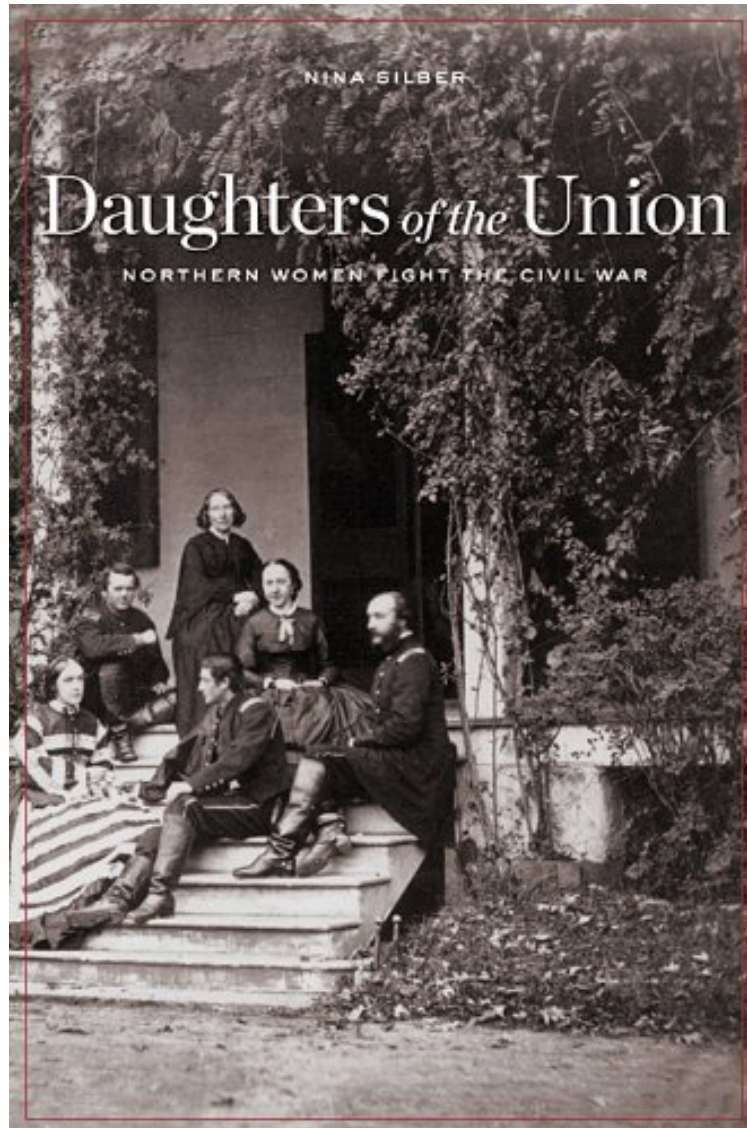


[Read now] Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War

Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War

Nina Silber

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1497300 in Books Harvard University Press 2011-03-18 2011-02-07Original language:EnglishPDF # 1
8.12 x .99 x 5.311, .83 #File Name: 0674060482352 pages | File size: 20.Mb

Nina Silber : Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's a great book for my next historical novelBy Sue B. DetischIt's a great book for my next historical novel. The research and biographies are wonderful as is the detail that is described.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. As good as history books can beBy Lynn A. BonfieldGood history

written in easy-to-read style. Women have been neglected in Civil War histories so this was a real winner. I've recommended it to others in this year of Civil War remembrance. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Author's Bias Ruins the Book
By Mary C. Hudgins
Based on the title of this book, I was looking forward to reading it. I knew I was in trouble when the author made her bias very clear in the prologue. She said she was going to prove that all the others who've written about women in the Civil War, including those who were there, were wrong. In her view the Civil War only proved the lowly status of women and that they were unable to handle the responsibilities thrust on them by the war. While she cites her examples, I kept getting the feeling that she was cherry-picking or misinterpreting what was written by women of the time. An example: in the Epilogue she quotes a nurse who wrote of "seeing soldiers 'faithfully plodding through the dust protecting me' had made her 'feel more insignificant than words can express'." In the author's view this proves the nurse learned how "subordinate" she was. A better interpretation, one most of us would say on watching the same thing today, would be gratitude for the sacrifice the troops are making for us. I made it through the book, but I would not recommend this as an introduction to women in the Civil War, it's just too biased.

Daughters of the Union casts a spotlight on some of the most overlooked and least understood participants in the American Civil War: the women of the North. Unlike their Confederate counterparts, who were often caught in the midst of the conflict, most Northern women remained far from the dangers of battle. Nonetheless, they enlisted in the Union cause on their home ground, and the experience transformed their lives. Nina Silber traces the emergence of a new sense of self and citizenship among the women left behind by Union soldiers. She offers a complex account, bolstered by women's own words from diaries and letters, of the changes in activity and attitude wrought by the war. Women became wage-earners, participants in partisan politics, and active contributors to the war effort. But even as their political and civic identities expanded, they were expected to subordinate themselves to male-dominated government and military bureaucracies. Silber's arresting tale fills an important gap in women's history. She shows the women of the North--many for the first time--discovering their patriotism as well as their ability to confront new economic and political challenges, even as they encountered the obstacles of wartime rule. The Civil War required many women to act with greater independence in running their households and in expressing their political views. It brought women more firmly into the civic sphere and ultimately gave them new public roles, which would prove crucial starting points for the late-nineteenth-century feminist struggle for social and political equality.

