

**WINNER OF THE NORMAN HARPER AWARD****EXERCISING 'THOSE FACULTIES MOST WHICH THEY  
DESIRE IN THEIR OFFSPRING': ENLISTING PARENTS IN  
THE CRUSADE AGAINST VICE**

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*ABSTRACT* Author of the prolific advice literature directed at parents in the mid-nineteenth century America, North believed that parents were custodians of their children's wellbeing and proper development. This perception, of parents as 'protectors', had undergone a shift from earlier understandings of parents as 'punishers'. This article examines the role of parents, as explained by parenting manuals, in combating vice, especially sexual excess, in their children. It argues that authors expected mothers and fathers to play an equal role, and that their roles included both moral and medical dimensions. It draws on both parenting manuals themselves, and the letters of one father, Colonel Charles F. Johnson, to his wife Mary during his service in the Union Army during the Civil War, to explore what messages advice literature disseminated, and the extent to which parents accepted but modified these instructions.

In his 1855 treatise entitled *Marriage and Parentage*, Boston reformer Henry Clarke Wright wrote that parents should endeavour to provide 'all that can make home an Eden, where alone the sweet flowers of affection, and the golden fruits of a concentrated, vitalizing love, can blossom and ripen'.<sup>1</sup> Wright saw the home as the repository of 'all that is sweet and dear and holy'.<sup>2</sup> Parents were the custodians of this sacred realm. Diligent mothers and fathers, who created upright homes and families, could 'remove the evils that afflict the [human] race' by instilling virtues in their children.<sup>3</sup>

In the decades before and during the Civil War, doctors, reformers and other public figures entreated parents to assist in campaigns against vice, especially the pernicious vice of sexual pleasure and excess in their children. Scholars have looked at the dramatic expansion of childrearing literature in the nineteenth century, pointing to the way that this literature changed understandings of childhood: children were no longer economic units that should contribute to a family's business, but were beings whose main value was sentimental.<sup>4</sup> These historians have mostly argued that

professional advice defended the primacy of the mother's role in raising the children.<sup>5</sup>

Yet although historians have mined these sources for general information relating to childhood and parenthood, they have paid scant attention to the specific messages that their authors directed towards parents, especially the medical advice that became increasingly prominent. They have also de-emphasised the importance that these guides placed on the father's role in bringing up children.

Most importantly, historians have largely disregarded how parents *responded* to the outpouring of advice literature. How willingly did parents accept the invitation to join the crusade against vice? In order to answer this question, I will draw on Fred Pelka's compilation of letters from Colonel Charles F. Johnson to his wife, Mary, during the Civil War while he was away from their home in Camden, New Jersey. (To avoid confusion, I will refer to Mary by her first name.) Before the war, Johnson had been a clerk and an engraver, and in 1850 had married Mary Ann Davis, who, Pelka writes, came from a 'financially secure' family.<sup>6</sup> In this collection, Johnson praised his wife and advised her on how to raise their twin sons, William (Willie) and Joseph (Joe), who were ten years old, and their daughter, Clara, who was two years old at the outbreak of war.

These letters are remarkable sources. The war itself, which took men away from home, provided a unique context in which several million ordinary people wrote letters that the recipients actually kept because of the perceived importance of the events of the war. In his commentary, Pelka focuses on Johnson's experiences in the army and in battle. But these letters also tell tales of a family separated by war.<sup>7</sup> Many soldiers wrote in their letters that the experience of war had led them to realise the true value of domesticity. Through written correspondence families became a source of emotional satisfaction and comfort.<sup>8</sup>

Johnson's letters offer unprecedented access to intimate discussions between husbands and wives over dilemmas of childrearing. Johnson was candid in his correspondence to his wife. His openness helps to overcome 'the problem of silences ... created by the authors of the documents historians use to reconstruct the past', which are most common in matters contained within a family unit.<sup>9</sup> Johnson offered practical instructions for how Mary should raise their children, including tips on schooling, exercise and interactions with doctors. He referred to *Decline of Manhood*, which Pelka hypothesises was actually a book published in 1843 by French reformer Léopold Deslandes and translated by an unidentified American physician, entitled *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*.<sup>10</sup>

Johnson told Mary that this book 'is on either the top or next to the top shelf in the secretary', and predicted 'that there is two books there of the same nature'.<sup>11</sup> Using these books, he said, 'you can talk advisedly' to the boys about abstaining from immoral and unhealthy behaviour.<sup>12</sup> So these letters provide rare insight into how parents responded to the advice literature that was available to them.

This essay will analyse the negotiation between parenting manuals and actual parenting by comparing the messages in the prescriptive literature and Johnson's instructions to Mary. First it will highlight the role that parents played as guardians of their children, disputing the claim made by some historians, that parents' duties were mainly punitive, rather than protective. It will especially debunk claims that fathers played a solely 'breadwinning' role, while mothers were chiefly responsible for the upbringing of the children. Secondly, it will explore the co-existence of moral and medical approaches to children's sexuality. Parents in this period were expected to protect both children's souls and children's bodies. Finally it will examine the specific techniques that parenting manuals recommended. Johnson did not uncritically accept this advice, but engaged with it judiciously, suggesting that he was reluctant to wholly surrender his parental authority to doctors and other professionals.

Although this essay refers to children generally, the emphasis is primarily on boys. Many prescriptive writers identified parenting techniques that were suitable for either boys or girls, or for both. Most of the advice literature that I have selected deals predominantly with raising boys, because this was the focus of Johnson's advice to Mary. Their daughter, Clara, was still very young, while their sons were entering puberty. This stage of development was perceived as requiring the most cautious supervision. As well, their parents were engaged by particular events that occurred in the boys' lives during the period in which these letters were written.

