne's included a section on 'The National Physique' in which he bemoaned that 'We have on our hands hordes of under-grown, under-fed, blemished, diseased, debilitated men, women, and children … who are industrially and socially in-efficient'.[67] Such concern was widespread and prompted institutionalized attempts to salvage the 'degenerate' body of the British working man through the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration and in the form of boys' and men's fraternal organisations and school physical education.[68]

[66] Baron, 'Masculinity, the embodied male worker', 146–7.
[67] Sir James Crichton-Browne, 'An Introductory Address on Efficiency', *The Lancet*, 7 October 1905, 1014.
[68] A.W. Fitz Roy, *Report of the Inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration* (1904); Budd, *Sculpture Machine*, 18. For similar fears of degeneration in France, Germany, and the US see Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal', 15–19.

The same imperative contributed to new leisure and recreation initiatives aimed directly at the working-class.[69] In 1868 the 'respectable' magazine aimed at working-class boys, *Boys of England: A Young Gentleman's Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction,* warned: 'Boys of England, in these days of cheap education, cheap standard literature, or cadet volunteer corps, cricket-clubs, and gymnasia; in these days when, even with unaided self-help and perseverance, you may achieve such wonders, it is your own fault if you do not grow up wise and strong men. Scorn aping manliness of mind and body; learn to think, speak, and write, learn to swim, jump, and run, despise skulking laziness, and face hard study and hard hand-labour'.[70] In these accounts the only agency the working-class man had over his body was to follow instructions. Undoubtedly, the needs of the state and nation were prominent in dictating the idealised male body, and in the deployment of the real male body. Nevertheless, there is evidence that the appeal of the muscular labouring male body could both inspire elite men and offer agency to working men.

The male labouring body was, after all, celebrated in visual, textual, and material form, particularly in the imagined forms of the soldier, the sailor, the boxer, and the entrepreneurial strongman.[71] These working men's bodies had a broad dissemination, commercialised in decorative, domestic objects intended to be collected and displayed in the home, such as ceramic vessels and plates, and pottery portrait figures, featuring boxers, as well as soldiers and sailors.[72] By the later nineteenth century such working men were also

[69] For example, The Young Men's Christian Association, founded 1844, and the National Physical Recreation Society, founded in 1886, which promoted fitness for working-class men, Budd, *Sculpture Machine*, 25.
[70] Crackers for the Ingenious. *Boys of England: A Young Gentleman's Journal of Sport, Travel, Fun and Instruction* (London, England), [Friday], [July 17, 1868] Issue 87, 142. For the magazine, see E. J. B. Rebecca Knuth, *Children's Literature and British Identity: Imagining a People and a Nation* (Lanham, Toronto, 2012) 64.
[71] For the labourer more generally see K. McClelland, 'Some Thoughts on Masculinity and the "representative artisan" in Britain, 1850–1880', *Gender and History* 1 (1989), 164–77.
[72] Boddy, *Boxing A Cultural History*, 44–5; Thomas Balston, *Staffordshire Portrait Figures of the Victorian Age* (1958), plate 47 (The Grapplers); P. D. Gordon Pugh, *Staffordshire Portrait Figures and Allied Subjects of the Victorian Era* (1970), 286–97 (soldiers and sailors).

deployed in advertising to sell products.[73] In examples from the early eighteenth century, the fine body of the labourer was based on classical statuary. This was intended to allude to the natural health and beauty of working men and thereby criticise the more effete, enervated effeminate bodies of those wealthy enough to participate in luxury and consume this art.[74] Joseph Wright of Derby's nocturnal paintings of blacksmiths, for example, include *The Blacksmith's Shop* 1771, in which three fine-figured men labour at the anvil.[75] Perhaps even more overtly indicative of the hearty beauty of male physical labour is the iron founder in Wright's *An Iron Forge*, 1772.[76] Overseeing the power-driven tilt hammer, he stands with his powerful arms crossed over his chest. Not only is he literally a glowing example of male strength, he is also surrounded by his family, indicating his virility and domesticity. As Matthew Craske observes, in these paintings Wright produced the opposite of the grand style of history painting, where the blacksmith stood as the lusty everyman essential to the village, and presumably natural society.[77]

By the 1840s the male labouring body was formulated as heroic. Thomas Carlyle, for instance, elevated work to a religion in his chapter in 'Labour,' in *Past & Present* (1843). In his view, work made the man, and in so doing saved the individual and national body and soul. He observed:

> Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of Labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt,

[73] Karen Walker, 'Manly Men and Angelic Women: Gender and Nostalgia in George Elgar Hicks's Watercolour The Sinews of Old England (1857) and in an advertisement for Cadbury's Cocoa (1886)'. http://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/resources/documents/manly-men-and-angelic-women-gender-and-nostalgia-george-elgar-hicks%E2%80%99s Accessed 18/06/19

[74] Matthew Craske, *Joseph Wright of Derby: Entrepreneur of Gloom*, forthcoming. My sincere thanks to Matthew for sharing his book manuscript with me.

[75] http://collections.britishart.yale.edu/vufind/Record/1669279

[76] http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wright-an-iron-forge-t06670/text-summary

[77] In this way, his paintings are similar to Chardin's images of dignified working people. Craske, *Joseph Wright of Derby*, chapter one. For the argument that the forge-man is portrayed as heroic, see Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 35.

> Desire, Sorrow, Remorse, Indignation, Despair itself, all these like hell-dogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor dayworker, as of every man: but he bends himself with free valour against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The man is now a man. The blessed glow of Labour in him, is it not as purifying fire wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame![78]

The elevation of the working man to heroic status was widespread in British art and literature in the second half of the nineteenth century. Tim Barringer's 'critical iconography of the working man' suggests that representations the male labouring body acted as 'the nexus of ethical and aesthetic value'.[79] The two best-known visual examples of the heroic working man are found in George Hicks's *The Sinews of Old England*, 1857, and Ford Madox Brown's *Work*. Hicks's *Sinews of Old England* is a particularly appealing example of the genre of the labouring man at his cottage door. The title refers to the phrase 'the sinews and power of old England,' which was used to describe the navy.[80] No doubt this drew connections in viewers' minds with the heroic 'everyman', Jack Tar, whose robust, stout, hard body offered another appealing model of working manhood.[81] The other archetypal depiction of heroic manual labour is Ford Madox Brown's richly iconographic painting 'Work', influenced by Ruskin and Carlyle and so closely linked to Carlyle's views on work that it portrays him as an observer.[82] Work is glorified in the navvies' bodies. In a sonnet that he wrote to accompany the painting, Brown eulogised (Feb, I865) work as beading the brow

[78] Thomas Carlyle, 'Labour,' *Past & Present* (1843) http://www.online-literature.com/thomas-carlyle/past-and-present/34/ Accessed 16/06/15
[79] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 1–2.
[80] For the use of the title see *Men and times of the Revolution; or, Memoirs of Elkanah Watson, including journals of travels in Europe and America, from 1777 to 1842* (New York, 1856) https://archive.org/details/menandtimes00watsrich Accessed 16/06/15
[81] Joanne Begiato (Bailey) 'Tears and the Manly sailor in England, c. 1760–1860', *Journal for Maritime Research*, 17 (2015), 117–33.
[82] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 28.

and tanning 'the flesh of lusty manhood', thereby 'casting out its devils!'[83] Brown, a radical and socialist, used the central heroic navvy's body whose pose he based on the Apollo Belvedere, to convey the worth of the lower classes over poorer-quality men who did not labour so nobly.[84] Brown described the Apollo-like navvy as being in the 'pride of manly health and beauty, and of course in this combination his figure merged both poise and power.[85]

Such images can be read in several ways in the light of what has been discussed so far. Manly labouring bodies served as moral exemplars for society. In 1770 Arthur Young complained: 'It is not the deficiency of labouring hands, but the progress of sloth and indolence which ought to alarm our fears: it is this which induces the idle part of our people to prefer the less toilsome, but more precarious works of the manufacture to the rough, but more manly exercises of the husbandman.' Here the labouring rural manly body was the antithesis of an unmanly idleness, that bugbear of social and moral commentators because it damaged productivity.[86] Those like Hicks' domesticated labourer can be seen as moralistic in intention, reinforcing the gendered spheres of home with the man active in the public sphere and his adoring wife waiting in the domestic sphere.[87] Like other similar images, it sentimentalised men's hard labour, in the process making the industrious working-class man less threatening to higher-ranking people by valorising their work ethic for their families.[88] Moreover, as with the Jack Tar, this image of the labouring man at the heart of his family embodied the strength of the nation through the motif of familial affection that saturates the painting. Working men's bodies in genre pictures were also didactic in that they were

