

CIVIL WAR, RECONSTRUCTION, AND REUNION, 1848-1896

HIS 338-01 Spring 2015

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In this course, students will learn to understand and explain the causes, course, and consequences of the American Civil War.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand and explain how Americans from diverse backgrounds acted to bring about the Civil War and how the conflict changed the nation. Students will analyze the ideological, military, political and social aspects of the war and its aftermath and critically examine how we now think and talk about the legacy of the conflict.
2. Students will develop historical thinking skills in a series of primary document exercises to contextualize and interpret source material.
3. Students will use good writing and speaking skills in class discussions, forum submissions, written responses to reading, and in the final essay not only to recognize different interpretive points of view regarding the Civil War era, but also to articulate interpretations of their own based on primary and secondary reading.

REQUIRED READING (All of these are required, and are available in the bookstore.)

Jonathan Daniel Wells, *A House Divided: The Civil War and Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Routledge, 2011)

Charles B. Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2002)

William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir's Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)

Nicholas Lemann, *Redemption: The Last Battle of the Civil War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007)

Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic: Race, Religion, and American Nationalism, 1865-1898* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007)

Additional reading will be assigned via Canvas

ASSESSMENT

Participation	25%
Primary source exercises	25%
Book essays	25%
<u>Final Exam</u>	25%
	100%

PARTICIPATION. I will only occasionally offer a lecture, so this class will depend on your active participation in discussions. You will need to have read and/or completed all assignments and prepared not only to discuss them, but to ask questions about things that are unclear or spark your curiosity, listen respectfully to your peers, articulate ways of understanding and talking about the Civil War, and synthesize interpretations from across the readings and assignments. If you read, talk, and generally engage, you will do well. If you show evidence that you have not read, and do not speak in class, you will not do well.

BOOK ESSAYS. In four 750-1000 word submissions, you will respond to a prompt regarding the interpretation--and your assessment of that interpretation—of Dew’s, Barney’s, Lemann’s, and Blum’s books. In short, *this is not a book report*. Your essay will be assessed based not only on critical engagement with the author, but the clarity and organization of your writing, the presentation of evidence and ideas, and the quality of your interpretations and conclusions.

PRIMARY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS. In four assignments, you will utilize effective search skills in a variety of physical and digital collections. You will identify, evaluate, contextualize, and interpret primary source material.

FINAL EXAM. This will assess your ability to understand and explain why the Civil War happened, consider the ways it changed the United States, and interpret the legacy of the war and Reconstruction.

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken daily. It is essential to your class participation grade. There will be a 3% reduction of the student’s final grade for each absence after the first two. Regular absences will result in failure of this course. Excuses may be granted on a case-by-case basis, but documentation for illness, family emergency, or school related absences must be provided.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments will not be accepted.

INCOMPLETE GRADES: Incomplete grade requests must be made through the Dean of Students.

LAPTOP COMPUTERS: Laptop computers tablets are permitted for use in the class to consult reading material, take notes, check references, or look up a class-related item. However, any non-class related uses (email, social media) will result in you being asked to leave the class and the day recorded as an absence. Multiple offences will result in you failing the class.

CELL PHONES: Strictly prohibited for any reason. Cell phones must remain in your pocket, purse, bookbag or backpack. Any student observed handling or using a cell phone during class hours will be asked to leave and the day recorded as an absence. More than one offence will result in you failing the class.

PROFESSIONALISM: You will be expected to conduct yourself as a professional in this class. This means you will dress appropriately, arrive on time and stay until completion, treat your peers and their opinions with respect, complete all readings and assignments, and communicate with your professor in an appropriate manner.

Further, you will be expected to rehearse “real-life” behavior in this class. That means you will do the work even if you don’t want to, you will be interested even if you are not interested, you will pay attention even when you are bored, you will write and communicate in a professional manner, and you will engage respectfully with your colleagues and with ideas that you may find irrelevant or even offensive. Mastering these skills will be essential to successful navigation of a professional workplace.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please read the UNC-G Student Policy Handbook on Academic Integrity found at <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR GOOD WRITING

CONTENT

- Wrote a clear thesis, or argument, that seeks to explain a historical problem.
- Foreground an original argument or analysis.
- Grasped the significance of primary sources and the interpretation of secondary material, and conveyed them faithfully in your own writing.
- Supported thesis with appropriate evidence.
- Created original analysis, and did not simply pass along an author’s content.

