CHAPTER 2

Military Service and Resistance

Toward a Theory of Black Republicanism

> Just a few fools . . . of the race are taking the view . . . that the colored man has nothing to fight for in this country, where he is the subject to more humiliation, maltreatment [and] lynching than the treacherous, barbarous Spaniard, or the alien anarchist, nihilist, or socialist. But now the country dearer to us than life is in peril, and everybody who thinks knows that Negroes have in every past crisis forgotten their little hardships, forgotten their chains even . . . and have unhesitatingly come to their country's call. They know that this is our country, that Negroes helped to make it what it is in war and in peace. . . . Negroes want to fight, are anxious to fight, but only on the same footing as the rest—they want an equal chance from start to finish to rise even to the highest possible place by merit. . . . The stars and stripes, the eternal emblem of Liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice to everybody must not, shall not touch the dust, if the black arms of ten million Negro Americans are given a full and fair chance to help hold it aloft. God save the nation, Washington, Attucks, Douglass, Lincoln, and McKinley by making it do right by all her children, black and white alike.
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> —N. C. Bruce, Third North Carolina Volunteer Infantry (Negro), May 1898, quoted in Willard Gatewood, *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers*

In chapter 1, I illustrated the manner in which military service affected the social standing of African Americans. When blacks were allowed to serve and their service contributed substantively to a war's positive outcome, they were rewarded with progress toward social justice. Conversely, on those occasions when they were not allowed to serve or their combat-related contributions were minimized or flat-out denigrated, their social status remained the same or even regressed. As I emphasized, however, change was not limited to the top-down, government-sponsored sort that occurred in the aftermath of the Revolutionary War and the

Civil War. As some of the actions of black servicemen mentioned in the previous chapter suggest, many of those who served had changed, even if society refused to do so, and these changes in turn helped to produce more widespread reform in the South.

To argue that black veterans returned home more willing to challenge white supremacy than they were when they left is not to say that nonveteran black Southerners failed to routinely contest their oppression. From everyday actions aimed at claiming dignity and self-respect to larger, more complex acts of resistance choreographed by movement organizations, black Southerners often demonstrated a willingness to resist white supremacy (Dittmer 1994; Kelley 1993, 1994; McAdam 1999; Morris 1984; Payne 1995; Tuck 2001). Nevertheless, I contend that the "radicalizing experience" of the military to which Eric Foner (1988) refers in his work on the Civil War supplemented black servicemen's and veterans' commitment to insurgency.

The epigraph to this chapter highlights the content of their radicalism. It expresses loyalty and commitment to American principles, as well as the demand that American society honor them. It is also worth noting that N. C. Bruce, a black soldier who served during the Spanish-American War, also mentions fraternity and justice, in addition to liberty and equality, as American principles that must be honored. His interpretation of the flag as a symbol of these principles, I argue, is a nod to blacks' desire to be part of the larger national political community in which they are viewed as equals. He also suggests that blacks were willing, even eager, to fight for their country. But the country had to allow them to do so under fair conditions. Black Americans, he argues, were willing to set aside their hurt and anger regarding the humiliation and brutality to which they were subjected in exchange for the opportunity to serve on an equal basis. Perhaps this sense of political agency, one that remained frustrated, explains the militancy of black veterans.

From the previous chapter we know how this particular story ends. Black units performed well in the Spanish-American War, even saving Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders from defeat. While their deeds did not become well known nationally, the soldiers who performed them remained proud of wearing the uniform, proud of their service to the nation (Fletcher 1974). They became increasingly militant as the pride and confidence associated with their military service continued to collide with the daily humiliations and subjugation of Jim Crow. Even as segregation hardened throughout the South around the turn of the century, some black soldiers and veterans challenged the prevailing racial norms to which pride and confidence did not permit them to submit. This resulted in violent clashes, often accompanied by gunplay (Christian 1995; Fletcher 1974).

In this chapter, I will elaborate a theoretical framework designed to explain the attitudes and behavior of such black veterans. I first examine the political and cultural underpinnings of the citizen-soldier ideal, which I argue is foundational to black veterans' claims to equality. I then take a two-pronged approach to explaining the effects of military service on veterans' political attitudes and behavior. I ground this approach in the symbolic meaning of black veterans' military experience. Normatively, black Southerners believed that wearing the uniform and serving the country made them the political equals of whites—full members of the political community. In this regard, military service had the symbolic effect of making black Southern veterans feel "more American." In this way, black veterans believed themselves entitled to the fruits of democracy for which they were prepared to die, including freedom and equality. They also drew symbolic meaning from their *experiences* in the military, which they associated with significant achievements and perseverance over the rigors associated with military life, as well as enduring discriminatory treatment even as they fought for democratic principles. Conquering both gave many of them an unshakeable sense of confidence. After examining the meaning of military service to veterans, I consider how their service shaped the belief system to which they subscribed, something I call *black republicanism*. I will then distinguish it from both mainstream republicanism and other competing black ideologies. As I argue below, black republicanism was a belief system that deployed the rhetoric of republicanism as a means of justifying claims to equality and the contestation of white supremacy.

The Citizen-Soldier Ideal

To fully appreciate why black elites like Fredrick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois believed so strongly in the efficacy of military service in producing racial progress, we must first examine the place of military service in American political culture. Let us begin by considering the origins of the institution of the citizen-soldier, a cornerstone of republican citizenship.

The Citizen-Soldier Ideal: The Classical Model

Originating with Aristotle and later revised in the work of such thinkers as Cicero, Niccolò Machiavelli, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Baron Montesquieu, *republicanism* is a complex set of ideals and empirical assumptions about how citizens and institutions may secure the common good

and protect political liberty. Among these ideals and assumptions is the notion that a virtuous citizenry is a necessary component of a free state. Unlike the liberty associated with liberalism, which aspires to freedom from interference and the unconstrained pursuit of self-perfection (Berlin 1969), republicans seek to free themselves from the arbitrary interference of others and to participate in their own political destiny (Pettit 1997; Skinner 1998). More concretely, liberals are concerned with preventing the imposition of limits on their freedom of choice. Republicans contend, on the other hand, that freedom as the absence of interference ultimately fails to square with real freedom. Indeed, Quentin Skinner, a leading republican theorist, maintains that "if basic rights and liberties may be taken away with impunity . . . they do not have the status of rights" (2002, 250). For one to remain an object of domination one does not need to actually have their freedom of choice curbed; the mere possibility that it *could be* curbed by another party is sufficient for domination to obtain. Theoretically, then, it is possible to enjoy freedom of choice and pursue self-perfection while remaining an object of domination. For republicans, thus, a free state is one in which the absence of domination is preferred to the absence of interference. The principal difference, therefore, is how one defines freedom: for liberals, it's the absence of constraint; for republicans, it's the absence of dependence or domination.

Domination may emanate from the outside or from within. Individuals may be subjected to internal domination by those within the state who arbitrarily curb their freedom, such as a corrupt government through its agents. War, on the other hand, presents an external threat to liberty, as it may result in a nation's occupation or its permanent loss of sovereignty. To avoid domination and the loss of their liberty, citizens are encouraged to put the needs of the republic before their private interests. Thus, the civic virtue of a republican citizenry is exhibited in its willingness to participate in politics, subsume self-interest to the common good, identify emerging threats to liberty—both internal and external—and come to the aid of the country, even if it requires the forfeiture of life. Republican liberty, in sum, is both realized and protected through participation in the public sphere, including military service (Snyder 1999).