From Publishers Weekly
Although Dorothea Dix, Clara Barton and Anna Dickinson have cameo roles, Civil War historian Silber reaches far deeper than such star turns to address "the diminishing place of Union women in American memory," the corollary that their commitment was "lackluster" and the domestic fallout of their involvement—"the expansion of the nation-state into the lives of ordinary Americans citizens." Relying heavily on letters and diaries, Silber's scholarly account is solidly informative for the serious historian and quite accessible for general history buffs and students. As primary breadwinners go off to war, women serve as fund-raisers, post mistresses, suppliers, nurses, government workers and teachers. That's a familiar enough story, but with a greater public role, women find "their personal, intimate relationships subjected to intense... scrutiny, not only from neighbors and kin but also from state and federal officials." Those who work as nurses are "required to be plain looking women." The result, Silber argues, was a change in the way marriage's regulatory function worked in society in ways that continue to reverberate through homes and jobs. In this provocative, challenging work, Silber writes ordinary women onto the page and reshapes the boundaries of Civil War history. Her attention to the presence of Northern black women is particularly noteworthy. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist
Although Civil War literature abounds, relatively little has been written about the roles many Northern women played in the conflict. With the exception of such legendary figures as Clara Barton and Harriet Beecher Stowe, and unlike their Southern counterparts, these otherwise ordinary women have not been portrayed as active participants in the war effort. Silber seeks to rectify this oversight by providing a fascinating accounting of the economic, social, and political challenges met and overcome by patriotic Union women in both the domestic and the civic spheres. Perhaps most significantly, the author also traces the tentative roots of the female political activism that manifested itself in the suffrage and temperance movements of the late nineteenth century to the new identities forged by Yankee women during the war years. This worthy contribution to the scholarship and popular culture of the Civil War will also appeal to women's historians. Margaret Flanagan
Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved.
Challenging prevalent misconceptions about women's role in the Civil War North, Nina Silber offers a fascinating account of how the war experience both opened new opportunities for female independence and tied women more and more closely to the needs of an activist state. An important addition to our understanding of the crisis of the Union. (Eric Foner, De Witt Clinton Professor of History, Columbia University)
Southern women both white and black became direct participants in a Civil War that in many cases swept over their homes and farms. While the same was not true for most Northern women, they too experienced unprecedented engagement with public affairs as they mobilized themselves to support the war. Nina Silber's excellent study of this engagement gives new and broader meaning to Lincoln's

description of the Civil War as 'a People's contest'- all the people. (James M. McPherson, author of *Hallowed Ground: A Walk at Gettysburg*) This is the most comprehensive and deeply researched study of northern women in the Civil War to date, and one of the best books on gender in crisis in many years. Silber's achievement is profound: an engaging, nuanced, persuasive story of how the Civil War did not progressively put women on the course of liberation, but by throwing them into the civic realm in unprecedented ways, fostered a new realization of their political selves and of their social and legal subordination. Silber's Yankee women are patriots, rarely feminist heroines, always complex historical actors. (David W. Blight, author of *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*) We have all eagerly awaited this indispensable book. Nina Silber's engaging and definitive study presents a new side of the Civil War experience in the North and a new dimension of the history of American women. (Drew Faust, author of *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War*) Northern women have remained a curiously neglected group in the massive literature on the Civil War. Nina Silber's study brings them to the fore, examining the myriad ways in which the conflict impinged on their lives and underscoring the complex legacy it bequeathed in terms of their relationship to the nation-state. Admirably researched, clearly written, and forcefully argued, this splendid book will appeal to anyone interested in how women of the North fit into the grand mosaic of our defining national trial. (Gary W. Gallagher, author of *The Confederate War*) In this provocative, challenging work, Silber writes ordinary women onto the page and reshapes the boundaries of Civil War history. Her attention to the presence of Northern black women is particularly noteworthy. (Publishers Weekly 2005-04-25) *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* is an innovative analysis that is sure to inspire a reconsideration of northern women's patriotism and its long-term results. Silber's analytical strengths and narrative style make this an engaging study for students and scholars of both women's and Civil War history. (Victoria E. Ott *Journal of Southern History*) Nina Silber uses [an] ordinary woman's appeal to the president to reveal the complexities of Northern women's relationships with the nation-state during the Civil War... In this concise and accessible work, Silber argues that the Civil War brought Northern women into a more public relationship with the federal government, but that this relationship was framed in terms of their subordination to it. Using women's diaries and letters, she discusses how such changes affected Northern women and their understandings of women's civic and political responsibilities. While many historians see the Civil War as prodding Northern women to increased autonomy and feminist political action, Silber demonstrates that the war's impact on women was more complicated than that. The war brought neither complete liberation nor complete oppression for women, but a bit of both... There are important lessons here for scholars in many fields, as Silber shows how women's experiences in wartime both reveal and affect social, cultural, and political events. (Kara Dixon Vuic *Journal of Military History* 2006-10-01) This important book fills a significant gap in existing scholarship on women and the Civil War. By focusing on northern women in general, rather than on the minority who left home to engage in war work, it reveals that paying attention to women--even those who did not play a large role in organized war work--changes our understanding of the legacy of the Civil War itself. (Barbara Cutter *Annals of Iowa* 2006-12-01) *Daughters of the Union* is an important tome in the canon of Civil War women's studies... Dr. Silber brings a fresh perspective to the active participation of Northern women during the war. Her thesis is well documented and should be required reading in Civil War history programs and political science curriculum, in addition to women's studies programs. (Janet Leigh Bucklew *H-Net Online* 2006-10-11)