

US Civil War and Reconstruction (HIUS144)

"There never will be anything more interesting in America than that Civil War never." –
Gertrude Stein

- Time: TU/TH, 11:00 – 12:20 p.m.
- Place: Center Hall 222
- Prof. Plant's office: HSS 4062
- Office hours: Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.
- email: rjp@ucsd.edu

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the Civil War and Reconstruction in shaping modern U.S. history. By settling the question of whether the Union, long strained by sectional differences, would endure, the war set the stage for the nation's eventual emergence as a major world power. In the process, the war ended the practice slavery within the United States, enhanced the authority of the federal government over that of the states, dramatically shifted the balance of power between North and South, disrupted the global economy, and changed the course of countless individual lives.

Taking 1850 as our starting point, we will first probe some of the major causes of the Civil War. We will analyze how, over the course of the decade, competing worldviews hardened in response to a series of legislative, legal, and political acts. As tensions mounted, the existing party system frayed and collapsed, paving the way for the rise of the Republicans and Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860, as well as the secessionist movement in the South. We will then study how both regions mobilized for war, and how the war's goals, conduct, and meaning changed over time. Topics to be explored include: the motivations ordinary soldiers; the significance of the border states; the promise and threat of foreign intervention; developments in military technology and warfare; the experiences of slaves who liberated themselves by fleeing to Union lines; mounting dissent in both the North and South as the conflict's human and materials costs soared; and the widely shared religious views about suffering and death that shaped Americans' responses to the unprecedented carnage.

In the last part of the course we will focus on the history of Reconstruction and the memory of the Civil War. We will discuss how various factions competed to control or shape the emergence of a new social order in South, and we will investigate why attempts to ensure

freedmen political equality and economic security ultimately failed. Finally, the course concludes with an exploration of how the war came to be remembered and memorialized in the late 19th century in ways that allowed for sectional reconciliation, but at the expense of racial justice.

Ground rules: This is a **no-electronics** course, meaning that the use of laptops or other electronic devices, including phones, is not permitted in class. We all love our computers, but I have found that a significant percentage of students cannot refrain from going online during class. Moreover, studies have shown that *even those students who use laptops only for note taking perform worse on conceptual questions*—in other words, the most important questions—than students who take notes by hand. (This is because when you take notes on a laptop, you are more inclined to simply transcribe rather than processing information as you write). See [“To Remember a Lecture Better, Take Notes by Hand.”](#)

Academic integrity: I take the issue of academic integrity very seriously and will report all suspected cases of cheating or plagiarism. Indeed, as a UCSD professor, I am required by the Office of the Academic Integrity Coordinator to file a report if I suspected such activity has occurred. Please do not make me take this step. (See the “Instructors’ Responsibility” and “Students’ Responsibility” sections of the University’s Academic Integrity Statement.) Plagiarism is not limited to the most flagrant examples of cutting and pasting material from the web. Any time you take a sentence, or even a phrase, from another person’s work without using quotation marks and providing proper attribution, you are plagiarizing. When you write a paper, the best way to avoid plagiarism is to do all the necessary reading, including online reading, before you begin to write. Once you start, you should not go online again until the paper is done. If you have any questions as to what is or is not plagiarism, please review the attached MLA statement. If you still have questions, please contact me.

Late paper policy: I will accept late papers without penalty only if an extension is requested by email at least seven days in advance of the due date. Otherwise, a letter grade will be deducted for each day beyond the due date.

Reading: All course readings are to be accessed through [e-reserves](#). **IMPORTANT:** Please see your email for the password to access e-reserves for this course.

Course requirements:

- Short writing assignment (25%).

- In-class midterm (25%). The midterm will consist of a series of short answer questions. Short answer questions require a long paragraph response.
- *Either* a take-home final essay examination consisting of three essay questions *or* an 8-10 page research paper on a particular aspect of the Civil War. *If you choose to go this route, you must send me an email to get approval of your topic by Nov. 6* (35%).
- In-class quizzes (15%; 5% each). This is essentially your attendance/participation grade. Over the course of the quarter, we will have a total of 5 quizzes on the weekly reading. I will have you swap quizzes and we will grade them together on the spot before handing them in. At the end of the quarter, I will take your top 3 quizzes (out of however many you have turned in) and disregard the rest. As with my no-electronics policy, my use of quizzes has a two-fold purpose. First, I of course want to reward people for coming to class and doing the reading. But I also want to help you master the material and prepare for the final, and it turns out that being tested significantly enhances people's ability to remember material that they study. (See "[How Tests Make Us Smarter.](#)")

Grading: 97-100 = A+; 94-96 = A; 90-93 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 84-86 = B; 80-83 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 74-76 = C; 70-73 = C-; etc. Grading for this class will not be on a scale.

