1996

Union Civilian Leaders

Allen C. Guelzo
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: http://cupola.gettysburg.edu/cwfac

Part of the Military History Commons, and the United States History Commons

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Union Civilian Leaders

Keywords
Civil War, Union Army, Army of the Potomac

Abstract
The American Civil War was a war of civilians. The fact that 3 million or so of them happened to be in uniform was almost incidental, since the soldiers, sailors, and officers of both the Union and Confederate armies were mostly civilian volunteers who retained close contacts with their civilian social worlds, who brought efficacious civilian attitudes into the ranks with them, and who fully expected to return to civilian life as soon as the shooting was over. By the same token, civilian communities in both North and South kept closely in touch with their volunteers all through the war, sustained by peak rates of literacy in both sections and by the military postal services, and nourished by newspapers whose reliance on electrical telegraphy and field correspondents helped erode the customary cognitive distance between soldiers in the field and civilians at home. Above all, the American Civil War was (as Lincoln described it) "a people's contest" because it was fought over domestic political issues within a republican political framework, where the consent of the governed (rather than the ambition of an aristocratic or military caste) was understood to be the ultimate arbiter. At almost any point in the war, the military conflict could have been ended by popular civilian decision, since congressional and presidential elections were held in both the North and the South in 1862, 1863, and 1864. If any of those elections had gone that way, there is very little to indicate that either Union or Confederate soldiers would have defied that determination; the only serious moment of military resistance to civilian control, after Lincoln's removal of George McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac, fizzled without measurable result. Hardly any other military conflict in the nineteenth century was so much a matter of civilian support, commitment, and willpower.

Required Publisher's Statement
Original version is available from the publisher at: http://www.abc-clio.com/ABC-CLIOGreenwood.aspx
The American Civil War was a war of civilians. The fact that 3 million or so of them happened to be in uniform was almost incidental, since the soldiers, sailors, and officers of both the Union and Confederate armies were mostly civilian volunteers who retained close contacts with their civilian social worlds, who brought truculent civilian attitudes into the ranks with them, and who fully expected to return to civilian life as soon as the shooting was over. By the same token, civilian communities in both North and South kept closely in touch with their volunteers all through the war, sustained by peak rates of literacy in both sections and by the military postal services, and nourished by newspapers whose reliance on electrical telegraphy and field correspondents helped erode the customary cognitive distance between soldiers in the field and civilians at home. Above all, the American Civil War was (as Lincoln described it) "a people’s contest" because it was fought over domestic political issues within a republican political framework, where the consent of the governed (rather than the ambition of an aristocratic or military caste) was understood to be the ultimate arbiter. At almost any point in the war, the military conflict could have been ended by popular civilian decision, since congressional and presidential elections were held in both the North and the South in 1862, 1863, and 1864. If any of those elections had gone that way, there is very little to indicate that either Union or Confederate soldiers would have defied that determination; the only serious moment of military resistance to civilian control, after Lincoln’s removal of George McClellan as commander of the Army of the Potomac, fizzled without measurable result. Hardly any other military conflict in the nineteenth century was so much a matter of civilian support, commitment, and willpower.
In the most general sense, Union civilian life has usually been treated as an aspect of the home front, a surprisingly ambiguous term, developed during World War I and suggesting both distance (a separate "front" from military combat) and a subtle claim to a sort of organized mobilization. But nothing stands out more clearly from several of the comprehensive surveys of the Northern war effort than the remarkably perfunctory sense of mobilization that prevailed throughout the war. The most outstanding recent survey of the organization of Northern society during the war, Phillip Shaw Paludan's *A People's Contest: The Union and the Civil War, 1861–1865* (1988), is extraordinarily effective in surveying the dialogue of politics and the channeling of Northern economic resources into the war effort, but nothing emerges from the narrative to suggest that any effort was made during the war to create a Northern wartime mentality. In fact, what seems striking from Anne Rose's composite cultural portrait of Civil War-era civilians, *Victorian America and the Civil War* (1992), is the unwillingness of Northern elites or Northern bourgeois to come to terms with the war, as though it were a distant aberration—better ignored than interpreted, while Louise Stevenson's *The Victorian Homefront: American Thought and Culture, 1860–1880* (1991) underscores the absence of any cultural unanimity about the war in the North. Curiously, it has fallen to the social and demographic historians, rather than the cultural and intellectual historians, to begin piecing together answers to the question of a Northern home front. Some of those answers came in Maris Vinovski's outstanding collection of essays, *Toward a Social History of the American Civil War* (1990), which turned the interpretive and analytical tools that historians had honed on early American life in the 1970s and 1980s onto the era of the Civil War. All seven essays in Vinovski's anthology deal with the North, and taken together they suggest a far greater degree of connection and representation between civilian and military life in the North, and in far more concrete terms, than the characters of Rose's or Stevenson's books indicate.