If civic virtue is central to the realization and protection of political liberty, what can be done to engender a virtuous citizenry? Here, republicans have traditionally turned to a variety of institutional and social mechanisms (including mixed government, direct participation, education, civic religion, the avoidance of economic extremes, and the control of commercial interaction) in order to inculcate the proper virtues of citizenship. The military, which produces the citizen-soldier, is among these mechanisms. Indeed, many republicans have perceived the military to be

the republic's primary school of virtue. Machiavelli, for example, believed that military service to the state has the capacity to transform people into better citizens because it ordinarily demands self-sacrifice and a concern for the greater good (Pocock 1975). Service members must be willing to exchange their safety for danger, comfort for physical hardship, and familial integrity for family separation. Enduring these hardships together with fellow citizens to protect the republic reinforces the importance of self-sacrifice for the good of the political community.

The idea that soldiers should be citizens, however, has been important to republican theorists for another reason: possession of a citizen militia allows the republic to avoid the corruption associated with a standing army. A professional army must justify its existence, possibly creating a conflict of interest, as it must press for an aggressive foreign policy, which in turn makes war more likely. With few exceptions, war threatens the political community and therefore the common good.[1] The militia not only makes a standing army unnecessary but inhibits the spread of corruption by preventing tyranny from above or unjustified revolt led by demagogues from below. Some theorists have considered an armed citizenry (a citizen militia) to be the only thing standing between a corrupt state and the interruption of republican liberty by the imposition of domination or servitude (Pettit 1997). Others see an armed citizenry as capable of denying factions led by demagogues the ability to undermine the pursuit of the common good. In a republic with widespread political participation, David Williams (1991) explains, the citizen militia was historically perceived to be utterly incapable of acting against the common good of the people, because "the virtue of the militia rested upon and reflected the virtue of the citizenry as a whole because they were one and the same" (579).

The Citizen-Soldier: In the American Context

The citizen-soldier was very much in evidence during the American Revolution. In fact, the early Americans favored a militia-based fighting force over a standing army because, like their European forebears, they believed the latter might just as soon promote corruption as stem it. Alexander Hamilton, in *Federalist Paper* 29, "Concerning the Militia," makes clear the republican concern for a standing army while arguing the merits of a federally regulated militia: "If standing armies are dangerous to liberty, an efficacious power over the militia . . . ought . . . to

[1] Machiavelli (1970), on the other hand, believed that an aggressive foreign policy and war were sometimes good for the republic because they can relieve internal unrest that was mitigated when plebes were sent off to fight.

take away the inducement and the pretext to such unfriendly institutions" (Hamilton 2005, 154). In the American colonies, moreover, republicanism was shaped by opposition to continuing British rule (Bailyn 1967; Wood 1969). In Gordon Wood's (1969) account, the American version of republicanism reflected the moral character of American society, in which civic virtue, equality of opportunity, and self-sacrifice anchored the pursuit of the public good. There is little doubt that these ideals motivated ragtag, poorly trained state militia units to take on the far superior British force. It's not a stretch to say that the militiamen drew upon the righteousness of their cause as means of enduring the financial and personal sacrifices entailed in repelling the redcoats (Chambers 1987).

That the colonists enjoyed their political liberty and were willing to die for the values underpinning it was revolutionary in its own right. There is, though, at least one additional reason why the American rebellion against the British should be considered a revolution: it remains the first modern attempt to create a broad-based republic in which ordinary people were given a voice in government in exchange for their service. The citizen-soldier tradition was a key part of this experiment. Prior to the war, the ability to vote was tethered to property ownership, excluding significant segments of the population. But it was exceedingly difficult for the colonial elite to reconcile the egalitarian spirit of the revolution with the contingent nature of the franchise (Keyssar 2000). The prevailing sentiment among men of all social ranks seems to have been that " 'every man in the country who manifests a disposition to venture all for the defense of its liberty, should have a voice in its council' " (Anon. [Thomas Young?], quoted in Keyssar 2000, 14). And so, as the eighteenth century drew to a close, military service was closely connected in the new American republic to the discourse of citizenship.

The service-citizenship nexus continued to be influential in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Suffrage expansion in the aftermath of the War of 1812 was attributed in part to military service. By agreeing to attach voting rights to military service—that is, to militia duty and army service—the social elite secured their interests while sidestepping the moral dilemma associated with the less fortunate shouldering the bulk of the burden of defense (Keyssar 2000, chap. 2). The Civil War, however, was a departure from the earlier conflicts. Unlike the War of Independence and the War of 1812, in which some men fought to gain franchise, refusing to serve during the Civil War, some believed, warranted a forfeiture of civil and political rights, including the right to vote. During the war, republicans argued that, when necessary, military service was an important obligation of citizenship (Chambers 1987). General William Sherman, a noted Civil War commander, went

so far as to suggest that the American government should strip of all legal and political rights those who refused to answer the call to the colors. When New Yorkers resisted conscription, the state militia's adjutant remarked, " 'Where the whole population participates in the rights, privileges, and immunities of a free people, they must share equally also in its burdens' " (quoted in Chambers 1987, 59). While draft dodgers were never actually stripped of civil or political rights, they were deprived of liberty: they were thrown in jail (Chambers 1987, 59).

The citizen-soldier enjoys a long, and some would say distinguished, history in American political development. Yet some scholars take issue with the status of the concept. Historian Richard Kohn, for example, maintains that the ideal American soldier is a myth, romanticized for the sake of inspiring patriotism. Kohn (1981) argues that only on rare occasion has the military truly been a reflection of American society. Sometimes, moreover, patriotism alone has failed to motivate sufficient numbers to join the fight. American history, Kohn reminds us, is also full of deserters, of soldiers who have fled from the fight or intentionally injured themselves to avoid combat. Even Peter Karsten's (1966) work on the citizen-soldier, which on balance is positive, reveals real deficiencies with the individuals who are charged with realizing the ideal of the citizen-soldier, some of whom were charged with collaborating with the enemy as prisoners of war.

These revelations should not be taken lightly. Every war has its share of people who, for various reasons, fail to join with their conationals, or are too weak to withstand interrogation. Nevertheless, the ideal of the citizen-soldier has been important in the development of American citizenship, regardless of the frequency with which some individuals deviated from it. Moreover, for symbolic and practical reasons, the citizen-soldier ideal retains currency in American citizenship discourse insofar as military service continues to be regarded as an obligation of citizenship (Conover, Crewe, and Searing 1991). Symbolically, it has represented membership in the political community, for service has secured right to vote for those who lacked it in most cases. In this regard, eligibility for military service—especially militia duty—has rivaled the vote as an indicator of social standing (Berry 1977; Shklar 1991). After all, it is irrational to risk one's life to defend a nation in which one has no say in the decision to go to war. To do so, contradicts republican logic in that those who defend the republic from external domination should not be refused the opportunity to participate in the institutions that promise to spare them from internal domination. Republican ideology demands that soldiers not be asked to fight for republican freedom abroad even as they are denied it at home.