### **'The objects of your gentlest affections' – conceptualising parents as guardians**

In the antebellum decades, reformers, doctors and parents saw children as innocent and malleable. In 1844, a number of authors published *Facts and Important Information for Young Men, Showing the Awful Effects of Masturbation*, which described children to parents as 'the objects of your gentlest affections'.<sup>13</sup> This perception necessitated that children be guided towards a healthy and virtuous adulthood by worthy guardians – and writers enlisted parents for that task.

Historian Philip Jenkins captures a broad consensus among historians in writing that conceptions of sex, of children, and of parenthood are 'socially

constructed realities'.<sup>14</sup> According to Stephen Robertson, a 'sentimental' construction of children has existed throughout the twentieth century. Parents are orientated towards providing for and securing their children. But he asserts that this parent-child dynamic only emerged in the late 1870s. Before then, he writes, parenthood entailed punishing rather than protecting children.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, James Kincaid dates the development of the relationship of protectiveness to the start of the nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup> Kincaid's view is substantiated by sources from the antebellum period which prescribed that parents act as guardians of their children. Parents were exhorted both to express love for their children and to guide them towards responsible adulthood.

Parents had a duty to cultivate their children's emotional wellbeing by creating a loving family environment. Orson Squire Fowler, a New York phrenologist, emphasised the responsibility to display affection towards children in his *Love and Parentage Applied to the Improvement of Offspring* (1851). Fowler wrote that love 'perpetually call[s] forth and cultivate[s] [children's] higher faculties, awakens them to the highest pitch of exalted action', and so allows them to achieve 'that supremacy required for happiness'.<sup>17</sup> In an 1848 *Lecture to Young Men, on Chastity: Intended also for the Consideration of Parents and Guardians*, Sylvester Graham, a minister from Connecticut, described the parent-child relationship as sacred and 'dear to a [parent's] heart'.<sup>18</sup> The aspirational language that these authors used shows the elevation and exaltation of parents' duties to love and protect their children.

But loving one's children was not enough. Parents in antebellum America were also to mould their children according to social norms. Fowler wrote that children 'receive being and constitution' from their parents, who have a consequent obligation to 'exercise those faculties most which they most desire in their offspring'.<sup>19</sup> The children of parents who 'banish grossness and vulgarity, and associate purity, propriety, taste [and] refinement' would be 'earthly angels'.<sup>20</sup> Children were, ultimately, impressionable. They were so susceptible to the influence of their parents because they were 'uncreated immortals'<sup>21</sup> whose characters had yet to be cast. Graham, concurring with Fowler, urged parents to 'seize the earliest opportunity to secure the young mind in virtue'.<sup>22</sup> He praised one of his parishioners who, he believed, had fulfilled this obligation: a woman with three young children who was 'unremitting in her maternal care and efforts, to imbue the young minds of her children with sentiments of virtue and piety'.<sup>23</sup> These professional writers viewed children as blank slates whose future would be determined by their parents. Consequently, parents were to be vigilant in guiding them towards responsible adulthood.

Parents' guardianship duties were especially important in relation to their children's sexual development, in which children were especially vulnerable. The most intense fear of nineteenth-century prescriptive writers was, according to Thomas Laqueur, masturbation, otherwise known as 'onanism' or 'self-abuse', especially when performed by children and adolescents.<sup>24</sup> A French physician whom Deslandes quoted wrote in 1828,

*neither the plague, nor war, nor small-pox, nor similar diseases, have produced results so disastrous to humanity as the pernicious habit of onanism: it is the destroying element of civilised society ... and gradually undermines the health of a nation.*<sup>25</sup>

Parenting manuals often emphasised the importance of parents steering children away from this practice. The authors of *Facts and Important Information for Young Men* wrote that 'the habit [of masturbation] once formed, becomes almost unconquerable'.<sup>26</sup> Their anecdotal evidence for this claim included one patient, who, claiming to have been 'instructed in the habit' by a middle-aged man, reported that it had 'gained such absolute sway over him that he found it almost a hopeless task to conquer it'.<sup>27</sup> According to Deslandes, because children's minds were 'controlled by the most vivid, most varied, and most transient impressions', they were susceptible to 'adopt[ing] the most hazardous enterprises'.<sup>28</sup> The responsibility for preventing children adopting such practices lay with parents.

Johnson's approach to parenthood aligned with those that prescriptive writers championed. He saw himself as a guardian of his children, responsible for loving, protecting and guiding them along an acceptable course of development. He expressed affection for his children, as professional writers advocated. Almost all of his letters concluded with a request that Mary pass on his love to the boys and give 'many kisses' to Clara. Upon hearing that Willie was upset by an injury, Johnson instructed Mary to 'hug that little thing for me'.<sup>29</sup> He lovingly referred to Clara as 'that little farey', 'our little warbler', 'our darling' and 'our little Pet'.<sup>30</sup> The frequency of these displays of warmth suggests that affection was the predominant characteristic of Johnson's relationship with his children.

