

Civil War Book Review

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The Benefits Of Change

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Editorial

THE BENEFITS OF CHANGE

Fava, Colleen H.

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There is a debate circulating in literary and academic circles regarding publishing on the Internet. Many purists fear that web publishing will tarnish the sanctity of language and literature while the avant-garde is embracing the excitement of hypertext and new age information sharing. There are plenty of us who fall in between these two ends of the spectrum. As an avid reader and writer — a bibliophile, you could say — I am at times petrified by the thought of curling up on the sofa with a glass of warm red wine and a laptop. Then again as a Gen-Xer I cannot imagine obtaining driving directions, doing theoretical research, sending birthday cards, purchasing books — (this list could go on and on) without the aid of websites and the almighty email account.

The current economic climate, and its impact upon the *Review*, has influenced me to reevaluate my trepidation toward on-line publishing. Karl Marx once wrote: Mankind always sets itself only such tasks as it can solve; since looking more closely, we will always find that the task itself arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. In light of the economic pressures upon the publishing industry, a new venue for publication was inevitable. If we did not have the option of posting the *Review* online we would have been forced to cease production altogether until a new print sponsor had been identified. Instead in this day and age we have the opportunity to save and relish print resources that during other times might have perished.

Several of the books being reviewed in this issue directly reflect transitional periods and the benefit of understanding change and reconstruction in both a historical and personal sense. Glenn Robins considers the impact of the Civil War on middle and upper class women of the South in Mary Culpepper's **All Things Altered: Women in the Wake of Civil War and Reconstruction** (McFarland & Company Publishers, ISBN 0786413395, \$35.00, softcover). While reviewing **Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory, and the American Civil War** (University of Massachusetts Press, ISBN 1558493611, \$19.95,

softcover) by David W. Blight, Gregory Urwin discusses the importance of historical memory when considering the shortcomings of the Reconstruction era. Lance Janda assesses a new anthology aimed at revealing the dramatic effects of war on the home front edited by Joan E. Cashin, **The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War** (Princeton University Press, ISBN 0691091749, \$17.95, softcover).

As with our previous print issues we are offering reviews of biographies, military and battle histories, fiction and children's literature, and political and religious studies. The support of our reviewers and subscribers has been enormous and we are confident that the Review will continue to meet and exceed its mission whether in print, online, or both.

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