The Symbolism of Military Service

The citizen-soldier ideal suggests that military service represents political equality. It signals one's loyalty to the nation and its values, often resulting in the extension of the franchise to nonvoting groups that have used military sacrifice to prove their loyalty. For this reason, the citizen-soldier ideal was seized upon by black elites as a means of staking a claim to equal citizenship. Implicit in their championing of African Americans' military service was their assumption that the value of this service would be recognized and rewarded by the state. So popular in the black community was the notion that military service represented a path to equality for African Americans that it was taken for granted and eventually attained the status of folk wisdom among blacks (Burk 1995). Though scholars have often made this point, the symbolic meaning of military service for black soldiers has received less attention. To whites and blacks alike, military service signified loyalty, but to blacks it also represented their membership in the national political community, something that for much of American history has been contested (Smith 1997). Military service, especially for black Southerners, also represents the many experiences associated with serving Uncle Sam, including fighting and surviving two battles: one on the battlefield, the other on post.

Generally, symbols simplify and communicate often complex arrays of stimuli from which meaning is derived (Firth 1973). One source of stimuli to which symbolism may be applied is political culture. If culture is at least in part constituted by a system of symbols (Geertz 1973; Laitin 1988), we may think of political culture as a system of political symbols (Dittmer 1977). To the extent that political culture is in part about how one feels about politics (Almond and Verba 1963), it makes sense that symbols, as a means of indexing political culture, are laced with affect (Elder and Cobb 1983; Sears 1993). Indeed, symbols represent individuals' attachment to political culture insofar as they are at once part of political culture and tangible objects to which people within a given system attach meaning (Cobb and Elder 1972).[2]

Whether symbols are abstract or more concrete, they have at least one thing in common: they are subject to interpretation. More precisely, "the meaning of [a] symbol," as anthropologist Raymond Firth observes, is "a concrete indication of abstract values" (1973, 54). Among the ways in which symbols become tethered to values is through the production of meaning. Meaning, according to political scientist Lisa Wedeen (2002),

[2]For the pioneering work on the connection between politics and symbols, see Edelman (1985).

is the product of individuals' practices, symbols, and language. More to the point, she contends that "symbols are inscribed in practices that produce observable political effects." These political effects, in turn, confer meaning upon the symbol. Meaning can only be made, however, "as conventions become intelligible to participants through observable usages and effects" (Wedeen 2002, 722). Simply put, in the absence of a shared understanding of the relationship between symbols and practices, and the product of the two, meaning is difficult to achieve.

For my purposes, Wedeen's framework suggests that meaning is attributed to the observable political effects of military service as social practice. Historically, as I have shown in chapter 1, military service is often associated with improved social standing, especially if, as Judith Shklar (1991) has argued, standing is tied to the franchise. Service during the Revolutionary War supplied white men without property with the right to vote; the War of 1812 also extended the franchise to white males. For blacks, the American Revolution resulted in limited freedom for those who served, and the right to vote—albeit only temporarily—for free black Americans more generally. It almost goes without saying that the Civil War brought more widespread change for African Americans. Moreover, the periods surrounding the Revolution and the Civil War were times during which republican themes were very much a part of public discourse (Bailyn 1967; Chambers 1987; Smith 1997). We see, then, that military service, as a social practice embedded in the language of republicanism, produced tangible political effects, securing access to the ballot. Hence, we see a path by which military service has come to symbolize political equality.[3]

As tangible representations of political culture, symbols range from the abstract to the concrete. On the abstract end of the continuum are representations of the political community; the flag, the national anthem, and the Constitution are good examples (Baas 1979). Political authorities, such as a presidential administration, political actors, and particular policies, are more concrete, situational symbols (Elder and Cobb 1983). In this taxonomy of symbols, military service belongs with

[3] Political symbolism is more than a representation of political culture. Symbolic politics, as Sears (1993) calls it, also informs political attitudes and behavior. Sears argues that early childhood socialization creates affective attachments to objects that are essentially political symbols. Party identification, basic values such as equality and individualism, and racial prejudices are all symbols to which sentiments, positive and negative, are attached. These symbolic predispositions predict political attitudes and behavior when a symbol contained in the attitude object triggers the disposition with which it is associated. For example, for whites, busing, as an attitude object, triggers predispositions associated with race (Sears, Henslee, and Speer 1979).

the flag and the Constitution as a representation of the political community. Each is a commanding presence in American mythology and therefore within American political culture. With such cultural prominence comes enormous normative weight: the flag is associated with patriotism, the Constitution with the rule of law, and military service with first-class citizenship.

Military Service as a Symbolic Experience

The symbolism associated with military service motivated black veterans by drawing upon the reproduction of American political culture, in which military service is equated with full membership in the political community. Emphasizing this normative component of military service, however, can only take us so far. The normative component helps to explain why veterans wanted change, but it fails to explain what ultimately moved them to act. If we wish to fully understand why black veterans acted on their beliefs we must examine their *experiences* in the military. This move does not require abandoning the symbolic political framework. Beyond mediating the relationship between individuals and their political culture, symbols are also capable of representing shared experiences and of summarizing and indexing knowledge (Dittmer 1977; Elder and Cobb 1983; Firth 1973). In what follows, I argue that the social practices and values that are part of the military's institutional culture, along with the confidence that comes with surviving service in a Jim Crow military, constituted the shared experience and stock of knowledge that spurred veterans to act on their frustration and sense of entitlement to equality.

Race-Neutral Military Experiences

No one can deny that military service, especially during war, is among the most challenging and enduring experiences life has to offer. After all, one is obliged to kill, and die if one must, for the nation (Walzer 1970). Since the military as an institution is charged with national defense, it must develop practices, procedures, and values commensurate with its mission. Like other institutions, the military operates according to well-defined scripts and rules (Meyer and Rowan 1991). Such scripts in the military include but are not limited to teamwork and self-reliance, both of which are key to achieving mission success (Gage 1964; Lovell and Stiehm 1989). It is also responsible for the inculcation of certain values conducive to the pursuit of war. Some studies indicate that discipline,

duty, courage, and obedience, the suite of values on which military culture rests, are indispensable to the military's mission of national defense (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960). The military, as a total institution—especially during war—continues to reinforce these values for the balance of the service member's career.

To inculcate and reinforce these martial values and virtues, the military draws on constructions of masculinity. That military training draws on such constructions should shock no one; the West has almost always equated being a warrior with masculinity (Elshtain 1987). Some even suggest that martial virtue is a prerequisite of manliness (Mansfield 2006). While one need only consult the performance of American women in the current foreign entanglements in Iraq and Afghanistan to conclude that the marital virtue associated with military service isn't only reserved for men (Snyder 1999, 2003), masculinity remains purposefully linked to qualities believed to be coterminous with the successful pursuit of war (Goldstein 2001). According to this line of reasoning, an effective warrior is one who possesses courage, strength, skill, and honor, all of which map well onto traditional conceptions of masculine duty, part of which emphasizes the duty of men to defend women and children. Warriors must also learn to suppress emotion and the natural inclination to flee when attacked, which are solved through the application of discipline and courage, respectively. Soldiers are taught to aspire to possess all of these values lest national defense suffer.[4]

Military service also breeds confidence. As sites that present opportunities for self-realization, institutions serve as ideal locations for engaging in behavior that is likely to generate confidence and a sense of agency (Gecas 1982). The military should (and should continue to be) such a site for at least two reasons. First, it is often a challenging environment in which mastering difficult, complex tasks are essential. Successfully completing these tasks, studies show, increases one's sense of efficacy. Second, one's sense of efficacy is tied to how one's actions are appraised in the community (Bandura 1982). In other words, the subjective *meaning* of an act affects the extent to which one is able to gather confidence from it (Gecas and Schwalbe 1983). With the possible exception of Vietnam (Isaacs 1997), American veterans are typically celebrated by the American public. It's no wonder, then, that veterans generally tend to emerge from the military with a keen sense of confidence (Elder and Clipp 1989; Mettler 2005a). Thus the practice of *practicing* for war—and in the case of battle, engaging in one—has at least one side benefit in that it boosts confidence.

