

Hist/AS139

The Civil War Era

Bowdoin College, Fall 2007

Meets: MW 11:30-1:00
Prof. Patrick Rael
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If any event in American history can be considered pivotal, surely it is the Civil War. This lecture course covers the era of the Civil War, roughly from the 1830s through the 1870s. While no historical period fires the imagination of Americans more than our bloodiest conflict, few of us actively explore the deeper meanings of the era for our country's story. Enamored with battles, glory, and courage, the popular mind seems less willing to understand the massive transformations which impacted nearly every facet of national life. While we will explore the military side of the War — the stuff of popular interest — we will focus also on the economic, constitutional, and social changes wrought by the conflict. Students are expected to enter with a basic knowledge of American history, and with a commitment to participating in large class discussions. This course is excellent preparation for an intermediate seminar I will offer on Reconstruction.

Level: This is an introductory course taught in the History Department. It is intended for first-year through junior students, particularly those with little experience in history courses. The course is designed to serve as an introduction both to the history of the Civil War era and to the basic skills of the discipline of history. History majors or potential history majors should realize that they may earn major credit for only two history courses taken below the 200 level, and that seniors may not earn major credit for such courses. I expect students to spend an average of 6-8 hours outside of class and lab each week preparing for this course.

Course websites: The material for this course may be found online through the Blackboard system. You will find a copy of this syllabus, as well as all the reading and paper assignments. You may easily refer to the website for the most recent course assignments and requirements. You will also find my website <<http://academic.bowdoin.edu/faculty/P/prael/>> useful. It links to guides on writing, plagiarism, and other matters crucial to your success in history courses.

Books: Purchase these required books at the campus bookstore or online. When possible, I will place extra copies on library reserve.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life Among the Lowly* (1852; New York: Penguin Books, 1981). ISBN 780140390032. \$8.95.

McPherson, James M. *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997. ISBN 0195117964, \$19.95.

Shaara, Michael. *The Killer Angels* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993). ISBN 0345348109. \$5.99.

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 3rd edition. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 2001. ISBN 0312274664. \$7.99. This book includes the citation guidelines and formats that should be used for this course.

Additionally, there is a packet of course readings available in .pdf format through the course website on blackboard.

Course objectives:

- ▶ To introduce students to the historical events surrounding the Civil War
- ▶ To develop introductory college-level skills in historical research, writing, and reasoning.
- ▶ To develop introductory college-level skills in analyzing primary and secondary historical sources for the period.
- ▶ To evaluate popular historical interpretations of the period.

Assignments:

Breakdown	
Quizzes (best 5 @ 2 points each)	10
Biography and interest group profile	10
Legislative history assignment	15
GIS project	15
Mid-term exam	20
Final exam	20
Participation	10
Total points	100

Quizzes: (10%): I will randomly start some class sessions with a quick writing exercise or quiz, each of which will be worth 0-2 points. Your best five of these quizzes will count for 10% of your final grade.

Interest group profile (10%): This assignment asks you to profile your interest group. It should include a brief (2-3 pp.) biography of a historical figure who represents your group, offer an overview (2-3 pp.) of your group and its interests, and include a biography of at least six works illuminating your interest group. The overview of the group should concentrate on what your group wished the federal government to do to further its cause. You may not use Internet sources for this assignment, but I suggest that you consult the library's [online guide for research in American History](#).

Legislative history assignment (15%): In this assignment, you will have a chance to get into the library and do some intensive research into primary historical sources. Working with librarian Ginny Hopcroft, you will research the history of a piece of legislation propounding the interests of your group.

GIS project (15%): To be explained.

Mid-term exam (20%): In-class essay exam covering material from the first half of the semester.

Final (20%): The exam will be held in class during the scheduled exam period. It will cover material from the entire semester.

Discussion and participation (10%): Your thoughtful participation in both lecture and discussion is a significant part of your course work. Readings should be completed before class. Please be prepared to discuss them (though we will not discuss all readings equally during class). Please keep your comments relevant, and consider others when speaking.

