Religion, Senses, and Remembrance: Brooklyn’s Sumter Club in Postbellum Charleston, S.C.

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RELIGION, SENSES, AND REMEMBRANCE:
BROOKLYN’S SUMTER CLUB IN POSTBELLUM CHARLESTON, S.C.

by

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DEDICATION

To my eldest, Michael, who took it upon himself to bleed, sweat, and cry on my behalf as I wrote this thesis.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A friend once joked that writing acknowledgments for a thesis was the act of budding scholar feigning humility over the grand new “discovery” they found. I chuckled at the idea of an acknowledgment being the offering of breadcrumbs from my imagery ivory tower, however, I have come to view it as one of the best few ways for this historian to shower thanks to all who have helped and will help me with this project and future ones.

The senses and religion never factored in my plans to pursue graduate degrees in the field of the American Civil War. However, as all the “best-laid plans of mice and men” often tend to do, the universe took me on a different path. Dr. Lauran Sklaroff, in her own unique way, pulled me from my original plans for a research paper and told me to look at Northern tourism and battlefields instead. Dr. Saskia Coenen-Snyder who kept forcing me to think outside the box as I prepared to do another research paper. My advisor, Dr. Mark Smith, influenced my interest in Sensory History and saw potential in an overlooked pamphlet and group of people as he read an older paper of mine. His unending reserve of patience pushed me to do better and be better. My readers, official and unofficial, Dr. S.P. MacKenzie and Dr. Spencer McBride, offered insights and questions. The best thanks is for last, my family. My wife Stacy and my three children have sacrificed so much to see so little of me and deal with my frustrations as I completed this. Emett Family, I love you for being here and helping me be a better person at home.
ABSTRACT

Civil War historians are slowly coming to realize the need to explicitly analyze the senses of those who lived in, and survived, the Civil War era. Although vision has reigned as the “supreme” sense, the nonvisual senses, with the help of historians of the senses, are becoming just as important to Civil War research. However, scholars are still unraveling the lived experiences of Civil War Era Americans and the perceptions and meanings these Americans gave to those experiences, with Northerners receiving comparatively little attention. To understand the world of antebellum and Civil War Americans, we should take them at their word and on their own terms. There is general agreement that these Americans were not just more religious than us but applied their religious upbringing to understand the world around them differently. To better understand how Americans perceived their war, we must discover how the senses worked with their religion.

This study examines a group of people from Brooklyn, New York who went on to form the Sumter Club. This is the first study to combine the study of Civil War Era religion and Sensory History. Drawing from their antebellum abolitionist activities, led by their reverend, Henry Ward Beecher, and carefully studying their account of the 1865 trip, we begin to see how they used religion to explain their sensorial experiences. Religion was, for this group, one of the most important references they could rely on to better understand the sensations of their world and their trip to Fort Sumter.
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CHAPTER 1:

RELIGION, SENSES, AND REMEMBRANCE:
BROOKLYN’S SUMTER CLUB IN POSTBELLUM CHARLESTON, S.C.

James McPherson writes that “Religion was central to the meaning of the Civil War, as the generation that experienced the war tried to understand it. Religion should also be central to our efforts to recover that meaning.” Many scholars have poured through sermons, letters, diaries, newspapers, and speeches to recover what religion meant to civilians and soldiers alike, North and South. As a result, a number of insightful publications have charted the faith and doctrine of American churches in the Civil War era.¹

Extant work, its excellence notwithstanding, does not offer all we need to know as to how Americans perceived the war and the meanings they attached to it. Through a case study, this thesis asserts that while human sensory physiology changes over time, and even adapts as their natural functions are interrupted, the perceptions generated are fluid, varied, and evolve by place, time, and culture. By framing religion through the senses, we find that religion is not an independent variable of Civil War history. Religion is social, cultural, emotive, and political; and a combination thereof. When, in this case, civilians interacted with their faith, their location, and church practices, there arose a myriad experiences, sectional predispositions, and social constructs through

perception. The senses become a way to explore the meanings of the war and religion, because the senses are contextual, interpretative, and flexible; they are active. While a sensory history of religious belief cannot completely recover the meaning and experience of the Civil War according to those who lived it, such a perspective does allow us to better understand the civilian experience of the war on their own terms and in their words.

The activities and members of the Brooklyn-based Sumter Club offer us insight into the sensory meaning of the Civil War era and the sensate-religious perceptions civilians constructed to understand their experiences during this era. Largely filled by members of the Congregational Plymouth Church, this collection of northern civilians left a record of their wartime experience in the South. After attending the flag reraising ceremony\(^2\) at Fort Sumter on April 14, 1865, they published their account of this excursion. The Club formed while docked at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, on April 18, 1865 after the news of Lincoln’s assassination, which occurred on the same night of the Sumter flag ceremony, was conveyed to them. The passengers of the steamship *Oceanus* decided to form a club to annually commemorate the flag ceremony, the fort’s commander, Robert Anderson, and Abraham Lincoln. Membership included all the

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\(^2\) As this April 14, 1865 event at Fort Sumter was labeled by military, government, and civilian records as a “reraising” (save for at least one known instance, see Figure 2.7.), this wording will be used throughout. Compared to calling it the “flag raising ceremony,” what took place at Fort Sumter in 1865 was the returning of an object and pattern that was broken when Fort Sumter fell to Confederate hands in 1861. When the American flag was lowered in surrender and a Confederate placed in its stead, the chain of federal authority was broken. By not only reestablishing federal authority back to Sumter four years later, but to also bring back the very same flag that had flown over it in 1861, the chain was “relinked,” therefore becoming a “flag reraising ceremony.”
Oceanus passengers, Robert Anderson, and others from the military, Congress, leaders of other churches, and the business sector.

By analyzing their antebellum activities as a religious group, a careful reading of their trip offers us the ability to see how, through the senses and dogma, this eclectic group made sense of this event and the war. Further, the way members wrote about their experiences in sensorial terms helped transform the trip into a religious pilgrimage, turning the ruins of Fort Sumter into a holy site. Additionally, this religious experience and meaning granted through the senses help us better appreciate the choices made in the Club’s annual memorial celebrations of the flag ceremony.³

A sensory history of the Sumter Club establishes no claim to universality; this is a specific sensory experience, albeit one framed through the prevailing sensory paradigms commonly used in the nineteenth century. Although the members of the Sumter Club individually had sensory experiences at Fort Sumter, they chose to present them collectively, publishing a unified account. The Sumter Club is a partial representation of the North. There are numerous works focusing on the soldiers, the enslaved, and southern civilians. Little has been written about northern civilians of the era.⁴

³ James Clement French and Edward Cary, The Trip of the Steamer Oceanus to Fort Sumter and Charleston, S.C. (Brooklyn: The Steamship Printing Press, 1865). History as not been kind to the Sumter Club. While many publications that touch on the Fort Sumter flag raising and the keynote address offered by Henry Ward Beecher cite the Club’s account, to date there has been no study of any kind concerning this club or its members. Only one work makes a mention of the Sumter Club; even then those two paragraphs have some inaccuracies about the Club’s origins. See, Roy Meredith, Storm Over Sumter (New York: Simon and Schuster Press, 1957), 5-8.