Social historians, however, have rarely found Civil War history, with its weakness for faddism and battle narratives, a very congenial work space. Thus, it has been easier for Civil War historians to divide up Northern civilian life into a series of separate and less comprehensive categories, which, unfortunately, also yield up less comprehensive answers than those that have generated so much debate in Confederate historical circles. None of those categories has bulked larger in the past twenty years, or yielded a richer crop of understanding, than Civil War-era political history and biography. Much of this was certainly a by-product of Eric Foner's classic *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (1970), a book whose greatest novelty was the very suggestion that nineteenth-century Americans even possessed a political ideology. And perhaps because Foner's book was the first to resurrect ideology as a driving force in Civil War politics, the Republicans and their Whig predecessors have been the subject of a series of outstanding political histories. Daniel Walker Howe's group portrait of Whig "political cul-
ture" (1979) and Thomas Brown's essays on Whig "statesmanship" (1985) have restored the image of the Whigs as a potent ideological force in the politics of antebellum America, while William E. Gienapp (1987), Michael Holt, (1969, 1978), William Dusinberre (1965), Erwin S. Bradley, (1964), Paul Kleppner (1979), James Rawley (1974), and Stephen Maizlish (1983) have forced us to recognize the role of nativism and regionalism in the construction of Republican politics. The Democrats have not been entirely without their remembrancers, and the work of Jean Baker (1979, 1985) and Joel Silbey (1977, 1985) offer highly useful analyses of the ideology of the Democrats in the war years.

Some of the best writing, however, has not been about political ideology but about the Northern politicians themselves. A number of published papers and diaries of Lincoln's staff and cabinet secretaries offer critical glimpses into the operation of wartime politics at the highest levels in the North, beginning with Burton J. Hendrick's survey of Lincoln's War Cabinet (1946) and including David Donald's Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase (1954), Howard K. Beale's The Diary of Gideon Welles (1960) and The Diary of Edward Bates (1933), and Tyler Dennett's selection of excerpts from John Hay's diary and letters, Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay (1939, 1972). Lincoln's premier civil servant, Secretary of State William Seward, has never enjoyed much of a reputation in Civil War history, despite having attracted a number of surprisingly admiring biographers, beginning in recent times with Glyndon Van Deusen's William Henry Seward (1967) and John M. Taylor's William Henry Seward: Lincoln's Right Hand (1991). Both Van Deusen and Taylor are unstinting in their praise of Seward as a secretary of state, but Norman Ferris, in Desperate Diplomacy: William Henry Seward's Foreign Policy, 1861 (1976) and The Trent Affair: A Diplomatic Crisis (1977), is substantially less enthusiastic. Gideon Welles, the secretary of the navy, has unaccountably outshone his much more formidable counterpart, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, in terms of simple volume—Beales's edition of Welles's diary, John Niven's Gideon Welles: Lincoln's Secretary of the Navy (1973), and Richard S. West, Jr.'s Gideon Welles: Lincoln's Navy Department (1953) easily take up more space than the literature on Stanton—but Stanton's great biography by Harold Hyman and Benjamin P. Thomas, Stanton: The Life and Times of Lincoln's Secretary of War (1962), makes up for that shortfall by being one of the finest models of Civil War biography ever written. Salmon Chase may actually have done more to carry the war to victory through his oversight of the Treasury than any other member of Lincoln's cabinet, but his forbidding and ambitious personality has been hard for even sympathetic students like Frederick Blue, John Niven, and Louis Gerteis to make likable.