Johnson's intense desire to protect his children was most palpable when he received a letter from Mary in August 1863. Although Mary's original letter has been lost, Johnson's reply suggests that a custodian at their sons' school, Mr Reed, had sexually abused his sons (he never specifies the form of abuse).<sup>31</sup> Pelka, in his commentary on these letters, mentions this event and Johnson's reaction merely as evidence that 'life during war time was [not]

easy for either Charles or Mary'.<sup>32</sup> In fact, Johnson's response throws light on how he perceived his role as a protector of his 'innocent children'.<sup>33</sup> Because he is stationed in Missouri at this time, he could not travel home, and so he expressed his grief and fury through his correspondence with Mary. He desired to wreak revenge upon 'that scound[r]el Reed', whom he described as a 'hypocritical son-of-a-bitch'.<sup>34</sup> He wrote that the time would come when Reed 'shall feel what a Father's revenge for a son's wrong is like', expressing a 'desire to tare [Reed's] cursed carcass to pieces [and] to grind his mangled corpse beneath my feet'.<sup>35</sup> He was willing to 'sacrifice [his] own honour ... [rather] than not have revenge'.<sup>36</sup> The rage that permeates his language indicates the vigour with which he embraced his role as his children's protector.

In the same vein as the advice literature which he read, Johnson believed that his parental duties extended to supervising and safeguarding his children's development. Johnson felt personal pride in his sons' 'continual good behaviour',<sup>37</sup> indicating that he had invested effort into and saw himself as responsible for producing this outcome. Furthermore, in August 1863, two weeks before first hearing about Reed's encounter with his sons, Johnson recounted a visit to St Louis. He reported with shock that the 'people [of St Louis] are so low, vulgar ... [that] it is what one might term "damn common"'.<sup>38</sup> He expresses particular astonishment at lewd dinnertime conversations: on one occasion, his young friend, Livingston, asked the servant, 'how is your ass to-night', to which she replied, 'how is *your* ass'.<sup>39</sup> His protective paternal instincts were clear, as he intimated to Mary, 'I would not have one of the boys "get his growth" here for half its worth'.<sup>40</sup> Johnson believed that he was responsible for making choices that would determine how his children progressed to adulthood.

Although the letters that Mary wrote to her husband are not available, Johnson's letters reveal that she shared his belief that parents were responsible for supervising their children's development. It is clear that Mary had expressed a feeling of personal guilt for her sons being abused by Reed, because Johnson repeatedly reassured her that she should not feel responsible. He wrote that the incident was 'not the result of any want of care or foresight upon your part; nor the want of any proper training on the part of the children by you – no! no!!'.<sup>41</sup> He chastised Mary for 'charg[ing] [her]self with neglecting the requisite precautions for the security of the children'.<sup>42</sup> Although Johnson denied Mary's culpability in this case, these statements highlight their shared belief that Mary did have a role in moral guidance.

Reflecting the emphasis of parenting manuals, Johnson devoted especial attention to his sons' sexual development, especially after their encounter

with Reed. He cautioned Mary that ‘these practices’ – though he never specified to what practices he refers – ‘once instilled into children seldom ceases until they grow to man hood’.<sup>43</sup> He feared that the experience will ‘have the effect of hardening their feelings ultimately make them perfectly callous to their future life’,<sup>44</sup> and so implored Mary diligently to observe the boys for signs of continuing distress or trauma. Upon hearing that Joe lacked concentration and ambition in his pursuits at school, he asked Mary, ‘Do you think the boys indifference (Joe’s especial) at school is the result of a broken spirit?’<sup>45</sup> Pervading these letters is the message that the boys were impressionable. It was their parents’ duty to mitigate the harmful influence imposed by Reed’s behaviour and to restore their proper development.

It is clear from Johnson’s letters that he saw himself as jointly responsible for loving and protecting his children and guiding them through an acceptable course of development. This belief is inconsistent with the views of some historians who assert that responsibilities for children’s moral development lay primarily with mothers. Robert Griswold, for example, writes that the duty that dominated fatherhood in this era was ‘breadwinning’, and that it was only in the 1950s that a father was judged according to whether he ‘had done his part in promoting good personality formation’.<sup>46</sup> But fathers’ guardian duties included the nurturing role that Griswold, among others, attributes solely to mothers. Reverend John Abbott, a Calvinist preacher from Massachusetts, wrote in 1842 that the ‘responsibility of correctly rearing a family equally devolves upon both father and mother’, and that families could not be well-regulated ‘unless there be cooperation of both parents in watching over and governing the children’.<sup>47</sup> Most fathers did not fit the stereotype of a self-contained patriarch who governed his family remotely.<sup>48</sup>

Johnson did display a breadwinning impulse: he obviously cared about providing for his family as his letters frequently concluded with an explanation of when he would send money home to Mary. But he gave more attention and higher priority to the wellbeing and upbringing of his children, perceiving himself as an active participant in this process even though he was away from home. For the Johnsons, parenthood was a commitment shared by both parents.

### **‘Undermining their physical constitutions’ – the risk to morality and the risk to health**

Prescriptive writers of the antebellum period coupled the traditional underpinnings of parental responsibility – morality and purity – with concerns about children’s physical health. Especially in relation to preventing premature sexual activity, parents’ obligations expanded from

being limited to moral training to also incorporating a duty to sustain their children's health.

Many historians devote their attention only to the moral dimension of parenthood. LeRoy Ashby writes that the antebellum anticruelty movement targeted parents who were 'morally dead'.<sup>49</sup> He provides compelling analysis that reformers conflated other factors that hindered effective parenting, such as low intelligence or poverty, into a general category of 'vice' that also included the characteristics of abusive and neglectful parents.<sup>50</sup> Griswold writes that parents emphasised 'conscience, guilt and religious redemption' as the major tools for teaching their children the importance of being upright citizens.<sup>51</sup> Antebellum parenting manuals did stress the importance of protecting children from 'contamination'<sup>52</sup> – the moral component of parenthood – by exhorting parents to direct their children away from sexual pleasure, which exemplified excess and corruption. New York physician J. Henry Warner wrote in *The Magic Monitor and Medical Intelligencer* (1859) that masturbation is of 'a horribly unnatural character' and 'defac[es] the manly beauty of the human form divine', violating the provision of the 'great Author of Creation'.<sup>53</sup> Fowler's work echoed this message: he argued that 'multiply[ing] and replenish[ing] the earth' is 'the great command of the Bible' and so humankind's 'solemn duty to fulfil'.<sup>54</sup> Masturbation distracted individuals from this duty and was an abuse of sexual functions. Wright, too, expounded the immorality of breaching 'the fixed, just laws of God, that were designed to control the expenditure of the Reproductive Element', as such violations 'of Nature's laws constitute man's only source of disease'.<sup>55</sup> The weight that these writers gave to the moral dimension of parenthood is consistent with the analysis that Ashby and Griswold, *inter alia*, provide.