While the limited attention given to the Northern civilian may seem acceptable insofar as this group was not directly affected by the war in terms of battles, invasions, and destruction, save rare exceptions such as Gettysburg. The small number of scholarly works on the North is in fact unjustifiable. Sensory experiences during the war were not limited to the battlefield, for civilians experienced the war in similar ways and, as this thesis shows, came to re-enact them sensorially too.

Sensory history generally relates to the changing hierarchy of the senses over time. Through the epistemological and technological changes that accompanied the Enlightenment, some scholars argue that the sense of sight and hearing were elevated as the rational, “higher senses.” This elevation, so the argument goes, debased the senses of touch, smell, and taste as emotional and savage “lower senses.”

The “Great Divide” theory as presented by McLuhan and Ong, along with the work of other early media scholars, has influenced sensory historians. While many historians have viewed the past and its activities predominantly through a sight-centric lens, sensory historians have shown that the historian need not be held hostage to sight to better grasp history. For


example, although the printing press made reading a part of industrial nineteenth-century America’s visual culture, people consumed news and books through listening and touching as well. This thesis does not look to replace sight or find another sense as predominant, but to use all five to assert their important roles in how daily life was navigated and how experiences were given meaning with religion.⁶

This argument builds off what has been set forth by sensory historians to help emphasize the vitality of the nonvisual in the supposed visual era of nineteenth-century America, along with those who have studied ancient, medieval, Reformation, and Enlightenment Christianity through those nonvisual senses. Civil War historians have only just begun to draw on the senses and this thesis offers an intervention alongside these efforts. The point of utilizing all the senses is to bring about a totality of sensory perception to a lived experience, or as some have argued for, a restoration of intersensoriality. While sensory historians know that the senses work as a whole, we tend to view them in isolation from one another, even in competition. By applying this

intersensoriality, and in an explicit manner, we see how each sense contributed to the lived experience of the members of the Sumter Club.\footnote{On the hierarchy of the senses, see in particular Constance Classen, “The Witches Senses: Sensory Ideologies and Transgressive Femininities from the Renaissance to Modernity,” in Empire of the Senses, 70-84; Susan Stewart, “Remembering the Senses,” Empire of the Senses, 59-69; Martin Jay, Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), Kate Flint, The Victorians and the Visual Imagination (Cambridge University Press, 2000)}

We are seeing, slowly, a shift from the implicit use of the senses toward explicit use in order to understand the war from the participants’ perspective. Pioneering scholars of Civil War soldiering, such as Bell Irving Wiley, Gerald F. Linderman, and Earl J. Hess have all used sensory descriptions to bring alive the combat of the war and the life of a soldier, in the camp. They do not tend, however, to contextualize the senses. This is unfortunate since people at the time disagreed about the senses and their meanings, cautioning us to approach sensory history. In more recent times scholars taking a specifically sense-oriented approach to the past have demonstrated awareness of the need for contextualization Mark Smith, through a series of vignettes, has shown the value of contextualized, historical senses and war by analyzing the civilian nose at the battlefield, sight and combat, hearing during times of order and war, and palates in chaos during a siege. Evan Kutzler has argued that an understanding of the senses is essential if we are to understand how prisoners of war experienced their capture and imprisonment during the war.\footnote{Bell Irvin Wiley, The Life of Johnny Reb: The Common Soldier of the Confederacy (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1943); Gerald F. Linderman, Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War (New York: Free Press, 1987), 97-99, 122, 129-33, 165, 242, 253; Earl J. Hess comes closest to discussing the role of nonvisual senses in combat, albeit, The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the}
Sensory historians have examined Christianity through the olfactory, aural, visual, and, to a lesser extent, touch. Multi-sensory religious practices marked Christianity in the ancient and medieval worlds as well as during the Reformation. During the Enlightenment, sight was elevated in Christian discourse. This study builds on these insights and considers the sensory religious sensibilities and beliefs of Americans immediately after the Civil War.9

Scholarship detailing the northern homefront is relevant here. The use of Popular culture, political and economic changes to daily life, nationalism, death and mourning, and resistance are just some of the topics covered by Civil War historians. Research into gender roles, veterans, and sanitation has also made great strides. Religion, too, is analyzed as historians center in on both the pulpit and the pew to better understand the theological role of this conflict. The varied religious beliefs and practices of soldiers and the work of military chaplains have recently become topics of interest.10

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10 Civil War era home front and religion literature include: Alice Fahs, The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North and South 1861-1865 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Earl J. Hess, Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners
A study of religion and the senses for the northern home front is not these days possible without the inclusion of work on material culture, environmental studies, and the emotions. In reference to material culture, for instance, relics held many roles for many people. Relics were sacred, they validated faith and experience, enriched pleasure, preserved memories, and became treasures. For Christians of any era, relics could also heal, bring one closer to a saint or Christ, and could cleanse one from sin. For soldiers and civilians of the Civil War, relics symbolized victory, service, a cause, kept a loved

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one’s memory alive, and brought the war closer to home. Relics worked in unison with sight and touch especially, and hearing too, although in more modest fashion. Touch especially gave meaning to war and faith. Touching bestowed the relic with authenticity. Faith and service were validated when people touched the relic. However, in our day, relics are kept at arm’s distance, touch replaced with sight in order to better control the relic.¹¹

Most often to obtain relics, one had to either travel to the relic or to find a relic and take it back; thus, a journey becomes a pilgrimage. Moreover, movement into a place, in a pilgrimage mindset, made a building like a church holy and could do so for a place designed for secular functions. While the Civil War destroyed towns and cities, and natural environments, some of these sites might become sacred once cleared up. Megan Kate Nelson argues that this shows in how Americans transformed ruins to foster reconciliation. Some exceptions to this do exist today. Although Fort Sumter is considered by Nelson as one of these exceptions, a modern visitor center, pathways, repairs, and cleanliness are found alongside the ruined remains of this battle site. We will see how the Sumter Club sought to preserve the destruction they had witnessed through the practice of pilgrimage. By entering the ruins, the Club transformed a secular fortress into a holy place, redemptive in nature. The Club’s pilgrimage to Fort Sumter also

generated relic-making as they brought back items to the north for those who needed a way to come to the war and see it, hear it, touch it, and make sense of it.12

