



# **The Gentlemen and the Roughts: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army**

*Lorien Foote*

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# The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army


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During the Civil War, the Union army—like the society from which it sprang—appeared cohesive enough to withstand four years of grueling war against the Confederates and to claim victory in 1865. But fractiousness bubbled below the surface of the North’s presumably united front. Internal fissures were rife within the Union army: class divisions, regional antagonisms, ideological differences, and conflicting personalities all distracted the army from quelling the Southern rebellion.

In this highly original contribution to Civil War and gender history, Lorien Foote reveals that these internal battles were fought against the backdrop of manhood. Clashing ideals of manliness produced myriad conflicts when educated, refined, and wealthy officers (“gentlemen”) found themselves commanding a hard-drinking group of fighters (“roughs”)—a dynamic that often resulted in violence and even death. Challenges, fights, and duels were common. Based on extensive research into heretofore ignored primary sources—courts-martial records and regimental order books—**The Gentlemen and the Roughs** uncovers holes in our understanding of the men who fought the Civil War and the society that produced them.

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