

After reading the positive and negative reviews for, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, by James McPherson, I will approach this book with the mindset that, like most books dealing with major points in history, this one may be a bit biased due to the author's personal point of view. While reading I will also keep in mind that there are three sides to every story, and if I ever feel that McPherson has inserted too much of his own opinion, then I will look up other sources and see how they match up.

The word "bias" was used in multiple negative reviews on amazon, and as far as historical accuracy goes, issues related to an author's biased view point is a bit worrisome. When a book leans drastically to one point of view or another the reader doesn't get a fair idea of what actually happened. However, unless they want to read a book full of statistical fact after statistical fact, they have to expect that there will be at least a small amount of the author's view point infused into the material.

Of the negative reviews the ones I trusted the most were the ones that also highlighted what they felt McPherson did right. The first review called "Too much, too small" states, "The beauty of this book is its scope in which it covers the war, the politics, daily lifestyles, North and South (I think its focused more on the Union), the economics, the issues and leaders of the era (1850's to 60's)." Then they go into the parts of the book that they didn't like and end it with a suggestion of a different book. This shows that they enjoy learning about the Civil War, and that they took the time to at least put thought into their review rather than just saying, "The book was bad."

Of the good reviews, I found the "This Is Not News" review and the New York Times review to be fairly similar and the most trustworthy. Both authors found at least one thing that they didn't agree with, and used reasoning to support these ideas. In the New York Times one the writer states, "revolution is a much abused word." And because of that he takes issue with the titles of chapter 8 and 9. The writer then goes on to explain why the over use of the word "revolution" in chapter titles might lead to reader misconceptions of the actual revolution.

My level of confidence in this book as our main source is pretty high. One reason is that it won't be our *only* source. The next reason being that as a student you put trust in your teachers to pick out material that will best help you learn, and I don't believe that a teacher would use a book that they felt wasn't up to par. I highly doubt that this material for this class is an exception to that.