ORGANIZATION

- Establishes an adequate introduction and a clear purpose for the essay in the first paragraph.
- Clearly organized essay to elaborate on and support a central thesis.
- Tightly organized individual paragraphs with clear topic sentences and cohesive content.
- Structured the essay so that the progression of ideas and transitions from one paragraph to the next are logical and easy to follow.

DOCUMENTATION

- Paraphrased the source author's language concisely and accurately.
- Properly used quotation marks for all information from the readings.
- Properly documented all quotations and paraphrased information.

BASIC USAGE AND MECHANICS

- Used precise words and avoided pretentious phrasings and the passive voice.
- Used standard conventions for formatting, grammar, usage, and spelling in English.
- Proofread for typos and other careless errors.

UNIT 1: CAREEN TO WAR

Week 1 (1/13-15)

Edward Ayers, "What Caused the Civil War." (e-reserves)
Tony Horwitz, "150 Years of Misunderstanding the Civil War" (link)
Wells, Chapter 1.

Week 2 (1/20-22)

Wells, Chapter 2 & 3
Primary documents: State v. Mann, Dred Scott v. Sanford, Thornton Stringfellow,
and James Henley Thornwell.

DUE: Primary Source Assignment #1

Week 3 (1/27-29)

Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*

DUE: Book essay #1 (Dew)

UNIT 2: THE RED ANIMAL: WAR

Week 4 (2/3-5)

Wells, Chapter 4
Gary Gallagher and Katherine Shively Meier, "Introduction to Special Issue on
Military History," *Journal of the Civil War Era* (forthcoming)
Barton A. Meyers, "The Future of Civil War Era Studies: Military History," *The
Journal of the Civil War Era* (J-Stor)

Week 5 (2/10-12)

Wells, Chapter 5

Visit Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections & University Archives

Week 6 (2/17-19)

Wells, Chapter 6

Martha Jones, "History and Commemoration: The Emancipation Proclamation at 150," Vol. 3 (December 2013) *The Journal of the Civil War Era* (J-Stor)

Week 7 (2/24-26)

Wells, Chapter 7

Week 8 (3/3-5)

Wells, Chapter 8

DUE: Primary Source Assignment #2: Letter Transcription Project

Week 9 (3/10-12)

Wells, Chapter 9

Week 10 (3/17-19)

DUE: Book essay #2 (Barney)

UNIT 3: TIME FULL OF TRIAL: RECONSTRUCTION

Week 11 (3/24-26)

Wells, Chapter 10

DUE: Primary Source Assignment #3

Week 12 (3/31-4/2)

Wells, Chapter 11

Week 13 (4/7-9)

Wells, Chapter 12

DUE: Book essay #3 (Lemann)

UNIT 4: FORGETTING

Week 14 (4/14-16)

Wells, Chapter 13

Week 15 (4/21-23)

DUE: Book essay #4 (Blum)

Week 16 (4/28)

Gary Gallagher, "The Civil War at the Sesquicentennial: How Well to Americans Understand Their Great National Crisis?" Vol. 3 (June 2013) *The Journal of the Civil War Era*

Ta-Nahisi Coates, "Why Do So Few Blacks Study the Civil War?" ([link](#))

David S. Reynolds, "Reading the Sesquicentennial: New Directions in the Popular History of the Civil War," Vol. 2 (September 2012) *The Journal of the Civil War Era*

Jill Oglie Titus, "An Unfinished Struggle: Sesquicentennial Interpretations of Slavery and Emancipation," Vol. 4 (June 2014) *The Journal of the Civil War Era*

DUE: Primary Source Assignment #4

Exam day (TBA)

PRIMARY SOURCE ASSIGNMENTS

NORTH CAROLINIANS REACT TO SECESSION

January 22

In January of 1861, white North Carolinians across the state gathered in public meetings to let their opinions about the potential for secession be known. The resolutions of these meetings were published in newspapers.

Your task is to find examples of two public meetings from North Carolina newspapers in the Library of Congress' Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers collection, and report on them.

[Go to this link](#). Go to Advanced Search, and narrow down your search to North Carolina newspapers between January 1 and January 12, 1861. Four newspapers are available.

