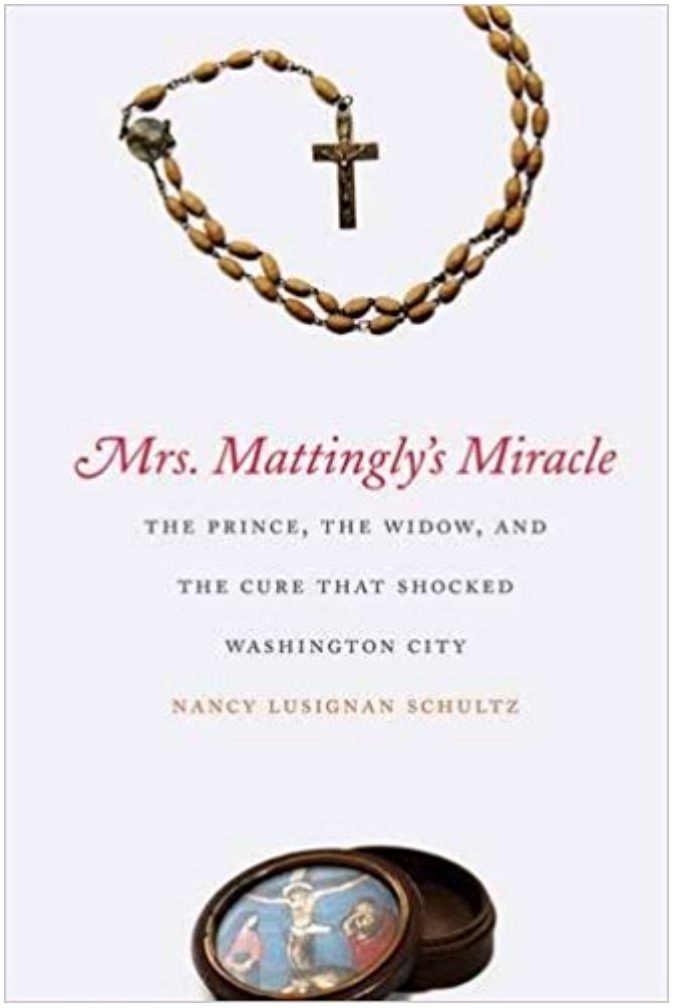
A Divisive Miracle



Schultz paints a picture of an increasingly divided church in the United States, with miracles being only one of the issues on which the camps disagreed.

The Competing Legacies of Junípero Serra: Pioneer, saint, villain



Presented as part of the Special Issue: Pacific Routes

Standing alongside the heroic and saintly Serras of the Capitol and the Catholic Church is a villainous Serra with the worst features of Christopher Columbus, a man whose own life story is overshadowed by everything he has come to embody and symbolize to his detractors.

‘We Are All Savages’: Scalping and Survival in *The Revenant*



Scalping survivors were visual evidence for the narratives the nation wanted to tell itself.

Re-collecting Jim



Where and how to find the narrator, who was not only an escaped slave but an author with no name?

Constructing the House of Chouteau: Saint Louis



Presented as part of the special issue “Early Cities of the Americas.”

“The sense of purpose that guided settlers, that covered the distance from old

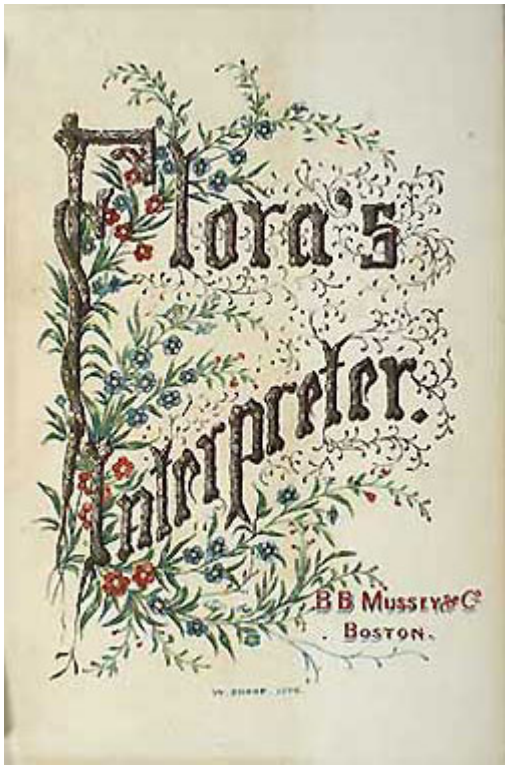
to new, created a most bourgeois environment of great expectations, of possibilities, even entitlement.”