[83] Cited in Gerard Curtis, 'Ford Madox Brown's "Work": An Iconographic Analysis', *Art Bulletin* 74 (December 1992), 633.
[84] Ibid., 629; Barringer, *Men at Work*, 37.
[85] Curtis, 'Ford Madox Brown's "Work"', 631; Barringer, *Men at Work*, 37.
[86] Ibid., 16.
[87] Ibid., 30–1.
[88] For an overview of this in relation to trade union emblem history, see Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 36–40.

intended to promote manly ideals to their social superiors. For instance, Millais's *The Rescue* painted in 1855 offers a working-class muscular hero: a fearless fireman rescuing two children from a burning house. *The Athenaeum* reviewer of the painting declared the fireman to be 'thoroughly English, cool, determined, and self-reliant ... resolute, manly, strong as iron, like one accustomed to pass through fire'.[89]

Scholars of labour and art argue that such heroic depictions of male labouring bodies subordinated and objectified men.[90] This firm-jawed fireman not only reinforced patriarchal hierarchies of men and women, he reinforced those between men, by offering an archetype of tough male body which sedentary men were unlikely to reach. Furthermore, Ava Baron characterises working-class men in these images as passive, because, like women, they became the subject of the gaze; their muscular bodies eroticised and therefore pacified.[91] Though handsome, heroic, and idealised, Ravenhill-Johnson claims, they 'are still "the other", not of the same class as the purchaser of fine art; their depiction acts as reassurance that workers are sober, industrious and, above all, nonthreatening.'[92]

Yet working bodies need not be read only in terms of condescension, passivity, and subordination. These representations were multi-purpose and working-class men's bodies had dynamic cultural power which spanned social classes. Elite men, for example, were inspired by the idealised hardened working male body. Hardening was a feature derived from plebeian working men. Stuart Hogarth explains that plebeian men needed wiry, tough, enduring bodies in order to carry out their manual labour. As such their paid physical labour not only shaped and made demands upon their bodies, it was intrinsic to the formation of their gender and

[89] Cited in Herbert Sussman, *Victorian Masculinities: Manhood and Masculine Poetics in Early Victorian Literature and Art* (Cambridge, 1995), 144, 146.
[90] For the thesis that the labourer in art became increasingly depersonalised and anonymous see John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting 1730–1840* (Cambridge, 1980).
[91] Baron, 'Masculinity, the Embodied Male Worker', 148–9.
[92] Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 38.

class identities.[93] Men originally of lower social status, writing in the early nineteenth century, referred in their memoirs to a similar notion of body 'hardening'. Thomas Bewick described compensating for his sedentary life as an engraver during his apprenticeship, and the resulting ill-health it caused, by following medical advice to restrict his diet and train his body through walking to harden it into a manlier form.[94] Francis Place used cold-water therapy to harden his body against illness.[95] Studies of twentieth-century mining, steel working, and ship building demonstrate that male workers continued to define their masculine identity through a cult of toughness at work, as well as the ability to take and ignore risks.[96]

Elite men emulated the hardened bodies of plebeian men from the early nineteenth century. Admittedly this was probably derived from representations of labouring men's bodies rather than reality, since, as Pamela Gilbert observes, this was compromised by the fact that labourers' bodies were formed by hard labour and rarely produced a body conforming to classical ideals.[97] Still, as Barringer argues, visual images formed styles of masculinity as well as articulating them'.[98] Examples include elite men who emulated the idealised form of boxers. From the later eighteenth century, competitive boxing defined new sought-after models of male stance, use of the body, appearance, and body shape. Karen Downing notes the appeal of the 'gentleman' boxer's body, which was 'able to simultaneously convey strength, refinement, and self-control'.[99] Popular portraits of boxers displayed both male poise and power; as Harvey points out as fighters were posed naked from the waist upwards, but wearing trim breeches: a melding of politeness and strength.[100]

[93] Hogarth, 'Reluctant patients', passim.
[94] Thomas Bewick, *Memoir*, 1822 (unpaginated manuscript, Adam Matthew Publications Microfilm Series)
[95] *The Autobiography of Francis Place, 1771–1854*, ed. M. Thrale (Cambridge, 1972)
[96] Ronnie Johnston and Arthur McIvor, 'Dangerous Work, Hard Men and Broken Bodies: Masculinity in the Clydeside Heavy Industries c. 1930–1970s', *Labour History Review*, 69/2 (2004) 142.
[97] Gilbert, 'Popular Beliefs and the Body', 144–5.
[98] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 16.
[99] Downing, 'The Gentleman Boxer', 343.
[100] Harvey, 'Men of Parts', 812.

