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Hist 209 W15

McPherson Assignment #1

After reading the reviews on Battle Cry Of Freedom, I am excited to learn more about the Civil war. I will approach this reading both with the excitement of learning and the weariness of perhaps a biased author. That seems to be a universal flaw in the reviews provided on this book. The one thing that most of those reviewing his book agree on is he is a skilled, writer with the ability to cover a lot of material without giving a lot of filler, non-important information. That should make the book more enjoyable to read and easier to understand.

One of the issues in regards to historical accuracy that worries me the most is the lack of truth with who fought the war. There were African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and multiple immigrant groups who fought in the war. These races are not written about thoroughly (per reader reviews) like the whites are. Was this simply the readers interpretation, or is this how the book was written? I'll have to read it to find out. The statement about pre-confederate voters in more than a dozen counties boycotting the election is also false per another reviewer. This is inaccurate because there were not polls in all 13 counties. Some of the polls were opened by force and guarded by the Ohio soldiers, who in turn were responsible for most of the votes that were counted. There are other inconsistencies regarding the treatment and release of the slaves.

The reviews I trust the most are the Amazon reviews from multiple readers. I trust these reviews because there are several different people providing a review on this book. They gave reference to different parts of the book that was concerning due to lack of facts, too much rambling, a biased opinion etc. I prefer to have several opinions to review when forming an opinion for myself. However, the review given by Dave Thomer was good very informative also. He too gave examples of where the book was accurate versus where it was not. He refers to specific examples in the book when giving his opinion during the review. I felt like the review by the New York Times was more of a personal review of the author and his ability to write instead of an accurate review of the book.

My confidence level is high that this book will be both educational and beneficial in learning about the Civil war. Although there are reviewers that voice their concern about the author being biased or the facts not being completely true, I think as a whole the book will be beneficial for learning. I'd also like to think that you as a Professor would not have us spend an entire semester reading a book that is not accurate or educational.