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McPherson Assignment 1

After reading all three reviews, I can see there are many different opinions of the book. I will be approaching the book primarily with an open mind in order to learn more about a subject that I have little previous knowledge of, but also with a critical eye because I know opinions can differ from person to person. Upon completion of the book, I hope to have a greater knowledge and deeper understanding of a subject I have always wanted to study. One thing I will have to be cautious of throughout my progression through the book, is to keep an understanding that everything I read may not necessarily be exactly correct according to history, but instead it is of the opinion of the author.

There are not many issues that concern me about historical accuracy, especially because it seems like all three reviews showed praise for McPherson's accuracy. However, there is one issue from the second review that is of some concern for me. I thought the reviewer made a great point by calling it "primarily a book about military history". That is great for readers who would like to focus on the military movements of the civil war, and I am certainly one of them because I am fascinated by military history, but I also want to make sure I learn about an accurate perception of the political movements of the war. The other main focus I took away also came from the second review. The reviewer stated that there was little mention about the huge industrial and population advantages of the north, and the lack there of in the south. I would have thought that was a huge factor in the long term success of the union army, and therefore it would be covered accordingly. I will certainly keep that in mind throughout my reading of the book.

The reviews that I trust the most are numbers one and two. Both reviews seemed to come from sources that have a very deep knowledge of the civil war, and I find that to be reassuring when it comes to trusting an author or reviewer. In the first review, the reviewer seemed most impressed by the un-repetitive way in which the information is expressed, especially for such a widely covered and overly examined subject as the civil war. I think that statement alone shows that the reviewer has a great depth of knowledge for

the subject because they have read so many previously written works about the civil war, and that makes it easier for me to trust their opinion.

My overall confidence level in McPherson's book is pretty high. After reading reviews I think it will have a great amount of knowledge and insight, as well as a refreshingly new way of expressing it. I think there will always be negative reviews for a book, no matter what the subject is about. By nature people have different opinions and there is no way around that, but I certainly believe it is important we appreciate and respect the authors for expressing their own opinions, and how we take that is up to us as readers and critics. The three reviews highlighted in this report have certainly peaked my interest and I am excited to continue reading *Battle Cry Of Freedom* by James McPherson.