Do the following:

- Find two sets of resolutions in two different newspapers. Properly cite what papers you used, including Title, publication location, and issue.
- Transcribe the resolutions. (Type them into a word document.)
- Write one paragraph describing in your own words the concerns and interests of the public meetings. Consider how these reflect the larger national issues discussed in the Wells book and in class. How do the participants in the public meetings understand the choices facing North Carolinians at this time? What courses of action do they recommend? Are they united or divided?
- Submit your citation, the transcriptions, and the paragraph to the Canvas assignment link.

You will be assessed based on the GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR GOOD WRITING and on your ability to synthesize and interpret these primary documents.

LETTER TRANSCRIPTION PROJECT

March 5

The Martha Blankeley Hodges Special Collections and University Archives in the UNC-G library houses a small amount of manuscript material related to the Civil War. After an introduction to the collections and a class visit to the archives, each of you will select one letter or document to transcribe, annotate and introduce.

Do the following:

- Transcribe your letter, following the instructions you receive in class.
- Compose a one to two page introduction to your document that both identifies the author and the context in which the document was produced and suggests what this document can tell us about larger themes in Civil War history (e.g.: women, soldiers, medicine, emancipation, etc.)
- Annotate the document. In footnotes, identify individuals, places, events, and other relevant items mentioned in the document. Locate and use secondary sources to inform your annotations. Properly cite the sources you use.
- Finish with a bibliography of sources used, including proper citation of the archival collection.
- Submit your transcription, identifications, and paragraph through the Canvas assignment link as a Word document.

You will be assessed on the quality of the transcription, the completeness of the annotations, and the use of proper citations and good writing as described in the general expectations for good writing.

VISUALIZING EMANCIPATION PROJECT

March 26

Go to the [Visualizing Emancipation homepage](#). This map tracks incidents of African American interaction with Union and Confederate military forces, and the appearance of African Americans in newspapers, private manuscript papers, and official documents. In locations across space and time enslaved people—in different ways—took advantage of larger circumstances to grasp for freedom.

In this exercise, you will choose two separate months—one before January 1, 1863, and one after—of a single state or region, and analyze changes in how African Americans encountered freedom during the Civil War. You will make an index of six

“emancipation events” (three per each month) that you discover on the VE page, and create a 500-word analysis of historical context and change over time.

Do the following.

- Familiarize yourself with the map, its legends, and functions. [Read the “Introduction.”](#)
- On the main page, select the “pull-up” menu in the bottom right.
- Choose two separate month-long periods. (You can only do one at a time, so this will need to be repeated.) One month will be before January 1, 1863 and one will be after that date.
- Focus on a single state, or geographic region (Coastal Carolinas, Mississippi Valley, Appalachian Mountains, etc.)
- Select three different emancipation events that span the period. Choose from as wide a variety as permissible. (Use newspapers, military reports, manuscripts, etc.)

Index the events using the format below.

Type of event:

Date:

Author:

Source:

Event:

Analyze this evidence based on the instructions for good sourcing, good connecting, and penetrating questioning that we review in class. You will prioritize your own thesis about the process of emancipation, but your analysis will consider the following: Legal status of slavery in your area; the presence or absence of military forces in your area; geographic and industrial features of your area that might contribute to events; point of view of the author; typicality of the event in your region; and discernable effects of Emancipation Proclamation.

Submit your index and analysis to the Canvas assignment page.

You will be assessed on the strength of your analysis, proper formatting of citations, and the general expectations for good writing.

CIVIL WAR MEMORY

April 28

Public memory of the Civil War has been reflected in the types of monuments created to commemorate the event. White southerners shaped a powerful narrative of the conflict in the generations after it ended and many communities today add to or challenge that narrative. How did monument-builders in the late nineteenth century remember the war? How do they do so now? You will use the [DocSouth Commemorative Landscapes](#) homepage to analyze the creation and evolution of how civic communities remember the war.

You will analyze thirteen Civil War monuments in North Carolina from 1870 to the 2000s. You will create an index of Confederate monument inscriptions and analyze them as primary sources based on the instructions for good sourcing, good connecting, and penetrating questioning that we review in class. You will prioritize your own thesis about the creation of Confederate memory, but root your argument in the evidence that you collect.

