

Duty beyond the Battlefield

African American Soldiers Fight for Racial Uplift, Citizenship, and Manhood, 1870–1920

Le'Trice D. Donaldson

“Deeply researched and powerfully argued, *Duty beyond the Battlefield* is a significant contribution to the history of black soldiers, manhood, and citizenship. With this fascinating book, Le'Trice D. Donaldson has established herself as one of the leading scholars of African American military history.”—**Chad L. Williams**, author of *Torchbearers of Democracy: African American Soldiers in the World War I Era*

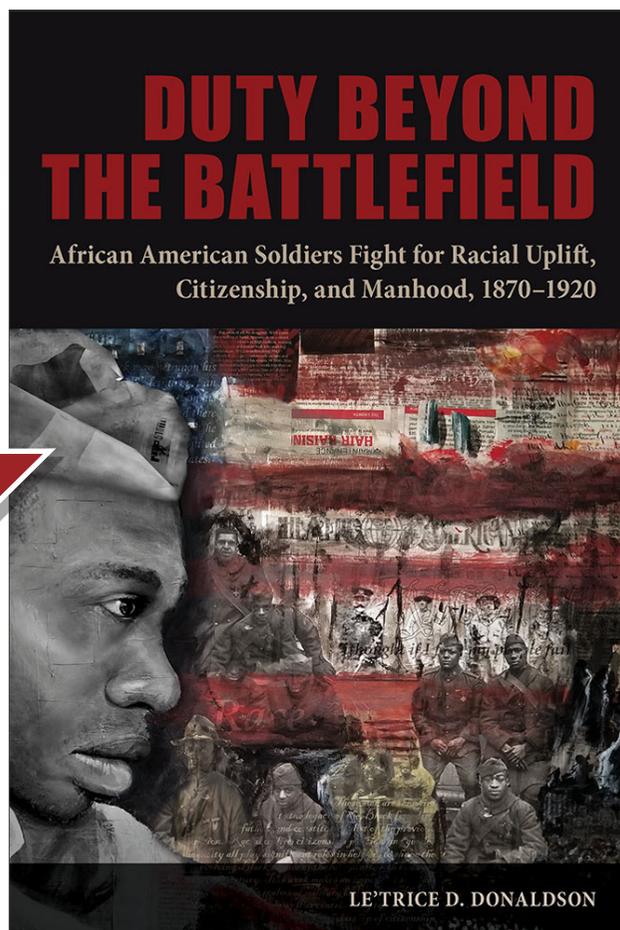
Race warriors, citizenship, heroism,
and manhood after the civil war

In a bold departure from previous scholarship, Le'Trice D. Donaldson locates the often overlooked era between the Civil War and the end of World War I as the beginning of black soldiers' involvement in the long struggle for civil rights. Donaldson traces the evolution of these soldiers as they used their military service to challenge white notions of an African American second-class citizenry and forged a new identity as freedom fighters willing to demand the rights of full citizenship and manhood.

Through extensive research, Donaldson not only illuminates this evolution but also interrogates the association between masculinity and citizenship and the ways in which performing manhood through military service influenced how these men struggled for racial uplift. Following the Buffalo soldier units and two regular army infantry units from the frontier and the Mexican border to Mexico, Cuba, and the Philippines, Donaldson investigates how these locations and the wars therein provide windows into how the soldiers' struggles influenced black life and status within the United States.

Continuing to probe the idea of what it meant to be a military race man—a man concerned with the uplift of the black race who followed the philosophy of progress—Donaldson contrasts the histories of officers Henry Flipper and Charles Young, two soldiers who saw their roles and responsibilities as black military officers very differently.

Duty beyond the Battlefield demonstrates that from the 1870s to the 1920s military race men laid the foundation for the “New Negro” movement and the rise of Black Nationalism that influenced the future leaders of the twentieth-century civil rights movement.



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Acknowledgments

Introduction

Part 1

1. **Bullets and Torches: The Making of the Race Warrior on the Western Frontier, 1870–96**

Through education and acts of defiance, Buffalo soldiers evolved into becoming race men. They also served as race ambassadors, and actively contributed to the ideology of racial uplift. Furthermore, their skills and leadership strengthened the African American community as a whole by exercising their rights as citizens and men.

2. **My Home, My Country**

This chapter examines African American soldiers during the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino 1898-1902 conflict as well as what the soldiers expected upon their return from fighting in Cuba, how they were treated, and how they felt. It also discusses how the black press responded to the negative backlash from white America to black soldiers returning home.

3. **For Race and Country, We Never Forget**

Details African American participation in the unsuccessful search for Pancho Villa in the Mexican Punitive Expedition (1916–1917) and how African American soldiers viewed their military participation in this tumultuous time in American and world history. Also covered is the First World War (1914–1918), which provided a different experience for these race warriors, who were exposed to European military culture on a worldwide stage.

Part 2

4. **Henry Ossian Flipper: The Lone Warrior**

Analyzes the military career of Henry Ossian Flipper (1856–1940), the first black officer to graduate from West Point, and his dismissal from the military. Henry Flipper's rejection of the correlative nature of military service and racial uplift in his community leads to his being left to fend for himself in his countless campaigns to clear his name and be reinstated.

5. **Charles Young: The Diplomatic Warrior**

This chapter centers on the life and career of Charles Young (1864–1922), the third black officer to graduate from West Point. It also demonstrates the political significance of military service to racial consciousness. Unlike Flipper, Charles Young embraced the role of carrying the mantle of his race, encouraged racial uplift, and essentially became a race man.

Conclusion

Notes

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Gallery of illustrations beginning on page 95