COURSE CONTRACT

Attendance: No absences are "excused" -- you are responsible for all material covered during missed class days. Those who may miss class to attend extra-curricular events are requested to inform me, as a courtesy, of planned absences. If special considerations prevent you from fulfilling course obligations (such as illness), please provide me with documentation so we may consider an exception. Because it is disruptive to the entire class, please do not excuse yourself in the middle of a class session, unless you are sick or have an emergency.

Late or missed assignments: Unless stated otherwise, assignments are due at the beginning of class; assignments handed in later in the day (during or after class) will be considered one day late. I will accept late assignments with no penalty only for documented health or other emergencies. In general, assignments which receive letter grades will be marked down one-third of a grade (e.g., from B+ to B), for each day late. A final but crucial point: All work must be completed in order to pass this course.

A note on academic honesty: Each author owns his or her own ideas, words, and research. You must give appropriate credit — generally in the form of quotations and proper footnotes — when using the work of another scholar. I expect you to be familiar both with Bowdoin's honor code, and with the guidelines for proper citation and attribution of sources provided for this course. If you have any questions, ask rather than take risks. Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is a serious violation of academic standards and Bowdoin's honor code. I will enforce violations of the honor code by bringing immediate, uncontested action before the Judicial Board. Minimum penalties for plagiarism will be to fail the course.

HIST/AS 139: THE CIVIL WAR ERA

Schedule of class meetings, readings, and assignments

1. This schedule is liable to change to suit class needs. The online syllabus always offers the most recent version of the syllabus.
2. Complete readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss them.
3. We will not discuss each reading with the same degree of rigor. I will do my best to let you know when to make special efforts with your reading. You are, however, responsible for all the assigned material, whether or not we discuss it in class.
4. A few readings may be available only through the course website. I will denote these on the syllabus.
5. “®” indicates that the reading can be found in the course reader.

Sept. 6	<p>Introductions</p> <p><u>Reading</u> (read after class for this day only; read before class for all other days):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James M. McPherson, “The War That Never Goes Away,” in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), ch. 4. • Drew Gilpin Faust, “We Should Grow Too Fond of It: Why We Love the Civil War,” <i>Civil War History</i> 50, no. 4 (December 2004), 368-83. (Muse)
Sept. 8	<p>The legacy of the revolution</p> <p><u>Reading</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbert J. Storing, “America's Founders Recognized the Dilemma of Slavery” (Reserve) • John Hope Franklin, “Slavery Left America with a Weak Moral Foundation” (Reserve)
Sept. 13	<p>North and South</p> <p><u>Reading</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seth Rockman, “Liberty is Land and Slaves: The Great Contradiction,” <i>OAH Magazine of History</i> 19, no. 3 (May 2005), 8-11. (Expanded Academic Index). • James M. McPherson, “Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism: A New Look at an Old Question,” in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), ch. 1. • John Spicer, “‘The Cause’ of the American Civil War,” <i>History Review</i> 49 (September 2004), 45-50. ®
Sept. 15	<p>Politics and expansion to 1848</p> <p><u>Reading</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>To be announced</i>
Sept. 20	<p>Antislavery</p> <p><u>Reading</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Howard Temperly, “The Ideology of Antislavery,” in <i>The Abolitionists: Means, Ends, and Motivations</i>, 3rd ed. Lawrence B. Goodheart, ed. (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1995), 12-25. (Reserve) • Michael D. Pierson, “‘Slavery Cannot Be Covered Up with Broadcloth or a Bandanna’: The Evolution of White Abolitionist Attacks on the ‘Patriarchal Institution,’” <i>Journal of the Early Republic</i> 25, no. 3 (2005) 383-415. (Reserve) • Henry David Thoreau, “On Civil Disobedience.” (Reserve)
Sept. 22	<p>Antiabolitionism and proslavery</p> <p><u>Reading</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Jones Lapsansky, “‘Since They Got Those Separate Churches’: Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia,” <i>American Quarterly</i> 32, no. 1 (Spring 1980), 54-78 (Jstor) • Paul Finkelman, ed., <i>Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South: A Brief History with Documents</i> (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2003), selections. (Reserve)

