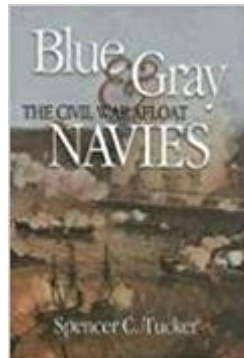


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# Blue & Gray Navies: The Civil War Afloat



## Synopsis

A longtime military history professor at Virginia Military Institute and prolific author, Spencer Tucker examines the important roles played by the Union and Confederate navies during the Civil War. His book makes use of recent scholarship as well as official records and the memoirs of participants to provide a complete perspective for the general reader and enough detail to hold the interest of the specialist. Tucker opens with an overview of the U.S. Navy's history to 1861 and then closely examines the two navies at the beginning of the war, looking at the senior leadership, officers and personnel, organization, recruitment practices, training, facilities, and manufacturing resources. He discusses the acquisition of ships and the design and construction of new types, as well as ship armament and the development of naval ordnance, and North and South naval strategies. The book then takes a close look at the war itself, including the Union blockade of the Confederate Atlantic and Gulf coasts, riverine warfare in the Western theater, Confederate blockade running and commerce raiders, and the Union campaigns against New Orleans, Charleston, Vicksburg, and on the Red River. Tucker covers the major battles and technological innovations, and he evaluates the significance of the Union blockade and the demands it placed on Union resources. Fourteen maps and a glossary of terms help readers follow the text. Extensive endnotes provide additional material.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 426 pages

Publisher: Naval Institute Press; 1st edition (May 11, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1591148820

ISBN-13: 978-1591148821

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.7 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #961,921 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #65 in [Books > History >](#)

[Americas > United States > Civil War > Naval Operations](#) #605 in [Books > History > Americas](#)

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## Customer Reviews

"Tucker's coverage of naval operations, administration and personnel, weapons and resources, and leaders is unparalleled. Chapters of the major campaigns clearly explain the vital contribution of

naval forces to Union success in executing the Anaconda Plan that strangled the Confederacy. This will long stand as the standard single-volume history of naval and joint operations during the Civil War."--James C. Bradford, Texas A&M University, Editor of the International Encyclopedia of Military History "At last the naval side of the Civil War is getting the attention it deserves. In this comprehensive survey, Spencer Tucker effectively mines the scholarship of the past several decades to produce a clear and authoritative history of the Civil War at sea."--Craig L. Symonds, author of *Decision at Sea* "A thoroughly researched, well written history that emphasizes joint army-navy operations in the American Civil War. For those interested in this topic, Tucker's new book is a must."--Jack Friend, author of *West Wind, Flood Tide*

Spencer C. Tucker held the John Biggs Chair of Military History at the Virginia Military Institute for six years until his retirement. He is the author of twenty-five books, including the award winning *Stephen Decatur: A Life Most Bold and Daring*.

I have had an interest in the naval side of the Civil War for years and this is a very thorough, well documented history of that aspect of the war. The book could benefit from more maps and photos to help bring the ships, locations and battles to life which is why I didn't give it five stars. A good resource for learning about this important part of the Civil War and the beginnings of the modern navy.

Good research resource

Though overshadowed by the famous campaigns on land, the naval battles fought between the Union and the Confederacy was just as significant in determining the outcome of the Civil War. In this book, Spencer Tucker seeks to rectify this imbalance, not just by giving the fighting on the sea and the rivers their due, but by going beyond the usual focus on the famous ironclad duels and the commerce raiders to provide a comprehensive study that includes many neglected aspects of the naval war between the states. Tucker succeeds in this aim. His book is a comprehensive account of the war, one that looks not just at the battles, but the people, vessels, logistics, and technologies involved in the combat between the two sides. Yet much of the drama is missing from the story. The first part of the book, where Tucker addresses the organization, ships, and personnel of the navies, reads like an extended encyclopedia entry; it is not until Tucker reaches the famous battle between the Monitor and the Virginia that the book is truly engaging, and much of the rest of the text

struggles to emulate these pages. For those readers seeking to understand the naval aspects of the Civil War, how it was fought, and the role that it played in the broader struggle this is a minor quibble, but anyone seeking a dramatic narrative of ironclad ships battling one other should turn elsewhere.

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