Statement on Poetic Research for Two Pieces



Oldest Windmill on Cape Cod

Victorian Flower Power

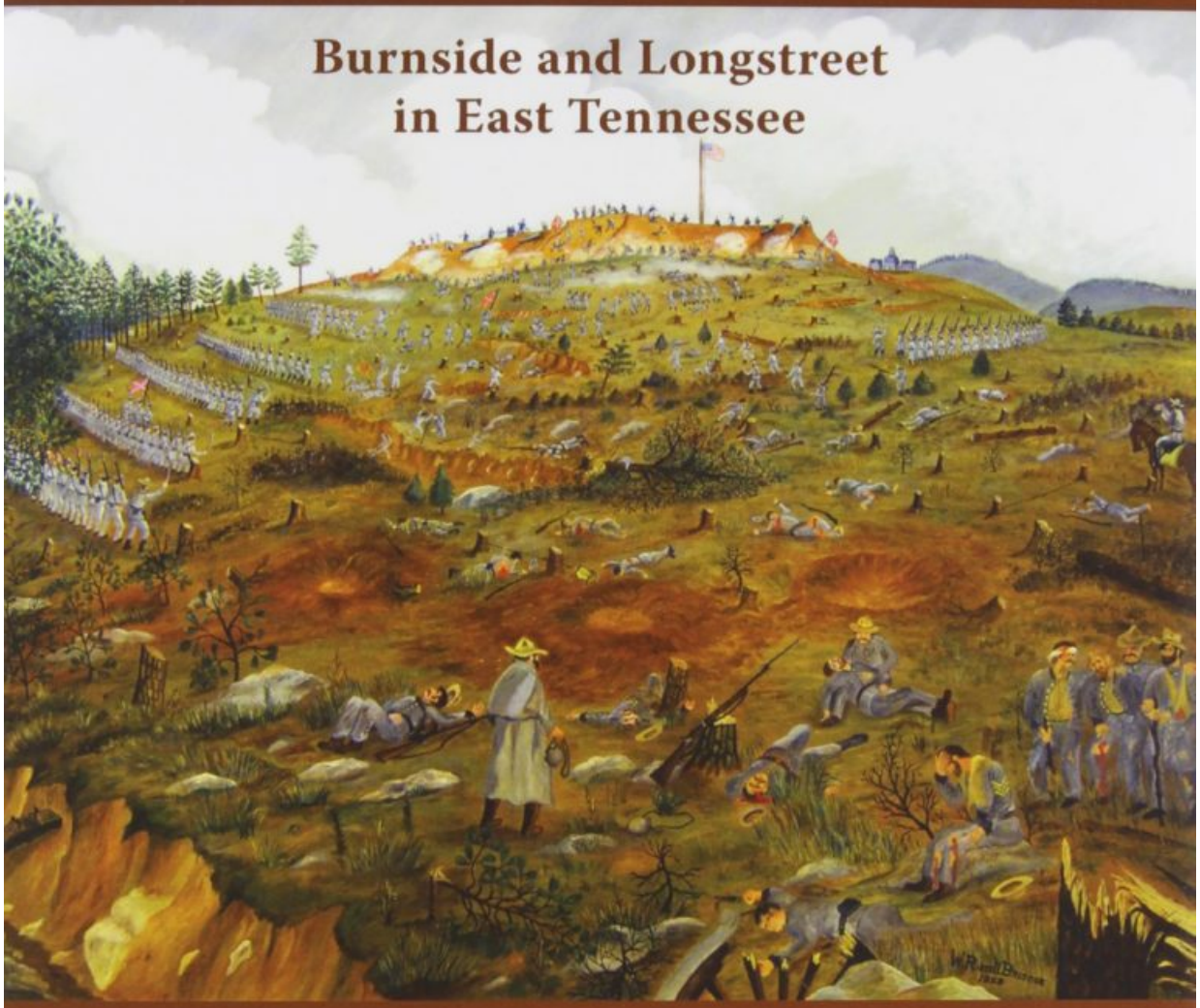


The neat separation of feminine and masculine spheres existed more as an ideal than as a fact.

Shall We Forget What They Did Here?