Lastly, the emotions that came out of the sensory and religious experiences that were fostered during the antebellum years evolved because of the war. Michael Woods has done a masterful job in tracing and analyzing the antebellum, and sectional, emotions of the American populace to argue for an emotive cause that helped lead to war.13 This thesis reintegrates the senses and emotions, delivering a fuller lived experience of nineteenth century Americans. Henry Ward Beecher’s application of multi-sensory metaphors gave his congregation not just visceral, accessible experiences of the South and slavery, but also triggered certain emotions to cause specific reactions. Therefore, the emotional state of the Plymouth Church and the Sumter Club during the years of increasing sectional division and war give greater validity to their sensate-religious perceptions and experiences.14


13 Michael Woods Emotional and Sectional Conflict in the Antebellum United States (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Woods has opened up opportunities to analyze the emotional conflict and evolution that took place during the Civil War and Reconstruction years.

14 My thesis relies on a careful reading of the account of the passenger steamship Oceanus which carried the members of the Sumter Club, many of whom were members of the Plymouth Church of Brooklyn, to Fort Sumter. The account itself is used as a primary source for the senses. I also utilize newspaper accounts and available Club memoirs of the trip to Sumter, accounts of Plymouth Church antebellum experiences, and accounts of Sumter Club annual proceedings. These printed sources are further supplemented by photos and renderings of antebellum activities and the flag ceremony. Beyond an invitation card to an 1885 club meeting, no known photos or sketches of Sumter Club meetings exist to the author’s knowledge.
With the advent of the Second Great Awakening (1790-1840), came a method of preaching that was loud, animated, and emotional. While some of this had precedence with the First Great Awakening, this new awakening formulated individual salvation that was obtainable through confession and perfecting oneself to be like unto God. This meant creating an atmosphere so emotionally gut-wrenching that one was compelled to convert and continually do so through boisterous sounds, cries, and a sense of optimism. With individual salvation came the desire to cleanse both society and nation of its moral ills. By doing so, society and nation could both perfect themselves as well as complete their divine role to bring about a New Jerusalem and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Christ. One of these national ills, or sins, was that of slavery. Reverend Henry Ward Beecher was going to make sure that his Congregational Plymouth Church, established in 1822 in Brooklyn, would play an active role. By overlapping the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening with his loud, theatrical oratory and his charismatic personality, Beecher would engage the senses to evoke the right emotions and actions to perfect nation and society.¹⁵

Congregationalism is a unique faith that has no central body, the branches of which utilize their autonomy to form their own doctrine. There is no real sense of a unified set of beliefs. Congregationalists utilized revivalism, evangelism, and egalitarianism. Meetings were and are meant to be active, emotional, and optimistic. Congregationalists believe that all members are preachers, and all have a calling to bring about conversion and reform man and society. The Plymouth Church was largely populated with Brooklyn’s wealthy merchants and industrialists, along with a number of middle-class worshippers. Plymouth members nonetheless sought to influence the lower-classes and adopted the Romantic tenants of humanitarianism and perfection.\footnote{For a look at Congregationalism before the Civil War see, David Hall, \textit{Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgement: Popular Religious Belief in Early New England} (Harvard University Press, 1990). For more specifics on the Plymouth Church’s application of this Christian sect, see Decker and Robertson, \textit{Plymouth Church} and Applegate, \textit{Henry Ward Beecher}.}

The Plymouth church building that stands now was designed in a way to best utilize the senses compared to their old church building. Beecher and the Plymouth church applied the early American church architecture of the “Old Ship” style incorporating a vaulted ceiling that captured sound and bounced it back down, symbolizing sound coming down from heaven as well as equality as sound descended upon all at once. The Plymouth Church also sought to employ the architecture of Charles Grandison Finney, the figurehead of the Second Great Awakening, who was also influenced by the “Old Ship” style. The Finney-styled church gave a barn-like appearance. This also allowed for the placing of pews along the new structure’s two-tiers,

emphasizing an egalitarian, open-to-all seating plan. This arrangement allowed for all to
be visually level with one another, indicating that all who were in this building were
saved equally. Beecher called for a stage in the middle that caused, by design, him to be
surrounded by his flock, as well as being level with many to create a very personalized

Before meeting in this new church, the members met in the Broadway Tabernacle,
which also influenced the new building’s design. Here, Beecher used his style, the senses,
and religion to confront slavery for the first time. This caused churchgoers to evolve in
how they used their faith to give deeper, greater meaning to the sensorial experiences of
both the war and the 1865 flag ceremony. Beecher’s “freedom auctions,” held between
1848 and 1860, progressed sensorially. These auctions involved both present and absent
slaves. The latter were held in slave pens throughout the South awaiting their fate with
these “auctions.” All of those “auctioned” had been pitied by their master or trader, who
tried to have the funds raised to free them. Beecher, through both oratory and
performance, triggered intersensory perceptions and meanings by using visual-aural
hybrid style.

Encouraging his flock to imagine an absent slave, Beecher first called for his
congregation to see themselves and their neighbors as a slave. Beecher then aurally
transformed the touch of spiritual conversion and desire to that of the physical. He asked
“could logic frame an argument strong enough to satisfy you that ought not to try to
escape? Should it not burn in your veins?” For Christianity, in this context, burning or a
fiery sensation had both positive and negative connotations. The latter meant one was feeling the flames of hell, the tactile realization of eternal condemnation. The former, used here, invoked fire as the tactile sensation of spiritual cleansing and the affirmation of God’s acceptance through the spiritual freedom of sin. By becoming a slave, this white audience now had the fiery feel of one who sought physical freedom. Freedom through fire became both spiritual and physical. Whether a slave was present or not, Beecher next led his congregation to visually imagine slaves having the appearance of a daughter, mother, wife, or sister. This brought the issue of slavery closer to human perception as one would hear the sounds and the physical descriptions of a loved one seen as property, flesh to satisfy human sexual pleasure, placed in perpetual bondage. This use of sex aurally, typically shouted in condemnation of sins such as lust and adultery inside church buildings, was breaking a Victorian taboo loudly exposing a subject typically whispered and hidden by the genteel and middle class. Beecher now brought the subject forth in full force, ushering in greater emotions and feelings usually unfelt. For his audience could not refrain from now envisioning a loved one sensorially assaulted by the men of the enslaving portion of society, who sought to satisfy their sexual urges.18

