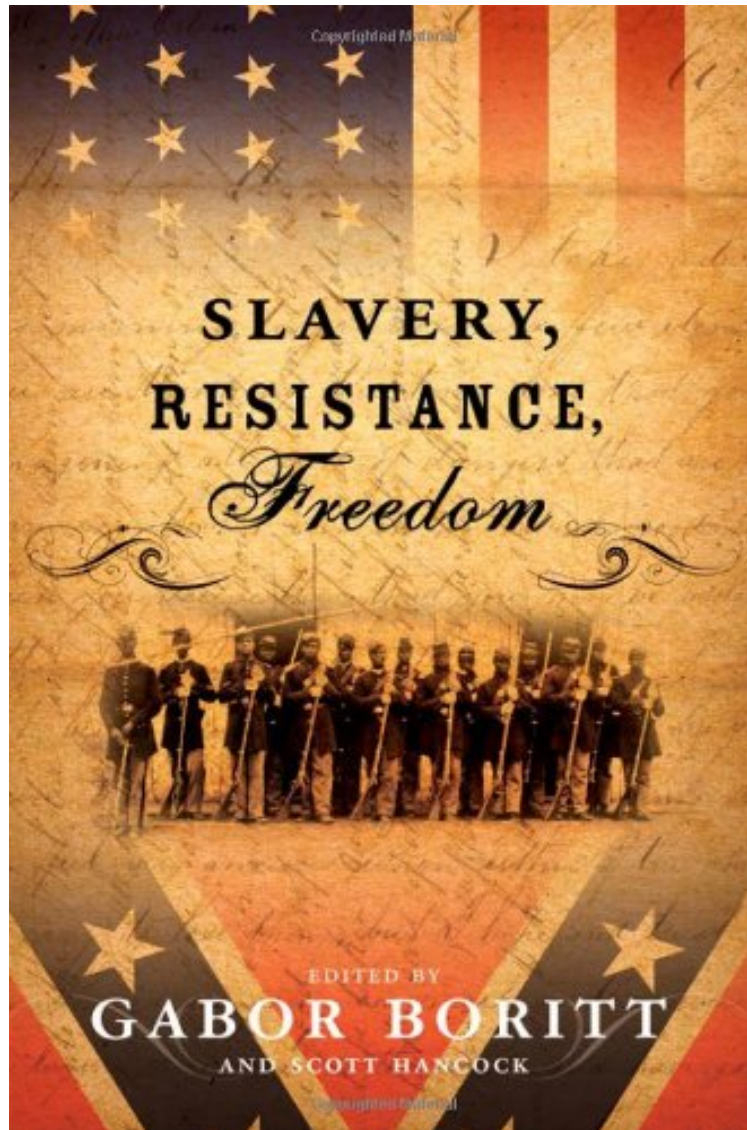


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Slavery, Resistance, Freedom (Gettysburg Civil War Institute Books)

From Gabor Boritt

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#4538918 in Books Gabor Boritt 2007-06-14Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 5.50 x .90 x 8.30l, .75 #File Name: 0195102223208 pagesSlavery Resistance Freedom | File size: 40.Mb

From Gabor Boritt : Slavery, Resistance, Freedom (Gettysburg Civil War Institute Books) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Slavery, Resistance, Freedom (Gettysburg Civil War Institute Books):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Pride, endurance, and transformationBy Kerry WaltersI've eagerly read each of the Gettysburg Civil War Institute collections of essays as they've appeared, and I've enjoyed and learned