Do the following:

- Familiarize yourself with the DocSouth Commemorative Landscapes homepage, particularly the Monument Timemap, the search functions, and the W. Fitzhugh Brundage essay, “Commemorative Landscapes.”
- Using the Monument Timemap, or the “Search Collection” field, identify one Civil War monument for each decade between 1870 and 2000. Take notes on the date, location, inscription, dedication events, and any other relevant information.
- Make an index/list of the monument names you analyze.
- In 700-1000 words, create an evidence-based thesis about Civil War memory over the course of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. Consider the context of monument construction, the language used, the monument sponsors and subjects, and what is said, and unsaid.
- Submit your notes and analysis to the Canvas assignment link.

ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS

DEW ESSAY

January 29

Write an essay of between 750-1000 words that responds to one of the following questions.

1. One common claim about the Confederacy is that it did not fight for slavery, but for Constitutional, or, state rights—meaning, in the words of former Confederate Jabez L.M. Curry written in 1901, “The object of quitting the Union was not to destroy, but to save the principles of the Constitution.” After reading Charles Dew’s analysis of secession commissioners, how do you respond to this claim?
2. What, according to Dew, did the secessionists fear about the election of Abraham Lincoln? Why did his election force them to remove their states from the Union?

Instructions

1. Review the grading rubric for good writing
2. Give your essay a title that reflects your thesis.
3. Write a clear thesis statement that explains your argument. Incorporate it into your opening paragraph.
4. Support your thesis with evidence. Cite page numbers when you make references to historical events, or quote Dew, or historical actors.
5. This is about Dew’s claims, but you should incorporate evidence from Wells, or anything else we have covered. Full and proper citation for this evidence is also expected.

BARNEY ESSAY

March 19

Write an essay of between 750-1000 words that responds to one of the following questions.

1. Walter Lenoir was skeptical of secession at the outbreak of war, but the war radicalized him, and made him an ardent Confederate by the end, and after. How do you explain his transformation?
2. How does Walter Lenoir’s story help explain the fact that many southerners were skeptical of secession, but fully supported the Confederacy?

Instructions

1. Review the grading rubric for good writing
2. Give your essay a title that reflects your thesis. DO NOT use a cover sheet.
3. Write a clear thesis statement that explains your argument. Incorporate it into your opening paragraph.
4. Support your thesis with evidence. Cite page numbers when you make references to historical events, or quote Barney or historical actors.
5. This is about Barney's claims, but you should incorporate evidence from Wells or anything else we have covered. Citation for this evidence is also expected.

LEMANN ESSAY

April 9

Write an essay of between 750-1000 words that responds to one of the following questions.

1. [These are slugs until more class-oriented questions can be developed.] After reading this book, which do you think was a greater factor in bringing an end to Reconstruction, the resistance of white southerners or a lack of will on the part of the federal government? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
2. How did southern whites view the violence that occurred in Colfax, Louisiana, in 1873? Why, in their view, was it justified, and how did they view their role in it?

Instructions

1. Review the grading rubric for good writing
2. Give your essay a title that reflects your thesis. DO NOT use a cover sheet.
3. Write a clear thesis statement that explains your argument. Incorporate it into your opening paragraph.
4. Support your thesis with evidence. Cite page numbers when you make references to historical events, or quote Barney or historical actors.
5. This is about Lemann's claims, but you should incorporate evidence from Wells or anything else we have covered. Citation for this evidence is also expected.

BLUM ESSAY

April 23

Write an essay of between 750-1000 words that responds to one of the following questions.

1. After reading this book, which do you think was a greater factor in shaping post-war reconciliation, the loss of political will and southern violence noted by Lehmann or social and religious developments cited by Blum? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
2. [This is a slug until a more class-appropriate question can be developed.] How did northern Protestants so easily abandon their commitment to biracial democracy?

Instructions

1. Review the grading rubric for good writing
2. Give your essay a title that reflects your thesis. DO NOT use a cover sheet.
3. Write a clear thesis statement that explains your argument. Incorporate it into your opening paragraph.
4. Support your thesis with evidence. Cite page numbers when you make references to historical events, or quote Blum or historical actors.
5. This is about Blum's claims, but you should incorporate evidence from Wells or anything else we have covered. Citation for this evidence is also expected.