However, when a slave was present (Appendix A), Beecher heightened the power of the gaze, bringing slavery uncomfortably close to home. Beecher turned the tables on his flock, now making them feel the gaze of that slave. In one instance, Beecher pressed

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his congregation to look into the eyes of a female slave to see if she could in response
“read ‘Liberty’ in your eyes.” The gaze of this era, and that of the modern, was more than
just the reasoned sense of knowing the truth, it was also the sensation of control and
normalizing behavior. By being gazed upon by a slave, the white New Englander
perceived both the control and transformation of behavior. His or her behavior as a
northern Christian, who heard of the evils of slavery and saw them through both print and
the presentation of a slave, was now a felt sensation where one was impelled to act. Their
behavior hearing of and speaking about redeeming the nation of slavery would come into
their eyes for the slave to see, knowing that through them, liberty would become real.
Further, the gaze made the audience into a physically redemptive body. White eyes had
gazed on the slave to stimulate a specific behavior in the South, but now in the North,
enslaved eyes gazed right back, spurring a certain reaction.19

Beecher himself took on a visual and oral-aural role by mimicking the slave
auctions he had witnessed whenever he crossed over to Kentucky while he attended
seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. He, it is recorded, took on the vernacular, accent, and loud
voice of an auctioneer (Appendix B). Published accounts by Beecher’s children and his
congregation are sparse on the details, merely stating that he “played the role” of an
auctioneer “selling a slave.” His playacting, these witnesses claim, caused a “perfect
frenzy” among the audience that later turned into a scene of “sobbing, hysterical women,
with shining-eyed, trembling-handed men,” as the performance became all too real for

19 Applegate, Henry Ward Beecher, 284, 316-317; Decker et. al., Plymouth Church 81,
95, Jay, Downcast Eyes, 287-288, 294-295, 410-413.
the crowd. His skill as an actor and orator, Beecher’s son would later write, made this experience so lifelike that Beecher “would have made a capital auctioneer.”

Due to witness accounts only offering vague suggestions that Beecher transformed the church into a slave market and described the slave as an auctioneer would, we must look elsewhere to determine how Beecher was to able generate not just aural and visual experiences, but tactile and olfactory experiences as well. Primary sources from the time of these “freedom auctions” include the memoirs of runaway slave and those who were kidnapped into slavery, such as Frederick Douglass and Solomon Northup. Those who personally experienced the auction, or at least saw fellow slaves auctioned, wrote of “scenes” where slaves, “properly trained,” were presented before a crowd. The physical inspections performed on the slaves were so invasive, that they were akin to a “jockey [examining] a horse.” Men and women were stripped, poked, and prodded (Appendix C). Women were often taken back for private examinations which elicited erotic moments, driving prices higher and higher. White witness accounts also reveal how enslaved men and women were washed, scented, and “oiled” to improve appearances and highlight muscle tone, female curvature, and health.

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Secondary literature on the slave auctions notes that “sweet oil” was rubbed over enslaved faces as they were washed and clothed for sale. Andrew Kettler sees in the control of a slave’s odor the implementation of southern white paternal rights over the slave, while also disguising a slave’s odorous disease. By combining the Plymouth Church allusions to what was said by Beecher, contemporary witness accounts of real auctions, and the scholarship on slave markets, we can gain a greater idea of how Beecher in his roleplay tantalized, horrifyingly, the tactile and olfactory senses of his parishioners.

Tactilely, Beecher went further as more and more of his auctions took place. To encourage this redeemer-in-making process he transformed his congregation as he shouted, “Christ stretched forth his hand and the sick were restored to health; will you stretch forth your hands and give that without which is of little worth? Let the plate be passed and we shall see.” In reaction, the people hurriedly grabbed cash, banknotes, and


jewels and stretched out to throw or drop these into the plate. Through the tactile actions of reaching out, grabbing money, and putting it into a plate, the people physically redeemed the slaves. Christ, as their New Testament described, placed his hands on the head or over their eyes, at times using earthy objects like clay, to physically and spiritually restore health and freedom from physical and spiritual ailments. The Plymouth Church used their hands and money, like clay, to redeem people, giving political health to those physically ill from slavery and freed them from that sin. Emancipation was now more than something said and heard in church, secular meetings, or in Congress. It was more than what was read in print. It was now something physically enacted.²³

²³ Newspapers and those with anti-abolitionist sentiment during Beecher’s time accused him of being insincere with his use of the “auctions” and of trying to cause war to break out between North and South. Modern scholarship has also critiqued the Beecher “auctions” as being not just insincere, but the theatrics of northern White Supremacy that was doing nothing more than oppressing the slave from the South to Northern society. He and his congregation were just another version of slave markets and slave trading, there was no freedom for these slaves “auctioned” in the Plymouth Church. Further, racism is an accusation used since most of those brought to the church were of mixed race and looked more white than black. Beecher biographer, Debby Applegate, responds to these modern accusations by noting that Beecher’s use of slaves who visually bore many perceived commonalities of skin color and facial features as that of his congregation fits in the mindset of white northerners of his time. To persuade even his congregation to feel “genuine kinship” with the enslaved was both radical and imaginative. Further, it was an “emotional [and sensorial] exercise” that was critical in their recognizing blacks as fellow citizens. For treatment of period criticism, see Applegate, *Henry Ward Beecher*, 228-229, 284-285, 316. Quote from Applegate, *Henry Ward Beecher*, 229. For an example of modern critiques, see Stupp, “Slavery and the Theatre of History,” 61-84. It should be noted that while most of those slaves on stage were of whiter hue, the first two to be “auctioned” were daughters of a freed slave father and enslaved mother, the latter and the girls were held in New Orleans at the time of the auction. The Plymouth Church met the father and had a photograph of the girls; later meeting them girls in the flesh. Their dark skin color was not a topic of controversy for these church goers as found in extant records seen thus far. Therefore, the charge of insincerity and racism may not hold water as much as Beecher’s modern critics set forth.
Beecher also used binding objects to visually and aurally transform his flock. Most abolitionist meetings used the sound of slave shackles to present to the North the noisy horror that clanged throughout the South. Such auditory realities and visual symbols were meant to drive Northerners into greater indignation and action since the sound and sight of bondage was interpreted as being savage, degenerate, and un-American. Henry Ward Beecher, following John Brown’s execution in 1859 for trying to ignite a slave rebellion, purchased the shackles used on Brown. In an 1859 church sermon, Beecher thrust the shackles into the air, shaking them, bringing that aural savageness to his people. Then, he threw them on the ground and stomped on them. In the Old Testament, it was prophesied that the snake, Satan, would be crushed by the heel, which represented Christ, freeing the world from sin. Beecher, then, took on the part of the biblical Redeemer and crushed the metal, shackle-snake of the national sin of slavery (Appendix D). Slavery could then be visually, aurally, and tactilely defeated.24