[4] Military culture courts controversy, however, when masculinity is used as a means of motivating service members, especially trainees. The military has institutionalized manifold ways of training men to fight. However, successful performance of each aspect of this training, according to Hockey (2003), is identified with masculinity; failure is associated with femininity. As a result, weakness, fear, and a failure to focus—the opposite of discipline—are perceived as the antithesis of masculinity and are feminized. Recruits who do not measure up run the risk becoming feminized and thereby stigmatized in the eyes of their peers (Enloe 1993).

Military Experience and Race

Discipline, courage, and confidence are important to military culture. Even masculinity has its place. All are important to the military's institutional identity. Each, however, is race-neutral in that these traits have come to be intrinsically associated with the military without regard to race. Once race is added to the mix, however, otherwise mundane military practices that would be of no consequence if the military were either all white or color-blind, become points of departure for action among black Southerners. Consider the acquisition of confidence. For whites, merely surviving combat was sufficient for boosting self-confidence (Elder and Clipp 1989). For blacks, an additional source of confidence, beyond the public's appreciation of military service, was attached to surviving Jim Crow policies in the military. During the Second World War, racism was institutionalized through policy; it remained so in practice during the Korean War. Hence, blacks were forced to endure antipathy from white soldiers, fight the institutionalized racism in the military, and confront the enemy on the battlefield. Logic dictates that, having bested " 'the man, the system, and the axis [powers],' " according to one anonymous veteran (quoted in Thomas 1993, 139), black veterans emerged from the military undeterred, and with abundant confidence.

We can look to masculinity for additional examples. Discipline and courage, both of which are constructed by the military as masculine traits, are indispensable for military service. But they were also important resources for black servicemen who sought to challenge the institutional racism to which they were subjected. In the absence of courage it's hard to imagine black soldiers challenging military authority during the Second World War.[5] Likewise, without discipline, one cannot conceive of the black veterans in the Tulsa Race Riots (see chapter 1) protecting their community by using fire teams and posting snipers.

The custom of overseas deployment, something that is a necessity even in peacetime, represents another source of insurgent attitudes. Travel—seeing

[5] The work of Katzenstein shows that women were also able to challenge military authority, mobilizing against sexism in the armed services. But the conditions under which they did so were quite different from when black veterans bucked authority. For more, see Katzenstein (1998).

new places and experiencing different cultures—often encourages one to think and go about business in new ways, especially if one has been raised in a traditional society (Grasmick 1973; Inkeles 1969). For white servicemen, travel overseas resulted in increased self-awareness (Elder, Gimble, and Ivie 1991). For black servicemen, especially from the South, experiencing life overseas went beyond self-awareness. Deployment during the Second World War and the Korean War exposed well over a million black Southerners—who were accustomed to discrimination and oppressive conditions (Litwack 1998; McMillen 1994; Woodward 1955)—to a model of race relations in which the indigenous, dominant group often treated them with a measure of respect. After witnessing more progressive cultures elsewhere, therefore, black servicemen had an additional reason (beyond the conviction that it was morally unjust) to question the legitimacy of white supremacy. As we shall see, exposure to more racially equitable societies made black veterans question the legitimacy of Jim Crow not only at home but also overseas. Black GIs were often forced to contend with the slanderous accusations of whites, even as they wore the uniform. Such experiences overseas and back home in the South, I contend, invited many of them to realize the stubbornness of white supremacy. If black veterans recognized the illegitimacy of Jim Crow prior to serving in the military, we can expect their perception of its illegitimacy to have intensified upon their return.

For African Americans, and especially for those from the South, military service during World War II and the Korean War also furnished an opportunity to escape crippling economic oppression. Prior to the elimination of segregation, the military represented one of few avenues of upward mobility for African Americans. To be sure, segregation was a formidable barrier to this mobility, and in some cases it devastated morale (Bogart 1969; Stouffer et al. 1949). Yet many black Southerners capitalized on the opportunities the military afforded them to rise out of poverty and relative illiteracy in spite of the demoralizing effects of institutional segregation. By learning new skills and becoming a part of a larger national organization, black servicemen were infused with a sense of self-confidence few had felt prior to their years of service (Katznelson 2005; Kohn 1981; Modell, Goulden, and Magnusson 1989; Moskos 1976; O'Brien 1999).

Many veterans, moreover, joined the military during a formative time in their lives, in their late teens and early twenties. Attitudes that are developed during these years tend to crystallize, remaining salient through middle adulthood (Jennings and Niemi 1981; Krosnick and Alwin 1989). Attitudes produced by momentous events also tend to remain with individuals for many years. If memories of the Second World War and participation in protests during the 1960s produced lasting effects (Jennings and Niemi 1981; Schuman and Scott 1989), so too should have military service.[6] And if attitudes developed under these circumstances are important—and they are—they should resist change, remain stable over time, affect cognition, and ultimately drive behavior (Krosnick and Petty 1995). We should expect the military experience, then, to have continued to structure the ways veterans thought, felt, and behaved for many years after their service.

To summarize, then, the military experiences of soldiers produce first a normative symbolic association; for African Americans, military service and fighting for democracy represented entrée to first-class citizenship. Second, they provided black Southerners with experiences, for which the military, as an institution, is responsible. Military service exposed African Americans to opportunities and situations that had the potential to result in enormous personal growth. Contending with and defeating institutionalized racism, both systemic and personal, should have only increased black veterans' confidence and assertiveness. Everyday exposure to military culture reinforced soldiers' confidence with discipline and a sense of courage generated by military training and its emphasis on the need for soldiers to demonstrate their masculinity. These experiences instilled many black veterans with a sense of achievement and of confidence, as well as an awareness that there were places in the world in which blacks and whites were more equal.

Sketching a Belief System for Black Veterans

The experience of military service made black veterans a relatively unique group in the Jim Crow South.[7] Certainly, like all black Southerners, veterans were socialized within black institutions that reinforced identification with the race. Their socialization experience nonetheless significantly departed from that of nonveterans. For starters, black veterans were exposed to and became accustomed to a measure of equality while in the service. This is not to say that segregation and discrimination within the military were not major problems; they were. But if the socialization experience of black Southerners who lacked military service

[6] It should be noted that upon comparing the residual effect of military service with protest participation during the 1960s, Jennings and Niemi (1981) found that the latter had a larger impact upon subsequent attitudes and behavior than the former. They also note, however, that the difference may be due to the populations from which each joined. Protestors were self-selected, while veterans were not.

[7] Group formation requires that members are cognizant of their membership in the group, aware that it is based upon commonly held values and experiences, and emotionally invested in it (Brewer 2001; Tajfel 1981, 1982).

is the baseline for assessment, black veterans were exposed to relatively egalitarian conditions that empowered them.

Like whites, blacks were allowed to bear arms in defense of the country, a signature right of republican citizenship (Kerber 1998; Williams 1991). The decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, in which Scott's petition was denied at least in part because he was barred from the militia, reminds us of the importance of arms bearing—especially in defense of the political community—to citizenship.[8] Though with few exceptions blacks were not allowed to serve in the same units with whites prior to the Korean War, black and white soldiers sometimes fought side by side.[9] Even if we leave aside occasions on which they fought and died together, that they fought on the same battlefield was indicative of rough equality.

