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Lyde Cullen Sizer, Jim Cullen, eds. *The Civil War Era: An Anthology of Sources.* Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2005. xxviii + 434 pp. $109.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-4051-0690-0; $41.95 (paper), ISBN 978-1-4051-0691-7.

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For Students, and for Teachers

The editors' dedication to this collection reads, "For our students," and that seems to be a fair guess at the audience Lyde Cullen Sizer and Jim Cullen, and their publisher, hope to reach with this book, which describes itself as anthology of sources. That the selections are divided into fifteen "parts," a number which coincides with the number of weeks in a traditional college semester, reinforces this guess. This mixed collection of primary sources and secondary writings should prove useful for those who require a convenient gathering of Civil War-related material for an advanced undergraduate history class. Presumably, most instructors would use Sizer and Cullen's book as a supplement to a one-volume general history of the war. While it is impossible for even a thick volume to be all things to all people, Sizer and Cullen largely succeed in producing a work that encompasses primary sources and a representative selection of the best of a diversity of recent scholarship that many will happily assign as part of the reading in Civil War classes aimed at upper-level college students.

The fifteen "parts" of the book are arranged by topics in a roughly chronological order. "The Impending Crisis" leads to "Justifying the War" and "The Battle Front," with "Victory and Defeat," "Reconstruction," (which some instructors, by personal preference or institutional imperative, might omit), and, inevitably given recent scholarly trends, "Memory," closing the book. After a reprint of Bruce Catton's 1960 introduction to *The American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War*, each part begins with selections from one or two major scholars written during the past 15 or so years. William W. Freehling, Reid Mitchell, Philip S. Paludan, Drew Gilpin Faust, Alice Fahs, and David W. Blight are among the scholars whose work is represented, and these names indicate something of the range and diversity of topics and approaches included. Some rough history-major arithmetic reveals that each part, each week, includes about 5,000-6,000 words of secondary source material, though this count, as far as it relates to the main text of the pieces, is inflated by the editors' laudable decision to include the original notes for the republished material. Each piece is also introduced by one or two paragraphs that provide useful historical and historiographical orientation.

With the book's focus on recent scholarship, the inclusion of the Catton piece may be a little jarring amidst the rest of this assembled company, but it is hard for this reviewer to argue with the editors' contention that, "And when it comes to sparse clarity there have been few Civil War writers who can match Bruce Catton" (p. 4). Many instructors of Civil War classes will find themselves waxing nostalgic as they tell their students of early encounters with *The American Heritage Picture History*, other works by Catton, and other monuments, moldering as they may now be, of the Centennial years and before. Except for the Catton excerpt, all of the essays included as secondary material date from no earlier than no earlier than the post-Centennial work of Eric Foner and James McPherson. Given the strength and breadth of scholarship over the last two decades or so, this is a welcome and probably inevitable decision. What we teach should be based on the insights and directions of the latest scholarship, even in undergraduate classes. That being said, limitations are inevitably imposed by the editors' choices on users of such a book, and instructors using this book will want to think through those limitations as they use the book in classes. Much of what follows in the following paragraphs is decidedly not intended as criticism in the negative sense of fault-finding, but rather offered as a beginning at exploring the opportunities for thoughtful teaching presented by the choices made by Sizer and Cullen.

For example, some instructors may find themselves searching for ways to extend some historiographical discussions to the period before the 1970s or 1980s. To go no further than the opening "Impending Crisis" unit, the exclusion of mention of such as the Beards or Avery Craven

or James G. Randall may lead those wishing to introduce students to the notion of shifting vagaries of historical interpretation on the topic of Civil War causation may need to create a supplementary lecture. (As noted below, the two contradictory selections by Alexander H. Stephens on the war and its stakes may be the jumping-off point for such a lecture, which could be further illustrated by the selections by Margaret Mitchell.) Such a topic may strike some as old-fashioned, but too many students in an upper-level history course have yet to be introduced fully to the notion of historiography, and the convenience of the opportunity early in the semester may prove irresistible, particularly for those who deal with significant numbers of students who come from backgrounds where they have learned to disassociate slavery and emancipation from the sectional conflict and the Civil War.

