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*Clara Barton's Civil War: Between Bullet and Hospital* by  
Donald C. Pfanz (review)

Victoria Bryant Stewart

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even though their participation had been widely acknowledged during the war. In the epilogue, McCurry considers why, concluding that this postbellum narrative emerged from assumptions about women's "normative identity as wives willingly subject to the authority of their husbands. "Those principles are hard to live without," she writes; "when war is over they have to be restored" (p. 205). Although men were certainly major actors in this willful forgetting, many women accepted these same ideas, even couching their postwar justification for women's rights in terms of their sacrificial service to men during the war, not their own active heroism. Akin to the postwar whitewashing of the war as a so-called brother's conflict instead of a war caused by slavery, McCurry illustrates "the larger historical problem of women and war: about how much of that past is disowned—or rendered exceptional—when it is in fact foundational" (p. 62).

Jacksonville State University

JENNIFER LYNN GROSS

*Clara Barton's Civil War: Between Bullet and Hospital.* By Donald C. Pfanz. (Yardley, Pa.: Westholme Publishing, 2018. Pp. xii, 228. \$28.00, ISBN 978-1-59416-310-4.)

In order to understand and assess Clara Barton's involvement and impact during and after the American Civil War, Donald C. Pfanz seeks to dispel the myths and mystique of Barton by unpacking her writings. Pfanz, a historian at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, acknowledges the misinformation about Barton in existing scholarship and also highlights her absence in the largest collections of Civil War-era materials. Existing scholarship about Barton rests on the belief of the reliability and accuracy of Barton's own writings and statements. Much of the myth, as Pfanz explains, was created by Barton herself.

While Barton's stories have been embellished, Pfanz skillfully demonstrates how her actual life's work during and after the war was truly valiant. As Pfanz notes, scholarship, including Stephen B. Oates's *A Woman of Valor: Clara Barton and the Civil War* (New York, 1994), depends on the reliability of Barton to recall her own contributions during and after the American Civil War. Largely based on Barton's accounts, Oates's narrative portrays Barton as someone who independently and skillfully managed to provide care, secure supplies, and work with others. Additionally, Pfanz exposes the issue with Barton's absence in soldiers' letters. Given the magnitude of her contributions, as Barton expressed it in her own writings, these letters neglect to mention her. This book's major contribution is Pfanz's great effort to present a factual and accurate account of Barton's life and work. He highlights her successes by exposing the true series and sequence of events without diminishing her bravery, tenacity, or nurturing spirit. While Pfanz intends to dispel the myths of Barton's career, he also details how the accurate and truthful events of her life did not need excessive or unnecessary embellishments. The true events of Barton's life during and after the American Civil War, as Pfanz details throughout this excellent narrative, were remarkable without the inclusion of these unnecessary additions.

To showcase Barton's own writings and thoughts, Pfanz includes an appendix of her most noted speeches, as they have been used to understand Barton's service during the American Civil War. Pfanz does acknowledge

limitations of her speeches. These sources, in contrast to private materials that were not intended to be shared to a wider audience, have a greater likelihood to be fraught with incorrect or overstated content. Speaking engagements allowed Barton to champion her favorite causes. These included efforts to help impoverished people and wounded Union veterans.

Pfanz also details Barton's life after the war, since she continued her public service. As Pfanz notes, Barton sought attention and praise throughout her life. While at speaking engagements, therefore, Barton omitted the role of others as a way to focus on herself. This self-promotion is further seen in Barton's inability to work with other women (especially those younger and more attractive) since they posed competition for praise and admiration, which Barton wanted for her services. To reinforce the sense of appreciation bestowed upon her, Barton regularly held and carried the awards she had received for her service, even when completing the most mundane tasks.

Those with an interest in nursing and the advent of humanitarian relief should read this narrative for its attention to detail and exhaustive research. In his quest to understand Barton, Pfanz presents an accurate account of her quest to help others. This larger-than-life figure brought humanity and care to difficult and deadly situations.

Northwest Florida State College

VICTORIA BRYANT STEWART

*Women and the American Civil War: North-South Counterpoints.* Edited by Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2018. Pp. xviii, 358. \$49.95, ISBN 978-1-60635-340-0.)

Judith Giesberg and Randall M. Miller begin this volume by quoting Thavolia Glymph's seminal 2002 essay on women in the Civil War era, which pointedly comments on the period's historiography as being "'the most racially gendered and regionally segregated'" in all of United States history (p. xi). The editors see themselves as responding especially to Glymph's second point, hoping to solve the problem of the sectional divide by pairing essays on northern and southern women that have a common theme—namely, politics, family, mobilization, relief, religion, emancipation, Reconstruction, and memory.

Giesberg and Miller clearly state in the introduction that the volume's central goal is to set up "a running comparative dynamic" between the experiences of northern and southern women (p. xi). This comparative dynamic, and what it is supposed to illuminate, becomes lost very early. The introduction does not highlight what new insights are learned from putting scholars of northern and southern women in dialogue with one another. Instead, it mostly summarizes the chapters. When insights are offered, they are not exactly revolutionary: the section on emancipation demonstrates that "policies were negotiated on the ground," and the section on family reveals that the war "radically reordered many families, sometimes permanently so" (pp. xvi, xiii). And while the authors "shar[ed] their work so that they would 'speak' to one another throughout the book," these comparisons are limited at best (p. ix).

It is then left to the reader to draw comparisons, and with the unevenness of some of the chapters, it becomes a near impossible task. The opening section on politics could not illustrate this difficulty more clearly if it tried. While