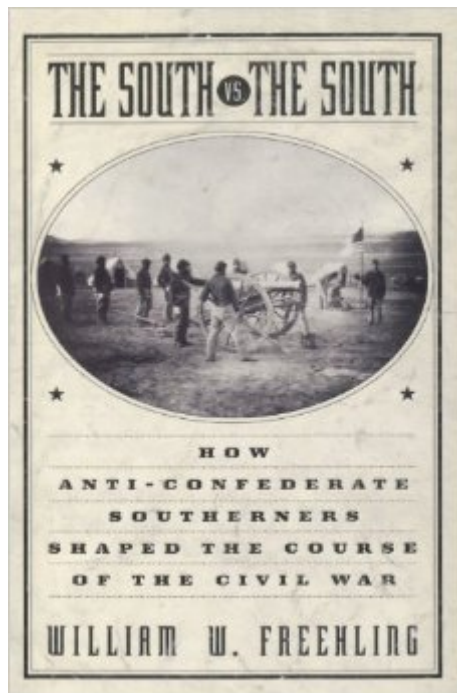


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The South Vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped The Course Of The Civil War



Synopsis

Why did the Confederacy lose the Civil War? Most historians point to the larger number of Union troops, or to the North's greater industrial might. Now, in *The South Vs. the South*, a leading authority on the Civil War era offers a critical supplementary viewpoint. William Freehling argues that 450,000 Union troops from the South--especially border state whites and southern blacks--helped cost the Confederacy the war. In addition, when the southern border states rejected the Confederacy, half the South's industrial capacity swelled the North's advantage. Whether revising our conception of Union military strategy or of slavery, or changing our perceptions of blacks' role in producing Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, or finding new meanings in what is arguably America's greatest piece of sculpture, Augustus Saint-Gaudens' Shaw Memorial, or establishing the antecedents to Martin Luther King, Jr., Freehling's piercing insight and rhetorical verve yield a major new Civil War narrative.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press (November 14, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195156293

ISBN-13: 978-0195156294

Product Dimensions: 7.9 x 0.6 x 5.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (31 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #474,163 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #243 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Confederacy](#) #581 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields](#) #765 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Minority Studies](#)

Customer Reviews

William Freehling's book argues that one of the key reasons for the defeat of the American South was that it was internally divided amongst itself. It could therefore not fully raise the measure of support needed to ward off the stronger North, even given the rather awkward and men-consuming strategy the North produced. This is a plausible thesis, and it is an accurate one, and general readers will find it useful to study. Specialized readers, however, are likely to be disappointed. Much of the recent discussion of the divided south concentrates on the views of rural whites within the

Confederacy. This is not where Freehling concentrates. Instead he deals with the much more obvious fact that the border states of Maryland, Missouri, Kentucky and Delaware did not join the Confederacy, and the 150,000 Black Southerners who joined the Union army. With the 200,000 border state Union soldiers, and the 100,000 whites from the Confederacy proper, a third of all Southerners fought for the Union in the Civil War. This is all well and good, but it is also rather obvious. The fact that the Border South did not join the Confederacy was after all startlingly clear at the time, and has been clear to all historians since then. There was a time when the African-American contribution to the war and to the slaves' own liberation was ignored, but for the last four decades that has been clearly rectified. Freehling does little more here than quote such established scholars as Leon Litwack, Benjamin Quarles, the documentation provided by Ira Berlin and his colleagues, and the unpublished dissertation of the late Armstead Robinson. Moreover, much of the work has a padded feel, as Freehling fills space discussing well known battles.

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