The KNOXVILLE CAMPAIGN

Burnside and Longstreet in East Tennessee



Earl J. Hess

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War's bloody fourth year, it is perhaps appropriate to ask: just what is the place of military history in our culture? A glance at the current landscape of American history would lead one to think that military historians might well rejoice at their place in our collective memory. Bookstores often have shelves of books about battles and generals, campaigns and cannon, armaments and armies. Civil War Round Tables meet with a frequency that Woman's Suffrage Campaign Round Tables do not. National and state parks preserve and interpret many battlefields; parks dedicated to remembering the environmental or economic history of the Civil War era are scarce by comparison. Re-enactors (or "living historians") still organize their events around staged battles. If ever a group of historians should feel secure and happy with their status, it seems as though military historians should be among that rare number.

And yet there is a palpable unease among the chroniclers of powder and shot. As an example of just how insecure they can be, we might turn to Richard McMurry, who lamented in his book, *The Fourth Battle of Winchester,* the many historians who neglect military scholarship because it has become unfashionable and choose to instead "flit off in pursuit of trendy new fields of inquiry" (63). It seems that at least some military historians sense that other fields of history are gaining on them, or even leaving them in the dust. McMurry's dismissal of his rival historians as effeminate (the choice of "flit" seems oddly specific) scholars concerned with fashion suggests the depth of his anxiety about his field's place in the larger profession. Such McCarthyisms rarely appear from people secure in their social and political place.

Earl J. Hess, The Civil War in the West. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012. 416 pp., $40.

Earl J. Hess, The Knoxville Campaign: Burnside and Longstreet in East Tennessee. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2012. 402 pp., $39.95.

If we are to ask how Civil War military history might come back into the professional fold, sharing its insights with other fields and in turn borrowing from them, we can start with Earl Hess's recent works.

We are left to wonder, then, just where military history lies in our culture. Is it popular and widely read, or is it thoroughly marginalized? The answer to that question lies in the different audiences being considered. Military history thrives with readers in the general population, smart people who are looking for a strong narrative and, often, a sense of good and evil. Among professional historians—people with advanced degrees in the field and teaching appointments or jobs in libraries or museums—military history has been in a state of apparent decline. We might wonder which audience is more desirable, but we might also ask how military historians might retrieve the attention of other scholars in their profession and—more importantly—also produce better military history. How can military history branch out to more fully comprehend

the social and political (but not expressly military) aspects of warfare in an era of democracy and armies that rely on mass enlistments from citizens?

Which brings us to Earl J. Hess, one of the country's foremost practitioners of Civil War military history and Stewart W. McClelland Distinguished Professor in Humanities at Lincoln Memorial University. A prolific and talented historian, Hess has brought out three books on the Civil War in the last two years, two of which will be considered here. Prior to these works, Hess has written books that go beyond the standard questions of which side had the better generals, luck, or tactics. He has studied the types and effects of field-works on military campaigns and researched the emotional and psychological impact of combat on Union soldiers. He also takes logistics seriously. His books are filled with men who have hearts and stomachs; battles in his books are not affairs in which units are pushed across a map and asked to do the physically and psychologically impossible by historians trying to decide if one more attack by the Confederates could have won the war (at Shiloh, or Gettysburg, or Chickamauga, and so on). If we are to ask how Civil War military history might come back into the professional fold, sharing its insights with other fields and in turn borrowing from them, we can start with Earl Hess's recent works.

Hess's *The Civil War in the West* has the daunting task of covering military events in the region between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River. Some military historians might approach this task as an invitation to cover military campaigns in depth while doing little else, but Hess's book instead covers battles in brief sketches, thereby leaving enough room for other matters. Logistics and political context often take precedence over combat in the scramble for pages. The battle of Stones River, for example, receives four solid paragraphs. Meanwhile, the pages before and after the description of combat discuss, in greater detail, broader "civil-military relations," including how Union forces dealt with pro-Confederate women in their midst. Also debated here are the logistical quandaries facing the Union commander trying to strike into middle Tennessee during the winter, and the political needs and expectations of Presidents Lincoln and Davis. After the battle, Hess places Stones River in a larger military context, but memorably also highlights the importance of the Union victory by reminding us that it happened in the week that the controversial Emancipation Proclamation came into effect.