Many black servicemen, as we have seen, were not given the opportunity to fight. Yet even this did not prevent them from experiencing more equal conditions and treatment than was afforded to black Southerners with no military experience. Indeed, black soldiers often perceived themselves to be elevated to the level of their white compatriots simply by donning any garb bearing the initials "U.S." (Glatthaar 1990; Thomas 1993). White lynch mobs implicitly acknowledged this symbolic function of the uniform when they sought to lynch black GIs who possessed the temerity to wear it in the South. Perhaps the uniform represented a level of equality which with these white Southerners were uncomfortable.

Another cleavage in the experiences of black veterans and nonveterans resulted from the former having encountered the paradox of military service. By this I mean the experience of actively fighting for democracy while being denied its fruits, such as equal treatment. As I have indicated, fighting and wearing the uniform were rough indicators of equality, but they were also sources of pride and confidence. To be sure, black nonveterans were familiar with the constraints imposed by white domination, and many were proud of their race (Litwack 1998; Matthews and Prothro 1966; Rochon 1998). But it remains difficult to imagine a comparable experience among nonveterans in which such a sense of empowerment was juxtaposed with oppression.

The military experiences of black veterans supplied the raw material for the formation of a viable social group. To the degree that group formation and identification requires that members are cognizant that they

[8] I have gone into the *Dred Scott* decision in a bit more detail in chapter 1.

[9] The Battle of the Bulge, the German counteroffensive through the Ardennes in 1944, is an occasion in which black units, at the battalion level, were integrated with larger white units, at the regimental or divisional level (Lee 1966).

belong to the group, are aware that membership is based upon commonly held values, and are emotionally invested in the group and its values (Tajfel 1981), veterans constitute a social group. For a social group to remain viable, however, it needs a belief system to bind it together. Ideology serves this purpose. As a system of beliefs, values, and attitudes (Rokeach 1968), ideologies bind individuals to groups, which coalesce around common cognitive orientations (Converse 1964; Lane 1962; Harris-Lacewell 2004). They also perform an important cognitive function, informing perceptions of the social world and conditioning how one reacts to it (Dawson 2001). Ideologies, in short, provide a rationale for group interests (Lane 1962).

Ideological Contenders

Identifying the ideology of black veterans requires first turning to Michael Dawson's seminal work on black ideologies.[10] In *Black Visions* (2001), Dawson identifies six ideologies that have historically served as the basis of African American political thought: radical egalitarianism, disillusioned liberalism, black Marxism, black nationalism, black feminism, and black conservatism. I begin to assess the compatibility between black veterans and the ideologies identified by Dawson with nonliberal ideologies, ways of seeing the world that are at variance with the ways black veterans see it. For instance, it would be difficult to square the sensibilities associated with black feminism, a way of seeing the world in which correcting race- and gender-based oppression takes priority, with black veterans. It seems to me that black veterans would have no problem opposing the oppression of black women. Indeed, they sought to protect black women. And though they thought it their duty to protect black women, the desire to do so smacks of patriarchy, something rather inconsistent with feminism, much less black feminism. Beyond that, black veterans, like other African American men who sought to challenge the status quo, believed that women should assume a relatively subordinate role in the movement (Hill 2004; Ransby 2003; Tyson 1999). For black veterans, however, given the masculinity inculcated as part of their military training, and the affirmation of their manhood through arms bearing and more equal treatment overseas (Lentz-Smith 2005), it is likely the case that their patriarchal impulses were pushed beyond those that were associated with nonveterans.

[10] I draw on Dawson's historical exploration of black ideologies as a point of departure because it is the definitive work on black ideologies of the period of time covered in this book. Harris-Lacewell's (2004) work on black political ideologies is an exceptional piece of scholarship, but hers is a work centered upon contemporary ideologies.

Black Marxism, with its emphasis on class conflict and distrust of capitalism, has even less to offer black veterans. With few exceptions, and as long as their postwar status improved, blacks veterans, at least implicitly, sought to preserve capitalism as part of the American way of life. A related point, one that bears directly on class, is the advancement blacks sought through the use of the GI Bill (Mettler 2005a). It seems that a desire to move into the middle class—and higher, if possible—would prevent most black veterans from embracing black radicalism.[11]

The last of the nonliberal ideologies is not so easily dismissed. Black nationalism, especially the community variant, may appeal to black veterans in at least three ways. First, black nationalism prizes self-reliance, something with which black veterans are indeed comfortable (Moskos and Butler 1996). Like black nationalists, many black veterans also harbor a deep distrust of the state—at all levels of government. Third, black veterans, similar to all nationalists, also believe that men should lead the charge for reform, women assuming a subordinate role (Hill 2004; Tyson 1999). The attraction between African American military service and black nationalism, however, is not without limits. More militant versions of black nationalism, ones that insist upon land, or separation from American society, fail to appeal to black veterans (Parker 2001). Even community nationalism, a strain of black nationalism committed to the development of black autonomous institutions (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967; Dawson 2001, chap. 2), if not complete social separation from whites, isn't compatible with black veterans' military service. One reason for the incompatibility is that community nationalism fails to tolerate diversity: blacks should be for blacks and no one else. This contradicts findings that suggest military service in mixed units increased racial tolerance (Bogart 1969; Stouffer et al. 1949). Another point of departure between the tenets of community nationalism and the behavior of black veterans rests upon allegiance, and to whom it is owed. Black nationalists, including community nationalists, preach allegiance to the black community (Carmichael and Hamilton 1967). Yet this philosophy fails to square with the views of many black veterans in the postwar South who expressed allegiance to both the black community *and* the national political community (McMillen 1997; Parker 2001).[12]

[11] Two notable exceptions are Harry Haywood after World War I, and Robert F. Williams during the 1960s. After serving during the First World War, Haywood joined the African Blood Brotherhood, an organization that combined black nationalism with socialism (Dawson 2001). After falling out of favor with the NAACP over his preference for armed self-defense, he fled to China, and eventually settled in Cuba.

[12] For an examination of black nationalism from a normative perspective, see Shelby (2005). For other empirical explorations see Brown and Shaw (2002) as well as Davis and Brown (2002).

That leaves us with the black ideologies that Dawson associates with liberalism: radical egalitarianism, disillusioned liberalism, and black conservatism. Of these ideologies, black conservatism is easiest to dismiss. Because military service stimulates racial pride and self-confidence, black veterans may have supported the emphasis on self-reliance of black conservatives (Dawson 2001). But black conservatism in the context of Jim Crow also meant accepting white supremacy (Marx 1967). Black conservatives were, in the 1950s and '60s, satisfied with the speed of change, and they rejected civil rights activism. As other scholars have pointed out, however, many black veterans refused to observe tradition, challenging white supremacy on several occasions throughout the South (Brooks 2004; Hill 2004; Nalty 1986; O'Brien 1999; Tyson 1999). Black conservatism cannot account for this activism.

It may be that black veterans subscribed to the ideology Dawson calls "disillusioned liberalism." One can imagine that serving in a segregated military under the command of racist Southern white officers might have caused black servicemen to conclude that whites were fundamentally racist, one of the tenets of this ideology (Dawson 2001, chap. 6). As a tactical solution to the tenacity of racism, disillusioned liberals counseled separation from American society as well as the political and economic empowerment of the black community. Black veterans certainly supported the empowerment that disillusioned liberals called for. They believed, for instance, that blacks should be in charge of their own institutions, including businesses and schools (Parker 2001). But they could not abide entirely separating from American society, even as a tactical solution to American racism (Ellison 1992; Parker 2001). Indeed, many veterans remained committed to America even after suffering discrimination during their service (McMillen 1997; Moore 1996). For better or for worse, black veterans cast their lot with American society; many of them had served and risked death in order to gain entrée into this society (Stouffer et al. 1949, chap. 10).