COURSE SCHEDULE

10/2 [Lecture 1: Course introduction](#)

Week 1: The Legacy of Slavery and Competing World Views

10/7 Lecture 2: "Somehow the cause of the war": The History of Slavery in the U.S.

10/9 Lecture 3: A Hardening of Views: Proslavery v. Free Labor Ideology

- James M. McPherson, "And the War Came," chap. 1 of McPherson, *This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3-20
- Drew Faust, "The Proslavery Argument in History," introduction to Faust, *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981), 1-20
- [John C. Calhoun, "Speech on Slavery," U.S. Senate, Congressional Globe, 24th Congress, 2nd Sess. \(February 6, 1837\), 157-59](#)

- [William Lloyd Garrison, "Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Convention" \(December 6, 1833\)](#)
- Eric Foner, "Free Labor: The Republicans and Northern Society," chap. 1 of *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 11-29

Recommended:

- Edward B. Rugemer, "The Southern Response to British Abolitionism: The Maturation of Proslavery Apologetics," 70:2 (May 2004): 221-48

Week 2: Rising Sectionalism and the Origins of the War

10/14 Lecture 4: Coming Apart: Political Crises of the 1850s

10/16 Lecture 5: Prelude to War: The 1860 Election and Secession, and Fort Sumter

- James Oliver Horton and Lois Horton, "Federal Assault: African Americans and the Impact of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850," *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 68:3 (January 1992): 1179-97
- Paul Finkelman, "Dred Scott v. Sandford," in Melvin I. Urofsky, ed., *The Public Debate over Controversial Supreme Court Decisions*, CQ Press, 2006, 24-33
- James A. Stevenson, "Lincoln vs. Douglas Over the Republican Ideal," *American Studies* 35:1 (1994): 63-89 (35 pages)
- [Stephen A. Douglas, excerpt from the first Lincoln-Douglas debate \(August 21, 1858\)](#)
- [Abraham Lincoln, excerpt from the first Lincoln-Douglas debate \(August 21, 1858\)](#)
- [Jefferson Davis' speech to the U.S. Senate upon withdrawing from the Union \(January 21, 1861\)](#)
- [Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address \(March 4, 1861\)](#)

Recommended:

- Jon Grinspan, "'Young Men for War': The Wide Awakes and Lincoln's 1860 Presidential Campaign," *Journal of American History* 96 (September 2009): 357-78

Week 3: The Fight for Allegiance and Allies

10/21 Lecture 6: Mobilizing for War, North and South

WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS

10/23 Lecture 7: International Dimensions of the American Civil War

- James M. McPherson, "On the Alter of My Country," chap. 7 of *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 90-103
- Lorien Foote, "Rich Man's War, Rich Man's Fight: Class, Ideology, and Discipline in the Union Army," *Civil War History* 51 (2005): 269-287
- James McPherson, "The Saratoga That Wasn't: The Impact of Antietam Abroad," in *This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 65-77
- Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War," *American Historical Review* 109:5 (December 2004): 1405-38

Recommended:

- Aaron Sheehan-Dean, "Everyman's War: Confederate Enlistment in Civil War Virginia," *Civil War History* 50 (2004), 5-26

Week 4: Toward Total War

10/28 Lecture 8: Confederate Ascendancy, 1861-62

10/30 Lecture 9: Religion, Suffering and Death in Victorian America

- Frances M. Clarke, prologue and "Suffering in Victorian in America," chap. 1 in *War Stories: Suffering and Sacrifice in the Civil War North*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 1-27
- [David Hacker, "Recounting the Dead," *New York Times*, September 20, 2011](#)
- Drew Faust, "The Work of Death" and "To Lay Down My Life," introduction and chapter 1 of *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2009), xi-xvii and 3-31
- Nicholas Marshall, "The Great Exaggeration: Death and the Civil War," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4:1 (March 2014): 3-27
- [John J. Miller, "With Death on His Mind," *Wall Street Journal*, February 11, 2012](#)

- [William Knox, "Mortality" \(1824\)](#)

Week 5: The Transformation of the Civil War

11/4 1863: Military and Political Turning Points

11/6 MIDTERM (MUST REMEMBER TO BRING A BLUE BOOK)

- Mark Grimsley, "Conciliation and Its Failure, 1861-1862," *Civil War History* 39:4 (December 1993): 317-335 (18 pages)
- Eric Foner, "Lincoln and Colonization," in Foner, ed., *Our Lincoln: New Perspectives on Lincoln and His World* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 135-66 (31 pages)
- [Manisha Sinha, "Allies for Emancipation? Black Abolitionists and Abraham Lincoln"](#)
- [The Emancipation Proclamation](#) (January 1, 1863)
- [Gettysburg Address](#) (November 19, 1863)