Laqueur and G. J. Barker-Benfield point out that nineteenth-century Americans saw masturbation as a menace not only to individual morality, but also to the integrity of social order. Masturbation indicated a loss of self-control, when desire overcame an individual's capacity to exercise reasonably and act rationally which were cornerstones of an ordered society.<sup>56</sup> A New York pastor, Augustus Kingsley Gardner, espoused that masturbation unleashed to 'the hazards of free will', giving the body 'potent sway' over the mind so that unbridled desire would 'become the master of man'.<sup>57</sup> According to Graham, making 'sensual enjoyment the motive of [one's] actions' and forcing 'rational powers into subserviency to that end' would result in bringing 'disorder, and disease, and misery upon ourselves, and on our species'.<sup>58</sup> So parents' duty to protect their own children from corruption was necessary to safeguard the entire social order.

But another, more novel component of parents' responsibilities to their children emerged in this period. As well as protecting their children's morality, parents were to safeguard their children's physical health. Parents who neglected this responsibility, wrote New York physician M. B. La Croix, sentenced their children to a 'slow but gradual waste of bodily and mental power'.<sup>59</sup> Deslandes explained that masturbation should always be treated as a medical, rather than a moral matter, by writing:

*if, in a moral and religious point of view the simple fact of coition [mutual masturbation between heterosexual partners] in some cases and onanism in every case be a vice, an excess, an abuse, the physician should apply these terms only to cases where the health is injured.*<sup>60</sup>

A particular understanding of the body informed the medical perspectives of mid-century prescriptive writers. Doctors believed in a self-contained corporeal economy. The body was an autonomous, closed system, and masturbation depleted the body's finite resources.<sup>61</sup> This depletion was especially problematic because doctors saw semen as a uniquely valuable resource – so much that Barker-Benfield characterises the body, as imagined in this period, as a 'spermatic economy'.<sup>62</sup> Wright wrote that semen 'is composed of the most refined ingredients of our physical nature, the brain and the nerves not excluded [and so should be] preserved to impart life, energy and beauty to the entire man'.<sup>63</sup> This view of the 'entire man' permeated Deslandes' writing, too. Not just a person's body but his or her entire being relied on the proper functioning of the spermatic economy. The abuse of the genital organs 'becomes a source of disorder and disease to the rest of the body'.<sup>64</sup> He argued that '[t]he heart and mind suffer as much as the body from excesses of masturbation', because '[t]he development of the moral and intellectual faculties like that of the body is connected with the existence of the genital organs'.<sup>65</sup> Masturbation disturbed the vital corporeal economy.

Deslandes, like other prescriptive writers, charged parents with the responsibility for averting this outcome. Because children's constitution was yet unformed, and because the genital organs 'possess[ed] the most power' before and during puberty, parents must prevent their children from abusing their genital organs. Otherwise, those children would engage in sexual activity before adulthood and become 'monsters'.<sup>66</sup>

Deslandes encouraged doctors and parents to focus on these medical issues and avoid 'moralizing' about masturbation for two reasons. First, he argues that a preoccupation with the immorality of the habit diverts attention from the more grave problems caused to physical health. It was because

‘premature indulgence cause[s] so much injury’ that it should have been ‘one of the most interesting duties ... to prevent children and young persons from abusing themselves’.<sup>67</sup> More practically, he feared that judging patients on moral grounds would alienate them from doctors and induce them to keep their habit secret for longer.<sup>68</sup> Thus, according to Deslandes, physicians and parents should focus exclusively on the medical problems associated with premature sexual indulgences.

Graham provided a more complicated explanation of where professional and parental focus should lie. He wrote that parents should discourage masturbation because this behaviour ‘destroy[ed] the authority of the Bible’ and should be avoided in the ‘name of holiness’.<sup>69</sup> He argued that even the label ‘onanism’ was morally charged, as Onan, a figure in the book of Genesis, was condemned for ‘wasting his seed upon the ground’.<sup>70</sup> But these moral considerations, rather than existing in a vacuum, arose from the alleged medical harm that masturbation caused. Graham believed that ‘the Bible doctrine of ... sexual continence and purity, is founded on the physiological principles established in the constitutional nature of man’.<sup>71</sup> He explained,

*Our benevolent Creator has endowed us with peculiar powers, and set no bounds to our intellectual and moral acquisition; ... he calls us to the cultivation of our higher capabilities. ... Constituted as we are, our bodies must be sustained, for the good of our nobler powers.*<sup>72</sup>

So, unlike Deslandes, Graham exalted the moral reasons to abstain from sexual indulgence, but the basis for his moral objection was medical: masturbation undermined physical health, which humans had a responsibility to maintain.