The boxer's appeal was commercialised in various ways. Boxers marketed their diet and training regimes to elite men, intended to produce this muscular, but elegant physique. Most famously, George Gordon Byron used a boxing regime to lose weight and improve his body. He even materialised his love of boxing in a dressing screen upon which he collaged coloured pictures of prize-fighters and reports of boxing matches.[101]

Wealthy men also adopted plebeian styles of dress from the later eighteenth century, wearing modest and plain clothing which eventually came to be seen as a distinctively English style. The shift from breeches to trousers in men's legwear in the nineteenth century was particularly influenced by working-men's trousers.[102] As John Styles observes, men who chose to dress down 'were sharing in a powerful trend towards the rural, the sporting and the plebeian.' In an era of national crisis this trend personified patriotism through the association with pugnacious plebeian masculinity and English liberty.[103] From the mid nineteenth century, a generation of more sedentary middle-class men romanticised, and yearned to possess themselves the bodily markers of the heroic working body. Of course, there were considerable differences between the social classes' adoption of sportsmen's training regimes, body hardening, and simpler dress. Stuart Hogarth explains that hardening was a necessity for the labouring classes, but the middle-class men who adopted it when formulating gendered identities did so as 'a reaction against rich living,' both in terms of self-indulgence and mental strain.[104] Thus, by the later nineteenth century, as Gilbert proposes, the muscular Christian's 'body was based less on class than on other attributes seen as quintessentially British, and it insisted on a body toughened either by physical labour or physical sport'.[105]

[101] Boddy, *Boxing A Cultural History*, 49–54
[102] Harvey, 'Men of Parts', 811.
[103] John Styles. *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, 2007), 192–3.
[104] Hogarth, 'Reluctant patients', 73.
[105] Gilbert, 'Popular Beliefs and the Body', 144.

Working Men's Muscular Arms

Tim Barringer describes Brown's *Work* as composed around the three navvies, 'who catch the full force of the July sun that reflects harshly from their bared forearms'.[106] Indeed, perhaps the most potent symbol of working-men's labour was the muscular forearm. It was central to the depictions of industrial workers from Joseph Wright's iron-forge workers, to Hicks' agricultural worker, to Brown's Apollo-like navvy. Karen Harvey has focused upon the eighteenth-century elite male clothed leg as a marker of masculinity, conveying meanings of male power, strength, beauty, and virility.[107] This article concludes by arguing that the labourer's forearm was equally powerful in cultural meaning, and was extensively deployed by a range of social classes. The raised muscular male arm, with rolled-up sleeve, holding a working tool was originally the sign of the blacksmith; a single raised muscular arm bearing a hammer was used in trade guilds' heraldry.[108] By the early nineteenth century it became a common icon of skilled labour, adopted for use on friendly societies' and trades unions' ephemera and banners to symbolise pride in labour.[109] Arguably it only became a more threatening image of class militancy by the twentieth century.[110]

Initially, strong and muscular arms signified generic masculinity, not class- or occupational-specific manhood. An early seventeenth century poem *A Maid's Revenge* by James Shirley, for instance, reprinted in 1793, has the Count de Monte Nigro (who was described as a braggard) ask: Wherefore has | Nature given me these brawny arms, this manly bulk, | And these collossian supporters nothing but to sling | The sledge, or pitch the bar, and

[106] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 48.
[107] Harvey, 'Men of Parts', passim.
[108] Kim Munson, 'The Evolution of an Emblem: the Art & Hammer, 2010, unpublished paper. http://www.academia.edu/231841/Evolution_of_an_Emblem_The_Arm_and_Hammer Accessed 12/06/15.
[109] John Gorman, *Banner Bright: An Illustrated History of Trade Union Banners* (Buckhirst Hill, 1986), 78
[110] G. A. Williams, 'Introduction', in Gorman, *Banner Bright*, 20. For an example, see the Herculean form of a worker wrestling with the serpent of capitalism on the Dockers Union Export Branch banner, painted in the early 1890s, Gorman, *Banner Bright*, 127.

