

If the first three chapters make various arguments concerning the pervasiveness of politics in the nineteenth century, the final chapter argues that there were, in fact, boundaries to political culture. Neely disagrees with historians, Jean Baker in particular, who have argued that distinct connections existed between the political culture of northern Democrats and the blackface minstrel show. Noting both that the Whigs were the first party to employ elements of minstrelsy in election campaigns and that the minstrel show was a pervasively popular, and seemingly nonpartisan, form of entertainment in the nineteenth century, Neely argues that the electorate effectively compartmentalized these political and cultural worlds. Here Neely's argument is less persuasive than in the first three chapters. If various political parties made use of elements of the minstrel show, did they make the same use of them? It is clear that Democratic campaign materials that incorporated minstrelsy were more virulently racist than those of their competitors. Perhaps more importantly, Baker also argues that the racial ideology promoted by the minstrel show became critical to Democratic criticisms of Republicans, whether or not specific elements of minstrelsy were used. Nevertheless, Neely's evidence demands a rethinking of the relationship between minstrelsy and politics. More broadly, his book is an admirable effort to understand what exactly politics meant to the mid-nineteenth-century American electorate. It is essential reading for those interested in nineteenth-century politics, and it is a model in its innovative reading of political material culture.

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Lost Triumph: Lee's Real Plan at Gettysburg—And Why It Failed. By TOM CARHART. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005. xiii, 288p. Maps, notes, index. \$25.95.)

Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign. By KENT MASTERSON BROWN. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. xv, 534p. Illustrations, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

One would naturally assume that to date, *everything* that could or should have been published about the Battle of Gettysburg and its aftermath has already been written. Just in recent years, however, such works as Mark H. Dunkelman, *Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier: The Life, Death, and Celebrity of Amos Humiston* (1999); Thomas A. Desjardin, *These Honored Dead: How the Story of Gettysburg Shaped American Memory* (2003); James M. Paradis, *African Americans and the Gettysburg Campaign* (2005); Margaret S. Creighton, *The Colors of Courage: Gettysburg's Hidden History* (2004); Earl J. Hess, *Pickett's Charge: The Last Attack at Gettysburg* (2001); and Carol Reardon, *Pickett's*

Charge in History and Memory (1997) have revealed that the subject of the Civil War's most famous battle is by no means exhausted. Tom Carhart's and Kent Masterson Brown's seminal volumes also aptly demonstrate that the subject of Gettysburg is still a vital and volatile topic, with enough material for both the student of the Civil War and academician alike to relish and interpret.

Since the Civil War, a multitude of theories have been promulgated to explain the defeat of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Gettysburg, from the failure of Pickett and Pettigrew's Charge to fuse problems or faulty shells used by the Southern artillery. Years after the close of the war, former Confederate, General Harry Heth, passed judgment by stating that "the failure to crush the Federal Army in Pennsylvania . . . can be best expressed in five words—the *absence of the Cavalry*" (as quoted and italicized by John S. Mosby, *Stuart's Cavalry in the Gettysburg Campaign* [1908], 154).

Through the use of primary sources and deduction from the evidence, Carhart reveals the astute knowledge General Robert E. Lee had of the tactics and strategies of Napoleon and demonstrates that the Confederate commander did not simply make a poor tactical decision that fateful day on July 3, 1863, but that "Pickett's Charge . . . was at least in part, a massive distraction" (p. 4) of a master plan known only to Lee and possibly a few other key individuals.

Carhart presents evidence that it was Lee's desire to replicate the Napoleonic victory in Italy at the Battle of Castiglione in 1796. J. E. B. Stuart's force "would have come up behind Culp's Hill" to "roll up the Union right wing." This strategy, however, was altered to create instead a new "plan of attack," one that "would involve cutting the Union force in half and then defeating it in detail," as had been done at Austerlitz by Napoleon in 1805 (p. 176). This plan was cut short, mainly by the heroic actions of a Civil War officer of post-Civil War fame, George Armstrong Custer, serving with the Michigan cavalry at the time.

Though not everyone will agree with Carhart's final conclusion, one cannot come away from reading *Lost Triumph* without a greater understanding of both the genius of Robert E. Lee and also the significant role the cavalry played in bringing victory to the federal army. Tom Carhart's work is a refreshing example of the reason for the continuing popularity of the Civil War. Its causes as well as its battles and participants are as open to diverse interpretation today as they were at the time of the conflict itself. *Lost Triumph* demonstrates that the history of the American Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg in particular have by no means reached their high water mark, but have many "charges" left to be made in the realm of investigation.

The same is true of Kent Masterson Brown's *Retreat from Gettysburg*. So much has been written about the battle itself that its aftermath is often forgotten. It was indeed a horrendous operation to move thousands of men, livestock, and supplies of the Confederate Army through hostile territory back to the other side of the Potomac River after the defeat. Through meticulous research, Brown

reveals the effort involved in carrying out such a Herculean task.

Brigadier General Andrew A. Humphreys, in *From Gettysburg to the Rapidan: The Army of the Potomac* (1883), states that “Lee had the advantage, always possessed by the Army that withdraws under the cover of night, of gaining several hours” (pp. 1–8). This, of course, would bring censure to General George G. Meade, who was chastised by Lincoln for not pursuing Lee and his forces as swiftly as he would have preferred.

As his full title implies, Brown’s *Retreat from Gettysburg* not only offers a logistical analysis of *who* and *what* was *where* after the conflict at Gettysburg, but also brings such demographic information to a very personal level, utilizing primary source material that emotionally connects the reader with the horrific conditions Lee’s retreating forces endured. So many volumes dealing with the famous battle forget the major role that livestock, grain, and fodder can play in bringing about victory or defeat. These factors, coupled with the removal of the wounded, sporadic engagements with pursuing federal forces, and hostile weather conditions, reveal that the Army of Northern Virginia after Gettysburg lived a logistical nightmare, but one in which heroism and sacrifice played as important a role as did munitions and supplies.

Brown aptly remarks, “it can be argued that the retreat from Gettysburg, at a minimum, turned a tactical defeat—and a potential strategic disaster—into a kind of victory for Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia” (p. 390). As the French historian Montaigne mentioned so long ago, “there are triumphant defeats that rival victories,” and unlike Vicksburg, Gettysburg was not necessarily a “strategical” loss, as Gary Gallagher has pointed out (*The Third Day at Gettysburg and Beyond* [1994], 1–30).

Though some may find fault with Brown’s statements that General Robert E. Lee had not “become religious” until about ten years prior to the capture of his son William Henry Fitzhugh Lee during the Civil War, or that he was “quick to lose his temper” (p. 3), these are miniscule points of debate, since the overall theme of Brown’s work is aptly documented with footnotes and a bibliography gleaned from a vast assortment of primary sources.

For those who wish to truly experience what life was like *after* the Battle of Gettysburg, for both the Confederates and their Union pursuers, from both a logistic and personal level, *Retreat from Gettysburg* is a work that captures the reader from beginning to end. This volume, like Carhart’s *Lost Triumph*, should be in the library of every serious student and scholar of Civil War history.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

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