

changing relationship between loyalty and citizenship in greater detail from the reverse chronological perspective—the Reconstruction South. During the Civil War and in its immediate aftermath, Mathisen shows, the open disloyalty of white southern men provided openings for reimagining the body politic on the basis of loyalty rather than race. However, as Mathisen acknowledges, this tactic ultimately failed. Even as Andrew Johnson made “wartime loyalty the sine qua non of civic membership in the Union,” he overlooked African Americans’ loyalty, seeing them instead as “a people unfit for citizenship” (125–126). The Fourteenth Amendment’s formalization of birthright citizenship, as Mathisen acknowledges, further cemented the decline of wartime conceptions of loyal citizenship by leaving “the door open to treasonous white southerners” to rejoin the nation (167). In the end, *The Loyal Republic* charts the rise of loyalty as well as its fall. In so doing, it offers a valuable contribution to Civil War studies, while also deepening our understanding of understudied aspects of citizenship’s history.

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LARRY M. LOGUE and PETER BLANCK. *Heavy Laden: Union Veterans, Psychological Illness, and Suicide*. Foreword by ELYN SAKS. (Cambridge Disability Law and Policy Series.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xxvi, 257. Cloth \$110.00.

DIANE MILLER SOMMERVILLE. *Aberration of Mind: Suicide and Suffering in the Civil War–Era South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. Pp. xiv, 429. Cloth \$34.95.

If the post-9/11 American home front has a “signature disorder” (and I’m not sure that it does), it would have to be veteran suicide. No other social pathology better reflects the deadly combination of mental anguish and communal indifference facing contemporary vets than self-murder. According to a recent White House briefing, roughly twenty U.S. veterans kill themselves every day—a rate one and a half times that of non-veteran adults. Since the start of the War on Terror, suicide has proven to be a greater threat to veterans’ long-term health than al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) combined. Indeed, it’s become common wisdom to assert that the latest generation of American troops is especially vulnerable to suicidal behavior, their capacity for self-harm exacerbated by the chaotic nature of the wars they fight and the relative isolation they face upon homecoming. However, as a pair of remarkable new books makes clear, today’s suicide epidemic is neither novel nor unique. Larry M. Logue and Peter Blanck’s *Heavy Laden: Union Veterans, Psychological Illness, and Suicide* and Diane Miller Sommerville’s *Aberration of Mind: Suicide and Suffering in the Civil War–Era*

South examine the tidal wave of psychological trauma unleashed by the American Civil War. Individually, the two books paint sympathetic portraits of vast mental suffering on both sides of the conflict. Read together, they chart a new direction in the study of warfare and mental health, one that future scholars will inevitably follow.

The Civil War is especially ripe for this kind of analysis. Outside of the nation’s genocidal conflicts against North America’s indigenous populations, no U.S. war has resulted in more physical and mental destruction. As Drew Gilpin Faust argues in her award-winning *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (2008), the scale of the slaughter provoked a culture-wide reckoning with death. Yet, until Eric T. Dean Jr. published his *Shook over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War* (1997), historians had largely overlooked the psychological consequences of the conflict, including the rash of suicides triggered by war-related trauma. This makes some sense. Civil War–era physicians tended to rely on vague diagnoses such as “soldier’s heart” and “nostalgia” to describe combatants’ psychological ailments. According to contemporary gender codes, real men weren’t supposed to admit their mental distress, and mainstream Christian doctrine tended to view suicide as a mortal sin. Nevertheless, the Civil War left behind a “psychological landscape” of almost incalculable suffering (Logue and Blanck 47). Their bodies wracked with pain, and their minds traumatized by past memories and future worries, some Civil War–era Americans decided to put themselves out of their misery—uncounted casualties in the nation’s first modern war.

Published as part of Cambridge’s Disability Law and Policy series, *Heavy Laden* focuses on a specific population of Civil War suicides: Union veterans. Drawing heavily upon quantitative data, Logue and Blanck show that veterans’ suicide rates far exceeded those of their civilian counterparts. As vets aged, suicide rates ticked upward still, often the result of ill health and substance abuse. However, the scale of the Civil War’s emotional toll frequently escaped the attention of contemporary observers. Although cognizant of the horrors faced by soldiers in battle, Civil War–era physicians attributed suicide to “organic” causes (202) or “moral weakness” (52). Consequently, most were reluctant to recognize a clear connection between war trauma and postwar suicidal behavior. Muddying the waters further, a number of veteran suicides went unrecognized thanks to “private burials” and “connivance with decedents’ families” (36). Even so, Logue and Blanck contend that veteran self-murder “functioned as a miner’s canary—an incidence above that for nonveterans, signaling psychological distress extending well beyond actual suicides” (106–107). Less a comprehensive analysis of Union suicides,

Heavy Laden functions primarily as a kind of guidebook for future scholars, detailing the pitfalls facing historians of suicide and developing strategies for using contemporary terminology (such as PTSD) to diagnose past traumas.