Deslandes and Graham identified similar physiological results of masturbation. Deslandes wrote that when a person is sexually excited, the whole body heats up, ‘the eyes are more brilliant and the pulse [is] quicker’.<sup>73</sup> This physical reaction to sexual sensation caused ‘the veins [to] collapse’,<sup>74</sup> resulting in an unsteady blood flow. The uneven distribution of blood was the scientific explanation for many of the physiological effects of masturbation. Some effects were primarily aesthetic: the flesh becomes ‘soft and flaccid’, ‘the lips lose their colour’ and ‘a bluish circle surrounds the eyes’.<sup>75</sup> But the more serious harm was that caused to vital organs. According to Graham, the ‘heart, arteries and whole capillary system ... suffer from convulsive efforts’, while the brain was irreparably damaged as the ‘cerebral blood-vessels become distended and relaxed’.<sup>76</sup> Deslandes wrote that self-abuse could cause a rapid and severe ‘loss of flesh’, as the

'frame [of the offender] is reduced to a skeleton', and produced dyspepsy, gastritis, enteritis, phthisis and other diseases.<sup>77</sup> One soldier who frequently engaged in masturbation died unexpectedly, and physicians performing an autopsy found that 'blood had been effused in the brain'.<sup>78</sup> The damage the habit caused to the digestive system, especially the intestines, was so intense that patients have been known to die of diarrhoea, Deslandes related.<sup>79</sup> As a result of congestion of blood, patients could suffer 'polypi of the heart'.<sup>80</sup> He emphasised that these effects 'may be continued as long as life lasts',<sup>81</sup> and that this life was likely to be abridged as patients become early candidates for the grave. Deslandes concluded that '[t]his vice compromises the present and future health of the body'.<sup>82</sup> Graham asserted that doctors have proven these consequences 'with an accuracy of scientific truth which defies refutation'.<sup>83</sup> Both authors were convinced that there were irrefutable medical reasons for which parents must discourage their children from masturbating.

Johnson's letters reveal the complexity of the relationship between morality and medicine. In a letter just days after he first read about the incident with Reed, he told Mary that the most effective form of treatment was to create a 'moral culture' that discouraged indulgence in 'that vile habit'.<sup>84</sup> He instructed Mary to 'impress upon [Willie and Joe] the bad results and the crime of that nefarious practice'.<sup>85</sup> But he also understood that engaging in and exposure to sexual activity could harm children's physical health, and acknowledged the importance of 'remedies [to] *restore the physical condition of the constitution*'.<sup>86</sup> He encouraged Mary to consult doctors 'as to [the] effects upon [the boys'] *health*'.<sup>87</sup> Johnson, therefore, recognised that the duty to care for children had moral and physical dimensions.

#### **'Watching with great care' – how parents should treat vice**

Johnson accepted the broad beliefs of prescriptive writers that parents (both mothers and fathers) should act as guardians for their children, and that their responsibilities included managing their children's morality and physical health. But it did not follow that he was willing to allow the advice of experts to supersede his own parental judgement and authority in all circumstances, particularly when it came to implementing specific techniques that experts recommended. Johnson's letters indicate that he and Mary were mostly willing – and even eager – to follow these techniques, but they did not receive professional advice blindly. Rather, they engaged with it critically, and sometimes rejected it.

It is hard to gauge exactly how closely Johnson followed all professional advice simply because of the minutiae that writers described. Deslandes discouraged buying flannelette and woollen pantaloons and pyjamas that could cause irritation to the groin, and recommended feeding children

‘cooling foods’ such as milk and vegetables, as these would ‘appeas[e] all carnal desires’.<sup>88</sup> William A. Alcott, a New York educator, physician and prolific author of advice literature, wrote in 1855 that parents should travel with their children in ‘private carriages’ to avoid the ‘tumult and whirl of railroads and steamboats’ that could excite sexual desire, and should avoid ‘feather beds’ that provided ‘unnatural warmth and stimulus’.<sup>89</sup> Johnson’s letters give no indication of whether he accepted these very specific suggestions. But they do suggest that, while Johnson adhered to many of the more common and more general recommendations, he maintained a belief in an overriding parental authority. So there is evidence of Johnson negotiating a balance between expert and parental power.

Published guides encouraged parents explicitly to educate their children in matters of sexuality. Kincaid points to a conflict in Victorian culture between extending discourse about sexuality to children in order to control their behaviour, and fearing that ‘the naming of some sex acts might somehow make them tangible and dangerous’.<sup>90</sup> This tension permeated advice literature from the antebellum period. Deslandes explained that physicians and parents often ‘restrain from asking necessary questions, for fear of ... teaching the young patient a thing of which perhaps he is ignorant, or at least exciting in him a dangerous curiosity!’<sup>91</sup> But he ultimately concluded that the risk of ‘inspir[ing]’ a child to engage in sexual activity was a danger less substantial than the benefit of educating children.<sup>92</sup> Other writers agreed with this conclusion. One of the authors of *Facts and Important Information for Young Men* wrote that ‘thousands of amiable and pure-minded boys and young men are undermining their physical constitutions, and prospectively corrupting their souls by a pleasurable, and to many of them, innocent gratification’.<sup>93</sup> He argued that parents could not stop their children from learning about unhealthy habits, so should educate them against believing that these habits are, indeed, merely ‘innocent gratification’. Attempting to keep children entirely ignorant of such practices is, ‘at best, a very uncertain safeguard; an accident may destroy it, and leave the blind victim a prey to propensities unrestrained by enlightened reason’.<sup>94</sup> Graham concurred: to avoid children behaving dangerously without understanding the consequences, ‘it is of the highest importance that proper information concerning the odiousness of the vice of self-pollution ... should be given to them’.<sup>95</sup> So these authors agreed that parents should discuss the impact of sexual activity with their children in order to deter them from engaging in it.

