



Terrible Swift Sword: The Legacy of John Brown

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More than two centuries after his birth and almost a century and a half after his death, the legendary life and legacy of John Brown go marching on. Variouslly deemed martyr, madman, monster, terrorist, and saint, he remains one of the most controversial figures in America's history. Brown's actions in Kansas and Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, provided major catalysts for the American Civil War, actions that continue today to evoke commendation or provoke condemnation. Through the prisms of history, literature, psychology, criminal justice, oral history, African American studies, political science, film studies, and anthropology, *Terrible Swift Sword* offers insights not only into John Brown's controversial character and motives, but also into the nature of a troubled society before, during, and after the Civil War. The discussions include reasons why Brown's contemporaries supported him, attempts to define Brown using different criteria, analyses of Brown's behavior, his depiction in literature, and examinations of the iconography surrounding him. The interdisciplinary focus marshalled by editor Peggy A. Russo makes *Terrible Swift Sword* unique, and this, together with the popular mythology surrounding the legend of John Brown, will appeal to a broad audience of readers interested in this turbulent moment in American history. Paul Finkelman is Chapman Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Tulsa College of Law. He is the author of many articles and books, including *His Soul Goes Marching On: Responses to John Brown and the Harpers Ferry Raid* and the Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference. Peggy Russo is an assistant professor of English at the Mont Alto Campus of Pennsylvania State University. She has published in *Shakespeare Bulletin*, *The Southern Literary Journal*, *Journal of American Culture*, *Shakespeare and the Classroom*, and *Civil War Book Review*.

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