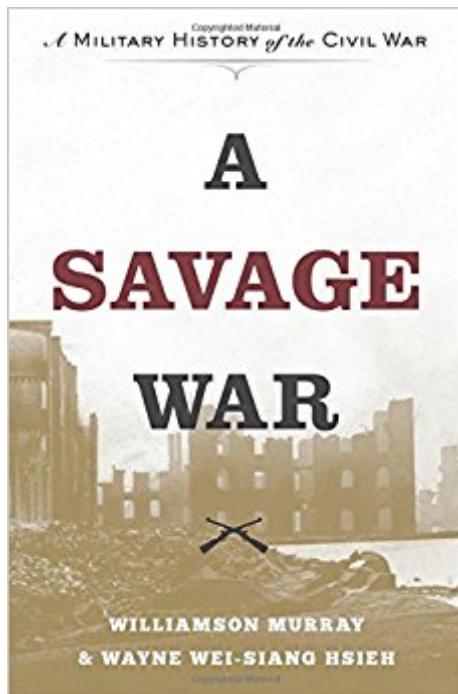


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A Savage War: A Military History Of The Civil War



Synopsis

The Civil War represented a momentous change in the character of war. It combined the projection of military might across a continent on a scale never before seen with an unprecedented mass mobilization of peoples. Yet despite the revolutionizing aspects of the Civil War, its leaders faced the same uncertainties and vagaries of chance that have vexed combatants since the days of Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War. *A Savage War* sheds critical new light on this defining chapter in military history. In a masterful narrative that propels readers from the first shots fired at Fort Sumter to the surrender of Robert E. Lee's army at Appomattox, Williamson Murray and Wayne Wei-siang Hsieh bring every aspect of the battlefield vividly to life. They show how this new way of waging war was made possible by the powerful historical forces unleashed by the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution, yet how the war was far from being simply a story of the triumph of superior machines. Despite the Union's material superiority, a Union victory remained in doubt for most of the war. Murray and Hsieh paint indelible portraits of Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, William Tecumseh Sherman, and other major figures whose leadership, judgment, and personal character played such decisive roles in the fate of a nation. They also examine how the Army of the Potomac, the Army of Northern Virginia, and the other major armies developed entirely different cultures that influenced the war's outcome. A military history of breathtaking sweep and scope, *A Savage War* reveals how the Civil War ushered in the age of modern warfare.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Major General H.R. McMaster's academic and professional qualifications notwithstanding, I found

myself skeptical after reading an extract from his pre-publication review stating Williamson Murray and Wayne Wei-Siang Hsieh have brought to light an important new perspective on an admittedly done to death subject. I was wrong to be skeptical. A quick glance disclosed that this book delivers far more than McMaster promised. In fact, Murray and Hsieh make a strong case throughout the book that our Civil War represented the first truly modern military-industrial-nation conflict and thus had a global impact. I have not read the whole book yet but its consistently heading on a positive trajectory as I progress through the narrative. The post battle assessments are IMHO without parallel as the authors point out the rights and wrongs of opposing commanders but they do so using methods in line with contemporary military processes, such as discussing not only the gaining of intelligence information, but also its perceived and actual value, when commanders received it, how they acted or didn't act on it, whether they embraced it or remained hesitant, and what impact their actions ultimately had on the ensuing battle, which is a method of analysis that I am far more familiar with. That revelation appeared on the first page I opened in the book - which discussed the Second Bull Run - and has not proved to be an exception to the rule. Another example appears on page 268 when the authors discuss the results of Chancellorsville, writing "Who Won Chancellorsville? The obvious answer is Lee and the Confederates.

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