The competing benefits and harms of candour and secrecy are evident in Johnson’s letters to Mary. He confided in Mary that speaking of the Reed affair ‘wounds [the boys’] *pride*’, and that he had ‘great faith in the effects of an honorable pride upon the actions of any one, even in a child’.<sup>96</sup> But his

holistic message to Mary was that she should discuss with the boys the effects of sexual activity. He suggested that Mary read the advice literature 'in the secretary' so that she would be able to 'talk advisedly to them [the boys] about the subject'.<sup>97</sup> He desired that Mary 'endeavour to impress upon the boys the enormity of [Reed's] crime' to deter them from replicating it.<sup>98</sup> Thus, as writers advised, Johnson encouraged a prolific normative discourse about sexuality with his children.

Parenting guides entreated parents to observe diligently their children's everyday habits so that they could detect abnormalities that may indicate sexual deviancy. Graham wrote that parents should 'watch with great care over the physical as well as mental and moral education and habits' of their children,<sup>99</sup> but Deslandes offered the most practical suggestions for how parents should exercise this vigilance. He recommended that parents observe children when they are sleeping, for if their hands never emerge from under the sheet, they may be masturbating, perhaps even unconsciously. Parents should look for stains of semen on children's bed sheets and clothes, and for symptoms such as 'loss of colour, languid expression of the face, an air of fatigue [and] difficulty in getting up'.<sup>100</sup> He even advised parents to sleep in the same bed as their children if necessary. Not only were parents following these suggestions more likely to detect signs of masturbation, but children were also less likely to engage in it at all because the practice required 'an opportunity to indulge in secret'.<sup>101</sup> So observing children closely was an important parenting technique for diverting them from sexual activity.

Johnson encouraged Mary to exercise such vigilance, to 'watch them carefully without their knowing it'.<sup>102</sup> When Joe seemed disinterested in school, as described above, Johnson said that Mary should '[e]ndeavour to find the *cause* – for it is impossible to remedy a defect without removing the primary cause of that defect'.<sup>103</sup> It appears that Mary kept her husband updated on the boys' status. Johnson wrote that he was 'glad to hear that Willie is improving' after the encounter with Reed.<sup>104</sup> As professional writers encouraged, these parents were eager to closely monitor their children's development.

Prescriptive writers suggested that parents engage their children in physical and mental activity. The authors of *Facts and Important Information for Young Men* wrote that '[i]f children are brought up in an idle, effeminate and luxurious manner, their passions are, like tinder, ignited by the first spark that falls upon them'.<sup>105</sup> Deslandes agreed, writing that '[o]nanism is arrested in those children, much more readily, who are extremely active and always in exercise, than those who are sedentary'.<sup>106</sup> He recalled that an Orphan Asylum in Berne successfully halted the prolific practice of

masturbation by 'introducing exercises'.<sup>107</sup> In line with the increasing medicalisation of parental responsibilities, Graham provided a scientific explanation for the need for physical activity: without 'frequent vigorous exercise of the body, ... the genital organs become oppressed and irritated' because of 'capillary congestion, or over-fullness of the minute blood vessels of the abdomen and loins'.<sup>108</sup> To counter these effects, he advised that parents 'promote the tone and action of [a child's] organs, and general vigor of his system, by active exercise; and let him exhilarate himself by free and copious draughts of the pure air of heaven'.<sup>109</sup> He encouraged parents to 'let him swing upon and climb the poles, and ropes, and ladders, ... and walk, and run, and jump, or labor on the farm, ... or let him ride on horseback' (as long as the latter did not cause involuntary emissions, in which case it 'must be avoided').<sup>110</sup>

Parents should also encourage mental activity. Deslandes explained that '[t]he action of intellectual labor is extremely analogous to that of muscular exertion [because] [p]ersons whose minds are much occupied ... are generally but slightly sensual'.<sup>111</sup> Parents had a responsibility to engage their children's intellectual faculties to prevent those faculties from being directing towards 'LASCIVIOUS DAY-DREAMS' which were 'often the sources of general debility, effeminacy, disordered functions, and permanent disease, and even premature death', according to Graham.<sup>112</sup> The authors of *Facts and Important Information for Young Men* were equally certain of the dangers of letting the mind wander: children may consciously engage in sexual behaviour, or may have such thoughts that lead them to involuntarily emit semen in their sleep.<sup>113</sup> To avoid this outcome, parents should ensure that their children 'closely apply the[ir] mind[s] to business or study or useful reading'.<sup>114</sup>

Johnson's advice to Mary aligned with the recommendations from published writers on the importance of physical and mental vigour. He pressed Mary to keep the boys' 'mind and body employed'.<sup>115</sup> She should, he said, 'encourage them to go out and play' and 'give them the bat and ball and any athletic exercise [she] can induce them to take'.<sup>116</sup> She should also offer them intellectual stimulation. Upon hearing that his sons had a 'partiality for music', Johnson decreed that playing music 'is an agreeable past-time', and so entreated Mary to 'encourage it ... to keep [the boys] off the street'.<sup>117</sup> Johnson implored Mary to instruct the boys to write to him, though he did 'not care on what subject they write so that they do write'.<sup>118</sup> Most importantly, Mary should not allow Joe and Willie to 'set and mope about the house',<sup>119</sup> as this idleness encouraged unacceptable imagining and behaviour. Thus, Johnson's letters reflected professional writers' enthusiasm for encouraging physical and mental activity to ward children away from inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Although he accepted and advised Mary to implement these various parenting techniques, Johnson was judicious towards the advice that experts provided. He conceded that on matters of physical health, doctors ‘of course know better than I do’.<sup>120</sup> But he repudiated advice that he felt undermined the natural authority that parents were entitled to exercise. Johnson scorned Dr. Cullin, whom Mary approached for medical advice following the episode of abuse but who, it appears from Johnson’s letter, offered guidance beyond her enquiry. According to Johnson, Cullin was one of a ‘whole class of advisers (meddlers I may call them)’ who can ‘go to the devil’.<sup>121</sup> Instead of placing faith in this professional figure, Johnson emphasised Mary’s ability and responsibility to apply her own independent judgement as to the most appropriate parenting procedures. He suggested that Mary ‘stop and think, quietly and calmly, ... as to the best course to adopt’, expressing his ‘abiding faith in [her] good common sense’.<sup>122</sup>

