

CIVIL WAR, RECONSTRUCTION, AND REUNION

HIS 338
MHRA 2209
Time: M W 2:00-3:15

Dr. Mark Elliott
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Office Hours: M W 3:30-4:30
Or by appointment
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Teaching Assistant:
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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. The political history of the war as well as its impact on peoples lives—both on the battlefield and the homefront—is given special emphasis. The contentious issues that caused the war were not resolved in 1865, and the class follows the continuation of the issues until 1896. 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. The course will conclude by examining the myths, legends, and ideological legacies of both the Civil War and Reconstruction.

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- Students will improve their ability to analyze and interpret historical documents.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 a “B” to become a “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 excused absences wisely and save them to cover all sick days, religious holidays, and personal emergencies. 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. Cell phones should be turned off. No text messaging or e-mailing will be tolerated during class. Sleeping in class will result in your being 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:

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 Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using the “Safe Assignment” function on Blackboard which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

Grading Formula:

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

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG Bookstore):

Orville Vernon Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*
Charles Dew, *Apostles of Secession*
Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*
Albion W. Tourgee, *Bricks Without Straw*
Louisa May Alcott, *Hospital Sketches*
Tony Horowitz, *Confederates in the Attic*

Week 1. INTRODUCTION: SLAVERY AND THE UNION

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

Aug. 23. The Civil War and American Culture

Aug. 25. Abolitionism and the causes of the Civil War

Week 2. ABOLITIONISM AND BLACK RESISTANCE TO SLAVERY

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 1-76
Blackboard Documents: Douglass, “What to the Slave is the 4th of July?” Excerpts from Hinton Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South*.

Aug. 30 Economics: Slavery v. Free Labor

Sept. 1 War with Mexico and Compromise of 1850

Week 3. THE TUMULTUOUS 1850s

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 77-133
Blackboard Documents: George Fitzhugh on slavery, Dred Scott Decision, Lincoln’s “House Divided” Speech

Sept. 6 **LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)**

Sept. 8 Rise of the Republican Party

Week 4. THE CRISIS OF SECESSION

Reading: *Apostles of Disunion*, all.
Blackboard Document: Stephen’s “Cornerstone Speech.”

Sept. 13 The Dred Scot Decision and the slide towards war.

Sept. 15 John Brown and the Secession Movement

Week 5. WAGING WAR

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

Sept. 20 The Early War: Strategies and Goals
Sept. 22 Film: *The Civil War, Episode 2 (1990)*

Week 6. EMANCIPATION

Reading: Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*, 81-145.
Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 134-167.

Sept. 27 Film: *The Civil War, Episode 3 (1990)*
Sept. 29 Emancipation [Paper Assignment #1]

Week 7. THE FALTERING CONFEDERACY

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 193-211.

Oct. 4 The Southern Homefront
Oct. 6 Midterm Exam

Week 8. THE POLITICAL WAR

Reading: Alcott, *Hospital Sketches*, all.

Oct. 11 FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)
Oct. 13 The Northern Homefront

Week 9. TURNING POINTS

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 168-192, 212-233.
Blackboard Documents: Lincoln's Gettysburg Address,
Vallandingham, "On the War and Its Conduct," Draft Riots from
Harper's Weekly.

Oct. 18 Chancellorsville to Gettysburg
Oct. 20 Bread Riots, Draft Riots, and Political Opposition to the War

Week 10. UNION VICTORY

Reading: Manning, *What this Cruel War Was Over*, 146-221.
Blackboard Documents: Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Address.

Oct. 25 Lincoln's Re-election.
Oct. 27 Sherman's March to the Sea; the Confederate Collapse [Paper
Assignment #2]

Week 11. RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 234-299.

Blackboard Documents: Black Codes of Mississippi, Journal of Gertude Thomas, Dana's "Grasp of War" speech, Civil Rights Act of 1866, Johnson's Veto Message.

Nov. 1 Andrew Johnson and the Problem of Reconstruction
Nov. 3 The Radicals Take Charge

Week 12. CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Tourgée, *Bricks Without Straw*, 1-200.

Nov. 8 The Grant Administration and Reconstruction
Nov. 10 Northernizing the South; Reconstructing the North

Week 13. THE COLLAPSE OF RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Tourgée, *Bricks Without Straw*, 200-432.

Nov. 15 The Collapse of Reconstruction
Nov. 17 The Compromise of 1877

Week 14. LIFE AFTER RECONSTRUCTION

Reading: Burton, *The Age of Lincoln*, 300-369.
Booker Blackboard Documents: Ida B. Wells, "Southern Horrors,"
T. Washington, "Atlanta Exposition Speech."

Nov. 22 Reconstruction and the "New South"
Nov. 25 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Week 15. THE RISE OF SEGREGATION

Reading: Horowitz, *Confederates in the Attic*, 3-145.

Nov. 29 The Triumph of Jim Crow Segregation
Dec. 1 Race and Reconstruction in Historical Perspective [**Paper Assignment #3**]

Week 16. THE MEMORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

Reading: Horowitz, *Confederates in the Attic*, 209-391.
Dec. 6 The Civil War in Contemporary Culture.

Week 17. FINAL EXAM

Dec.13 **Final Exam, 3:30-6:30.**