play …[111] It was never merely a marker of muscular male strength. The muscular male arm connoted both the capacity to smite and protect. As a sermon preached following the Lisbon earthquake in 1755 warned about God: 'He hath a Mighty Arm; strong is his Hand; and high is his right Hand'.[112] It was this mighty arm to which one supplicated, as when Roxana in 'The Rival Queens' pleaded to heaven following her broken heart and rising passions: 'What saving hand, or what a might arm | Can raise me sinking?'[113] The notion of the protective male arm was also deeply reassuring. Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnson, for example, recorded her thirteen-year old daughter's verses that she had written when fearful during a tumultuous sea passage in 1801:

Oh why am I so much afraid,
Why does each wave alarm,
Does not the Lord protect me still
And guard me by his arm?[114]

From political to popular culture, the nation offered its symbolic muscular arm to defend its subjects. Thomas Quayle, for example, declared that Jersey enjoyed a 'beneficent government; protecting them with a mighty arm, from the ravage, and the insult of the surrounding foe' in his review of agriculture in 1815.[115] Thus archetypal men might stand in for and defend the nation through their mighty arms. For example, in the popular poem 'The Sailor's Tear', the sailor raises his arm in all three stanzas – in the first two to wipe away a tear as he leaves his loving family, but in the final verse his arm is raised to slay the enemy:

Ere long o'er ocean's blue expanse,
His sturdy bark had sped;
The gallant Sailor from her prow,
Descried a Sail a-head;

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[111] James Shirley, *The maid's revenge. A tragedy* (1793).
[112] Samuel Clarke, *A Sermon Preached at Daventry, December 7, 1755, On occasion of the Late earthquake at Lisbon* (1755).
[113] Nathaniel Lee, 'The Rival Queens; Or the Death of Alexandra the Great' in *The British Drama Comprehending the Best Plays in the English Language, Tragedies* (1804), 173.
[114] Rev. Arthur Wentworth Eaton, (ed.), *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist by Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston, written in 1836* (New York, 1901), 101. For similar references to strong paternal arms see Joanne Bailey (Begiato), *Parenting in England: Emotions, Identities and Generation* (Oxford, 2012), 118–21.
[115] Thomas Quayle, *General View of the Agriculture and Present State of the Islands on the Coast of Normandy Subject to the Crown of Great Britain* (1815), 213.

And then he rais'd his mighty arm,
For Britain's foes were near,
Ay then he raised his arm, but not
To wipe away a tear.[116]

Of course, the viewer was also meant to admire the sinewy muscular forearms of Hicks' and Brown's working men, because they were symbolic of the manly sinews of patriotism and national strength, as well as the steely, hardened fortitude of skilled labour. Indeed, the workers' powerful forearm became a marker of Britain's industrial power. Historians of art, and scholars of friendly societies and trades unions' iconography, for example suggest that the heroic style of representing the working man from the 1850s was part of a 'new recognition of the times that the wealth of the nation rested on its industrial output, and the skills of its working men'.[117] The muscular arm, if first associated with particular trades according to which tools it held, became a political symbol of an entire working class late in the nineteenth century.[118]

There were numerous tensions at the centre of this image of workingmen's strength and identity. Barringer points out that 'Industrial work is portrayed as a celebration of the male body, well-nourished and in good health, rather than as a process that disfigures and ultimately destroys it'.[119] Yet, in some ways, this was recognised and, the concept of the heroism worker was used to ameliorate it. Jamie Bronstein shows how newspapers celebrated working-class men for performing acts of heroism following industrial disasters, casting their actions in terms of self-sacrifice and wartime heroism.[120] During the 1862 Harley Colliery disaster, the *Newcastle Chronicle* described resting rescuers: 'While the ruddy glare of the

[116] *Sailor's Tear*, Bodley Ballads, Bodleian Library, Frame 19918. Also see sheet music, Victoria & Albert Collection, S.356-2012, c 19th century, https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/20159 Accessed 15/06/15.
[117] Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 28, 38.
[118] Munson, 'Evolution of an Emblem', 9.
[119] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 166–7.
[120] Jamie L. Bronstein, *Caught in the Machinery: Workplace Accidents and Inured Workers in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, CA, 2007), 73–7. For the language of military heroism see Michael Brown, '"Like a Devoted Army": Medicine, Heroic Masculinity, and the Military Paradigm in Victorian Britain', *The Journal of British Studies*, 49 (2010), 592–622.