Hess makes much of Union logistics in analyzing how the Union war effort managed to prevail in the western states. His descriptions suggest ways to build bridges between academic subfields—to move military history back into the mainstream of the discipline and to better understand perennial, and still useful, questions such as why the United States won the war and why the Confederacy lost it. For many years, historians have criticized Union General Henry Halleck for breaking up his army into disparate groups after taking Corinth, Mississippi, instead of moving ahead with a massive force to take Vicksburg. The results of his dispersal of forces, his critics have said, were Vicksburg remaining Confederate for another year and a successful pair of Confederate counter-offensives into Tennessee and Kentucky as they regained the

initiative. For Hess, however, the matter is not so simple. Not only did Halleck lack the necessary supplies, but Hess also suggests that he really did need to stop and consolidate his position. Hess knows that modern armies move among civilians, and that these non-combatants can have significant effects on campaigns. Rather than fault Halleck for spreading out his large army, Hess states that "there was every reason for Halleck to stop after the fall of Corinth and consolidate Union control over the vast territory that had fallen into Federal hands" since the start of 1862 (52). "Vast stretches of [Tennessee] were under the control of no organized military force at all," Hess writes, and his book spends considerable time analyzing how the United States approached the problem of re-asserting control over its rebellious citizens. Partially this is a military question relating to guerrilla warfare, but in Hess's hands it is also about the political allegiance of Unionists and people who would become Unionists if that route promised stability and prosperity. Asking such questions means that Hess also must cover how Union policy evolved regarding former slaves, as well as the actions of Freedmen and women who sometimes followed federal policy, but sometimes made up their own. Hess covers these issues adeptly, as well as other military-civilian issues such as looting and its close cousin, the formal requisitioning of supplies from southern civilians. For readers who know that wars are won in the hearts and minds of the civilians around whom battles are fought, Hess's concentration on non-combatants is welcome and leads to a better understanding of why most early Confederates acquiesced to United States victory and why the Union Army was able to re-supply itself in places where the population was originally either hostile or indifferent to their success.

Hess's focus on logistics informs one of the major interpretive conclusions of his book. While many historians, led initially by former Confederate officers, have concluded that the United States won because of its superior manpower and war materials, Hess adds a significant addendum. It was not just the Union's greater quantities of men and goods, but their "greater ability to mobilize and manipulate those resources" that won them the war. The Confederacy, he adds, made "poor use" of what little it had (308). Hess provides ample examples of this, but perhaps none so spectacular as the move, late in the war, of the Union 23rd Corps from the western theater to the coast of North Carolina. The transfer moved a significant body of troops from a military backwater to the right flank of William Sherman's army for the war's final campaign. This important transfer happened smoothly and quickly.

Hess's interpretation—crediting the United States for better use of its resources—is enough of an advance for us to applaud Hess for a job well done. But could he have taken his interpretation further? Can we not ask *why* the Union was able to outperform the Confederacy in this arena? For generations, we have linked the superiority of Rebel cavalry in the war's first two years to the southerners' agrarian background; is it not time for historians to make connections between the superiority of Union logistics and management to the knowledge many white-collar northern men gained before 1861? Or to examine the practical skills learned on the job by northern mechanics and other industrial

workers and how they were applied during the war? Can't we better understand why the Union made bridges, railroad timetables, and fiscal policies better than the Confederacy by studying the real men (and women, in sanitary commissions) who made this all possible? Earlier studies praise northern Generals Montgomery Meigs and Herman Haupt for their abilities with supplies and railroads, but this narrow focus only leads us to a sense that a handful of people at the top made the difference. One suspects that expertise extended far deeper into the Union logistics branch and even into the ranks of soldiers, and that this depth of knowledge made an exceptional difference. But we will never know for sure until historians leave the battlefield and go into shipyards, armories, budget offices, and roundhouses. It is one thing for Hess to surprise and enlighten readers by pointing out that Union troops in Chattanooga in December 1863 were not receiving enough supplies even after the Confederate siege was lifted; it would be another to know more about the people who eventually fixed the problem and to place them in a broader social and economic context. Such avenues would enable military historians to enter into mutually fruitful dialogues with economic and business historians. If we read down into the ranks, we can also link labor history and military history. Looking at who built the Union's bridges can help historians build bridges of their own.