We now arrive at radical egalitarianism, the ideology most consistently embraced by African Americans (Dawson 2001). What we know about black veterans suggests that radical egalitarianism adequately describes a number of important aspects of their attitudes and behavior. Radical egalitarianism combines "a severe critique of racism in American society [with] an impassioned appeal for America to live up to the best of its [liberal] values" (Dawson 2001, 16). Dawson notes radical egalitarians' insistence upon individual liberty and uplift as well as self-reliance. Moreover, radical egalitarians adhered to Douglass's famous admonition to would-be insurgents, "Without struggle, there is no progress." Emancipation, in other words, required activism at the polls and in the streets. Wartime, Dawson contends, offered an ideal opportunity to lobby for

racial justice because "black actions during war constitute the repeated proof necessary to demonstrate black worthiness for full economic, social, and political equality and participation in American society" (2001, 260).

The experiences and aspirations of black veterans appear to have been relatively consonant with this description of radical egalitarianism. As chapter 1 suggested, veterans of all eras were critical of America's failure to realize its national ideals, a criticism that resulted in their activism. But there are a few tenets of radical egalitarianism with which black veterans seem to have disagreed. The first is the preference of radical egalitarians for a strong central state. It makes perfect sense for black Americans to prefer a strong state as a safeguard against the misdeeds of state and local governments. Given veterans' discriminatory treatment in the military, though, it is plausible to presume that they would not have trusted central state authority to the same degree as those without military experience. Because the central government was slow to respond to Southern terror, moreover, some veterans preferred to rely upon themselves to ensure their liberty (Hill 2004). Second, while it is true that black veterans were committed to activism, there was a line they refused to cross. Many veterans participated in protests, for instance, but if "taking it to the streets" entailed rioting, veterans were reluctant to do so (Parker 2001).

Another disconnect between black veterans' worldview and radical egalitarianism involves gender. It was not uncommon for black veterans to emphasize their masculine identity (Tyson 1999). Military service, after all, has historically served as a rite of passage through which young men prove their fitness for manhood (Gill 1997). Add to this the emasculated position of black men in the South and the centrality of masculinity to military socialization culture (Enloe 1993; Goldstein 2001; Hockey 2003), and it is no mystery why black men sought to certify their manliness by participating in combat (Stouffer et al. 1949). Yet the manliness associated with the military conflicts with radical egalitarianism's stance on equality insofar as women were largely excluded from the institution.[13] Due in part to their military training, black veterans were determined to protect the women and children in the community as they challenged white supremacy. Their conceptions of gender roles shaped what they believed to be the appropriate forms of social action for men and for women (Brooks 2004; Hill 2004). At least some black veterans, then, might have taken issue with the gender neutrality suggested by radical egalitarianism.

[13] Dawson doesn't make any direct claims that radical egalitarianism is gender neutral. However, on the grounds that one of the major tenets of radical egalitarianism is equality, it implies universalism, that equality is for everyone. Also, Ida B. Wells, one of the most prominent black activists of the early twentieth century, is among the most noteworthy practitioners of radical egalitarianism (Dawson 2001). In theory, therefore, radical egalitarianism's universalism should include women. But in practice, it is not at all clear that women were perceived as equal by some of the other twentieth-century radical egalitarians, chief among whom are W.E.B. DuBois and Martin Luther King Jr. (Dawson 2001). In DuBois's case there is evidence to support claims that he believed in gender equality in principle and practice, as well as critics who believe otherwise (Carby 1998; Lewis 2000). King, according to Ransby (2003), believed that women were best suited for supporting roles in the movement.

The Case for an Ideological Alternative

None of the above-mentioned ideologies, it seems, is fully capable of accommodating the behavior of black veterans. Black veterans were critical of the American polity, yet they maintained a desire to be counted as part of it. They chose activism, but many preferred activism without civil disobedience. Veterans believed in the importance of the black community's economic autonomy, but they rejected the necessity of full-blown social and political autonomy. Many black veterans, indeed, were also relatively militant, but not alienated (Parker 2001). It appears that black veterans sampled the menu of black liberalism, taking bits and pieces from conservatism, disillusioned liberalism, and radical egalitarianism without committing to any one of them.

What on the surface appear to be attitudes and behaviors without much coherence, however, are actually quite intelligible when considered as part of an ideology not identified by Dawson. Three general themes emerge from an examination of black veterans' worldview. First, black veterans were often critical of America. Sometimes during wartime, but more often after it, veterans voiced their disappointment at the glacial pace of racial progress. Second, black veterans possessed the courage to act on their convictions. In the face of white domination and intimidation, they continued to press claims to equality. Finally, veterans were ultimately committed to America and American ideals, even after suffering discrimination in the military.

Black Republicanism Defined

The ideology of mainstream republicanism appears more than capable of encompassing these three themes associated with black veterans' attitudes and behavior. Republicanism, for instance, calls upon citizens to criticize the state lest corruption take root. Citizens of the republic are also required

to participate in public life to ensure the maintenance of the common good; political activism is the lifeblood of the republic. Finally, republican citizens are required to love the values and institutions on which the republic rests, as patriotism ensures the fidelity of citizens to the nation.

If, however, one takes seriously the purpose for which republican theory was developed—to describe a means of self-governance that can ensure citizens' freedom and equality—it is apparent that conventional definitions of the ideology cannot apply to black Southerners. It is only in the last forty years that African Americans have been able to participate in self-governance in the absence of domination. Ratification of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act a year later outlawed public segregation, brought Southern educational institutions into compliance with the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, eased political participation, and promoted the political representation of black Southerners (Alt 1994; Handley and Grofman 1994; Kousser 2000; Lawson 1976; Matthews and Prothro 1966; Orfield 2000). Thus, any conception of black citizens' republicanism must acknowledge the domination to which black Southerners reluctantly became accustomed.

It is helpful, therefore, to define black veterans' republicanism as a separate type, which I will call *black republicanism*, and to elucidate some of the contradictions and elisions that separate it from the more conventional version of republicanism. As the following chapters illustrate, some of these contradictions and elisions open the door to new and interesting ways of interpreting the attitudes and behavior of black veterans.

Distinguishing Black Republicanism from Conventional Republicanism

Black republicanism, as I conceive it, is a response to the domination that was imposed on black Southerners during the Jim Crow era (Morris 1984). By any standard, Jim Crow crippled black Southerners' ability to exercise freedom of choice, violating a chief tenet of liberalism: noninterference. Indeed, the government and its agents, at the state and local levels, actively interfered with black Southerners' ability to vote and to live where they wished, and hampered their access to equal education. But liberalism's principle of noninterference fails to fully capture the invidiousness of Jim Crow and white supremacy because, in the absence of active interference, according to liberalism, there can be no domination. This leaves us without the ability to account for the threats against black Southerners that are associated with white supremacy, something that can be accomplished without actual interference.

