

CIVIL WAR, RECONSTRUCTION, AND REUNION

HIS 338
MHRA 2209

Dr. Mark Elliott
T-TH 9:30-10:45

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Civil War and its aftermath marked a watershed in the social, ideological and political history of the nation and its impact continues to be felt today. This course examines the American Civil War and its aftermath with an emphasis on the causes and consequences of the conflict between the North and South. It traces the development of an antagonism between slavery and capitalism as contrasting social and ideological systems, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of these systems as they influenced the outcome of the war, and explores the continuation of this ideological and social conflict between these societies during Reconstruction. The attempt to reconstruct Southern society on the principle of equal citizenship raised contentious issues about the meaning of free labor, democratic equality, and Federal authority over the states that are examined in detail. Myths, legends, and ideological legacies of the Civil War and Reconstruction will also receive attention.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Students will establish a strong foundation of knowledge in the causes, conduct, and consequences of the Civil War and Reconstruction.
- Students will improve their ability to analyze and interpret historical documents.
- Students will improve their ability to make historical arguments, and to assess those made by others.
- Students will be able identify common myths and false beliefs about the Civil War, and recognize the ideological purposes such myths and beliefs serve.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:

A student who is not present when his/her name is called at the beginning of class, will be marked "absent." More than three absences will lower your *final grade* by one-third of a grade for each subsequent absence (that is, your fourth absence will cause an "B" to become an "B-," your fifth will make it a "C+," your six will make it a "C," etc.). Missing a total of 9 or more classes for any reason (one-third of the semester) will result

in an automatic “F” for the course. No exceptions. Please use your 3 absences wisely. Students are responsible to complete on time all work assigned (or due) on days in which they are absent.

Participation:

You are expected to complete each week’s reading before class so that you can participate constructively in a class discussion and be informed for the lectures. You must be attentive and awake during class. Sleeping in class will cause you will be marked “absent”—so do not bother coming to class if you cannot remain conscious! Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions to the class—not the quantity of contributions you make.

Written Work:

Written work is due at the beginning of class *and will not be accepted by e-mail*. There will be in-class quizzes on the readings periodically to encourage you to keep up with the reading. If you miss one of these quizzes, you must do a short paper as a replacement or else receive a zero for the assignment. There will be one term paper on an assigned topic to be distributed in class. In order to pass the course you must hand in all written work on time and complete all assignments.

Academic Honor Code:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/complete/>

Grading Formula:

- 20% Class participation.
- 20% Quizzes and short papers
- 20% Midterm.
- 20% Term Paper
- 20% Final Exam.

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG Bookstore):

James McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*.

Paul Finkleman, *Defending Slavery*

Johnathan Earle, *John Brown’s Raid on Harper’s Ferry*.

James Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican*

Albion Tourgée, *A Fool’s Errand by One of the Fools*

Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels*

Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*
David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*

Week 1. INTRODUCTION: SLAVERY AND THE UNION

Aug. 26. The Civil War and American Culture

Reading: Pitcaithley, “‘A Cosmic Threat’: The National Park Service Addresses the Causes of the American Civil War.”

Aug. 28. Slavery and the Revolutionary Generation

Week 2. ABOLITIONISM AND BLACK RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY

Reading: Finkelman, *Defending Slavery*

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 27-58].

Sept. 2 Abolitionism and the causes of the Civil War
Sept. 4 Economics: Slavery v. Free Labor

Week 3. THE TUMULTUOUS 1850s

Reading: Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican*, XIII-XXII, 3-85.

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 59-124].

Sept. 9 The Failed Compromise of 1850.
Sept. 11 Rise of the Republican Party

Week 4. THE CRISIS OF SECESSION

Reading: Earle, *John Brown*

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 125-158, A1-14].

Sept. 16 The Dred Scot Decision and the slide towards war.
Sept. 18 John Brown and the Secession Movement

Week 5. WAGING WAR

Reading: Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*, 3-80.

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 163-282].

Sept. 23 The Early War: Strategies and Goals
Sept. 25 North vs. South: Strengths and Weaknesses

Week 6. EMANCIPATION

Reading: Oakes, *Radical and the Republican*, 87-208.
Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*, 81-111.
[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 283-326, 425-442].

Sept. 30 Lincoln and the Management of the War
Oct. 2 Emancipation

Week 7. THE FALTERING CONFEDERACY

Reading: Exam Review

Oct. 7 The Southern Homefront
Oct. 9 **Midterm Exam**

Week 8. TURNING POINTS ON THE BATTLEFIELDS

Reading: Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels* all.
[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 327-37].

Oct. 14 Chancellorsville to Gettysburg
Oct. 16 **Discussion:** Killer Angels

Week 9. THE POLITICAL WAR

Reading: Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*, 113-221.
[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 373-424].

Oct. 21 **FALL BREAK**
Oct. 22 Bread Riots, Draft Riots, and Political Opposition to the War

Week 10. UNION VICTORY

Reading: Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican*, 209-88.
[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 443-526].

Oct. 28 Lincoln's Re-election.
Oct. 30 Sherman's March to the Sea; the Confederate Collapse

Week 11. RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Tourgée, *A Fool's Errand*, 1-250.

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 533-581]

Nov. 4 Andrew Johnson and the Problem of Reconstruction
Nov. 6 The Radicals Take Charge

Week 12. CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Tourgée, *A Fool's Errand*, 251-404.

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 583-632].

Nov. 11 Northernizing the South
Nov. 13 Reconstructing the North

Week 13. THE COLLAPSE OF RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 1-139.

[McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire*, 633-661].

Nov. 18 Northernizing the South; Reconstructing the North
Nov. 20 The Compromise of 1877

Week 14. THE RISE OF SEGREGATION

Reading: Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 140-337.
Foner, *Forever Free*, 214-238.

Nov. 25. The Triumph of Jim Crow Segregation
Nov. 27 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Week 15. THE MEMORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

Reading: Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 338-397.
From Horowitz, *Confederates in the Attic*

Dec. 4 Race and Reconstruction in Historical Perspective
Dec. 6 The Civil War in Contemporary Culture.

Week 16. FINAL EXAM

TBA