fire was cast over their broad, manly features and well-moulded forms, they seemed to be the living embodiment of all those attributes of courage and strength which … [distinguish] the inhabitants of the British Isles'.[121] If this smacks of glossing over the exploited male labouring body, it is worth remembering that working-class men deployed the narrative themselves for their own ends.[122]

As this hints, this imagined male body had collective social agency for working-class men too. There is evidence from the turn of the eighteenth century that members of the working classes deployed and politicised images such as the handsome, working man resting at his cottage door to demonstrate that labouring men had the independence and respectability to possess a political voice. As much as in his masculine status, this was measured through his manly, temperate body, and physical strength.[123] It was central to the attempts to improve working-class men's bodies through the means of self-help. As the literary scholar Michael Budd comments, the second half of the nineteenth century saw 'the development of a new notion of the embodied self – one emphasizing the possibility of improving the body and character'. He points out that Samuel Smiles promoted this in his 'self-help' regime, which saw mutual connections between physical steadfastness, bodily health and self-reliance. [124] Whether this was a means of social control is open to debate, but working men certainly used these notions of bodily fitness as a way to improve social status. The physical culture regimens commercialised by 'fitness entrepreneurs' like Eugen Sandow to working-class men with disposable income also thus 'offered lower-class men a body-centred form of self-discipline and respectability'.[125]

[121] Cited in Bronstein, *Caught in the Machinery*, 75.
[122] Ibid., 74.
[123] Matthew McCormack, 'Married Men and the Fathers of Families: Fatherhood and Franchise Reform in Britain', in *Gender and Fatherhood in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Trev-Lynn Broughton, and Helen Rogers (New York, 2007).
[124] Budd, *Sculpture Machine*, 20–1.
[125] Hau, 'The Normal, the Ideal', 159; Kestner, *Masculinities in Victorian Painting*, 54.

Accordingly, there is substantial evidence that working-men took up the visual iconography of muscular arms as part of their formulations of self- and class-identity. Harvey observes that industrialisation focused more attention on men as workers and upon their occupations, leading to an identification of working men as both producers and workers. She argues therefore that the iconography of men's tools on ceramic objects and in visual culture helped articulate a collective identity of craftsmen in the first part of the nineteenth century.[126] Muscular arms exposed by rolled-up sleeves ready for labour and grasping tools were the most potent symbol of approved 'heroic' men's labour. Alongside others such as the handshake, symbol of unity and concord, they became central to the iconography of working-class friendly societies, trades unions, and political movements like Chartism.[127] Heroic, working-men stood at the heart of their bannerettes, banners, and certificates; large, noble, and elevated, rolled up shirt sleeves showing muscular forearms to present physical strength and health, muscular arms, and occupational identity through the tools they hold.[128] The illustrations of emblems collected in Ravenhill-Johnson's study offers numerous pieces of evidence spanning the century from the 1820s to 1920s.[129] James Sharples' emblem of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (1851) is an excellent example, featuring two dignified working men, a blacksmith and an engineer, posed in the heroic model of history painting; both have sleeves rolled up.[130]

Crucially, these visual representations of working-class identity and objectives were designed and created by working-class people. The artists were working-class and shared similar artistic conventions of male physiques to their elite counterparts. Often trained in art schools, they too had begun training by copying from antique sculpture, and Old Masters; even lesser artists trained at night school would copy from art primers, pattern books and

[126] Harvey, 'Craftsmen in Common', 69, 75–8.
[127] Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 31.
[128] Ibid., 107.
[129] Ibid., plates 1–90.
[130] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 173–5; Ravenhill-Johnson , *Art and Ideology*, 28.