A particular professional recommendation that Johnson rebuffed was that his sons be removed from school. Deslandes informed parents that ‘[m]ost frequently, the habit of onanism arises from direct provocation, from instruction’.<sup>123</sup> The most common teachers were older boys at school.<sup>124</sup> Graham issued a similar warning and claimed, ‘It is enough to make a parent’s heart recoil with horror, when he contemplates the danger to which his child is exposed, on becoming a member of a public school!’<sup>125</sup>

According to Johnson’s letter, Dr. Cullin also advised that the boys ‘be taken from school and put to *work*’ so that they would ‘not have a desire to practice that vile habit’.<sup>126</sup> Johnson told Mary that ‘the idea ... may as well be dismissed at once’ because removing the boys from school would ‘destroy their opportunities for intellectual improvement’. Only with a ‘strong mind’, trained through formal education, could the boys ‘overcome their desires’.<sup>127</sup> Ultimately, Johnson believed that parents were the most qualified adjudicators on suitable childrearing procedures. He told Mary, ‘the more you listen to what “every body” says the more difficult the case will appear to you and the less you will know how to manage it’.<sup>128</sup> Rather than relying on others’, even experts’ opinions, the treatment for the boys should be ‘the advice of parents’.<sup>129</sup>

Johnson’s advice to Mary suggests that there was a negotiation between parents’ judgements and expert recommendations. Although Johnson was receptive to most of the techniques that doctors and instruction manuals advised, he refused to forfeit his own authority over his children, or to let Mary relinquish hers.

### Conclusion: parents crusading against vice

In early September 1863, Johnson wrote to his wife, ‘Give my love to the boys – tell them that I live in the hopes of seeing them grow up to be such just, upright and honorable men as to be a credit to their parents’.<sup>130</sup> The path that his sons followed to adulthood reflected, Johnson believed, his and Mary’s approach to raising them, and this approach was influenced heavily by contemporary prescriptive literature. Most importantly, parents were to act as guardians, displaying affections and protective instincts, and guiding their children through an acceptable course of development to responsible adulthood. These duties applied especially to overseeing sexual development, and were to be exercised by both mothers and fathers in the joint endeavour of parenthood. Moreover, their responsibilities had a moral dimension – to preserve their children’s purity, and so social order – as well as a medical dimension. Particularly in relation to sexuality, children’s souls and bodies both required protection. Johnson was highly receptive to these messages, advising Mary to follow many of the specific techniques that parenting manuals recommended. But he also insisted that he and she retain supreme authority over their children.

### ENDNOTES

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<sup>2</sup> Wright, *Marriage and Parentage*, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> Wright, *Marriage and Parentage*, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Diane Miller Sommerville, “‘I Was Very Much Wounded’”: Rape Law, Children, and the Antebellum South”, in Merrill D. Smith, ed., *Sex Without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America*, New York University Press, New York, 2001, pp. 136; James R. Kincaid, *Child-Loving: The Erotic Child and Victorian Culture*, Routledge, New York, 1994, pp. 3,61-62; Stephen Robertson, *Crimes Against Children: Sexual Violence and Legal Culture in New York City, 1880-1960*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2005, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Robert L. Griswold, *Fatherhood in America: A History*, BasicBooks, New York, 1993, pp. 12-13; LeRoy Ashby, *Endangered Children: Dependency, Neglect, and Abuse in American History*, Twayne Publishing, New York, 1997, pp. 3,5,19.

<sup>6</sup> Fred Pelka, ‘Introduction’, in Fred Pelka, ed. *The Civil War Letters of Colonel Charles F. Johnson, Invalid Corps*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 2004, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen M. Frank, “‘Rendering Aid and Comfort’”: Images of Fatherhood in the Letters of Civil War Soldiers from Massachusetts and Michigan’, *Journal of Social History*, vol. 26 no. 1 (Autumn 1992), p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen M. Frank, *Life with Father: Parenthood and Masculinity in the Nineteenth-Century American North*, John Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 1998, p. 178.

<sup>9</sup> John D. Wrathall, ‘Provenance as Text: Reading the Silences Around Sexuality in Manuscript Collections’, *Journal of American History*, vol. 79 no. 1 (June 1992), p. 166.

<sup>10</sup> Léopold Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline: With Directions for its Perfect Restoration*, trans. and with additions by an American physician, Otis, Broaders and Co., Boston, 1843.

