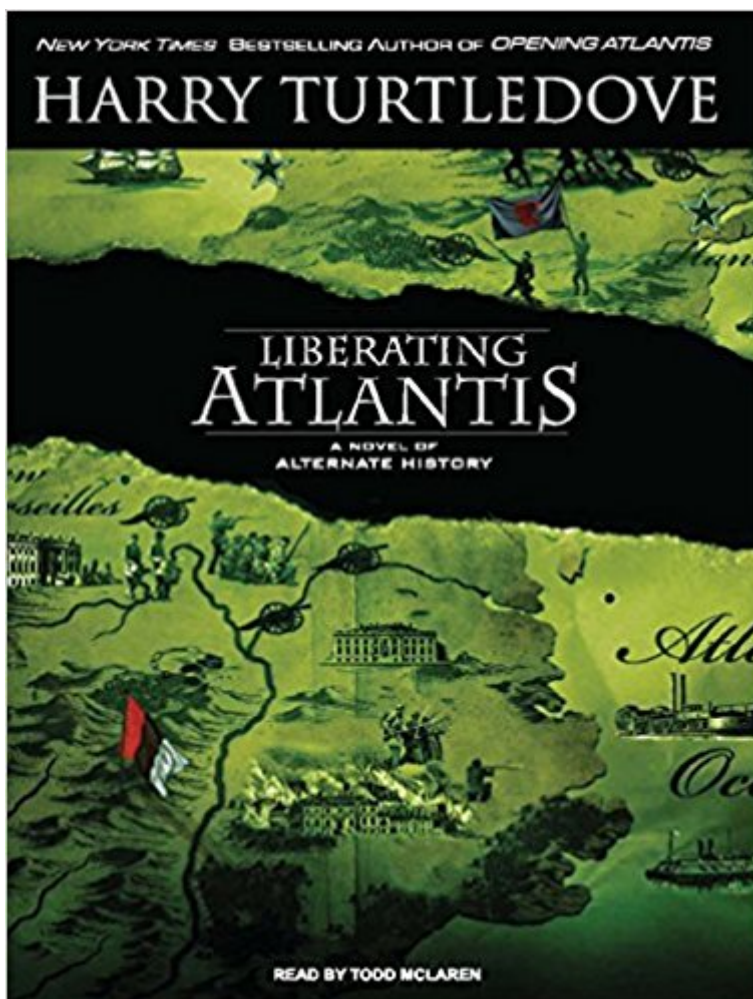


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# Liberating Atlantis: A Novel Of Alternate History



## Synopsis

Frederick Radcliff is a descendant of the family that founded Atlantis's first settlement, and his grandfather Victor led the army against England to win the nation's independence. But he is also a black slave, unable to prove his lineage, and forced to labor on a cotton plantation in the southern region of the country. Frederick feels the color of his skin shouldn't keep him from having the same freedoms his ancestors fought and died for. So he becomes the leader of a revolutionary army of slaves determined to free all of his brethren across Atlantis.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**\*Starred Review\*** Followers of Turtledove's Atlantis trilogy (Opening Atlantis, 2007; The United States of Atlantis, 2008; and this book) won't be surprised that it concludes with an Atlantean Civil War. Nor will those familiar with Turtledove's oeuvre be surprised that his expertise on the American Civil War makes the third book the trilogy's best. To get a this-world fix on its animating conceit, imagine that Nat Turner was George Washington's mulatto grandson, who, threatened with death, determined to be free and raised a formidable slave army. Such is what Frederic Ratcliff does in Atlantis, where the Slave Power isn't as formidable as the American South was and racism isn't as strong. Ratcliff and his Native American general, Lorenzo, face a respectable professional army led by hard-bitten Balthasar Sinapis, a European exile with a mysterious past. At the nominal head of that army on alternating