Remembering how important Lincoln's career as a lawyer was to both his image and his conception of his duties as president, relatively little is at hand on the Supreme Court of the war years, apart from Carl Swisher's volume in the O. W. Holmes official history of the Court, The Taney Period, 1836–1864
(1974), David Silver's much older study of the Lincoln-era Court, *Lincoln's Supreme Court* (1956), and Willard King's *Lincoln's Manager: David Davis* (1960), a biography of Lincoln's political manager and Supreme Court appointee. Constitutional theory has actually received somewhat better coverage than constitutional jurists, especially in Harold Hyman's *A More Perfect Union: The Impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the Constitution* (1973) and Phillip S. Paludan's *A Covenant with Death: The Constitution, Law and Equality in the Civil War Era* (1975). Of all the cases to appear before the Supreme Court during the war years, none may have been more critical than the Prize Cases—(which can be seen as Roger Taney's last-ditch attempt to cripple Lincoln's war-making powers) and they have been treated in detail in Stuart Bernath, *Squall across the Atlantic: The American Civil War Prize Cases* (1970) and in Ludwell H. Johnson's "Abraham Lincoln and the Development of Presidential War-making Powers: Prize Cases (1863) Revisited" (1989). But the most invisible parts of the wartime administration were the 195,000 civilian employees who provided so much of the real oil to the war machine and who reaped so much of the political profit of it. Unhappily, patronage and government employment have usually been studied only as a function of political spoils, as in Harry Carman and Reinhard Luthin's *Lincoln and the Patronage* (1943), and even then generally as a footnote to the iron control Lincoln exercised over patronage during the war.

It is not often appreciated how much Congress took leadership of the war into its own hands, in terms of both domestic and war policy. Allan Bogue's *The Congressman's Civil War* (1989) is an excellent brief survey of the operation of the House of Representatives in the Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth Congresses, while Leonard Curry's *Blueprint for Modern America: Non-Military Legislation of the First Civil War Congress* (1968) devotes itself to a study of both houses of the Thirty-seventh Congress. But most studies of the Civil War congresses have focused on the parties, with the Republicans again taking the lion's share of the attention. The major questions in this literature have revolved around the identity of Republican factions, and the degree to which the Radical Republicans were Lincoln's allies or critics. In an earlier work, *The Earnest Men: Republicans of the Civil War Senate* (1981), Allan Bogue used a highly sophisticated analysis of roll-call votes to identify a consistent core of Senate Radicals, thus taking sides against Michael Les Benedict's contention in *A Compromise of Principle: Congressional Republicans and Reconstruction, 1863–1869* (1975) that the radicals were united only on civil rights issues. Similarly, Hans L. Trefousse has argued forcibly in *The Radical Republicans: Lincoln's Vanguard for Racial Justice* (1968) that the radicals were Lincoln's secret agents for promoting policies he could not afford to endorse openly, while T. Harry Williams had argued just as forcibly in *Lincoln and the Radicals* (1941) that Lincoln was a moderate who struggled to keep the Radicals from turning the war into a social vendetta against the South. Individual congressional biographies, especially of the Radicals, are fairly numerous: the most famous is David
Donald's two-volume biography of Charles Sumner (1961, 1970), but Henry Winter Davis, Benjamin Wade, George W. Julian, William Pitt Fessenden, Henry Wilson, and John P. Hale have all earned major studies of their political lives. The most contradictory interpretations have swirled around that most contradictory congressman, Thaddeus Stevens, who has been variously interpreted as an idealist (see Eric Foner's review essay in a special issue of Pennsylvania History in April 1993 devoted to "Thaddeus Stevens and American Democracy"), a disgruntled outsider, as in Fawn Brodie's Thaddeus Stevens: Scourge of the South (1959), and the "enigma" described by Richard N. Current in Old Thad Stevens: A Story of Ambition (1942).

The need to deal with dissent and to give the war some kind of public shape and meaning called forth the efforts of the North's public intellectuals, and the best sampling of their literary labors on behalf of the Union can be found in Frank Freidel's two volumes of Union Pamphlets of the Civil War (1967). The best overall survey of Northern intellectual history in the nineteenth century is Bruce Kuklick, Churchmen and Philosophers: From Jonathan Edwards to John Dewey (1985), while D. H. Meyer's The Instructed Conscience: The Shaping of the American National Ethic (1972) provides an admirable introduction to nineteenth-century American ethics and the enthusiasm that public ethics lent to the antislavery crusade. George M. Frederickson's The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union (1965) is still the prevailing interpretation of the involvement of Northern intellectuals in interpreting the Civil War, but because he focuses so extensively on the secular intellectuals and the liberal religionists who created the United States Sanitary Commission, the record that emerges from his book is quite a dismal one, with Northern intellectuals being long on fears for social control and remarkably short on intellectual substance. William Quentin Maxwell, Lincoln's Fifth Wheel: The Political History of the United States Sanitary Commission (1956) is better than Frederickson on the details of the creation of the Sanitary Commission but misses the elitist pretensions of the commissioners, which Frederickson documents. The time is thus long overdue for a new intellectual history of the Civil War that will pay attention to the far more vital areas of American intellectual life than the fairly resultless meanderings of the New York and Boston literati of the 1860s.

