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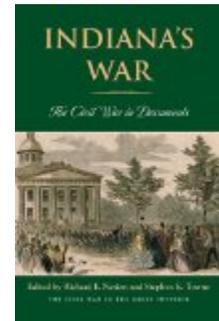
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Richard F. Nation, Stephen E. Towne, eds. *Indiana's War: The Civil War in Documents*. The Civil War in the Great Interior Series. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009. xx + 252 pp. \$18.65 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8214-1847-5.

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Indiana's War in Documents

Indiana's War offers an excellent collection of primary source documents that will prove useful to scholars and students of the Civil War and midwestern history. Published as a volume in the Ohio University Press series, *The Civil War in the Great Interior*, the book is edited by Eastern Michigan University history professor Richard F. Nation and Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis, archivist Stephen E. Towne, two established authorities on the nineteenth-century Midwest and Indiana in particular. Emphasizing race and politics, the book provides a wide range of documents that reflect current trends in historical research by including a diverse number of authors—rich and poor, well known and obscure, male and female, black and white—and covering topics ranging from the front lines to the home front, from southern Indiana to the northern part of the state, from state politics to slavery, from patriotism to treason. The editors provide brief, but interpretive introductions to the book as a whole and each chapter, along with a chronology and a section of discussion questions, which all combine to make this a powerful teaching tool for use in the college classroom.

The editors' introduction sets up the interpretive framework of the book in its first sentence: "The two main issues that drove the Civil War—slavery and the right of a people to determine their own institutions—had animated politics in Indiana from its territorial slavery" (p. 1). Arguing that race and slavery played an essential role in early Indiana politics, despite the mid-

western state being a free state that had been part of the Northwest Territory that forbade slavery from its beginning, Nation and Towne reflect the trends of the last several decades that have seen a return to seeing slavery as the dominant theme in studies of Civil War causation. Noting that Indiana had a large Southern influence due to early settlement patterns (the state was settled from south to north, with most of the first settlers coming from Virginia via Kentucky), the editors also point out the pervasive racism of white Hoosiers. While most of the state's white citizens were antislavery in their sentiments, they had mixed reasons for that view. Some opposed slavery on economic grounds, but many others also wanted to keep the institution out of their state for racist reasons. Some white Hoosiers did not like black people and did not want to live near them. Thus, the new state constitution of 1851 included an article that prohibited African Americans from settling in Indiana. Race, then, played a critical role in Indiana in the Civil War era and is highlighted in this volume.

The other main theme of the book is politics. The editors are both part of the movement toward a renewed interest in Northern politics and their interpretive approach here demonstrates the complexity of recent political history. While certainly including the major political figures of the period—Governor Oliver P. Morton and Senator Jesse D. Bright are two examples that receive much-deserved attention—*Indiana's War* also gives voice to lesser-known individuals (including poor white

women, enlisted men serving in the army, and newspaper editors). Beyond providing the expected analysis of elections and battles between the parties, the editors also use their selections to show how their main theme of race continued to drive Hoosier politics during the war. Additionally, they include the ways in which political identity was defined and transformed during the conflict, as patriotism mixed with the powerful currents of nationalism and charges of disloyalty led to trials for treason. In the midst of such high-stakes politics, the ideas of state's rights gave way to the nationalist ideology behind both Unionism and opposition to slavery. Although many Hoosiers embraced the new nationalism, others still held to their prewar conceptions and hoped to maintain their ideas about race and politics even in the postwar era.

The book's ten chapters are organized in ways that suggest the editors' interpretive approach. Students of more traditional military history will be disappointed to find only one chapter dedicated to the front lines, although another entire chapter is dedicated to the Morgan Raid, the 1863 cavalry raid led by John H. Morgan that brought the war onto Hoosier soil and remains one of the most obvious, if rather well-worn, topics of interest in Civil War Indiana. In keeping with recent trends in the historiography, even in the chapter "The Front Lines," Nation and Towne take a "new military history" approach, with documents dedicated to such subjects as women at the front and care for prisoners and the wounded. Those wanting more strategy and tactics rather than hospitals, medicine, and gender issues will need to look elsewhere. Still, some of the documents get at the book's focus on the experience of Hoosiers during the war, with accounts of going into combat and life in the camps portraying the views of the common soldier from Indiana. After all, this is *Indiana's War* and the state was not the scene of large campaigns and major battles.

