censorship in the nineteenth century. In addition, Giesberg’s study of the sexual culture of U.S. Army camps makes a valuable contribution to our existing understanding of the erotic print trade and obscenity regulation during the Civil War.

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There are as many books on the Civil War as there were casualties during the conflict. The period that followed, Reconstruction, also hardly lacks attention. This historiographical attention is not the case for the transition from one period to the other. Historians often simply turn the page on the war and begin Reconstruction, paying scant attention to the binding fact that tomorrow’s history is often planned yesterday. Christopher Lyle McIlwain Sr. understands this connection. In 1865 Alabama: From Civil War to Uncivil Peace, he focuses on the year 1865 and this transition. This year was seminal, according to the author, because the “actions and inactions of Alabamians during those twelve months . . . haunted them for the next century” (p. 2). The “four consequences of imprudent decision making and conduct” are examined in detail: “(1) the immediate and unconditional—as opposed to gradual or compensated—emancipation of the slaves; (2) the destruction of Alabama’s remaining industrial economy; (3) a significant broadening of Northern support for suffrage rights for the freedmen; and (4) an acute and lengthy postwar shortage of investment capital” (p. 2).

McIlwain argues that Confederate Alabamians overplayed their hand, helping undermine northerners, including President Abraham Lincoln, who envisioned a more moderate Reconstruction policy that appears, in hindsight, conciliatory (some might say collusive) rather than corrective or punishing. As a result of continued resistance and the misguided election of fire-eating secessionists and former Confederates as congressional representatives of southern states in late 1865, those who advocated for more punitive measures against Alabama and the rest of the Confederate South (since Radical Republicans initially focused on Alabama as proof of continued resistance) prevailed in the national debate and swept to power the next year. If “the year 1865 in Alabama is indicative of anything,” McIlwain boldly declares, “it is that too many of Alabama’s political leaders were either blind or deliberately indifferent to the consequences of their actions” (p. 188). Thus, Reconstruction, which most white Alabamians of the last century and a half viewed passively, was in fact a self-inflicted wound.

This work has far greater implications beyond its limited time frame and offers much for argument. Southern apologists will not appreciate the Confederates’ complicity. In this interpretation, Confederates were agents of Reconstruction policy; whether moderate or punitive, it was up to them. Those readers wanting freedpeople’s perspectives will be left wanting. In fact, their voices are so absent that one might ask, why the big fuss by former
Confederates? Lincoln historians will notice a defrocked rather than a sanctified man. Rather than the Great Emancipator, stalwart in his opposition to slavery and in his commitment to liberating four million helpless souls, Lincoln is shown as quite malleable, willing to compromise, delay, and even undermine the Thirteenth Amendment, and uncertain about his own Emancipation Proclamation. In the goal of restoration, policy makers (including and especially Lincoln) envisioned a far less revolutionary outcome of the war than contemporaries today would have believed. McIlwain argues Lincoln was willing to accept the possibility of black southerners, if not remaining slaves temporarily after the war, being deported via colonization or enduring limitations to their freedom, like lacking suffrage, since Lincoln was far closer in sentiment to white southerners than to Radical Republicans. He also would have tolerated some form of postslavery control such as apprenticeship. This man hardly compares with the uncompromising, sacrificial character in Steven Spielberg’s *Lincoln* (2012).

Well researched and clearly written, although needing a detailed map, McIlwain’s work will elicit a much-needed examination of the transition and continuity from war to peace and spur reexamination of generally accepted interpretations.

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**Christopher B. Bean**

*Your Heritage Will Still Remain: Racial Identity and Mississippi’s Lost Cause.*


On September 17, 2017, Alabama’s Republican candidate for Senate, Roy Moore, a former judge, surprised many Americans by suggesting that our nation was better back in the days of slavery. “I think it [America] was great at the time when families were united—even though we had slavery—they cared for one another. . . . Our families were strong, our country had a direction” (Los Angeles Times, December 8, 2017, [http://www.latimes.com/95396983-132.html](http://www.latimes.com/95396983-132.html)). Historians of the South likely heard in this statement an echo of the Lost Cause narrative. As numerous scholars have amply demonstrated, this narrative had four main tenets: the South’s cause, states’ rights, was just; the Confederacy lost because it was overwhelmed by northern military might; black people were innately unsuited to freedom and had been better off in slavery, which was a benevolent institution; and Confederates were not traitors but the heroic defenders of American values and liberties. Former Confederates crafted this ideology in the 1860s to vindicate their beliefs and actions, but their descendants expanded its reach in the early twentieth century into all sectors of American society. How it emerged and why it continues to shape many contemporary white Americans’ understandings of their own identity are the central concerns of Michael J. Goleman’s brief yet insightful and accessible book.

Goleman’s work complements the extensive literature on the Lost Cause by focusing on its evolution in a single, very influential state: Mississippi. The book begins in the 1850s to establish the state and national context. The