One source for such a new work will be several of the recent biographies of the standard literary figures of the mid-nineteenth century, including Stanton Garner's The Civil War World of Herman Melville (1993) and Joan Hedrick's critical biography, Harriet Beecher Stowe (1993). But it must also include the far more culturally potent religious literature of mid-nineteenth Protestantism, which was then reaching its zenith of public authority. Sidney Ahlstrom's magisterial survey of American religion, A Religious History of the American People (1972), devotes an unusual amount of space to the Civil War, reflecting Ahlstrom's own personal interest in the war, while James Moorhead's American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860–1869 (1978) ad-
venturously links the allegiance of Northern evangelical Protestants to evangelical hopes that the war might be harbinger of the millennium. Victor B. Howard (1990), Richard Carwardine (1993), and John R. McKivigan (1984) link Protestant evangelicalism more directly to abolition through the takeover of evangelical denominations by antislavery factions who hoped to wed Whiggish Republicanism with public Christianity, including, in the case studied by Martin Borden (1979), to the point of campaigning during the war for a "Christian amendment" to the Constitution. There are a number of highly serviceable biographies of Civil War religious figures, such as William G. McLoughlin's *The Meaning of Henry Ward Beecher: An Essay on the Shifting Values of Mid-Victorian America, 1840–1870* (1970), Keith Hardman's *Charles Grandison Finney, 1792–1875: Revivalist and Reformer* (1987), Barbara Cross's *Horace Bushnell: Minister to a Changing America* (1958), and Richard S. Taylor's "Seeking the Kingdom: A Study in the Life of Jonathan Blanchard, 1811–1892" (1977). But getting access to many Civil War-era religious texts is still problematic, and the only useful anthology of Civil War sermon literature is David B. Chesebrough's *God Ordained This War: Sermons on the Sectional Crisis, 1830–1865* (1991). Another obvious source for developing a new intellectual history of the Civil War era will be the Northern press, whose popular print culture will need to be integrated with the high culture represented by the literati. The Civil War press has generally been treated as a rollicking story of daring journalists, snatching scoops under fire; a good deal less attention has been paid to how the press acted as a forum and a popularizer of political, religious, and intellectual debate.

If the intellectual history of the war has been poorly served so far, the history of Northern women in the war has been almost invisible until very recently. For many years, Mary Elizabeth Massey's *Bonnet Brigades: American Women and the Civil War* (1966) was almost the only women's history of the war era consulted by Civil War historians, and even then Massey concentrated mostly on providing a "contribution" history, dealing only with the contribution women made to what is otherwise described as a predominantly male-gendered event. Three decades after Massey, American women's history has become its own separate department within American studies, and it has now begin to generate its own subdepartment in Civil War studies as well. One mark of the increasing sophistication of gender and family studies of the Civil War era is *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* (1992), a collection of essays on gender and the Civil War edited by Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber, which offers explorations of childhood, spies, nurses, divorce, and even illicit sex. Similarly, Marilyn M. Culpeper's *Trials and Triumphs: Women of the American Civil War* (1991) makes excellent use of a plethora of unpublished women's diaries and letters, although without giving them much interpretive coherence. However, in recovering a women's history of the war, it has been easiest to start at the top, with the North's most elite women. Jean H. Baker's *Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography* (1987) offers a sympathetic reading of Mary Lincoln's life, but Bak-
er's highly optimistic reading of her has to be balanced against the highly negative testimony of many of her contemporaries, and Mark Neely, Jr., and Gerald McMurtry returned a serious consideration of Mary Lincoln's mental stability to front stage with the publication of *The Insanity File: The Case of Mary Todd Lincoln* (1986). Other prominent Northern women who have received renewed attention in the past decade include Jessie Benton Frémont, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Kate Chase, Abby Kelley, and Clara Barton. The study of elite women has yielded also to comparative studies of urban and rural women during the war, and to the publication (in a spectrum of state historical quarterlies) of the diaries of Northern women across a broad geographical and demographic spectrum. Strangely, we have not yet seen modern critical editions of two of the most militant Northern women's memoirs from the Civil War era: Mary Ashton Livermore's *My Story of the War: A Woman's Narrative of Four Years Personal Experience* (1889) and Sara Emma Edmonds's *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army: The Adventures and Experiences of a Woman in Hospitals, Camps, and Battlefields* (1865). The Clinton-Silber anthology, however, points the way toward an important new horizon in Civil War studies, and the way now seems open for new work on the family, gender, and the ways in which the Civil War created an "upside-down" opportunity in Northern society for women. Beyond that, these new gender studies will have to address the larger question of the ambiguity of the war's results for Northern women: how different their world was from that of the Southern women studied by Drew Faust, George Rable, and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and whether the "gains" of Northern women actually translated into anything substantial for the future.

