"work that the founding generation had left undone" (p. 98).

Essays by Kevin R. C. Gutzman and Michael Vorenberg deal substantively with Lincoln's interest in colonization. Gutzman examines similarities in the racial thought of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. He also notes the importance to Lincoln of Henry Clay, a life-long colonizationist, and documents how consistently Lincoln advanced the idea. Though some scholars try to explain away Lincoln's statements on colonization, Gutzman concludes that "It seems entirely likely that Lincoln continued to hold to the Jeffersonian view . . . that blacks were entitled to the self-government [of] the Declaration of Independence . . . but that . . . they could exercise it only 'upon [their] own soil" (p. 72). Vorenberg, meanwhile, points out that Lincoln may have continued to be attracted to ideas of gradual emancipation and colonization—even as events pushed him in a different direction. He argues for the relevance of Lincoln's Whig background and shows that Lincoln's support of education for African Americans was not entirely different from the priority placed on education by some of today's advocates for reparations.

An essay by Brian Dirck about the effect on Lincoln's emancipation policies of possible opposition by the Supreme Court, and an analysis of the tangled politics of emancipation in Missouri by Dennis Boman, round out this useful volume.

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Lincoln and the Decision for War
The Northern Response to Secession
By Russell McClintock

(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. Pp. xii, 388. Notes, bibliography, index. $35.00.)

Accounts of the secession crisis of 1861 focus mostly on what Southerners did to secede (the most recent example being William W. Freehling's *The Road to Disunion: Secessionists Triumphant* [2007]) rather than what Northerners did to oppose it. Our primary accounts of the Northern response are limited very largely to David M. Potter's early *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis* (1942) and Kenneth M. Stampp's *And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860-61* (1950). But neither of those outstanding works paid more than fleeting attention to that Northern response outside the limited circle of Abraham Lincoln, the Republican party's leadership, and the editors of prominent newspapers. This has not been a particularly fashionable way of doing political histo-

ry in the decades since Potter and Stampp. But it is the burden of Russell McClintock's equally outstanding book to demonstrate that, given the structures of American party politics, those were exactly the people who mattered most.

McClintock builds his narrative of the secession crisis on three fundamental discoveries: first, that secession was primarily a political crisis, not an economic one (as in Stampp) or a cultural or personal one (as in Freehling); second, that no matter what the trends, this was a crisis in which a handful of "great white men" really did matter; and third, that the "decision for war" was largely Lincoln's, principally because Lincoln controlled the political options of the Republican party.

It is one of the ironies of the secession crisis that the party most worried about disunion was the Democratic party, and not the Republicans, who affected a lofty refusal to believe that secession was anything more serious than the usual Southern bluster (p. 41). The South, announced Horace Greeley, "could no more unite upon a scheme of secession than a company of lunatics could conspire to break out of bedlam" (p. 47). Lincoln, especially, refused to offer olive branches to lure the secessionists back; even on the one occasion when he did formulate a statement of policy, he had Lyman Trumbull include it as part of one of Trumbull's own speeches, rather than issuing it personally (p. 51). Lincoln did occasionally make placatory gestures, but never offered real compromise with the secessionists, assuming that Southern unionism would eventually douse the secessionists' fires (p. 91).

This did not mean that some Republicans had not taken enough alarm over secession to begin advocating compromise. But the Republican compromisers were concentrated in New York, and included New York governor Edwin D. Morgan, Albany editor Thurlow Weed, and Weed's formidable master, William H. Seward. But neither Weed's nor Seward's political skills could persuade other Republicans to balk at Lincoln's stubbornness. Even when public opinion uneasily began to show a "massive resurgence of pro-compromise support" in February and March of 1861, Lincoln ignored it, and Republican politicians who might have been tempted to join the tide for compromise were too anxious for patronage rewards to buck Lincoln's line (p. 145). Lincoln's would be the last word, especially after Congress adjourned in March (p. 189).

McClintock acknowledges that in the final weeks preceding the Confederate assault on Sumter, even Lincoln weakened in his resistance to compromise, assuring Southern unionists that he would trade Virginia's loyalty for an evacuation of the immediate irritant of militant secessionism, Fort Sumter. But the mission he sent to South Carolina to sound out Southern opinion convinced him that Southern unionism was too weak

a reed to rest upon; the iron entered into Lincoln's soul and, in the face of Seward's pleas, he authorized the relief expedition to Sumter which made armed confrontation inevitable. In the end, all the "efforts to promote compromise and foster conciliation" by Northern Democrats and Republican moderates "were thwarted at every turn" by the fact that Lincoln commanded "the Republican Party machinery" (p. 239). Far from compromising, Lincoln "deliberately discarded" any realistic plan for relieving Fort Sumter in favor of one which would maneuver the Confederates into firing the first shot (p. 249). His plan yielded mixed results. It did trigger massive anger in the North at the rebels—uniting all parties across the Northern spectrum—but did not in the upper South; when Lincoln followed Sumter with a call-out of the state militias, Tennessee, Arkansas, Virginia and North Carolina bolted to the side of the Confederacy.

McClintock sees in this a vindication of Lincoln's political skills in handling the winner-take-all powers that come to victorious political parties in the American system. Of course, it could just as easily be read—and surely will be, by that untiring cadre of unreconstructed Lincoln-haters—as proof of a cruel Machiavellian streak in Lincoln that sacrificed blood and lives to political intransigence. In fact, McClintock's meticulous recounting of the weeks and days leading up to the attack on Sumter shows its greatest weakness by failing to ask just why Lincoln should have thought the relief expedition was, necessarily, a decision for war. Lincoln had always believed that unionism was the default position of all but a handful of Southerners, and running the clock was the best way of giving Southern unionism a chance to regain control and rescind secession. An unarmed relief expedition would keep that clock running—a fact which the secessionists understood all too well, since the longer the upper South distanced itself from secession, the more absurd the secessionists' cause looked. Attacking Sumter before the expedition could arrive was their only hope of forcing matters to a head in the upper South. What resulted, as McClintock notes, played into Lincoln's hands. It remains a question, though, whether this was the play Lincoln really wanted to follow.

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