Earl Hess's *The Knoxville Campaign* offers scholars and general readers outside of military history less to chew on. With this work, Hess follows the form of the traditional campaign study, in which readers pick up the story at the beginning of the campaign, witness troop movements, a battle, and some final maneuvering. As the subtitle (*Burnside and Longstreet in East Tennessee*) suggests, Hess's conclusions are mostly limited to assessments of the performances of generals during the campaign. Somewhat surprisingly, given their larger historical reputations, Union general Ambrose Burnside receives generally good grades for his well-conducted retreat into the fortifications around Knoxville and the foresight and skill with which he and his subordinates prepared the city for a siege, while Longstreet appears to have missed opportunities and blundered in ordering a poorly planned assault on the city's Fort Sanders. Hess writes all of this with clarity, and his conclusions are reasonable. We now have a record of the events of the campaign that exceeds what we had before. But this is the kind of factual narrative that leaves other professional historians at a loss as to how to apply this body of information to a fuller understanding of the war.

There are places where Hess could have branched out into other discussions about the era. The most important opportunity comes from Hess's acknowledgment that East Tennessee Unionists provided essential provisions to the Union garrison while it was otherwise cut off from northern supply bases. Asking why there were such Unionists in Tennessee even after they had been under Confederate rule for two years would have allowed Hess to converse with a larger body of work on white Southern Unionism and what it says about Southern society. It also would have enabled him to connect his military history with discussions of guerrilla warfare and civil-military relations, in this case with how Confederates approached hostile civilians in an area over which they

held military control. In the era of “hearts and minds” winning conflicts, Hess could have broadened his recognition of the logistical importance of Tennessee Unionists to get beyond the men in uniforms. Beyond allowing him to talk with other professional historians, taking this course would have led to a fuller understanding of the military events in East Tennessee during the fall and winter of 1863.

Hess, however, does take us down one unconventional but promising path in this campaign study. Many military historians are working with the study of memory, and Hess finishes his book with an appendix covering “Knoxville’s Civil War Legacy.” Spanning twenty-three pages, the appendix discusses photographs taken after the battle, claims for battle damages files by civilians, the construction of monuments, and the fates of the campaign’s battlefields (and how to get to them). The appendix will allow people to understand what they see if they visit East Tennessee, both in terms of the natural and the built landscape. This kind of postscript may open up new paths for military historians, preservationists, tourists, and environmental and urban historians.

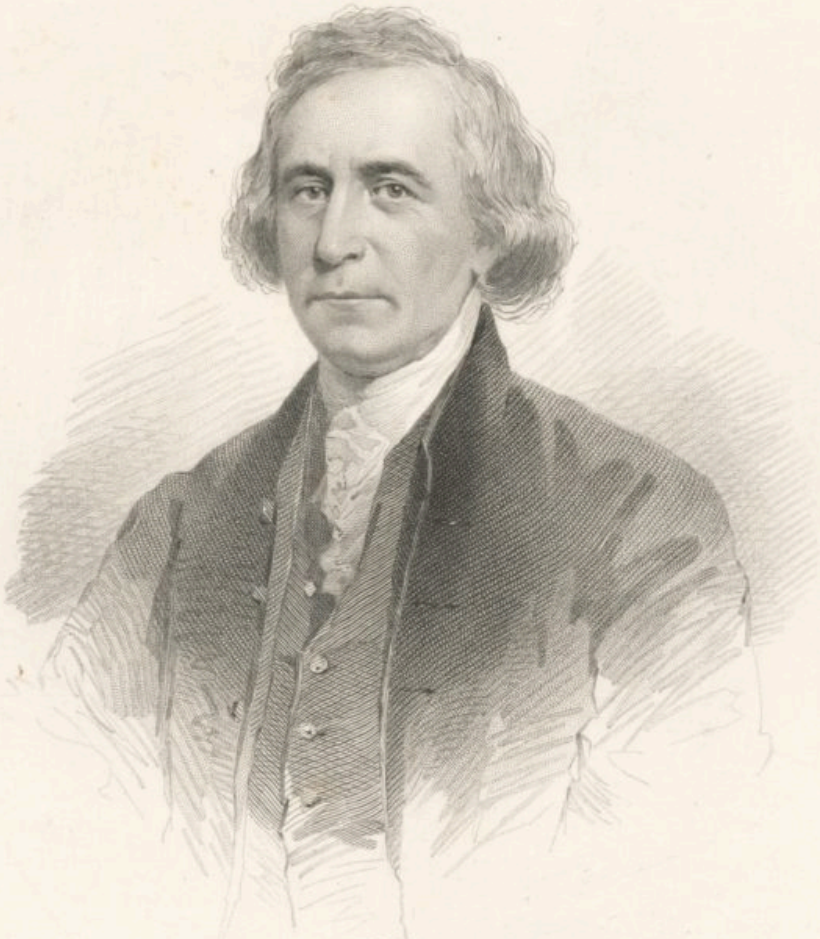
Writing in the middle of the 1700s, Voltaire warned that not all history was equally important. In his *Age of Louis XIV*, he tells readers that not everything that occurs is worth writing down. Perhaps, he suggests, we should not always remember what soldiers did here, instead saving our efforts for more important matters. Like what? Voltaire would have us remember “the arts, the sciences, and the progress of the human mind.” Only those fields will serve “as an eternal token of the true glory of our country” (2). We cannot ignore military events, but neither can military historians seal themselves off from the rest of the profession as it moves toward a broader picture of the progress of American culture.