Another object was used to serve as a contrast to the large, oppressive bondage of the shackle. A congregate threw in her gold ring to help purchase the freedom of a young girl. Beecher took the ring and placed it on the girl’s finger, proclaiming “with this ring, I wed you to freedom” and to “remember that this is your freedom ring.” This small, golden ring bound this girl to her eternal “bride-groom,” freedom. This tactile reality was

felt only around a finger and was a binding of and to freedom. Binding, in the Christian 
religion, is often portrayed as a covenant with God, a promise that enabled freedom at the 
end of one’s earthly life. While most sects of Christianity, and scholars of touch, view 
this as a controlling binding that proffered both pain and pleasure to ensure this freedom, 
Beecher asserts here that there is no pain in this binding, only the gentle sensation of 
freedom. He even commissioned a painting depicting this young girl as gazing upon this 
small symbol of binding in a relaxed, thus free, posture and expression (Appendix E). 
Color here, with the tactile, matters as well visually. Shackles are large, black, and rough 
objects. Their color is one of darkness and despair, matched by their tactile 
unpleasantness and pressure. This ring is gold and of smooth fashioning. This ring’s color 
meant treasure, value, and light, while its feel was comforting and tender.25 

Crying, clapping, and place also matter in understanding the Plymouth Church 
members sensate-religious perceptions and the meanings they drew from them. Their 
church was designed as a place for spiritual salvation through the physical gathering. 
Now, the “freedom auctions” made the church a place of singular, physical redemption. 
Clapping utilized the acoustics of the church to create thunderous booms that appeared to 
come from heaven. Thunder, in the Bible, means numerous things, such as destruction, 
God’s wrath, the announcement of a cleansing rain, and working with angelic trumpets to 

25 Applegate, Henry Ward Beecher, 316-317, Decker et. al., Plymouth Church, 92-95. On 
binding, touch, and religion, David Chidester, “The American Touch: Tactile Imagery in 
American Religion and Politics,” in The Book of Touch, 51-531. For more on ancient, 
medieval, and Reformation religious interpretations of binding, Darrell Thorpe, 
“Handclasps and Arm Gestures in Historical Christian Art,” LDS Temple Endowment 
http://ldstempleendowment.blogspot.com/2009/08/laws-of-
god.html?showComment=1330896091738#c3964736465796395418
proclaim the coming of Christ. For the freedom auctions, the clapping-thunders
proclaimed God’s wrath for the sin of slavery, pushing the nation to free itself from this
divine displeasure. It also meant the approval of God as another body containing a soul
was (physically) saved, and the nation was cleansed and prepared for the coming
millennium of Christ’s reign. Crying, too, is multi-faceted in religion. It demonstrated
sincerity, grief, celebration, angst at one’s sinful nature, and the catharsis of one’s
spiritual release from sin. Churchgoers at these auctions cried out of grief and indignation
when they saw a slave or saw in the slave their female loved one; they even cried in
shame of the existence of slavery. When the “auction” was successful, the tears
transformed into tears of celebration, happiness, and cleansing. Newspapers described the
tears and the clapping creating “rapturous” scenes. This rapture being that culmination of
God’s wrath upon earth to destroy sin, ending in the concourses of angelic celebration
and the relief of surviving believers in a sin-free world.26

In 1865, these antebellum sensorial experiences were heightened and transformed
as the war closed with Union victory, allowing for the senses and religion to generate
meaning from the war. When Charleston, South Carolina was occupied in February of
that year, the Lincoln administration called for a flag reraising ceremony on the four-year
anniversary of Fort Sumter’s surrender to Confederate forces on April 14, 1861, and the
war’s commencement. Brevet Major General Robert Anderson, who had commanded the
fort in 1861, was to return to the fort and reraise the same flag that flew during the

26 Applegate, Henry Ward Beecher, 226-229, 284, Decker et. al., Plymouth Church, 21,
95. For the culture and history of crying, and the role it has on religion (and religious
interpretation of crying) see, Tom Lutz, Crying: The Natural & Cultural History of Tears
(New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).
bombardment and was lowered in surrender. Henry Ward Beecher was tapped to be the ceremony’s keynote speaker. This caused a flood of excitement as members of the church were able to persuade the government to allow them to attend the ceremony as well. Such an increase in numbers demanded more vessels for the trip. Those who would soon form the Sumter Club were able to charter the steamship, Oceanus, from a local steamboat company, with Beecher joining Anderson on the Arago.27

The trip down, as recorded in the Oceanus account, was one of excitement and pleasure, where comical moments of seasickness and games, meetings were held, and an easy-going aura emanated from the passengers. Often, though, they would also try to create an atmosphere of sobriety by having the preachers onboard offer sermons and doxological hymns were sung. The sense of sanctity that would transform the ceremony into something more for these Northerners, would nonetheless not occur until they entered Charleston Harbor and caught their first sight of what remained of Fort Sumter.28

As they entered the harbor, their first glance at what they assumed was Fort Sumter, simply revealed a “dim pile.” There was nothing magnificent at first sight about this storied fort that became the first battleground of a four-year-long war, whose commander was heralded as a hero for the North. Waiting in line to dock, the passengers drew closer to the structure, further describing it as a shapeless, jagged “disabled monster” decorated with rubble. As they passed by it, seeing an American flag rising


28 Oceanus, 10-20
above the fort offered these passengers their first sense of something sacred. For as they bowed their heads at this sight, the flag, seemingly animated, “dipped,” or bowed back in reverence. Silence prevailed for a time, as seeing their flag within the remains of the fort brought their minds back to the years of warfare, and contemplated on the “changes, passions, carnage, suffering, defeats, depression, and final triumph flashes” the war had brought. Suddenly peals of a band played patriotic airs and soldiers upon the fort’s walls saluted the passing steamship. Optimism triumphed.²⁹