It would be unfair to Sizer and Cullen to offer as a criticism a list of recent scholars whose work is not included in this anthology, all the more so since there is no way of knowing all of the relevant issues they faced regarding intellectual property rights and payments and so forth. Their list of scholars is representative and diverse and strong, and not all of everybody's favorites can be included in such a work. And it is no surprise that their list reflects the predominance of social and cultural approaches among the war's scholars over the last two decades. Even so, some instructors–and, based at least on my experiences, more students–will find the paucity of material on directly military matters questionable (ironically, those instructors whose background in military history is relatively weak may be more concerned with this than those who are more comfortable dealing with military historical matters). While the editors' inclusion of such innovative work as that of Eric T. Dean Jr. on the psychological consequences of battle for Civil War soldiers or James McPherson's on "Why Men Fought" is welcome, the exclusion of an entire corpus of recent literature tying more directly the military aspects of the war and its experiences to social and cultural and political concerns is noticeable; one searches in vain for work by at least one of such as Michael C. C. Adams, Mark Grimsley, Charles Royster, or a number of others.

In addition to the scholarly essays, each of the fifteen parts of Sizer and Cullen's book includes a supply of primary sources. Each weekly part includes about five primary sources, with each week's unit of combined secondary writings and primary sources averaging about twenty-five or so printed pages. As with the selections from recent scholarship, the editors include helpful one- or two-paragraph introductions to their selected documents. If the complaints of a reviewer of an anthology such as this about the inclusion or exclusion of this scholar's essay or that favorite chapter quickly come perilously close to being tendentious, quarreling too much about whether this primary source was included or omitted would become even sillier. The assembled documents present a representative selection of the war's experiences as they touched and afflicted and created opportunities for men and women, Northerners and Southerners, blacks and whites, the great and the humble. Mary Chestnut and Walt Whitman are included, and so are such old chestnuts as Alexander Stephens and the Cornerstone speech (an example of his postwar apologia is also included for students to evaluate his shifting viewpoint on what was at stake between 1861-1865, perhaps providing a starting point for a teacher looking to teach at length on Civil War causation), and Lincoln's exchange with Horace Greeley on the desirability of emancipation and his letter to Mrs. Bixby. Some might consider Lincoln slightly overrepresented, but it's hard to see how the Gettysburg Address or the Second Inaugural could be cut. The inclusion of work by commentators intermediate to the war and the last two decades–Stephen Crane, W. J. Cash (the evocative account of the rise of "stout young Irishman"), W. J. Dixon, and Margaret Mitchell (illustrating white Southern loathing of the Freedman's Bureau and its work)–is welcome and innovative and, as previously noted, may provide opportunities for discussion of shifting and contested views of the war, even as careless or inattentive students may need to be reminded that these sources are not contemporaneous with the war years.

Each of the fifteen weekly parts is illustrated by an opening piece of visual culture–photographs, woodcuts, broadsides, a map or two, all of which are adequately captioned but otherwise left to stand on their own. No efforts at introducing students to the evaluation of such sources are made by the editors. A chronology which might help a struggling student sort out some dates is included, all of the scholarly essays seem to reprint the original notes, and the index seems serviceable. A couple of overview maps orienting students to major places in the war could have been included.

Sizer and Cullen largely succeed in the task they have set for themselves, including in one convenient "anthology of sources" some of the best of recent scholarship on the war along with a strong and sometimes imaginative selection of primary sources. Chock full as it is of possibilities for an instructor in any advanced undergraduate class on the Civil War era, this book may be particularly welcomed by instructors on campuses with limited library resources or with commuter students unlikely to be able to spend much time in a reserve reading room.

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