In Griswold We Trust



In these accounts Washington did not add “So help me God” to the oath. In fact, no account of his inauguration, either contemporaneous or later, has Washington saying “So help me God”—until 1854.

Belated President’s Day poetry break: Philip Freneau, Patron Saint of the Blogosphere



T. Halpin

Philip Freneau

So, over this past weekend I was sweating over a long-overdue article [hi, Sean!] on Philip Freneau, the so-called "poet of the Revolution" who is probably better known these days, deservedly in my view, as the American republic's first major journalistic gadfly. Freneau was a good deal more than that as well, since his *National Gazette* was closely associated with the emergence of the first opposition political party, the Republicans (or Democratic Republicans to distinguish it from the modern GOP), which was first publicly named and its principles first spelled out in his pages.

Freneau was also a bitter critic of the elective quasi-monarchy that the presidency almost immediately started to become, and one of his most frequent themes was the overpowering influence of "great names," like George Washington, "over the human mind." Freneau recognized that putting a face and name people liked and respected on a government, personifying it in a word, was a good way to distract even good republican citizens from the potentially unrepublican policies and values of that government. Once the officer and the office were thoroughly conflated, popular veneration of the great personage would make criticism of the government seem churlish and rather treasonous. Then you had monarchy – we might just call it something more general like autarchy – whether the chief magistrate was called "King" or not. Once a single man or family had been elevated over all the others, any hopes of a society based on republican political equality were destroyed. As Freneau or a like-minded contributor wrote over the pseudonym "Cornelia,"

> No character or place ought to be sacred in a republican government as to be above criticism. Inviolability and infallibility are *royal* qualities, which *slaves* only can comprehend. . . . In a free government every man is a king, every women is a queen; each should preserve the individual sovereignty guaranteed by our constitution that "ALL MEN ARE BORN EQUALLY FREE." To *homage* any one is to destroy the equality of our sovereignty, and is a *degradation* of freemen. [Philadelphia *National Gazette*, 21 Dec. 1792]

Based on this conviction, the over-veneration of leaders was a insult to the human dignity of all, and reason. Freneau made a habit of lampooning the "absurd panegyrics" that issued from orators, artists, and his fellow poets whenever some Great Man died or whenever some landmark of George Washington's life was reached. "Birth-day odes" to Washington were especially vexatious.

Back to the point of this post. Wading through Freneau's collected poetry – nothing says "weekend" like Freneau's collected poetry – I ran across his, er, counter-programming to the choirs of angels that most other writers were unleashing in response to Washington's death, "STANZAS Occasioned by certain absurd, extravagant, and even blasphemous panegyrics and encomiums on the character of the late Gen. Washington." Now, Freneau was no Yeats, so I do not make any claims for this piece as Great Literature, but the message is a good

one that our time needs even more than Freneau's did: "Who stuff'd with gods the historian's page," the poet asks, "And raised beyond the human sphere/Some who, we know, were mortal here?" I particularly like Freneau's emphasis on the blasphemy involved in supposed Christians deifying even a great mortal like Washington: "Ye patrons of the ranting strain,/What temples have been rent in twain?" As you can imagine, this snottiness did little to help Freneau's fading popularity and ever-precarious finances.

At any rate, President's Day (give or take a week) seemed like an appropriate time for a reminder that democracy needs some disrespect and inappropriateness towards our historical icons in addition to the celebrations. Come to think of it, that might make Freneau the patron saint of the blogosphere.

P.S. Thank you, readers, and editors, for letting me work out my mental blocks in public.

This article originally appeared in issue 8.3 (April, 2008).

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