exaggerate the extent of states' rights sentiments among Wisconsin Republicans, but the issue did play a role in intraparty factionalism, the study of which represents McManus's main contribution with this work. Garrisonian-like remarks, or even those reminiscent of nullification, might nonetheless better be viewed in the context of intraparty rivalries and otherwise viewed as a tactic employed against southern domination in government. Nonetheless, the "conditional Unionism" that McManus examines among Wisconsin antislavery forces adds a further dimension to the texture of antebellum politics.

This volume makes a worthy contribution to the study of the Civil War's antislavery origins, but dust jacket claims that the book preempts other interpretations are quite undeserving. Despite the rather startling innovations of the past generation, this work remains primarily a conventional study with a mostly standard interpretation. Yet the careful examination of the issue of Unionism among Republicans suggests what can be accomplished when a student ventures beyond the work of his mentor.

Patriotic Toil: Northern Women and the American Civil War, by Jeanie Attie. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998. xiii, 294 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $37.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY THERESA R. MCDEVITT, INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Histories of the American Civil War have most often focused on the activities of military males. The conflict itself would have been far shorter, however, if civilian women on both sides had not supported it with their labor and donations. In countless ways—from taking up occupations vacated by enlisted men to providing medical services at home and at the front—women sustained the war effort. Particularly important to the struggle were the donations women sent to state, local, and private soldiers' aid societies—gifts whose value has been estimated at nearly $50 million. Such contributions were especially significant given the unexpected nature and duration of the war and the weak and decentralized federal government's limited ability, particularly at the start of the conflict, to provide adequately for the troops it had assembled.

In *Patriotic Toil* Jeanie Attie examines the tensions that arose surrounding the highly significant wartime benevolent efforts of northern females. Attie places her study within the context of decades of prewar change and debate over the nature of women and their proper place in society. She explains that while women were generally excluded from public life during this period, they were able to escape the confines of

the domestic sphere through benevolent activities. When the war began, women began almost immediately to organize to assist the soldiers, but when the scope and importance of the benevolent work appeared great, men seized the helm.

The focus of the study is the U.S. Sanitary Commission, the Union's largest and most effective wartime philanthropic organization. Its leaders attempted to control and direct the donations of northern women toward relief of the Civil War soldier, while at the same time pursuing a broader nationalist agenda. Attie asserts that these elite males believed that the nation's women would instinctively comply with their calls for support. The women, however, were accustomed to exercising some control over their donations, and were unwilling to relinquish such control even to the most well-connected philanthropic organizations. As the war progressed, the distance between male sanitary leaders and the female public increased. When women did not automatically send their gifts to the Sanitary Commission, male leaders charged them with parochialism or sectionalism. When the Commission failed to inform and respond to the concerns of these women, they charged the Commission with corruption. In the end, although the Sanitary Commission retained its preeminence among philanthropic organizations, its leaders found the experiment in nationalized social welfare less than a success.

Attie also compares male and female leaders of the Commission and their relationship to the female public. Although they shared religious, institutional, and class affiliations, male and female leaders reacted differently to the resistance of northern females to the Commission's requests. Male leaders tended to view the lack of support for the organization as the result of the public's frailties or the work of competitors, while female leaders sympathized with the concerns of their donors and looked within the organization for causes. Attie demonstrates that even women branch leaders yearned for greater control and turned to Sanitary Fairs, based on prewar female fundraising methods, to clearly demonstrate their economic worth. Many studies of women's involvement in Sanitary Commission work have focused on female leaders and suggested that organizational skills acquired during the conflict prepared them for successful feminist work in the postwar period. Attie does not deny this assertion, but she highlights dissatisfactions leaders experienced and suggests that for the common women touched by the Sanitary Commission, the wartime experience was a negative one that devalued the products of their household labor and may have helped to lay the groundwork for feminist movements of the late nineteenth century.

Attie's thought-provoking and analytical study is based on a rich collection of individual and organizational papers and is a welcome addition to the far too scanty literature examining the contributions of women to the conflict and the wartime work of nationwide philanthropic organizations. Most studies of women in the Sanitary Commission have focused on its leaders. This study, on the other hand, provides a glimpse into the thoughts and circumstances of the thousands of ordinary women who donated to the cause. While demonstrating the importance of their contributions, Attie also shows that women acted intelligently to maintain control over the products of their domestic work.

Attie does an excellent job of analyzing what occurred in a Union-wide organization with a nationalist agenda, but such conflicts also occurred on the state level. Iowa is a case in point. Older studies as well as Elizabeth Leonard's recent *Yankee Women* (1994) have discussed the tensions that arose when the state's male sanitary leaders attempted to seize control of the fruits of soldiers' aid societies led by Annie Wittenmyer and other women. Their story is interesting and complex, and more could be done with this important aspect of Iowa history. Attie's well-reasoned and highly readable book could provide a useful analytical framework for such study.

The Children's Civil War, by James Marten. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. xi, 365 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $34.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY PAMELA RINEY-KEHRBERG, ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

The Children's Civil War, by James Marten, takes a new look at a conflict that has had more written about it than any other event in American history. Marten's approach to the Civil War is fresh and innovative, and serves to remind the reader that the conflict was experienced not just by soldiers on battlefields, but by all who lived through its four long years. It is not the story of drummer boys and underage soldiers, but of the millions of children who experienced the war as civilians. Using letters, diaries, reminiscences, and children's books, Marten brings together an impressive array of material to illuminate what had been a hidden corner of the war's history.

In six chapters, Marten discusses the many ways the Civil War affected children's lives. The war saturated the atmosphere, making it impossible for children to avoid the topic even if they had wanted to do so. It appeared in their textbooks and literature, even becoming a