Aberration of Mind offers a more expansive study of suicide in Civil War America. Moving beyond the topic of veterans' emotional distress, Sommerville's book explores mental suffering throughout all ranks of wartime and postwar southern society. Unlike Logue and Blanck, Sommerville largely eschews quantitative judgments and narrow categorization. She acknowledges that it's "impossible to know with certainty whether suicidal activity in the South rose during and after the war" (7). Instead, she adopts what she calls "an individualized case approach" to war-related psychological turmoil (2), melding "stingy clues" from the historical record with "recent finds in medical, neurobiological, psychiatric, and sociological studies" (9). The result makes for compelling reading. The book is chock-full of stories of misery and self-destruction, written with a novelist's eye for poignant detail. Sommerville's most significant decision is to include lengthy discussions of suicidal ideation—self-destructive thoughts and fantasies that she argues are "most often associated with females" (8). Ultimately, Sommerville contends that the misery and upheaval of the Civil War not only "left Southerners more vulnerable to suicide" than ever before (9), but also ushered in a "sea change in attitudes toward suicide" (236), reorienting them away from theological prohibitions and toward secular beliefs on the dignity of self-inflicted death.

In telling the history of Civil War suicides, both books devote ample discussions to suicide among African Americans. During the nineteenth century, ideas about suicide were closely tied to notions of civilization and white supremacy. Racial doctrine held that black people were "less prone to mental illness" than whites (Logue and Blanck 156), their minds "impervious to suicidal impulses" (Sommerville 87). According to Sommerville, "Southern whites repudiated the notion of suffering among the enslaved, disallowing a basis for their melancholy, despair, and insanity, the presumed cause of suicide" (87). In the war's aftermath, racist whites blamed an increase in African American suicides on emancipation, charging that formerly enslaved people lacked the intellectual capacity to handle the demands of freedom (135). Beyond demolishing such rationales, *Heavy Laden* and *Aberration of Mind* chalk up postwar African American suicides to a range of factors: inadequate health care, devastating reactions to postpartum depression and high child mortality rates, and racist medical practitioners and asylum wardens. As both books make clear, the "trauma of the Civil War was no respecter of black or white skin, or slave or free birth" (Logue and Blanck 191). If any-

thing, they make the case that people of color suffered the greatest of all of the war's victims, their physical and mental wounds compounded by the soul-crushing weight of structural racism.

Of course, all of this raises a question: Even if we know how many people killed themselves following the Civil War, can we ever really know why? After all, suicide is frequently the product of a multitude of influences, and suicide notes—perhaps the most concrete of sources on the topic—often suggest mixed motives for self-harm (Sommerville 173). Logue and Blanck approach this problem by adopting an air of caution, at times bordering on tentativeness. While admonishing scholars to respect the "terms and conditions" of the past, they nonetheless acknowledge that it isn't "inconceivable that veterans themselves suffered from an equivalent to PTSD" (205–206). Ultimately, Logue and Blanck's embrace of the complexity of veterans' suicide is intellectually persuasive, even if *Heavy Laden*—with its numerous graphs and frequent asides about methodology—reads like something one would assign to first-year historiography grad students. Sommerville, by contrast, is far more willing to embrace speculation, conceding that "no matter how cautiously a historian proceeds, much of what we conclude about how nineteenth-century Americans experienced a variety of mental health ailments is grounded in conjecture" (11). In a lengthy discussion of one Confederate widow, for example, she assures readers: "While the historical record discloses no definitive explanation for Caroline Mayo's suicide attempt, there seems to be no question that war-related pressures contributed to her declining health" (71). At the core of *Aberration of Mind* is the notion that suicide is less a mystery to be solved than a commonsensical response to the immense suffering created by the Civil War and its aftermath. Faced with fear, pain, and loss of status, countless men and women decided that they had had enough.

Writing this kind of history requires more than technical skill. It requires tremendous empathy—empathy that, admittedly, I did not always share. While Sommerville urges us to consider suicide's meaning "from the vantage of the individuals who took their own lives" (119), I would have appreciated a bit more critical distance from her subjects. Reading *Aberration of Mind*, I struggled to get worked up about how the "loss of slave labor" contributed to white southerners' postwar "stress," even if it led some former slaveholders to take their own lives (205). Likewise, I am not sure what to make of Sommerville's assertion that "Southern men and women bore a greater emotional cost than their counterparts in the North" (12). Is this because they endured the bulk of the physical damage, because much of the conflict took place in the South, or because the Confederacy was so thoroughly beaten? And, if the latter is the case, then is this diagnosis unique to the Confederacy or to the populations of all wartime losers?