For almost as long as women's studies had been invisible, so had the study of Northern African Americans, and what attention Northern blacks had earned from the historians was almost entirely a matter of the military laurels won by black soldiers. But the struggle of black soldiers to win freedom and dignity on the battlefield was matched by a struggle by black Northern civilians to achieve the same goals on the segregated streetcars and public schools of Northern cities. Although the Northern states prided themselves on being free, their freedom was largely a matter of economics—of "free labor" rather than social or political equality. If there was any point at which Northern civilian life really became a home front of engagement and confrontation, it was precisely over the demand of Northern blacks after 1861 to win the same civil rights as their fellow Northerners. The story of these battles so closely parallels the civil rights struggles of the 1950s that it is no surprise that many of the accounts of these efforts emerged from the "Second Reconstruction" of the post–World War II period, beginning with Benjamin Quarles's *The Negro in the Civil War* (1953) and *The Black Abolitionists* (1969), and receiving their most comprehensive treatment in James M. McPherson's *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (1964). If these works reflected some of the optimism of the modern civil rights struggle, the ambiguous results of the era of Martin Luther King, Jr., were matched by the turn of African-American
Civil War literature toward the equally ambiguous results of the war for Northern blacks. George M. Frederickson in *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (1971), Eric Foner in *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (1983), and Mary Frances Berry in *Military Necessity and Civil Rights Policy: Black Citizenship and the Constitution, 1861–1868* (1977) have shown that the gains made by blacks on the civilian home front had to be made in the teeth of persistent white resistance, and many of those gains were pragmatic concessions by Northern white society made to accommodate the military necessity of using black soldiers. No other single figure among Northern black civilians was more prominent or has attracted more modern biographical attention than Frederick Douglass. In addition to Philip Foner’s edition of *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass* (1950), Benjamin Quarles’s *Frederick Douglass* (1948), Waldo E. Martin’s *The Mind of Frederick Douglass* (1984), D. J. Preston’s *The Young Frederick Douglass: The Maryland Years* (1980), and David Blight’s *Frederick Douglass' Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (1989) have transformed Douglass into one of the most thoroughly examined lives of the American nineteenth century. Northern black women, on the other hand, have just begun to attract attention from biographers, and only for the most prominent abolitionists like Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth.