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- <sup>11</sup> Charles F. Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 179.
- <sup>12</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, p. 179.
- <sup>13</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men: Showing the Awful Effects of Masturbation*, Wilder, Boston, 1844, p. 3.
- <sup>14</sup> Philip Jenkins, *Moral Panic: Changing Concepts of the Child Molester in Modern America*, Yale University Press, Connecticut, 1998, p. 4.
- <sup>15</sup> Robertson, *Crimes Against Children*, p. 7.
- <sup>16</sup> Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, pp. 61,62.
- <sup>17</sup> Orson Squire Fowler, *Love and Parentage Applied to the Improvement of Offspring*, Fowler and Wells, New York, 1851, p. 102 [emphasis in original].
- <sup>18</sup> Sylvester Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity: Intended also for the Serious Consideration of Parents and Guardians*, C. H. Pierce, Boston, 1848, p. 160.
- <sup>19</sup> Fowler, *Love and Parentage*, pp. v,102.
- <sup>20</sup> Fowler, *Love and Parentage*, p. 104.
- <sup>21</sup> Fowler, *Love and Parentage*, p. v.
- <sup>22</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 160.
- <sup>23</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, pp. 165-166.
- <sup>24</sup> Thomas W. Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation*, Zone Books, New York, 2003, p. 46.
- <sup>25</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 8.
- <sup>26</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 6.
- <sup>27</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 11.
- <sup>28</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 21.
- <sup>29</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 27 November 1861, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 58.
- <sup>30</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 4 January 1862, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 75; Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 16 May 1862, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 115; Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 4 July 1862, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 120; Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 23 November 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 201.
- <sup>31</sup> Pelka, 'Introduction', p. 310 n19.
- <sup>32</sup> Pelka, 'Introduction', p. 19.
- <sup>33</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>34</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, pp. 174-175.
- <sup>35</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>36</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>37</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 29 April 1862, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 110.
- <sup>38</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 13 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 160.
- <sup>39</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 13 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 160.
- <sup>40</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 13 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 160.
- <sup>41</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 174.
- <sup>42</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 9 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 183.
- <sup>43</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>44</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 21 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 188.
- <sup>45</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 2 October 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 192.
- <sup>46</sup> Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, p. 8.
- <sup>47</sup> John S. C. Abbott, 'Paternal Neglect', *The Parent's Magazine and Young People's Friend*, Concord, New Hampshire, March 1842, pp. 147-148.
- <sup>48</sup> Frank, *Life with Father*, p. 3.
- <sup>49</sup> Ashby, *Endangered Children*, p. 3.
- <sup>50</sup> Ashby, *Endangered Children*, p. 31.
- <sup>51</sup> Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, p. 19.
- <sup>52</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 2.

- <sup>53</sup> J. Henry Warner, *The Magic Monitor and Medical Intelligencer: containing wonderful and elaborate revelations concerning the following subjects, love, courtship & marriage, how to prevent an increase of family, how to cure self-abuse and its results, the detection, prevention & cure of all private diseases, &c.*, J. H. Warner, New York, 1859, pp. 67,73.
- <sup>54</sup> Fowler, *Love and Parentage*, p. vii [emphasis in original].
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- <sup>56</sup> Laqueur, *Solitary Sex*, p. 66; G. J. Barker-Benfield, 'The Spermatic Economy: A Nineteenth-Century View of Sexuality', in Michael Gordon, ed. *The American Family in Social-Historical Perspective*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., St Martin's Press, New York, 1978, p. 385.
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- <sup>58</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 68.
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- <sup>61</sup> Barker-Benfield, 'The Spermatic Economy', pp. 377,381.
- <sup>62</sup> Barker-Benfield, 'The Spermatic Economy', p. 377.
- <sup>63</sup> Wright, *Marriage and Parentage*, p. 259.
- <sup>64</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 11.
- <sup>65</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, pp. 16,61.
- <sup>66</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, pp. 19,20.
- <sup>67</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 36.
- <sup>68</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 171.
- <sup>69</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, pp. 20,22.
- <sup>70</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 88.
- <sup>71</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, pp. 23-24.
- <sup>72</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 68.
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- <sup>74</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 26.
- <sup>75</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 54.
- <sup>76</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, pp. 106,118.
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- <sup>78</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 72.
- <sup>79</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 56.
- <sup>80</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 117.
- <sup>81</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 54.
- <sup>82</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 36.
- <sup>83</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 23.
- <sup>84</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
- <sup>85</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
- <sup>86</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178 [emphasis in original].
- <sup>87</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178 [emphasis in original].
- <sup>88</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, pp. 213,217.
- <sup>89</sup> William A. Alcott, *The Young Woman's Book of Health*, Miller, Orton & Mulligan, New York, 1855, p. 218.
- <sup>90</sup> Kincaid, *Child-Loving*, pp. 135,139-140.
- <sup>91</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 10.
- <sup>92</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 170,231.
- <sup>93</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 3.
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- <sup>95</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 157.

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- <sup>97</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 179.
- <sup>98</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>99</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 24.
- <sup>100</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 168.
- <sup>101</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 232.
- <sup>102</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 175.
- <sup>103</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 2 October 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 192 [emphasis in original].
- <sup>104</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 31 August 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 176.
- <sup>105</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 14.
- <sup>106</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 221.
- <sup>107</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 222.
- <sup>108</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 62.
- <sup>109</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 149.
- <sup>110</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 149.
- <sup>111</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 223.
- <sup>112</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 58.
- <sup>113</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 15.
- <sup>114</sup> *Facts and Important Information for Young Men*, p. 15.
- <sup>115</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 9 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 180.
- <sup>116</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 9 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 180.
- <sup>117</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 16 January 1862, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 83.
- <sup>118</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 28 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 191.
- <sup>119</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 9 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 180.
- <sup>120</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178 [emphasis in original].
- <sup>121</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
- <sup>122</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
- <sup>123</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 227.
- <sup>124</sup> Deslandes, *Manhood, the Causes of its Premature Decline*, p. 227.
- <sup>125</sup> Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity*, p. 93.
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- <sup>127</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
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- <sup>129</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 3 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 178.
- <sup>130</sup> Johnson to 'Dear Mary', 9 September 1863, in Pelka, ed., *Civil War Letters*, p. 184.