If liberalism cannot fully account for the totality of domination, republicanism can pick up the remaining slack. Unlike the former, the latter

does not require *active* interference on the part of the state to affect one's freedom or even freedom of choice. What makes even the late Jim Crow period—the time immediately preceding the civil rights legislation of the mid-1960s—one of domination is the *possibility* of interference from white authorities. For republicans, according to Phillip Pettit, "the dominating party can interfere on an arbitrary basis with the choices of the dominated . . . in particular on the basis of an interest or opinion that need not be shared with the person affected. The dominated party can practice interference . . . at will and with impunity: they do not have to seek anyone's leave and they do not have to incur scrutiny or penalty" (1997, 22). Under these conditions, the possibility remains that the master will fail to interfere with the slave's choices. The slave may even have a "benevolent" master; but the fact that he *may* interfere is sufficient to make one susceptible to domination (Skinner 1998).[14] Thus, in the late 1950s and early '60s blacks, in some parts of the South, weren't deterred from voting through manifest acts of violence; they needn't bear witness to it. By the 1950s, after decades of violence visited upon members of the community who sought to vote, they were deterred by the mere *possibility* of violence (Matthews and Prothro 1963).[15]

Even as domination robbed black Southerners of freedom it promoted a sense of solidarity and attachment to the black community. Economic exploitation and discrimination in their various forms—the shared experience of tenant farming under Jim Crow rules, the institutional discrimination that followed black Southerners to the cities in the South and North—fused together the black community (Broman, Neighbors, and Jackson 1988; Demo and Hughes 1989). Physical domination and vulnerability to indiscriminant violence also bred a sense of solidarity (Demo and Hughes 1990; Litwack 1998). The development of black institutions within which black Southerners socialized and worshipped also fostered a sense of community. They allowed blacks a forum within which to deal with issues relating to domination. Churches, fraternal groups, and women's clubs reinforced and nurtured racial solidarity (Allen, Dawson, and Brown 1989; Dawson 1994; Harris 1999; Skocpol, Liazos, and Ganz 2006).

[14] Recent scholarship in political theory by Markell (2008) and Rogers (2008), however, interrogates the explanatory power of domination.

[15] Matthews and Prothro indicate that more often than not the targets of violence were institutions, such as churches, schools, and temples. In terms of personal violence, twenty-nine people were shot—including white sympathizers. Areas in which "old-style" racial violence (i.e., lynchings) occurred between 1900 and 1931 accounted for only 7 percent of the "new-style" racial violence. They conclude, however, that the absence of violence did not indicate the disappearance of the threat. On the contrary, it was indicative of white strength.

One of the areas in which black republicanism and the more conventional version of republicanism part company, then, is in the notion of allegiance. Conventional republicanism in the United States presumes the presence of a singular political community, one in which whiteness was the standard (Smith 1988). African Americans were excluded. The solidification of white domination in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries drove blacks to develop a separate, parallel society to which they felt a particular allegiance. Blacks were nevertheless committed to the political values on which the national community rested, if not to their white conationals. In short, they were drawn at once to national political values and to the black political community (Myrdal 1944;).

Domination and its consequences also interfered with the ability of blacks to participate in self-governance, the key to the maintenance of a free and equal republic. Effective participation in self-governance, according to republican ideology, requires individuals to have equal access to the political process (political equality) and the deliberative process, as well as the ability to discipline representatives through the use of the ballot (Sunstein 1988). But these mechanisms are only meaningful for full members of the political community. Black Southerners were not granted equal access to the political process, nor were they permitted to participate in meaningful deliberation beyond their indigenous institutions. They were also barred from choosing representatives, much less disciplining them. Equally devastating was the fact that domination prevented black Southerners from fully developing their democratic capacities. This is not to say that blacks did not have the opportunity to do so at all, for as Hahn (2003) illustrates, slaves formed deliberative bodies for the purpose of adjudicating disputes among themselves and meting out punishment for slaves in violation of community norms.[16] But this is not the same as taking part in the collective decision making of a diverse polity in which one is forced one to consider one's needs in light of the needs of others, and how both relate to social institutions. Participation in self-

[16] After the Civil War, former slaves acquitted themselves well in democratic politics. It is well known that black representation exploded during Reconstruction. Less well known is the extent to which freedmen participated in the deliberative process, with whites, in the Union League, the political arm of the radical Republicans. There they discussed and debated pressing issues such as the national debt, the proposed impeachment of President Johnson, and supporting one or another candidate for office. Members also discussed local issues such as school and church construction as well as drafting petitions decrying the continued exclusion of blacks from juries (Foner 1988; Franklin 1961). Black delegates' contribution to the deliberative process in both Louisiana's and South Carolina's constitutional conventions resulted in equal education in some parts of the South (Franklin 1961, chap. 7). Finally, in South Carolina's state house, black representatives eventually maneuvered to wrest power from their white counterparts (Holt 1977).

governance, in the context of diversity, also forces one to develop the ability to convey one's ideas and sentiments to others, a requirement of a healthy democracy (Young 1990).

The experience of domination, moreover, affected how black Southerners perceived the balance between rights and duties. Were it not for a combination of amendments and acts spaced a century apart, black Americans would have remained outside the political community, unable to participate in self-governance. Black republicanism departs from the more mainstream version, consequently, in its conception of rights. Some may object to my characterization of African Americans as republicans on the grounds that black republicanism's preference for rights is not prioritized in republican discourse. This is true, but only insofar as liberals insist on identifying the origin of rights in some prepolitical, natural source. In the absence of laws and customs to sustain them, rights are nothing more than moral claims. In this way, as Marizio Viroli (2002) argues, rights are historical rather than natural and inalienable. A more pragmatic view of republicanism understands it to include rights as long as they contribute to the democratic process. "What is distinctive about the republican view," Cass Sunstein writes, "is that it understands most rights as either preconditions or the outcome of an undistorted deliberative process . . . [including] the right to vote" (1998, 1551). Black republicanism's emphasis on the importance of rights is, in this sense, in keeping with the republican tradition. Few would disagree that the right to vote and equal access to the political system—both of which were secured by the Voting Rights Act—contributed to the democratization of the South.

Domination also affects how individuals view corruption. Republicans define corruption as anything that poses a threat to liberty and equality. Mainstream republicans saw corruption in the formation of factions, in the use of patronage, and in the machinations of interest groups, among other places (Pocock 1975). Black Southerners, by contrast, should have located corruption in the white domination that impeded liberty and equality in the South.

A final contrast between mainstream and black republicanism lies in their conceptions of the relationship between military service and liberty. Conventional republicanism calls for the military to defend liberty from external threats of domination, which, in the most extreme case, could ultimately result in slavery. To black Southerners, military service presented an opportunity for emancipation, a means of securing liberty from an *internal* enemy that robbed them of their liberty and dominated them in increasingly creative ways. Even when society failed to reward black Southerners for their service, black veterans drew on their military experience to contribute to social reform in the South.

Identifying Black Republicanism: Sources of Criticism and Activism

Now that we are familiar with some of the contradictions between black veterans' hypothesized belief system and republicanism as it is conventionally understood, we may sketch the analytical framework of black republicanism. As long as it is modified to account for the effects of domination, as it was experienced by black Southerners, republican ideology can explain the prevailing attitudes and behavior of black veterans. (While it is certainly possible that black republicanism as an ideology extends beyond black veterans, I believe they are its most faithful adherents, because they were forced to sacrifice the most on behalf of the black community.) Like mainstream republicanism, black republicanism calls upon individuals to criticize the state and its agents, be active in civic life, and embrace the values and institutions of the republic. As later chapters will show, however, black veterans' criticism, activism, and attachment to the nation were all stimulated by their respective military experiences.

