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I figured McPherson's text on the Civil War would take an unabashedly pro-Union stance. After all, history is written by the winners and when it comes to a conflict that is best known as the United States' final obstacle in ridding the country of slavery, the good vs. evil narrative practically writes itself.

I don't usually take much stock in reviews. What I'd like to know most about the text is whether or not it's enjoyable to read, and the New York Times review provides that for me. As for the quality of the content, it's difficult to create an all-inclusive account of any given subject — as I had noted in the Ken Burns forum — and the omissions many of the Amazon reviewers referred to I took with a grain of salt. It's also incredibly tough for me to take anyone criticizing a literal work seriously when their own writing contains enormous errors in grammar and punctuation, even on the Internet.

After reading the reviews and flipping through a few pages of the book, I can tell I'm going to enjoy McPherson's prose and flow. The sources for his information are well-documented in the footnotes, so I'm sure that I won't contend with any of his facts. However, I'll finish this class with just as many questions as answers about the era. I guess that's why there are hundreds of Civil War books out there. If journalism has taught me anything, it's the importance of having multiple sources.

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