The next day, April 14, was also the day of the ceremony. Northern visitors wandered through what remained of Charleston. The visitors determined that the ruins were the physical embodiment of the apocalyptic destruction of sin and wickedness, not just the destructive nature of the Union war machine. Further, accounts such as those from the Oceanus place an additional meaning on this experience as the springtime growth of vegetation amidst the rubble meant that the South, and the nation, were both redeemed by God’s wrath and renewed through a fiery cleansing.³⁰

While in the city, they came upon the Battery, where they learned that the citizenry had gathered to watch the two-day bombardment of Sumter. Seeing Sumter in the distance from the angle of a secessionist, Fort Sumter began to transform for the Oceanus passengers. This visual angle generated a vision of the cannon fire aimed at the fort and the cannon fire and smoke emanating from inside it. This scene was given a religious interpretation without hesitation. With the fire and smoke, visualized at night, the fort in the distance became “as the pillar of fire and cloud which was destined to go

²⁹ Ibid., 20-26

³⁰ Ibid., 31-42
before a race despised and enslaved, till it should lead them out into the promised land of liberty and peace.” This “pillar of fire and cloud” was none other than Jehovah of the Old Testament who led the Jews (the “despised race”) out of Egypt to Israel by way of the desert. Therefore, the fired-upon Fort Sumter was perceived as the guiding, sought after, redeemer leading the slaves of the nation and, for these Northern Christians, the nation itself out of the Egypt that was Charleston/the South. The four years of war became the 40 years traveling in the desert wilderness, with the victory of union and emancipation as the arrival in Israel. According to Northern Protestant belief, this meant that postwar America had become the new Israel, a land of “liberty and peace” for both the slave and the nation.31

On the afternoon of the 14th, the sightseers finally entered the fort. The interior was described as being “glorious,” even with the ruin of war and the tools of war both strewn about and organized in neat piles. About 4,000 people were “densely” gathered but managed by military officers. Like church, this large crowd was visually and tacitly egalitarian in nature. White and black, freed-slave and born free, soldier and civilian alike were all on equal footing to commemorate the nation’s redemption and victory. Cheers arose as Anderson, Beecher, and those who had played a role in capturing Charleston entered and took the stage. Proceedings began, much like a Sabbath gathering, with a military chaplain offering a prayer and then a blessing upon the flag. Psalms were read that praised God, spoke of eternal battles, prophesied of a heavenly banner flying in victory, and peace upon believers. Those with eyes closed, upon hearing this, must have

31 Ibid., 33-34
imagined the American flag as that heavenly banner, with Sumter and Charleston as those battles found in scripture, with themselves as the believers and angelic hosts who cheered and praised God.\(^{32}\)

With these images in mind, the flag that was lowered in 1861 was taken out of the same mailbag by Anderson which he had placed it in. The flag “came forth to the light once more from its long and carefully guarded seclusion,” a scene that caused “most tumultuous cheers”: Cheers akin to the Psalmist praise of God’s victory. When Anderson began to speak, it was noted that he appeared to struggle with an intense emotion as “ten thousand eyes” looked, or gazed, upon him, awaiting what words he would speak. This was no gaze to control Anderson or to normalize him, but a gaze of awe and wonder, for as the hero of 1861, he was back four years later with the flag he defended which was used to rally these people throughout the war. This gaze was a religious one of respect, deifying him as a saint, with the 1861 flag his emblem. Speaking briefly, he then lifted the flag up the flagpole. The crowd noted how the flag was “smoke-stained, shot-pierced, with not a single star smitten” from its body. At the top of the pole the flag was seen to come to life, as it waved upon the crowd in a type of welcome. As this occurred, the whole crowd impulsively rose to their feet, “waived [sic] hats and handkerchiefs with frantic exultation above their heads, and with one long, pealing, deafening, ecxatic [sic] shout” hailed the flag (Appendix F).\(^{33}\)

\(^{32}\) *Ibid.*, 44-49

\(^{33}\) *Ibid.*, 50-52. David Silkenat in his work on the culture of surrender and the Civil War, spends a few pages on the 1861 rallies to honor Anderson and hero, offering one of the fullest treatments of this topic: David Silkenat, *Raising the White Flag; How Surrender Defined the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 38-42.
Just like they cheered when they freed slaves within their church, these churchgoers, and other attendees, shouted, filling the air with the selfsame thunder-like sounds for a flag freed from its seclusion, returned to a now emancipated landscape. Further, the multitude “wrung each other’s hands in joy, huzzaed until they were hoarse, wept, and laughed.” Hand-clasping, or handshakes, had an egalitarian and religious tactility about them in early American culture. Quakers adopted the action of the handshake in resistance to the perceived aristocratic and class-dividing airs of bowing and hat-doffing. Handshakes placed all on equal social footing, and this practice was adopted as a thoroughly American sign of welcome and respect. In ancient and medieval Christianity handshakes placed one in a covenant with God for eternal reward while also symbolizing the union of a couple or peoples. This action was also redemptive since hand clasping was done by Christ during His ministry and during the rite of baptism. The saints and followers of the older Christian eras even clasped hands as part of ceremonial celebrations. Here in Fort Sumter attendees presumably shook hands with all those around them, as the record does not relate that only certain hands shook certain others, in celebration of the victory of the war and over sin. They shook hands in celebration of an event already sacred as it began with prayer and scripture reading to commemorate the return of a flag they sensed as being heavenly. They shook hands celebrating the redemption and freedom of both the slaves and the nation.\footnote{Oceanus, 52-54; Thorpe, “Handclasps in Church Art”, Smith, Sensing the Past, 96-97, 100-101, 105-107.}

This tactile experience was accompanied by huzzahs that made voices hoarse. As noted already, the Plymouth members’ cheers were loud and long, but did more than just
make noise. While the cheers signified praise, they also suggested the human weakness of vocal cords as the crowd could only give off hallelujah-like sounds for a limited amount of time. Denied this oral-aural form of praise beyond a certain point, they shook hands and cried. During the “freedom auctions,” the cries were largely of indignation, grief, and shame, but with some gladness. During the flag ceremony the crying was only positive. The crying became more intense as the crowd sang the Star-Spangled Banner. Crying became then “tears of gladness” which “filled every eye and flowed down cheek unused to weeping.”