Black veterans, I believe, were motivated by their military experiences and the meaning they attached to them. These experiences produced a relatively organic (as opposed to instrumental) connection between black veterans and the nation of the sort described by Snyder (1999). Since black veterans had been willing to perform the most demanding duty required by the state under less-than-ideal circumstances, they developed an emotional bond to their military service and what it meant to them. Black republicans' criticism of white domination turns on this connection to the nation and its values. More concretely, the paradox inherent to fighting for democracy within a military establishment in which one remained a second-class citizen highlighted the division between the professed American creed and white domination.

This experience activated something akin to what sociologist Morris Janowitz has called "civic consciousness." Civic consciousness, he argues, "refers to positive and meaningful attachment a person develops to the nation state," an attachment that involves "elements of reason . . . [and] personal commitment" (1983, x–xi). The military promotes in soldiers an attachment to America and a commitment to its principles. This understanding of the effect of military service on soldiers' political ideology is commensurate with an interpretation of a symbolic orientation in which strong positive affect coupled with a well-defined meaning results in an ideological symbolic attachment (Elder and Cobb 1983). Among other things, this type of symbolic attachment tends toward stability, promoting the meanings associated with the symbol. In time, individuals holding this symbolic attachment "may initiate actions in the name of the symbol or use it to challenge the actions of others" (Elder and Cobb 1983, 59). As we shall see, an attachment of this sort characterizes the meaning of military service embedded in black republicanism.

Through military service, black veterans came to identify more strongly than they had initially with the nation's values and institutions, if not with white conationals. Their commitment to national values, also known as patriotism, went beyond the reactionary, jingoistic disposition with which patriotism is sometimes confused (Adorno et al. 1950). True (or genuine) patriotism, they suggest, defines one's commitment to and critical understanding of a set of political principles and ideals, not simple conformity.[17] Political philosopher Viroli agrees, adding that patriotism is "critical inasmuch as it is dedicated to making sure that one's polity lives up to its highest traditions and ideals" (2002, 14).

In the American historical context, patriots were critical of the corruption, tyranny, and oppression associated with English rule. Theirs was a patriotism based upon criticism and dissent. Liberty and equality, therefore, are among the cornerstones of *American* patriotism (Dietz 2002). American political philosophers, like their European counterparts, recognize the need for a critical definition of patriotism. Walter Berns, for instance, believes it to be a mistake to assume that citizens understand what is required of patriots. He explains, "Devotion to a principle requires an understanding of its terms, and, especially in the case of an abstract philosophical principle, that understanding cannot be taken for granted. Most people can enjoy liberty, but not everyone understands its foundation in principle" (Berns 2001, 83).

Of course, the ideology to which one subscribes informs how one interprets certain principles. Consider the Jim Crow South. The "separate but equal doctrine" was a white supremacist interpretation of equality, but, as the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown* suggested—and supporting the NAACP's interpretation of equality—separate was *inherently* unequal. Moreover, to the extent that American patriotism requires citizens to oppose domination and oppression (Viroli 1995), the court's decision was in keeping with the American patriotic tradition. Black veterans' patriotism, which took African American history into account, harmonized well with the patriotism described by Theodor Adorno, Walter Berns, Mary Dietz, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Maurizio Viroli. Indeed, in the service of social and political reform, patriotic appeals to the universal application of democratic ideals are capable of animating "different forms of emancipatory collective action" (Viroli 1995, 16).

[17] Genuine patriotism is in opposition to pseudopatriotism, which, according to Adorno et al. (1950), is consonant with blind, uncritical attachment to national values and folkways.

Frederick Douglass's interrogation of the Declaration of Independence during his famous address at Corinthian Hall provides an excellent example of the sort of critical patriotism to which I refer: "Pardon me, and allow me to ask, why I am called to speak here today? What have I or those I represent to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and justice, embodied in the Declaration of Independence, extended to us? . . . The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity, and independence . . . is shared by you, not me. . . . This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn" (Douglass 1852, n.p.). This address, in which Douglass went on to call the Fourth of July celebration a "sham" and American liberty and equality a "hollow mockery" in the context of slavery, was delivered in 1852. Criticism like Douglass's is republican in the sense that the pursuit of the common good requires citizens to criticize the state and its agents (Sunstein 1988; Williams 1991). The maintenance of white supremacy impeded the spread of democracy throughout the South. In this context, white domination was the corruption that black Southerners battled. The commitment to American national ideals, represented by military service, was the bedrock upon which veterans rested their criticism of the racial status quo.

Republicans, moreover, are duty-bound to remain actively engaged in the maintenance of liberty. In republican thought, political activism ensures the pursuit of the common good, acting as a bulwark against corruption. In a republic, citizens are obliged to participate in the political process, serve on juries, and serve in the military, among other things. Such obligations, as we have seen, imply correlative rights, such as the right to hold public office, the right to a fair trial, and the right to the protection of the state (Kerber 1997). Black Americans' commitment to political activism was aimed at their *achievement* of the basic rights that whites were simply attempting to maintain.

Black republicanism is not without its flaws, perhaps the most important of which is the position it takes toward women. In this regard, it is similar to mainstream republicanism, in which women are effectively excluded from citizenship (Elshtain 1987; Kerber 1998). There are two reasons for this exclusion. First, military service—which in the mid-nineteenth century was virtually completely restricted to men—was institutionally connected to citizenship. Second, the military constructed and reinforced the importance of *manhood* through ritual.[18] Consequently, the institutional and experiential exclusion of women suggests that black republicanism is a gender-specific ideology. I remain mindful of this fact.[19]

[18] We must also consider the black men who, for various reasons, failed to serve. For the most part, they were most often deemed unfit for military service due to educational deficiencies.

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In this chapter I have proposed a framework for understanding black soldiers' and veterans' resistance to white domination as a product of an ideology—black republicanism—that these men developed as an outcome of their military service. Since the Civil War, some black veterans have sought to assert their perceived right to equal treatment and respect, a perception ultimately fueled by the American politicocultural belief in the importance of the citizen-soldier to the health of the polity. Veterans were transformed by their military service on a number of levels. First, service had normative symbolic effects: fighting for democracy and wearing the uniform symbolized black veterans' political equality and suggested the potential for African Americans' eventual liberation from domination.

Military experience, I argue, also had institutional symbolic effects, reinforcing soldiers' manhood, teaching them discipline and self-reliance, and giving them greater confidence. Among African Americans, especially black Southerners, exposure to military education and occupational skills furnished a new perspective on the world and their own capabilities. The military also allowed black GIs the chance to travel, which exposed them to alternative models of race relations and more tolerant cultures. The sum of these experiences encouraged black veterans to adopt a worldview commensurate with their military service. This worldview of black republicanism accounts for the criticism and activism of many black veterans in the civil rights era. Of course, other ideologies available to black citizens also encouraged criticism and activism, radical egalitarianism among them. Military experience, and the sacrifice entailed by it, however, separates black republicans from radical egalitarians.

It would be either a gross overstatement on the influence of black republicanism or the height of naïveté to suggest that all black veterans subscribed to black republicanism, using republican rhetoric to justify their actions. Like any social group, some members of the group would gravitate to alternative ways of perceiving and reacting to social and political life. Nevertheless, I contend that many black veterans drew on republican rhetoric to frame their discontent in the postwar South. Such discontent and the courage to act on it, at least among black veterans, was underwritten by their military experience, a subject to which I will turn in chapter 3.

[19] For a critique of republicanism, see Herzog (1986). For another critique of republicanism by way of comparison with liberalism, see Patten (1996).