engravings.[131] The industrial blacksmith James Sharples, for instance, 'appropriated the vocabulary of high art in order to fashion a corpus of visual self-representation'.[132] He also constructed his public persona in such terms. Samuel Smiles added him to the celebrated lives in the second edition of *Self-Help*, published in 1860. In addition, Smiles requested his photograph to add to his collection of notable self-made men. In the resulting studio portrait, Sharples posed as blacksmith not artist, sleeves rolled up to bare his working-man's forearms, holding his hammer.[133] As Ravenhill-Johnson's study of the art and ideology of the trade union emblem demonstrates, their working-class commissioners and creators appropriated Greek and Roman culture to represent their union members.[134] Perhaps a particularly telling example is on the Certificate of the Friendly Society of Iron Founders of England, Ireland, and Wales, 1857, by John James Chant. It shows a typical architectural cutaway with working scenes at the bottom, and two ennobled working men at the top, rolled-up sleeves, holding their tools of trade. However, at the centre is a miner hewing an enormous coal face. He is positively herculean, bare-chested, and heavily muscular.[135] Here were both the poised and powerful male bodies.

What is also striking about such emblems is that they were not restricted to banners which were publicly paraded, but were also part of the domestic environment Certificates and emblems were meant to be displayed at home. Others had particularly domestic uses and connotations. A touching example is the emblem of the Friendly Association of Cotton Spinners, a Glasgow society, formed in 1806, and printed on a japanned tin tray in c. 1825.[136] The image was a copy of the Association's bannerette. In front of the power spinning

[131] Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 35, 38, 40.
[132] Barringer, *Men at Work*, 139.
[133] Ibid.,149–50.
[134] Ravenhill-Johnson, *Art and Ideology*, 2.
[135] Ibid., plate 21. For colour version of engraving see http://www.unionhistory.info/Display.php?irn=7000001&QueryPage=AdvSearch.php.
[136] Glasgow Museum, accession no A.1938.11.du http://collections.glasgowmuseums.com/starobject.html?oid=139177 Also discussed in Gorman, *Banner Bright*, 70.

machine stands a male worker extending his hand to a female child worker; his sleeves are rolled up above his elbows, he is neatly attired in a waistcoat otherwise. This demonstrated his paternal benevolence and his respectable status as much as his trade, which is represented by the spinning machinery rather than a handheld tool. The Carlisle branch of the Glasgow Association used the same image in its banner, probably around a similar date. The domestic nature of the banner however is particularly vivid, since the banner takes the form of a patchwork quilt, with the emblem reproduced in embroidery on an apron at its centre, surrounded by pieced cotton patches. The apron was apparently worn by a local cotton spinner when celebrating the passing of the 1832 reform act in a procession through Carlisle.[137] This is a reminder of the ways in which working-class masculinities were formulated in the home as much as the work place or leisure venue.

There is also evidence of the links between the earlier sturdy heroic labouring man and his later counterparts. J. Havelock Wilson, who founded the sailors' and fireman's union in 1887, recorded in his autobiography that union banners often portrayed national figures of importance to the working-class movement. He recalled frequently seeing his own portrait on the various banners of the Seamen's Union in all kinds of 'picturesque positions'. One that he specially noted was his portrayal as the '"heroic sailor"' Jack Crawford, the hero of the naval battle of Camperdown.' This Sunderland-born sailor became a northern hero thanks to his actions in 1797 in nailing the fleet's colours back onto the mast, and was portrayed on ceramics, and prints through the century.[138] This hints at a long lineage of working-class heroism, rooted in male bodily strength and evolving from a primarily gender to class identity.

Conclusion

[137] Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, Carlisle http://www.tulliehouse.co.uk/thecollection/cotton-spinners-banner-victorian
[138] Gorman, *Banner Bright*, 113.

Manliness was not cerebral and bloodless, but was carried within and conveyed through men's bodies whose parts, poise, and power were encoded with gendered values and qualities. An embodied approach therefore opens up male corporeality to be read as a site for cultural meaning and social practice. This article demonstrates that manly bodies were reified as symbols, progenitors, and defenders of gender, society, and nation. These bodies therefore needed to be manipulated and made-over to improve men and their masculine qualities at an individual and collective level and across social classes. Influenced in form by classical aesthetics, depictions of men's bodily styles spanned a spectrum of poise and power, deployed in either or both forms to embody cultural, social, political, economic, and military success. Initially this was a set of codes originating within and circulated among elite groups. However, men who did not use their bodies to earn a living came to emulate the appearance and exercise regimes of muscular men's bodies trained through sport or work. Moreover, the allure of poised and powerful male bodies extended beyond the upper ranks. From the later eighteenth century, working-class men also adapted bodily symbols of muscularity, strength, and skill to construct their own masculine, occupational, and class identities.