days are pro-slavery consul Jeremiah Stafford and his anti-slavery partner, Leland Newton. Political bickering, effective guerrilla tactics, and unfamiliar terrain lead to a situation in which the army must negotiate peace or be slaughtered. Then the light dawns on both parties that fighting to decisive victory or defeat will ruin Atlantis for everyone. The Treaty of Slug Hollow is hammered out and presented to the Senate. More obstacles remain, and the Senate offers a mixture of horror-struck opposition, hair-tearing doubt, and sighs of relief. In the end, readers may, overwhelmingly, join in joyously launching their hats skyward. --Roland Green --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Harry Turtledove is an award-winning and bestselling author of science fiction, fantasy, and historical fiction. His alternate-history works include *How Few Remain* (winner of the Sidewise Award for Best Novel), *The Man with the Iron Heart*, the *Worldwar* saga, the *Colonization* books, and the *Settling Accounts* series. Todd McLaren was involved in radio for more than twenty years in cities on both coasts. He left broadcasting for a full-time career in voice-overs, where he has been heard on more than 5,000 TV and radio commercials, as well as TV promos, narrations for documentaries on such networks as A&E and the History Channel, and films.

A thing to keep in mind, though the book jackets don't make this nearly clear enough, is that *Liberating Atlantis* is the third novel in a trilogy. That said, while not qualifying quite as a stand alone, one doesn't HAVE to have read the first two novels. *Liberating Atlantis* is Harry's vision of what would have happened had Southern slaves in our country taken up arms in an organized way and fought a revolution against their white enslavers. The slave leading the uprising is Frederick Radcliff, grandson of Victor (the main character in the previous installment). He was born and raised a slave, and by middle age he was entrenched in his life there. Then, by an accident of fate (a warped floorboard), his life changed....and days later he took advantage of an outbreak of yellow fever, obtained a cache of guns, and started an uprising. Nat Turner, with better luck, in other words. The Atlantean army, led by Consuls Newton (a northerner sympathetic to the revolution) and Stafford (a fire eating southerner) is dispatched to fight him. The novel's inner monologues are from these three men, with their differing viewpoints. And therein lies the issue: Those monologues, along with Radcliff's conversations with his chief advisor and his wife, and Newton and Stafford with each other, are so repetitive and one note as to be exasperating. Radcliff, when he's not talking about strategy, bitches about his life as a slave (understandable mind you), while Stafford keeps ranting about how blacks are inferior to whites and how dare they revolt. Newton is meant to be the one in

the middle, the voice of reason, and while he pulls it off....well I got tired of it all after 200 pages. And that's not even halfway through the book. Add to that a telegraphed ending.....The Atlantis series was interesting, however pointless the middle chapter was (it was the American Revolution in Atlantis, with Victor Radcliff subbing for George Washington), and I'm happy that he seems to have ended it here, rather than go forward and have Atlantis be a part of the world wars of the 20th century. But for the first 80% of the trilogy it moved along nicely, and I'm not unhappy that I bought it. But I have to wonder, after purchasing over 15 of his books (the southern timeline series is most of that), whether I should leave Harry Turtledove behind. His publishing pace is so quick that I think quality gets a little overlooked. There are so many books out there, especially now with electronic exclusive books and series, that my search to have my proverbial socks knocked off needs to take me elsewhere. Three stars.

This is the third in the "Atlantis" series from Harry Turtledove which currently consists of 1) "Opening Atlantis" 2) "The United States of Atlantis" 3) This book, "Liberating Atlantis" This series looks at the history of the United States through the prism of an alternative history world in which there is a large island or small continent in the mid Atlantic. The first book described the discovery of the island, named Atlantis, and its early history, which bore a remarkable resemblance to that of the US colonies up to about the seven years war. The second book essentially tells the story of the American War of Independence but translates it onto the island of Atlantis. This book tells the story of how slavery came to be abolished through a civil war in the mid-nineteenth century, though the parallels with real history are not nearly as close as in the second book. During that second book, the character who corresponds to the historical George Washington had an affair with a black slave girl, which resulted in the birth of a son. "Liberating Atlantis" begins two generations later. Frederick Radcliffe, grandson of the general who defeated the British and gained freedom for White Atlantians, is a house slave on a plantation in one of the southern states of Atlantis. He doesn't usually dare use his famous surname within the hearing of his master or other whites because slaves are not supposed to have surnames. Annoying as his servile status is, he knows that as a house slave he is far better off than those blacks and "copperskins" (native Americans brought to Atlantis as slaves) who have to work in the fields. But for an accident he would probably never have chosen to rock the boat. But then events outside his control fill him with a burning sense of an injustice - and a chance to do something about it ...Turtledove once wrote that alternative history provides a "funhouse mirror" through which we can take a different perspective on real history. He has put this into practice: others have described his novels as having taken their plots from actual

