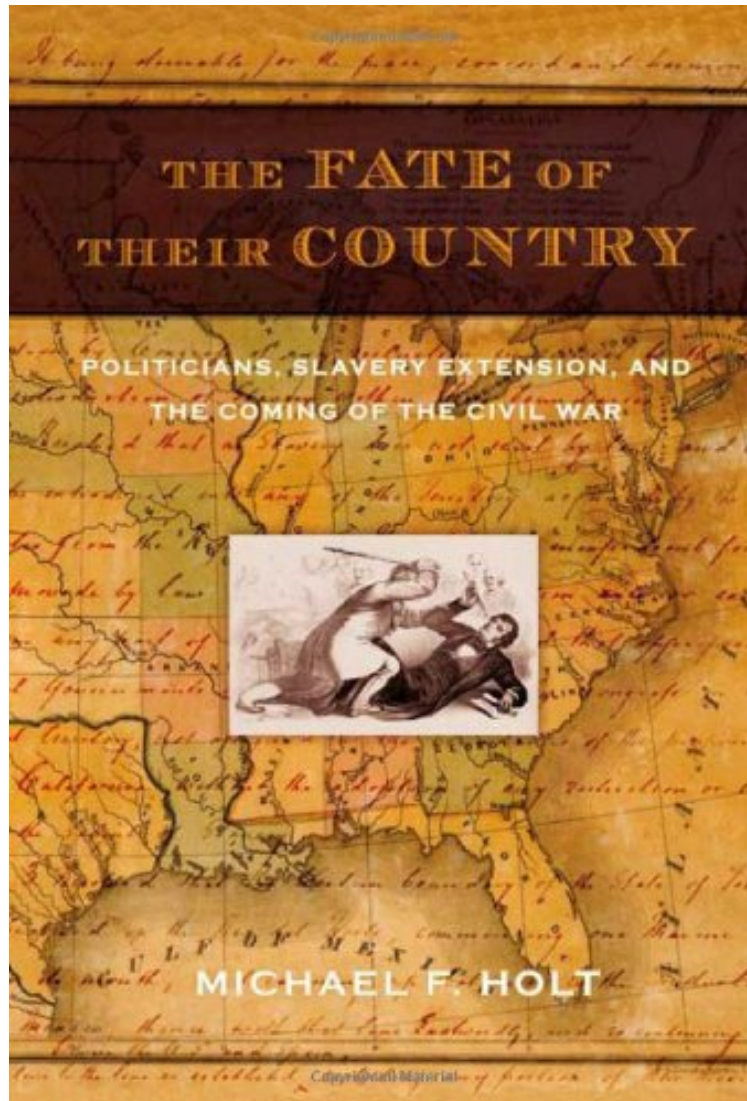


(Pdf free) The Fate of Their Country: Politicians, Slavery Extension, and the Coming of the Civil War

The Fate of Their Country: Politicians, Slavery Extension, and the Coming of the Civil War

Michael F. Holt

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Michael F. Holt : The Fate of Their Country: Politicians, Slavery Extension, and the Coming of the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fate of Their Country: Politicians, Slavery Extension, and the Coming of the Civil War:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Plain, easy, pleasure read By R. Oliva My political history professor

recommended me this book. It was a fantastic, easy, and fun read that I went through in one afternoon. It is books like this that make me feel like political history is a topic that does not get enough credit. Political History may seem dry but I find it to be the most interesting and relevant aspect of history to the problems that we are having in our country today. If there is anything I have learned the actions of politicians hasn't changed much. Holt is completely right that the actions of politicians DOES MATTER. Anyone who thinks that politics isn't important obviously hasn't turned on the TV. This book is only 150 pages and is a one night read. However, all of the information in this book discusses a very short but important period of time and gives information about events that are not taught in any class. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good book By L. Thompson The book surprised in quality. The events are linear. The cast of characters is relevant and not introduced at the same time. Get a little sad but that's history. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Brian Sullivan Good analysis of the political dynamics and the use of slavery in the politics of the time

How partisan politics lead to the Civil War What brought about the Civil War? Leading historian Michael F. Holt convincingly offers a disturbingly contemporary answer: partisan politics. In this brilliant and succinct book, Holt distills a lifetime of scholarship to demonstrate that secession and war did not arise from two irreconcilable economies any more than from moral objections to slavery. Short-sighted politicians were to blame. Rarely looking beyond the next election, the two dominant political parties used the emotionally charged and largely chimerical issue of slavery's extension westward to pursue reelection and settle political scores, all the while inexorably dragging the nation towards disunion. Despite the majority opinion (held in both the North and South) that slavery could never flourish in the areas that sparked the most contention from 1845 to 1861—the Mexican Cession, Oregon, and Kansas—politicians in Washington, especially members of Congress, realized the partisan value of the issue and acted on short-term political calculations with minimal regard for sectional comity. War was the result. Including select speeches by Lincoln and others, *The Fate of Their Country* openly challenges us to rethink a seminal moment in America's history.

From Publishers Weekly University of Virginia historian Holt (*The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party*) provides an elegant, brief analysis of the partisan political forces that, via the great debate over the extension of slavery into the American West, eventually plunged the United States into civil war. Holt discounts the view that the war arose inevitably from two irreconcilable economies as well as the more naive interpretation that it derived from righteous Northern outrage over slavery. Instead he argues that shortsighted and self-absorbed politicians from both the South and the North (their agendas focused, for the most part, on simple re-election) needlessly exploited the slavery-extension debate and escalated the associated rhetoric to a crescendo that finally made disunion inevitable. Holt provides brilliant thumbnail portraits of such key players as Abraham Lincoln, John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, James K. Polk, Daniel Webster and Stephen A. Douglas. He also offers vitally lucid analyses of such key legislative issues as the Wilmot Proviso, the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Stating his case in a nutshell, Holt writes, "At few other times in American history did policy makers' decisions have such a profound and calamitous effect on the nation as they did in the 1840s and 1850s." 8 pages of bw illus. not seen by PW; map. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Michael Holt's fascinating study of partisan politics and the territorial slavery issue shows again why he is one of America's finest pre-civil war historians. William W. Freehling, author of *The South vs. The South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* Michael Holt has distilled a lifetime of scholarship in this impressive account of America's greatest political crisis. There is no better introduction to the intricate yet explosive politics of the 1850s. Harry Watson, author of *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* Michael Holt has written a superb account of the nation's descent into Civil War. A skilled political historian, he focuses on the decisions that political leaders made, their arousal of the most divisive passions, and their loss of control of a system present in American life. Joel H. Silbey, author of *Martin Van Buren and the Emergence of American Popular Politics* About the Author Michael F. Holt teaches at the University of Virginia and is author of numerous books, including *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party* and *The Political Crisis of the 1850s*, and the co-author of *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (3rd edition).