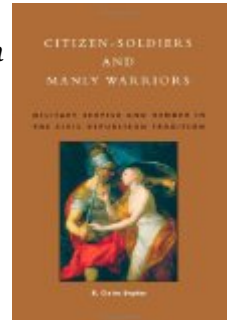


**R. Claire Snyder.** *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors: Military Service and Gender in the Civic Republican Tradition.* Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999. viii + 183 pp. \$29.95, paper, ISBN 978-0-8476-9444-0.



**Reviewed by** Ilene Feinman

**Published on** H-Minerva (October, 2000)

*Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors* addresses several audiences with connected thematic nodes. Political theorists concerned with democratic participation and citizenship, historians of the relationship between martial service and citizenship, scholars interested in the rise of the militia movements and their relationship to democratic rhetoric, and finally, those interested in the practices and meanings of women's inclusion in the military will all find points of interest here. *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors* does its best work in the rich descriptions of Machiavelli and Rousseau, as they represent an origin story of civic republicanism and liberalism carried forward to United States political ideals and practices. This core argument is represented by the notion that the political theory of the citizen-soldier is one of "citizenship of civic practices" rather than a "citizenship of blood." This is the lynchpin of Snyder's progressive argument for a citizenship of civic practices as the democratic form of the citizen-soldier.

Snyder develops a good description of the ideal, practice, and demise of the concept of the citi-

zen-soldier in forging democratic community in the United States. Her understanding of public political life builds on this paradigm to invigorate a notion of the "citizenship of civic practices." This concept supports a framework of participatory democracy that she traces in the early martial service as constitutive of citizenship. She also finds this set of bonding practices for citizens, in the examples of military schooling and hazing in the Navy, and in the example of the rise of militias. Each of these examples provide additional martial cultures within which the practice occurs. Snyder's attention in the book is to draw a distinction between the virtues and vices of the civic republican tradition through the citizenship of civic practices.

*Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors*, in its articulation of civic republicanism's paradigmatic legacies to the contemporary dilemmas of democracy, is less rich in description and less persuasive given the fundamental dilemma of the paradigm having been constructed for a "diversity" of propertied white men, rather than attending to, or recognizing the depth of inequities and injuries

which occur(ed) through these forms of representation. Furthermore, the continued association of these bonding practices within the contemporary examples of martial practices would suggest a more limited reading of the potential for citizenship of civic practices than that to which Snyder ascribes. Snyder works to balance this concern by showing that the ideal of the citizen-soldier has been used by militia groups as easily as by civic republicans; however, the propensity for the ideal to fit a form racist and militarist is not news but rather shaped the very core of its construction.

This constitutive fact of civic republicanism's history provided an untapped opportunity for Snyder to suggest a more nuanced reading of the navigation and negotiation necessary to create a citizenship of civic practices that accounts for inequities and works to create social justice. One might look here for a recognition of the social constructedness of race to enrich the account of how citizen-soldiers and citizens are made. Bodies inscribed in a hierarchy of citizenship is not a new concept in discussions of U.S. citizenry and yet the presence and impact of this stratification is, to my mind, not well accounted for in the re-imagining of the modes of participatory citizenship yearned for in the book. This would have enabled a more generous reading of the potential for rehabilitating the model of the citizen-soldier with what seems to be a promising model of the citizenship of civic practices.

The author does important work in describing the potential uses of social construction in terms of citizens as soldiers. Generally, this book contributes an important perspective to the ongoing conversation about new modes of envisioning soldiering and citizenship into the twenty-first century and Snyder's work to disclose and disrupt the gendered work of constituting citizen-soldiers is admirable.

Copyright (c) 2000 by H-Net and MINERVA: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military. All rights reserved. This work may be copied for non-

profit educational use if proper credit is given. For other permission contact [MinervaCen@aol.com](mailto:MinervaCen@aol.com).

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at  
<https://networks.h-net.org/h-minerva>

**Citation:** Ilene Feinman. Review of Snyder, R. Claire. *Citizen-Soldiers and Manly Warriors: Military Service and Gender in the Civic Republican Tradition*. H-Minerva, H-Net Reviews. October, 2000.

**URL:** <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=4604>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.