Within the last century, lack of crying has been characterized as part of the manliness of the male gender, as well as characteristic of anyone considered cold-hearted or mentally unstable. During this same time, having “dry eyes” was found to be a medical condition that did not negate the fact one was truly having emotional bouts. Anciently and Biblically, tears were shed by male heroes, Christ and his apostles, and the prophets. Males and females in between the ancient and modern eras shed tears for various reasons. In 1865, the weeping was that of people who had penned up their emotions as they awaited a time where order, justice, or redemption would finally come. The weeping by those who were used to it and those who were unused to it during this ceremony was linked to antebellum tears by being cathartic. The freedom of all the slaves and the whole nation, long sought after, had finally arrived.

35 Oceanus, 52

36 Lutz, Crying, 20-24, 36, 42-64, 73, 107-108, 115-132, 179-185, 291-295, 303. Stephen Berry provides further evidence concerning the claim of manliness being equated with crying. In his study of Civil War era males, he found that love and marriage, even crying, were integral in the formation of their masculinity and patriotism as they went off to war
In the end, all of this cheering, handshaking, and crying described in the *Oceanus* account was perceived as being akin to the celebration of the Second Coming of Christ. The passengers themselves infused this oral, aural, visual, and tactile experience with this Second Coming, millennial meaning: A “type of and foreshadowing of the vast multitude which shall stand upon a sea of glass, having the harps of God, and singing ‘Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints!’” 37

Once the flag reached the top, the national salute commenced. The cannons of Sumter were followed by cannons in Charleston’s Battery, the harbor batteries, and naval ships. From this national salute

came the thunder of might cannon… until the ‘earth shook and trembled,’ and the air grew dark with the gathering clouds of smoke which rolled their dun and murky volume over the harbor, shutting out from sight at length the city, the lighting flash of the cannonade.

Stephen M. Griswold, who attended the ceremony was also a Plymouth congregate and founding member of the Sumter Club, and added his own impressions of this cannonade and its sensorial effect. As cannons fired, the clouds of smoke “enveloped the fort in midnight darkness.” The words the *Oceanus* account, used to describe the tactile sensation of the vibrations of cannon fire comes from one of the biblical psalms. This psalm reads that God, in order to deliver Israel, caused the land and mountains to shake and for smoke and fire to arise in order to destroy wickedness. Thus, for those in

and sought to survive it. See, *All That Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

37 *Oceanus*, 52-53
attendance, the feeling placed upon the body during the salute was likened to the violence that came from God’s wrath to save a people. America, this new Israel, shook and reeled as part of its deliverance.\(^{38}\)

This biblical connection caused the Plymouth churchgoers to have a sensorial experience akin to the Second Coming that they had only read and heard about. The thundering of cannon fire, greater than that of clapping in an enclosed space, literally resembled the thunder that would come to the heavens as God unleashed His anger on a wicked world. With the thunder, the flashes of the cannon fire mirrored the lightning that would strike down upon the earth. The gathering of the numerous clouds of cannon fire came to be equated with the darkness that would stretch out over the earth, bringing confusion and depression as one’s sense of sight was taken away. That sense that symbolizes truth, light, and clarity was rendered fallible as wrath caused by sin blinded all.

However, positive interpretations of this intense inter-sensorial event followed the fear-causing moment. Griswold wrote that this darkness was but momentary as the breeze pushed the clouds away, in the afternoon light the flag “waved peacefully.” The Second Coming destruction and blindness is to be followed by a light that surrounds a descending Christ, filling people with a sense of peace. Therefore, the flag took on the role of a Christ-like figure whose presence brought peace to those who had just trembled, been shaken, blinded, and surrounded by darkness, thunder, and lightning.\(^{39}\)

\(^{38}\) Oceanus, 52-54; Stephen M. Griswold, Sixty Years with Plymouth Church (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1907), 149, Psalms 18:7

\(^{39}\) Griswold, Sixty Years, 149.
Before this moment of peace as recalled by Griswold, the Oceanus account related that as soon as the cannons fired, people ran to the ramparts of the fort, hoping to see the cannon fire throughout the harbor and from the vessels. While many were able to see this, others “returned disappointed” to their seats for not just the smoke, but also the sand which was “stirred up by the recoil of Fort Sumter’s guns, was driven into their eyes in blinding clouds.” Not only was the blindness a visual one through clouds of smoke, but for some, it was an uncomfortable, felt blindness. The interpretation they placed upon this event as akin to the Second Coming tumultuousness upon the earth, was made more real as those blinded by the sand realized that for the faithful, the wrath of God would be but temporarily unpleasant. Not despairing, the account continues, these temporarily blinded attendees were comforted that once they took their seats, they could still “listen to the next grand exercise.” Though blinded, the faithful could still use their ears to find freedom and victory and participate in events.40

Once the cannon fire ended and the clouds dissipated, Henry Ward Beecher rose and gave his address (Appendix G). The address is roughly 15 pages in length in the Oceanus account and covers a wide range of topics that cannot all be discussed here. These topics include victory; the defeat of secession; the death of slavery; reconciliation with the non-elite South; the education of poor whites; the civil rights and education of the newly freed slaves; the pending prosperity of a united nation where sectional and racial divisions no longer mattered; praise of Lincoln; praise of God, and the sight of the

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40 Oceanus, 53-54. This 1865 attempt by a crowd to watch midday cannon fire within Sumter and out towards the harbor and Charleston should be contrasted with Mark Smith’s aural and visual treatment of the 1861 crowd which watched the bombardment of the fort from Charleston at both day and night in “The Sounds of Secession,” The Smell of Battle, 9-38.
American flag with all the stars attached proving that America was divinely appointed. Following the end of his address, another hymn was sung, another prayer offered, and the ceremony came to a close. The audience returned to their transports, traversed the city some more, took souvenirs, and held a nighttime celebration involving toast-making and fireworks. In the coming days, all returned home.