Week 6: African Americans' Wartime Experiences

11/ 11 VETERAN'S DAY—NO CLASS

11/13 Lecture 11: The Struggle for Freedom and Citizenship

- Thavolia Glymph, "Rose's War and the Gendered Politics of Slave Insurgency in the Civil War," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 3:4 (December 2013): 501-32
- Ira Berlin, "The Black Military Experience, 1861-1867," in Ira Berlin, et al., *Slaves No More: Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 189-233
- Jim Downs, Introduction, *Sick from Freedom: African American Illness and Suffering in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3-17
- [Interview of Jim Downs by Robin Lindley, "Civil War and Emancipation the 'Greatest Biological Catastrophe of the Nineteenth Century'"](#)

Recommended:

- Chandra Manning, "Working for Citizenship in Civil War Contraband Camps," *Civil War Era* 4:2 (June 2014): 172-204 (32 pages)

Week 7: The Homefront and the Strains of War

11/18 Lecture 12: The Limits of Confederate Nationalism

11/20 Lecture 13: Dissent in the North

- Stephanie McCurry, "Women Numerous and Armed: Gender and the Politics of Subsistence in the Civil War South," in Joan Waugh and Gary Gallagher, eds., *Wars within a War: Controversy and Conflict over the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 1-26
- Lisa Laskin, "'The army is not near so much demoralized as the country is': Soldiers in the Army of Northern Virginia and the Confederate home front," in Aaron Sheehan-Dean, ed., *The View from the Ground: Experiences of Civil War Soldiers* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 91-120
- Joan E. Cashin, "Deserters, Civilians, and Draft Resistance in the North," in *The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War*, edited by Joan E. Cashin (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002), 262-285

Recommended:

- Drew Gilpin Faust, "Altars of Sacrifice: Confederate Women and the Narratives of War," *Journal of American History* 76:4 (March 1990): 1200-28

Week 8: The Hard Hand of War

11/25 Lecture 14: Military Campaigns of 1864-65

- Lance Janda, "Shutting the Gates of Mercy: The American Origins of Total War, 1860-1880," *Journal of Military History* 59:1 (1995): 7-26
- Mark E. Neely, Jr., "Was the Civil War a Total War?" *Civil War History* 50:4 (December 2004): 434-58
- Mark E. Neely, Jr., "The Sand Creek Massacre," chap 5 of *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 140-70
- Diary extracts from Robert Manson Myers, ed., *The Children of Pride: A True Story of Georgia and the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), 1220-48
- [Correspondence Pertaining to Sherman's Evacuation of Atlanta](#) (September 1864)

11/27: THANKSGIVING

- [Proclamation of Thanksgiving, written by William Seward issued by Abraham Lincoln \(October 3, 1863\)](#)

Week 9: Reconstruction

12/2 Lecture 15: Wartime and Presidential Reconstruction

12/4 Lecture 16: Radical Reconstruction and Its Legal Legacy

- [Abraham Lincoln, "The Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction" \(December 8, 1864\)](#)
- [Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address \(March 4, 1865\)](#)
- Michael W. Fitzgerald, "To Give Our Votes to the Party': Black Political Agitation and Agricultural Change in Alabama, 1865-1870," *Journal of American History* 72:2 (September 1989), 489-505
- Hannah Rosen, "Testifying to Violence," chap. 6 in *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 222-42
- [Affidavit of Roda Ann Childs, wife of black Union veteran \(September 25, 1866\)](#)
- [Jourdon Anderson, "To My Old Master" \(August 7, 1865\)](#)
- [Mississippi Black Code \(November 1865\)](#)
- [Letter from a black Mississippian, Pvt. Calvin Holly, to Major General O. O. Howard, the Freedmen's Bureau Commissioner \(December 16, 1865\)](#)

Week 10: Sectional Reconciliation and Its Costs

12/9 Lecture 17: The Failure of Reconstruction

12/11 Lecture 18: The Myth of the Lost Cause and the Politics of Memory

- [Frederick Douglass, Decoration Day Speech \(May 1871\)](#)
- David W. Blight, "'For Something beyond the Battlefield': Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War," *Journal of American History* 75: 4 (March 1989): 1156-78
- Judith Ann Giesberg, "'To Forget and Forgive': Reconstructing the Nation in the Post-Civil War Classroom," *Civil War History* 52:3 (September 2006): 282-302

- Bruce Levine, "Black Confederates and Neo-Confederates: In Search of a Usable Past," in James and Lois Horton, eds., *Race, Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory* (The New Press: New York, 2006), 187-212
- Paul Quigley, "Refighting the Civil War, yet again: Virginia's Confederate History Month mêlée," *American Nineteenth Century History* 11:3 (2010): 351-359

12/17, 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m: FINAL EXAM

Helpful Resources:

[Timeline of events from 1859 to 1865 \(Smithsonian Institution\)](#)