The great danger of using the kinds of categories for the literature on Northern civilians that I have noted thus far is that they presuppose a homogeneous Northern society that felt the differences of race, gender, or politics more than region. That is a highly risky assumption in the still-decentralized world of the American nineteenth century; Jefferson Davis, after all, was so confident of conflict between the North and the West that he fully expected that Minnesota could be persuaded to join the Southern Confederacy, and over 500 Delawareans actually served in the Confederate armies. In just the same way that William Freehling has pointed out that the South was really a composite of at least three "Souths," so the North was a composite of "Norths" with interests and subcultures that could vary wildly based on immigration patterns, economy, demography, and religion. New England states like Vermont enjoy a reputation for being unitedly Republican, antislavery, and Unionist, and Maris Vinovskis (1990) and William Rorabaugh (1986) have found in Massachusetts towns like Newburyport and Concord that support for the war effort resulted in a remarkably even demographic spread of volunteers, so that the war turned out not to be a "rich man's war but a poor man's fight." However, Thomas Kemp (1990) and William Marvel (1994) have come to diametrically opposite conclusions about the "rich man's war" problem in nearby New Hampshire, with Kemp finding that Newbury and Conway enlistments showed little demographic distortion and Marvel arguing that the burden of the draft fell disproportionately on Conway's poor. Variations like these require a thorough awareness of the variegated cultural landscape of the North in the Civil War, and fortunately a number of regional studies of the wartime North promote that awareness. The
Civil War centennial observances produced a spate of regional Civil War histories for the Midwest by John Barnhart (1961), Victor Hicken (1966), Morton Rosenberg (1967), and a commissioned series of Ohio essays edited by Kenneth Wheeler (1968). The middle Atlantic states may actually have enjoyed the thickest regional historiography of all, starting with Sidney David Brummer (1967) and Mary P. Hodnett (1971) on the Civil War state politics of New York and including a wide variety of studies of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania civilians, in fact, may have seen more civilian diaries and letters appear in scholarly print than any other Northern state in the Civil War). But New Jersey, Delaware, West Virginia, and even the Utah Territory, despite their relative smallness of size, have also generated useful Civil War histories by Norman B. Wilkinson (1966), Harold Bell Hancock (1961), Richard Orr Curry (1964), George Ellis Moore (1963), and E. B. Long (1981). Civil War urban history has all too often been swallowed up by New York City and its draft riots or Washington and its politics, but J. Matthew Gallman's *Mastering Wartime: A Social History of Philadelphia during the Civil War* (1990), along with several significant dissertations and new books by Ernest McKay (1990), Theodore J. Karamanski (1993), and Richard H. Abbott (1990), on New York, Chicago, and Boston, respectively, are beginning to open up a new urban history of the Civil War. Unfortunately, apart from the attention grabbed by war-related support agencies like the Sanitary Commission, comparatively little attention has been paid to Northern social and intellectual institutions during the war. A major but often neglected segment of this institutional history is the American college in the Civil War era, which was already on the brink of a major restructuring of collegiate curriculums and missions in the 1860s. Only Oberlin College, which was probably the most famous antislavery college in the North, has received any serious attention as a Civil War-era institution, in Nat Brandt's *The Town That Started the Civil War* (1991) and Robert Samuel Fleming's *A History of Oberlin College from Its Foundation through the Civil War* (1943).

It is clear that Northern civilian life has not been ignored, but much of this literature lacks a clear interpretive point, and gaining a sense of focus on the Northern home front will emerge only from the way we integrate our understanding to several important issues. First, any new approach to the home front needs to return political ideology to the forefront of attention. Unlike the modern American distaste for ideology, Americans of the prepragmatism era were possessed by extraordinary ideological commitments, and the failure to attend to those commitments lies behind much of the vacuousness of Civil War historiography. That, in turn, should lead to a consideration of the problem of morale. There is, unfortunately, no counterpart in terms of civilian morale to Gerald Linderman's study of "courage" among Civil War soldiers, and in its absence, what we have mostly to contend with is the story of wartime dissent rather than what is obviously more important in the long run, and that is wartime support. If the loss of will that Richard Beringer, Herman Hattaway, Faust, and Rable attribute to various sectors of the Confederate population did so much to deflate
the Confederacy, then the apparent staying power of Northern civilians certainly
needs a similar degree of appreciation in explaining the triumph of the Union.

Two other areas that demand comprehensive attention for understanding mo­
rere are the connection between the war and the rise of mass industrial capital­
ism, and the war and the decline of public religion. Richard F. Bensel’s Yankee
Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859–1879
(1990) has taken a number of the old responses to these issues and given them
new life, but Bensel’s work is really one of political economy rather than a
history of the Civil War’s impact on the economy, and though he gives the right
signals, the path ahead remains to be explored. Similarly, Rose’s Victorian
America and the Civil War is correct to see Northerners use the war to subsume
the rising tide of religious doubt in the nineteenth century, but Rose is a cultural
historian, and her handling of religious ideology is prone to generalization and
fuzziness. Finally, the current explosion in studies of gender needs to move
North, so that the sophistication with which Faust, Rable, Fox-Genovese, and
others are currently reading the upside-downness of gender in the Southern Civil
War roles can yield the same fruits concerning Northern men and women. It
will be important, however, to keep such a focus from being too preoccupied
with elite northeastern women at the expense of western farmers’ wives, and to
avoid a similar preoccupation with free black women while missing the even
more desperate story of free black men. The questions are provocative, and the
resources for answering them are rich. The answers may tell more than we ever
could have thought about why the North—the civilian North—won the Civil
War.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Dana, Charles A. *Recollections of the Civil War with the Leaders at Washington and in the Field in the Sixties.* New York: Appleton, 1898.


Edmonds, Sara Emma. *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army: The Adventures and Experiences of a Woman in Hospitals, Camps, and Battlefields.* Hartford, CT: W. S. Williams, 1865.


Hodnett, Mary Patricia. "‘Civil War Issues in New York State Politics.’" Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1971.


Kemp, Thomas. "‘Community and War: The Civil War Experience of Two New Hamp-


