

Jernigan, Jay. Review of *The Civil War and the Press*, edited by David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Debra Reddin van Tuyll. *Journalism History* 26.3 (2000).

Intended to showcase the Symposium on the Antebellum Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression held annually since 1993 at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, this book consists of thirty-three papers by twenty-nine contributors to those meetings. They are under three categories. The first, "Setting the Agenda for Secession and War," contains twelve, the second, "In Time of War," has sixteen, and the third, "Reconstructing the Nation," consists of five. The latter category is small because the conference changed its name after 1997 to the Symposium on the Nineteenth-Century Press, the Civil War, and Free Expression in order to include the reconstruction era. To give continuity to the collection, the editors include a full, proper noun index and a general introduction briefly summarizing each essay. Most of us will recognize many of the contributors as active in AEJMC or AJHA and know the high quality of their work from those conference venues: Leonard Ray Teel, David Copeland, Katherine Roberts, and William Huntzicker, but to name a few. The only previously printed piece is the lead article for the war section by David Mindich, "Edwin M. Stanton, the Inverted Pyramid, and Information Control," in which he argues, successfully, I think, that in his press reports Secretary Stanton first established the lead paragraph inverted pyramid style, not journalists constrained by the newfangled telegraph. That subverts most textbook accounts and thus deserved reprinting, but none of the other papers follow up on that argument. In fact, the collection as a whole is something of a miscellany, with fourteen of the essays focusing on an individual or a single newspaper. In that respect, they reflect the necessarily loose perimeters of the Symposium. Three papers by Barbara Reed do trace a single theme "the Jewish press and the Civil War" but they are unique, in this respect. It is in the small third part that I find the collection most interesting because of the implicit contrasts in presentation and methodology. For example, the late Richard Abbott, in "Republican Newspapers and Freedom of the Press in the Reconstruction South, 1865-1877," examined the fate of nearly 400 startup Southern Republican newspapers. He discovered their lives depended exclusively on reconstruction government patronage, and "government, rather than threatening freedom of the press, was the only means of sustaining it." Thoroughly documented, his essay establishes the argument succinctly without a lengthy quantitative review. On the other hand, both Richard Kaplan, in "Partisan News in the Early Reconstruction Era: Representations of African-Americans in Detroit's Daily Press," and Cathy Jackson, in "Wanted Dead or Alive: How Nineteenth Century Missouri Journalists Framed Jesse James," discuss quantitative methodology at some length within their texts, which to me impedes the flow of their arguments. Perhaps the recent topical expansion of the Symposium offers a needed forum for such broader studies and thus an arena to work out the most eloquent way of presenting chunks of quantitative data. At any rate, this collection as a whole offers a good, scholarly historical discussion of mid-nineteenth century American journalism and should be included in any substantial university library.

See also at: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&sid=cd066a94-f981-4d48-a04f-a13721532f44%40sessionmgr112&hid=120&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ==&db=ufh&AN=4308312>