



The Occupation of Eliza Goode

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Eliza Goode is born into a New Orleans' parlor house in the mid 1800s. Sold as a courtesan on her seventeenth birthday, she flees her arranged future at the outbreak of the Civil War. She is passed up through Mississippi's plantations from one slave quarters to another until she emerges at the Confederates' Camp Corinth and is swept along to the battle of Manassas.

Along the way, she meets Bennett McFerrin and his wife, Rissa, who follows her husband to war. Using guile and her extraordinary beauty, Eliza transforms herself from camp follower prostitute to laundress, nurse, and caregiver to Rissa when Bennett is taken prisoner by Ulysses S. Grant at the Battle of Fort Donelson in Clarksville, Tennessee. Her final transformation frees her from her past.

Eliza's story is more than a tale of war, transcendence, and hardship. It is a story told in modern times by Susan Masters, a novelist in Boston, whose cousin, Hadley, finds Eliza's letters in an attic and implores Susan to write Eliza's story to answer questions she seeks for her own life. Hadley has a shameful secret of her own—a past, about which she cannot even bring herself to speak.

Set in the second summer of the Iraq war and three years after 9/11, this is not your usual Civil War novel. This story says much about how we became who we are, and who we might have become, had the Civil War not saved us as a nation.

The Occupation of Eliza Goode Details

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Author : Shelley Mickle

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From Reader Review The Occupation of Eliza Goode for online ebook

Jane says

Interesting story-brave woman-lots of Civil War history-

Chrissy says

aww, I really wanted to love this. The premise sounds amazing, and even after I learned that the plot is comprised of Eliza's story through the perception of a modern day writer, I thought it'd be more than ok. What I found was a disjointed story, with an odd writing style that made me dread opening the book after day 2. Still...I persevered for another 2 days and was more frustrated than entranced. Damn.

April (Pandastar102) says

This Civil War novel by Shelley Mickle take a different and fascinating approach and I feel it is a must-read for anyone who likes books about that conflict. I personally found it difficult to put the book down. If you read it you'll see why.

C-shaw says

Very, very intriguing story of a 17-year-old prostitute during the Civil War!

* * * * *

What an excellent story this was; however, it was a novel-within-a-novel, and I could have done without the present-day story, which didn't add a thing to the riveting life adventures of the Civil War heroine. I paid \$1.99 for this as an Amazon Kindle download, and enjoyed it more than books for which I paid ten times as much. Read it!!

Kathi says

A very unusual book, Really liked this. A different look at the Civil War era, plus it nicely blended the past and present.

Marilyn Rhea says

Historical fiction at its best. This is about a modern day woman that is given letters written by Eliza Goode in the mid 1800's. It is moving, and emotional. Just reading the letters she wrote, draws you into her world and

the very difficult life she led. She started out with a difficult life, and was forced to make many choices, some concerning her own morality, and also the ones that she encounters in her life. The author did an excellent job of drawing us into Eliza's world, and wondering what was going to happen next. I particularly liked that she finished the story instead of leaving us hanging, which a lot of books seem to do. I was given this book to read and review, which in no way influenced me on what to write.

Marta Martinez Abreu says

I almost never read a book twice but this one I will read more than that! A wonderful look at the back side of the civil war and so much more. This is a book about humanity. This is a book about the struggles, defeats and successes of a survivor and the ways that we are shaped and shifted by the world around us. Shelley Frasier Mickle has given us a history lesson and a life lesson in the most entertaining way. We aren't that different from those who came before us.

Gina says

Normally, I find books that alternate between the present day and the past to be frustrating, as the transitions are often poorly executed. Not so with this book, thanks to the author Shelley Fraser Mickle. We flip between the Civil War and the story of Eliza Hamilton, or Eliza Goode, revealed to us by the other side of the story, present-day Susan, a writer who is given letters written by Eliza to "dear One" by Susan's cousin Hadley, who is dying. Hadley wants Eliza's whole story revealed to her before her time runs out, perhaps because she suspects there is something more than familial ties binding her to her distant relative Eliza. Susan is the woman to do this, to interpret the letters and build Eliza's story to life.

Eliza escapes her selling off to a courtesan and takes to the road, trailing Civil War camps and working as a laundress for the soldiers. With expert descriptions of war life and a genuine narrative of the moral struggles Eliza faces on a day to day basis, the author manages to marry the moral anguish of war to the physical anguish of sickness and regrets in the modern day. A very unusual book, but one I am so happy to have been able to read.

Carole Knoles says

"I gave him a teaspoon of truth and a barrel of concoction." I shall use that brilliant line to describe any prevarication that in future I find it necessary to tell. The reading of history can sometimes list to the dull side but not when it is wrapped in the story of Eliza a woman who starts out life as the child of a prostitute and is brought up in a brothel in New Orleans. The strength of character that she shows when she launches herself on the road to determine her own destiny is altogether formidable. My time was well spent with this novel.

Patty Mccormick says

This is a painless way to learn about the civil war. This book passes from today to the past flawlessly! It goes back and forth frequently, but it is clear that the author took many pains to make each transition clear. There was never any confusion when it shifted time periods. This book was very well put together. The plot is wonderful. I wish this was a true story and not fiction. The story goes quickly and the book is eventful and fast paced. The main characters in this book each have their own story. There is romance, addiction, terminal illness, family relationships and strong female characters. I was especially interested in the civil war parts concerning medical treatments, since I am a nurse. This book went fast for me. I didn't want it to end it was so good! This book had a great ending!! I'm not going to give it away though!! This is definitely a 5 star book!!!

Sally says

Unusual Perspective

A Civil War story told through the eyes of a woman is such a great idea. So much research (seven years, in fact) created a perspective that I have never considered before. The contributions that only a female could provide made this novel so much more historically accurate. I loved the way the author told us about Eliza Goode by way of three different methods. First, in the present, through Susan and Hadley. Second, Eliza's letters to "Dear One". Third and last, Susan's interpretation of Eliza's papers. My Book Club discussed it in great detail. We all had an opinion --- in my estimation, that is the best testament to this novel.