events but with different historical and fictional individuals and races playing the same roles. For example, in his book "In the Presence of Mine Enemies" a Third Reich which had won World War II eventually collapses in exactly the same way that the real Soviet Union collapsed. And Turtledove's massive eleven-book saga which begins with "How Few Remain" tells the dystopian history of a world in which the Confederate States of America won independence and survived for nearly a century but followed almost exactly the historical course which in the real world led Germany to Hitler's Third Reich and the Holocaust. The parallels with real history are much less close in this book than in "The United States of Atlantis" but they are definitely still there and looking for them is one of the more entertaining parts of the book. (I was particularly amused when one of the pro-slavery politicians makes a comment to the commander of the Atlantean army which in real history Abraham Lincoln made to one of his less aggressive generals - "If you don't want to use the army I would like to borrow it for a while.") Includes a fascinating little passage about the extent to which important individuals affect historical trends. At one point two of the main characters are speculating about what course Atlantean history would have followed if Frederic Radcliffe's grandfather hadn't had the affair with the slave girl and he had never been born. They come to the conclusion that the particular war they are involved in would not have happened, but within a few decades something similar probably would have. Turtledove also puts into the thoughts of his characters ideas which foreshadow future events. One or two of the characters in "The United States of Atlantis" (including, ironically, Frederick Radcliffe's grandfather) were more than a little uncomfortable that their fight for freedom for White Atlanteans did not include anything similar for blacks or "copperskins" in the southern part of the continent. Similarly, in this book two of the main characters opposed to slavery become uncomfortably aware that some of the worst injustices against Atlantean women, white or black, will not be abolished with slavery. In both books the characters concerned reluctantly come to the conclusion which can be summarised as "one battle at a time." All the books Turtledove writes seem to get slammed by some readers who hate them and praised by others who loved them. I am quite certain that this will be no exception. I enjoyed reading this series. While none of the Atlantis books are a work of genius like "The Guns of the South" or "The Two Georges: The Novel of an Alternate America" they are nevertheless among Harry Turtledove's better novels. I liked the characters, I thought the action was well paced, the descriptions imaginative, the sequence of historical events broadly plausible. And he keeps his tendency to repeat things too much reasonably well in check!

"Liberating Atlantis" is the third volume of Turtledove's "Atlantis" trilogy, set in a fictional universe

wherein the eastern third of North America is separated from the rest of the continent, and resides in the mid Atlantic. Unsurprisingly, it is settled by much the same people as came to North America in the real world, and goes through a somewhat similar history. In "Liberating Atlantis", the United States Of Atlantis finally deals with the issue of slavery ---again in similar fashion to the real world, but with fascinating twists. Turtledove's enormous knowledge of history and unsurpassed story telling skills make the tale as real as anything you will ever read. The plot and dialogue are crisp and riveting. I believe this is the best of the three "Atlantis" books.

This book, as are his other Atlantis novels, is an alternate American history. However, this one shows creativity which is lacking in the preceding novels. A truly unique alternative to the American civil war is brought about by a single loose floor board, and Atlantis will never be the same. Also filled with Roman history quotes and other factoids, this book is one you will find nearly impossible to put down. Enjoy!

Excellent book, great series!

For an alternative history story it makes you think that it very well could have happened.

Verbose but imaginative. Lacks suspense, character development and willing suspension of disbelief. Plot is obvious, people superficial. For fans only

Good enough book that my partner wanted it in hardback. Turtledove is a great writer of alternate history, and this is no exception.

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