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Douglas Southall Freeman (review)

Keith D. Dickson

The Journal of Military History, Volume 67, Number 1, January 2003, pp.  
265-266 (Review)

Published by Society for Military History

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2003.0024>



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“old” airman, and a “new” scholar, Anthony Cain has served this air force well, and this profession.

Robert J. Young

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***Douglas Southall Freeman.*** By David E. Johnson. Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing, 2002. ISBN 1-58980-021-4. Photographs. Illustrations. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 476. \$27.50.

Douglas Southall Freeman was one of the preeminent military historians of the twentieth century. His main works, *R. E. Lee* and *Lee's Lieutenants*, have never been out of print. So thorough was his research that these magisterial volumes have become the standard history of the Army of Northern Virginia. Although other biographers have chronicled Lee's life since Freeman, they all stand in the shadow of the master. Likewise, many books have been written about the campaigns in the Eastern Theater, but every author has found that Freeman had already covered the ground. He made his living, however, as a journalist, putting in a full workday editing the *Richmond News Leader* for over thirty years. During World War I, his editorials analyzing the war in Europe were so thorough that President Woodrow Wilson read them as a source of intelligence. He became famous in World War II by describing the campaigns of the European and Pacific Theaters by drawing on parallels to Lee's Civil War campaigns, and overlaying the terrain of France or the Philippines on Virginia to assist his readers in understanding complex military operations. He kept company with great commanders who valued his prodigious knowledge of warfare: Nimitz, Churchill, Eisenhower, MacArthur, and Marshall.

How did Freeman accomplish so much in one lifetime? As author David E. Johnson so thoroughly illustrates, he lived a dual life by becoming a master of time management through an exercise of enormous self-discipline, making maximum use of what Freeman called “the economy of small idle time.” Everything in his life had its precise place in the day for concentration: rising, eating, work, gardening, family time, reading and study, sleeping. This well-regulated life had its costs, and Johnson examines how those closest to Freeman often paid those costs more heavily than he did. This book greatly benefits from previously unavailable family material that reveals the personal side of this exceptional man. By concentrating on Freeman's literary life, Johnson has provided military historians with a number of valuable insights into Freeman's historical method and approach. Johnson allows the reader to observe the creation in progress, observing how Freeman used sources, made judgments, and crafted his prose. Johnson's narrative skills make this experience both fascinating and satisfying. This solid, well-researched, and engaging biography reveals Freeman as he himself would have wished to be seen. Johnson is content to remain within that

boundary and does not offer any broader assessments of Freeman's place in Southern history. As a Southerner and son of a Confederate veteran, Freeman's pursuit of a true rendering of history deserves additional analysis. Nevertheless, Johnson has laid the groundwork for future studies examining Douglas Southall Freeman's important contributions to shaping modern Southern identity through the use of history and memory.

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***From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt's America and the Origins of the Second World War.*** By David Reynolds. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001. ISBN 1-56663-389-3. Sources. Index. Pp. x, 209. \$24.95.

In his latest volume, David Reynolds discusses United States foreign policy in the years immediately preceding America's entry into the Second World War. The author gives a narrative account of events, from Munich to Pearl Harbor, which had an impact in three areas: Roosevelt's policies, public perceptions and precedents for the postwar world. Reynolds notes that Roosevelt was able to replace the weakened New Deal coalition with one based on foreign policy and aid to Great Britain. This transition could happen because Roosevelt was able to negotiate resistance to German aggression in the Atlantic, to the point of undeclared naval war. However, FDR was less able to manipulate policy in the Pacific because, according to Reynolds, opinion was more divided over Japan.

The author then goes on to discuss the way FDR altered the American people's perceptions from a strictly hemispheric concern to a more global attitude. FDR's newly coined term "national security" worked to broaden the United States's interests in the world. Reynolds suggests that it was necessary for Roosevelt to alter perceptions based on ideology. If Germany, Japan, and Italy were totalitarian regimes, then democracy was the only way to defeat them. Britain was repackaged as less class based, less imperialist, and more egalitarian. The Atlantic Charter and Four Freedoms provided the rhetorical foundations for FDR's use of democratic ideology to define the war's aims.

Reynolds's final point looks at the precedents set during the period 1938–41, which would have an impact on the Cold War. He suggests that U.S. foreign policy, especially in 1940–41, has been neglected when analyzing how the United States emerged as a superpower and how its Cold War ideology evolved. Reynolds traces the prewar origins of Cold War traditions such as how: globalism led to the establishment of NATO; the charge of totalitarianism was applied to the Soviet Union; the imperial presidency under FDR led to Johnson's and Nixon's policies in Vietnam; the failure of intelligence at Pearl Harbor led to the wartime establishment of the OSS and later the CIA, and Roosevelt's push for atomic research led to the development of the atomic bomb and the Cold War nuclear arms race. By tracing the devel-