from all of them (well, okay: maybe not *War Comes Again*; I couldn't quite see the point of it). Generally, the essays in each volume have been topnotch. This latest volume, I think, is the best of the lot. (It's also the most physically attractive volume in the series.) The authors know their stuff, and they take on a topic--slavery and the horrific war which ended it as a legal institution--the memory of which (as one of them, Ira Berlin notes) really does reveal much about who we 21st century Americans are. Although all of the essays are superb, for my money the three most noteworthy ones are co-editor Scott Hancock's reflection on the way blacks in the antebellum North constructed memory; Edward Ayers', William Thomas', and Anne Sarah Rubin's study of the fate of black civilian and soldiers from Franklin County, PA (just down the road from where I live), and Noah Andre Trudeau's sad tale of the 9th Corps' black division at the Battle of the Crater. Each of these essays speaks to the sometimes unbearable tension between pride and hope on the one hand and abuse and insult on the other experienced by free blacks in the Civil War era. Hancock, appealing to the incredibly rich notion of "postmemory," focuses on the way in which northern black oral tradition in the 1850s navigated communal recollections of black valor in the revolutionary and 1812 wars with lived experiences of social, economic, and legal oppression. The memory provided both a degree of pride that empowered free blacks as well as an anger at their subsequent treatment that led to conflicted responses to the outbreak of war. Hancock's essay is a thought-provoking meditation on the formation and meaning of collective memory. Ayers and his colleagues focus on the eagerness of Franklin County blacks to join the federal army (in this case, the famous 54th Massachusetts) despite local white skepticism about their potential as soldiers, and their willingness to endure abuse and mistreatment from northern soldiers in order to do their bit for the freedom of their own people. One of the most disturbing features of this article is the description of Lee's army rounding up blacks during the Gettysburg campaign--relatives of the very men who had enlisted in the 54th Massachusetts--to take them south. But Ayers Co. don't romanticize the black role. The essay ends on a disconcerting note. Even as one of the Franklin County black veterans eloquently writes that he's fighting for future generations of black folks, another one boasts that he and his fellow soldiers are picking fights with conquered Southern whites in occupied Charleston just for the pleasure of beating them up. Noah Andre Trudeau's essay on black soldiers at Petersburg tells the familiar story of the debacle at the Crater, the massacre of black troops, and the criminal incompetence of their white commanders. But what makes Trudeau's telling especially poignant is his description of the spirit-breaking abuse the black soldiers endured from white federal soldiers. Their fighting quality was scorned by white soldiers, their own white officers seemed frightened of them at times and scornful of them at others, and there are reports that during the worst killing in the Crater, some of them were bayoneted by their own officers who were desperate (given Confederate warnings of what would happen to white commanders of black troops) not to be associated with black soldiers. During the days leading up to the Crater, when the black troops (mistakenly) thought they'd lead the charge, they proudly sang "We-e looks li-ik me-en a-a-marchin' on, We looks li-ike men-er-war." They were willing to endure abuse for the sake of contributing something to the war effort and showing that they, too, were "men." But after the Crater disaster, and after the black troops, on Grant's orders, were segregated from white federal soldiers, they never sang it again. How unspeakably sad.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book
By David Marshall
Anything written by Gabor Boritt is wonderful and worth buying. Interesting and informative.

Americans have always defined themselves in terms of their freedoms--of speech, of religion, of political dissent. How we interpret our history of slavery--the ultimate denial of these freedoms--deeply affects how we understand the very fabric of our democracy. This extraordinary collection of essays by some of America's top historians focuses on how African Americans resisted slavery and how they responded when finally free. Ira Berlin sets the stage by stressing the relationship between how we understand slavery and how we discuss race today. The remaining essays offer a richly textured examination of all aspects of slavery in America. John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger recount actual cases of runaway slaves, their motivations for escape and the strains this widespread phenomenon put on white slave-owners. Scott Hancock explores how free black Northerners created a proud African American identity out of the oral history of slavery in the south. Edward L. Ayers, William G. Thomas III, and Anne Sarah Rubin draw upon their remarkable *Valley of the Shadow* website to describe the wartime experiences of African Americans living on both borders of the Mason-Dixon line. Noah Andre Trudeau turns our attention to the war itself, examining the military experience of the only all-black division in the Army of the Potomac. And Eric Foner gives us a new look at how black leaders performed during the Reconstruction, revealing that they were far more successful than is commonly acknowledged--indeed, they represented, for a time, the fulfillment of the American ideal that all people could aspire to political office. Wide-ranging, authoritative, and filled with invaluable historical insight, *Slavery, Resistance, Freedom* brings a host of powerful voices to America's evolving conversation about race.

"[This book] helps to sharpen our attention on the collective and individual ways that the non-celebrated have perceived and defined the intraracial and interracial dynamics of the antebellum era...Each chapter stimulates readers and forces them to think carefully about the ways Americans have defined themselves and their freedom relative to issues of slavery and race...Most useful in this collection are the methods employed by contributors to explore the

wors and activities of the bottom-rail, those ordinary working-class men and women."--Journal of African American History"Highly recommended for readers who favor a scholarly approach over narative drama and are seeking a deeper understanding of slavery and its effects."--The Civil War Times"Concise, compelling, and highly readable, this essay collection will be of interest to a general audience and to graduate and undergraduate students alike."--Journal of Southern History

About the AuthorGabor S. Boritt is Robert C. Fluhner Professor of Civil War Studies and Director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College. His books include Why the Civil War Came and The Gettysburg Nobody Knows.