

Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front

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Lovoll stresses—Norwegian settlement of the upper American Midwest would not have played out as it did.

Therein lies the significance of Lovoll's work. Most histories of Norwegian immigration have focused almost exclusively on the final destination. While important, there were other aspects to the process. For instance, I have argued for paying greater attention to the homeland when writing the history of Norwegian immigration. Now Lovoll, the sage historian of Norwegian immigration, has pointed to another neglected aspect of that history: the stepping stones or transition points along the way. Moreover, he has shown how a confluence of factors—the development of the Canadian timber trade, Norway's expertise in sailing ships, the motivation among Norwegian farmers and laborers to emigrate, and recruitment efforts by U.S. states in the upper Midwest—created a unique window of opportunity for about 20 years, which helps to explain why the American upper Midwest ultimately became such a haven for Norwegian settlers.

Across the Deep Blue Sea is thus another valuable contribution to our understanding of Norwegian immigration history. The book has delved into a hitherto largely unexplored side of that history, and it invites further exploration of this fascinating history.

Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front, by J. Matthew Gallman. Civil War America Series. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. 336 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

Reviewer Wallace Hettle is professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. He is the author of *Stonewall Jackson: A Civil War Hero in History and Memory* (2011) and *The Peculiar Democracy: Southern Democrats in Peace and War* (2001).

In *Defining Duty in the Civil War*, J. Matthew Gallman provides a lavishly illustrated, persuasively argued treatment of Northern popular culture during the Civil War. He focuses on how Americans shaped expectations of citizens' duties during the war through print culture. On the home front, Americans built a sense of community and responsibility based on a shared set of principles.

Gallman draws on the abundant print culture of the North during the war. He examined leading magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, and *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* and also consulted popular novels, local and national newspapers, soldiers' letters, and abolitionist newspapers such as *The Liberator*.

The book is organized thematically around a variety of appeals to duty on the part of Union citizens. It begins with satire, as patriots

mocked men who failed to volunteer for the cause and others who feigned patriotic sentiments while pursuing their own private interests at home. Authors and illustrators directed jokes and jabs at ostensibly loyal citizens, especially the so-called "aristocracy" who profited from the war.

Next, Gallman discusses how influential publications defined *duty* to the cause and the country. Publications provided personal advice derived from prewar guides to urban life and etiquette aimed at young people. In a rapidly changing society, loyal citizens faced new circumstances. Wartime publishers needed to focus not only on how to succeed as an individual but also on how one could contribute to the war effort.

Gallman portrays a culture focused less on bravery or cowardice than one would think. He describes a debate over republican citizenship crafted around a contrast between "virtue" and hypocrisy. Republican virtues, intertwined with notions about manhood, intensified with the advent of conscription in 1863.

Popular pamphlets, novels, and magazines described the patriotic role that loyal women were supposed to play. Some women, such as Louisa May Alcott, served as nurses. Typically, though, the chief role of women as portrayed in popular culture was to voice patriotism and freely give up their men for the cause.

Lastly, Gallman examines black Northerners as they grappled with their role in a country that had rejected them as citizens. Here the sources are thinner than in earlier chapters, both because white periodicals downplayed issues of concern to African Americans and because blacks were a relatively small group in the North during the war. Therefore, Gallman leans heavily on the abolitionist periodical *The Liberator*.

I cannot think of a historical monograph that uses visual evidence more effectively than this book. Extraordinary illustrations, some of them found in obscure publications, are abundant. I learned as much from the illustrations and Gallman's concise interpretations as I did from the rest of this very fine book. The cartoons and other engravings testify to the industry of the author and the generosity of the publisher.

Because the Civil War-era publishing industry was concentrated in the Northeast, the evidence necessarily has a regional bias. The author did, however, gamely consult a variety of newspapers to gauge local opinion outside the urban centers. Still, one is left to wonder whether Gallman's generalizations would apply to citizens in Iowa and the Old Northwest.