In the opening section, the editors' thematic framework is clearly reflected in three chapters: "The Politics of Slavery," "The Election of 1860 and Secession," and "Choosing Sides, Making an Army." Here, documents range from accounts of fugitive slaves escaping through Indiana to views of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the *Dred Scott* case, and John Brown's Raid; from campaign strategies to arguments about the meaning of the election of 1860 and questions about whether the South would really secede and how to save the Union; from the mobilization of troops to the expulsion of one of Indiana's U.S. senators on charges of disloyalty and the antiwar sentiments of conscientious objectors. The selections focus the reader on the themes of race and politics and teachers

will find some of the documents especially useful, as they are brief but insightful. The editors' chapter introductions and very short prefatory remarks at the top of each piece provide some of the context necessary for analysis. Those wanting to encourage critical thinking in the classroom will find plenty of opposing viewpoints expressed here.

Of course, the largest part of the volume is given to the war. In addition to the chapters on the soldiers' experiences at the front and Morgan's Raid, the other chapters are entitled "The Home Front," "Race, Slavery, and the Emancipation Proclamation," "The Battle to Control State Government," and "Dissent, Violence, and Conspiracy." The documents on the home front again reflect recent trends in historical scholarship and the editors have included letters from poor women to their husbands that stand alongside epistles by members of more well-to-do families left behind by the soldiers who marched off to war. In keeping with the view of the Civil War as a modern conflict, the editors include records of the Indiana Hospital for the Insane to demonstrate that fears about the war and the draft led to anxiety and mental illness. Race and slavery are the main focus of an entire chapter. The views of abolitionists pushing for emancipation are balanced by Hoosiers expressing hatred of blacks. Other selections discuss the decision to use African American soldiers in defeating the South, with Indiana authors predictably divided in their views. The political struggles during the war were dramatic and this is seen in documents dedicated to accounts of the Republicans bolting the legislature to prevent a newly elected Democratic majority from hampering the war effort, as well as military orders restricting free speech. And the battles between officials and draft resisters reveal the nature of high-stakes politics as Hoosiers responded differently to the fortunes of war and growing government power.

The chapter on dissent and violence underscores the point that the war was fought on the Northern home front as well as on the battlefield. While obviously not on the same scale as battles fought between armies, the struggle in Indiana included acts of violence, ranging from brawls to riots to killings. Draft resistance reached its height in the summer of 1863, when several draft officers were killed and others were attacked. Draft dodgers were hunted down by government troops and officials and this often led to shootouts as the fugitives and their friends and families fought rather than be arrested. Furthermore, secret societies organized by the antiwar Democrats became the subject of investigation and brought charges of treason that led to dramatic arrests

and trials. Often downplayed by historians who see the so-called Copperhead movement as a mere figment of the imaginations of Republican leaders in search of a way to vilify their rivals and win elections, the conspiracies have been taken more seriously by recent scholarship, including work by one of the editors of this volume, Towne. It is not surprising, then, that they receive attention and a balanced selection of documents that allow for a lively debate on the subject.

The book's final chapter, "War's End," again shows the ways that race, slavery, and politics divided Hoosiers, this time in the aftermath of the great conflict that redefined the nation as a whole. Change was balanced by continuity, as racism continued and views of the war transformed political identity, with Democrats charging Republicans with tyranny and radicalism while the now-dominant Grand Old Party countered by calling their rivals traitors. Politics remained divided and the issue of government's role in society remained important, even as the Republicans generally held the reins of power. The

selections here are a fine introduction to Reconstruction in the North and should prove useful for teaching the subject.

As is the case with any edited volume, one might quibble with the editors' selections. Certainly, this is only an introduction to the subject and there are thousands of other documents that offer different insights than the ones published here. And perhaps the editors have gone too far in their interpretation. While race and slavery were certainly important and dominate the recent historiography, perhaps other issues were of equal or greater significance in Civil War Indiana. For example, the editors make mention of temperance in the 1850s and they pay little attention to economics throughout the volume. But this is a fine scholarly contribution and will be especially useful as a teaching tool and should be adopted for use in the college and university classroom. But it should also be read by those general readers interested in the Civil War, the Midwest, and Indiana history.

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