Moreover, I was surprised by the two books' occasional use of ableist language—such as “blind” and “fell on deaf ears” (Logue and Blanck 205, 209)—despite their solid grounding in disability studies and history.

These concerns notwithstanding, *Heavy Laden* and *Aberration of Mind* are essential reading for anyone interested in the psychological fallout of the Civil War. Indeed, all historians of war and mental trauma are highly encouraged to spend time working their way through these absorbing and deeply challenging books.

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LUCY E. SALYER. *Under the Starry Flag: How a Band of Irish Americans Joined the Fenian Revolt and Sparked a Crisis over Citizenship*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018. Pp. 316. Cloth \$29.95.

The Fenian Brotherhood, a nineteenth-century group of Irish Americans who declared themselves an Irish Republic in America and launched a series of doomed military campaigns against British interests in Ireland and Canada, have in recent years been the subject of some scholarly and popular interest. Not because they were successful in what they set out to do—namely, to liberate Ireland from British rule—but because of the ways in which they provoked the United States and Britain to confront long-standing debates surrounding perpetual versus voluntary allegiance, the right of expatriation, and the rights of naturalized U.S. citizens when they traveled abroad, particularly to their country of origin. They are also of interest to those who study constructions of race, ethnicity, and nationhood in nineteenth-century America. Recent work on the Fenians includes Christian G. Samito's *Becoming American under Fire: Irish Americans, African Americans, and the Politics of Citizenship during the Civil War Era* (2009), Mitchell Snay's *Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites: Race and Nationality in the Era of Reconstruction* (2007), and my own *Divided Sovereignties: Race, Nationhood, and Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century America* (2016). These three studies consider the Fenians' efforts alongside those of other groups seeking to challenge constructions of citizenship in nineteenth-century America. There are also examinations of the Fenians that focus on their efforts in Ireland, England, and Canada, such as Patrick Steward and Bryan McGovern's *The Fenians: Irish Rebellion and the North Atlantic World, 1858–1876* (2013). Christopher Klein's 2019 book *When the Irish Invaded Canada: The Incredible True Story of the Civil War Veterans Who Fought for Ireland's Freedom* represents a popular history of the Fenians and their military exploits.

In what is one of only a few scholarly book-length treatments of the Fenians, Lucy Salyer situates the Fenians in a transatlantic context, detailing both British

and American responses to Fenian agitation. Building on recent work on the Fenians, Salyer's *Under the Starry Flag: How a Band of Irish Americans Joined the Fenian Revolt and Sparked a Crisis over Citizenship* contributes an in-depth study, rich with primary sources, that fleshes out in greater detail how the Fenians, specifically the men on the ill-fated mission aboard the *Erin's Hope* (also known as the *Jacmel*), who in 1867 sailed to Ireland to arm the people and incite rebellion against England, “would succeed in provoking an international crisis that many feared would bring the United States and England to the brink of war—and over what? The right of expatriation” (2–3). If not entirely “forgotten,” as Salyer suggests (6), expatriation has certainly been understudied in comparison to examinations of immigration, naturalization, and debates about race, allegiance, and citizenship in nineteenth-century America.

Salyer is an able storyteller, and *Under the Starry Flag* has a compelling narrative arc. It is organized into three parts, with the trial of the *Jacmel* men at the center: “The Fenians and the Making of a Crisis,” “Citizenship on Trial,” and “Reconstructing Citizenship.” These three sections detail the forces in Ireland and the United States that shaped the Fenians; the group's efforts within the United States to strike British interests and capitalize on strained relations between the U.S. and Britain in the 1860s; the high drama of the treason-felony trials of William J. Nagle (a native-born American citizen) and John Warren (a naturalized U.S. citizen), which occurred in Ireland over their leading roles in the *Erin's Hope* incident; subsequent legal and political wrangling over issues of allegiance and expatriation, which led to the Expatriation Act of 1868, the Burlingame Treaty, and the Bancroft Treaties; and the growth of international law as a field. Salyer details how outrage over the treatment of Fenians in Ireland, including individuals who were charged with treason for acts committed in America, helped unite naturalized citizens across ethnic lines to press for U.S. action to define the rights of naturalized citizens and enforce them internationally. Grounded in Salyer's archival research, the book blends fascinating personal stories—such as the accounts of Nagle's and Warren's incarceration and trials, quoting from letters they wrote, from courtroom transcripts, and from tense messages sent across the Atlantic from an increasingly concerned secretary of state, William Seward—with broader accounts of the legal and political landscapes of the period.

Salyer presumes some knowledge of the structure and development of the Fenian Brotherhood, formed in 1858 as the American wing of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and led by James Stephens, with its loose organizational structure of “circles,” each led by a “centre.” Questions may arise for those who are not familiar with the group's history, its organization, and the key players involved. This book also does not re-