With the Oceanus account demonstrating how its passengers came to derive religious meaning from their sensorial experiences, this trip can be viewed as a pilgrimage. The faithful traveled and gathered at what not just a fort of war and site of battles and siege but also a shrine that proved God’s divine plan for America as He destroyed wickedness and sin, freeing a people and nation, and bringing peace. To bring these experiences and meanings home, they took souvenirs, which, as this was a de facto pilgrimage, became religious relics. The Oceanus souvenirs included colonial and revolutionary time-stamped letters and official papers, accounts of slave punishments and fines, shackles, worthless Confederate money, shell fragments, cannonballs, and pieces of various buildings. Of central importance were the shackles. During the antebellum decades, shackles came north to visually and aurally reveal the savage sin of slavery and were used to prophesy slavery’s death. Now, postbellum, these shackles were to be seen, handled, and spoken of in relation to a dead institution, a thing of the past to remind people of what the nation went through to fulfill antebellum prophecies.41

41 Oceanus, 54-136, 166-168. This second trip to Charleston warrants its own focus as they visited cemeteries of Confederate and Union prisoner dead, the grave of John C. Calhoun, a POW camp, a black church, and other prominent sites of the city. William Lloyd Garrison and other abolitionists, who came to the ceremony, spoke before Charleston’s black populace.
Religious relics were believed to heal those who either touched or saw them. They visually asserted the truth of and reality of saints, apostles, the church, and Christ. Relics were taken from one place to another so that the faithful could gather round and be edified. The Sumter Club followed this medieval practice to grant those who did not go to the Sumter-shrine some understanding of the war and what was lost and what was gained. These objects of war and freedom, and the Old South’s demise, contrasted with what Northerners had become accustomed to during the war and would see for years afterward: photos of destruction and war and the torn bodies of its veterans.42

The Sumter Club’s publication of their trip-pilgrimage came a few months after the ceremony. Of special note is that they dedicated the publication to the flag whose “resurrection in Charleston Harbor” was to be celebrated by them annually. By relabeling the flag reraising ceremony as a resurrection, their pilgrimage had transformed that specific American flag into a type of Christ symbol. This took their sensate-religious perceptions further than before. The flag upon a pole, torn by shot and shell, over the fort in 1861 was now a scene of crucifixion. The flag taken down the pole and placed in a mailbag, now symbolized the taking down of Christ’s body of the cross and placing it in a tomb. Taking it out of the bag after four years was now perceived as Christ leaving the tomb after three days, further supplemented by its reraising over the fort as symbolic of Christ rising from the tomb and later ascending. The shot-pierced flag with all the stars remaining upon it, for the Club, had become visually a resurrected Christ that maintained the marks on hands, feet, and side, but no bones were broken when He was crucified.43

42 In addition to the sources noted in footnote 12 above Nelson, Ruin Nation, 160-227.

All of these sensate-religious meanings also come with the fact that the flag reraising took place on Good Friday, which commemorates the crucifixion of Christ. The *Oceanus* left Charleston on Easter Sunday, the day used in the celebration of the resurrection of Christ and the death of earthly and spiritual bondage. The Easter holiday week, then, helped further the transformation of the flag ceremony into a holy pilgrimage for these Northerners because they took what they experienced sensorially and repackaged it in the only way they could understand it: through religious rhetoric and symbols.

However, there was one problem for the Club and their annual meetings: they could not make these meetings into pilgrimages by returning to Fort Sumter. The fort had been reactivated following the war for the purposes of harbor defense and as a lighthouse. These military functions meant that the fort was closed off to the public. However, the Club found an acceptable alternative. They brought the shrine and pilgrimage home by proxy. Two examples are found in the 20th-anniversary celebration held in 1885. Invite cards were embossed with an 1865 sketch of the ruined Fort Sumter (Appendix H). Within the Music Hall, a table was used to hold a counterfeit pastry that also displayed the fort in its 1865 condition. Each meeting held a reenactment of the flag reraising and speeches were made by Club officers and invited guests, who were typically civilians, politicians, and military officials who were at the 1865 ceremony. Letters from those who could not attend were also read. Meetings recounted the meanings the original event held for them, with new connections made, political and religious. For example, Civil War hero William T. Sherman connected the event with the Declaration of Independence, declaring the event to be more important as it put into actuality articles that spoke of
independence, freedom, and equality. Robert Anderson’s widow in 1885, proclaimed her love for the Club because it had kept the memory of her husband alive as since then no bronze or marble monument of him has been erected alongside other generals of the war. Extant records show that the Sumter Club, with the Plymouth Church assisting, met for at least 50 years, hoping to turn April 14, 1865, into a national holiday.44

There is no doubting that religion was a central component of the lives of nineteenth-century Americans, especially during the Civil War. They read their Bibles and heard sermons declaring the providential role America was to have. Northerners believed that if only the sin of slavery was gone, that role could be achieved, even if it meant sectional discord and war. However, religion and war were not abstract things for people. Though distant from the destructive battles of the war, Northern civilians experienced the war through their senses, yet could not understand these sensory experiences until they enshrouded such moments with religious perceptions and meanings through the application of sensory, and multi-sensory, metaphors. The Plymouth Church-cum-Sumter Club is a case in point. Although these Northern civilians were exceptional because they were able to visit fresh sites of war in the South as the war closed in Northern victory, the Sumter Club offers us the ability to take another look at the northern home front. As sensory history helps us understand what the war experience was like for soldiers and southern civilians; it can help us better understand these experiences in the North. To better understand the experiences, perception, and meanings of the war on the terms of the Civil War Northerner, we must do more than offer

seemingly independent analysis of economic, political, social, cultural, and religious histories. These histories adjoined with the senses help us to gain a fuller, human context of Civil War America, for the senses moved through the experiences these Americans encountered.
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Figure A.2. Circa 1830 slave auction illustration. Beecher assumed the role of the auctioneer seen on the left atop a stage, behind a pulpit, and with female slaves. Beecher’s playacting pricked an intersensory transformation as he stood before his congregation. Getty Images. https://time.com/5750833/new-years-day-slavery-history/
Figure A.3. Examining slaves for sale. Slaves for sale at an auction in New Orleans, Louisiana. Hand-colored woodcut of a 19th-century illustration. Notice how the slaves are physically examined by their potential owners.
Figure A.5. “The Freedom Ring.” Painted by Eastman Johnson in 1860. “Pinky,” or Rose Ward, was the young slave “auctioned” in 1860 who received a congregant ring to “wed” her to freedom. Pinky gazes at the ring, in relative comfort and ease, and in fine clothes, a far cry from her previous enslaved state. Image taken from Hallmark Art Collection. https://www.hallmarkartcollection.com/artwork/the-freedom-ring/
Figure A.6. *Oceanus* sketch of flag reraising. The crowd cheers as the flag is reraised. Image can be found just after page 52 in the *Oceanus* account.
Figure A.7. Beecher speaks at Fort Sumter, April 14, 1865. “Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Interior view of Fort Sumter during ceremony of raising flag.” This fragmented image shows Beecher just left of the flagpole, standing and speaking in a large white-colored hat. Library of Congress. https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/cwp2003005355/PP
Figure A.8. 1885 invite care to a Sumter Club meeting. Sumter Club 1885 Twentieth-Anniversary Celebration invite card
“Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries” (2011),