Sept. 27	<p>Uncle Tom's Cabin</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life Among the Lowly</i> (1852; New York: Penguin Books, 1981). • (Recommended) James M. McPherson, "Tom on the Cross," from <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 24-36. <p><u>Library workshop:</u> Northern groups</p>
Sept. 29	<p>Uncle Tom's Cabin</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harriet Beecher Stowe, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin or, Life Among the Lowly</i> (1852; New York: Penguin Books, 1981). • (Recommended) James M. McPherson, "Tom on the Cross," from <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 24-36. <p><u>Library workshop:</u> All other groups</p>
Oct. 4	<p>The Sectional Crisis, 1848-1860</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric Foner, <i>Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War</i> (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), ch. 1. (Reserve) • James Oakes, "The Political Significance of Slave Resistance," <i>History Workshop</i> 22 (1986), 89-107. (Reserve)
Oct. 6	<p>Precipitants: The Dred Scott decision</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Dred Scott vs. Sandford</i> (1857). (Online)</p>
Oct. 11	<p>Fall vacation – no class</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Road to War" ®
Oct. 13	<p>Precipitants: John Brown's raid</p> <p>In-class film: "John Brown's Holy War"</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William E. Gienapp, "The Republican Party and the Slave Power," in Robert H. Abzug and Stephen E. Maizlish, eds., <i>New Perspective on Race and Slavery in America: Essays in Honor of Kenneth M. Stampp</i> (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 51-78. (Reserve) • Sean Wilentz, "Homegrown Terrorist," <i>New Republic</i> 233, no. 17 (October 24, 2005), 23-30. ® <p><i>Legislative history project due</i></p>
Oct. 18	<p>Election and Secession</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seymour Martin Lipset, "The Emergence of the One-party South – The Election of 1860," from <i>Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics</i> (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1960), 344-54. (Reserve) • Peyton McCrary, Clark Miller, Dale Baum, "Class and Party in the Secession Crisis: Voting Behavior in the Deep South, 1856-1861," <i>Journal of Interdisciplinary History</i> 8, no. 3 (Winter 1978), 429-57. (Jstor) • James M. McPherson, "The War of Southern Aggression," in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford, 1996), 37-51.
Oct. 20	<p>Mid-term</p>
Oct. 25	<p>First Bull Run to Antietam</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Early War" ® • B.H. Reid, "First Blood to the South: Bull Run, 1861," <i>History Today</i> 42:3 (March 1992), 20-26. (EAI) • Stephen W. Sears, "God's Chosen Instrument," <i>American Heritage</i> 39, no. 5 (July/August 1988). ®

Oct. 27	<p>Antietam to Gettysburg</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The War Intensifies” ® • Gary W. Gallagher, "The Maryland Campaign in Perspective," in <i>Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction</i>, 2nd ed., Michael Perman, ed. (Lexington, Ky.: D.C. Heath, 1998), 104-11. ® • James McPherson, "How the Confederacy Almost Won," in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), ch. 9.
Nov. 1	<p>Introduction to GIS project</p>
Nov. 3	<p>Who freed the slaves?</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James M. McPherson, “Who Freed the Slaves?” in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 192-207. • Ira Berlin, “Who Freed the Slaves? Emancipation and Its Meaning,” in <i>Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction</i>, Michael Perman, ed., 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 288-97. (Reserve)
Nov. 8	<p>Killer Angels</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Shaara, <i>The Killer Angels</i> (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993). <p><u>GIS workshop</u></p>
Nov. 10	<p>Killer Angels</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Shaara, <i>The Killer Angels</i> (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993). <p><u>GIS Workshop</u></p>
Nov. 15	<p>Up close with JLC</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas A. Desjardin, “Constructing the Consummate Gettysburg Hero,” in <i>These Honored Dead: How the Story of Gettysburg Shaped American Memory</i> (Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 2004), 127-52. (Reserve)
Nov. 17	<p>Gettysburg to Chattanooga</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Climax” ® • James M. McPherson, “Race and Class in the Crucible of War,” in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), ch. 6. • Glenn W. LaFantasie, “Lincoln and the Lost Opportunity of Gettysburg,” <i>Civil War Times</i> 44, no. 5 (December 2005), 26-63. ®
Nov. 22	<p>African Americans and the war</p> <p><u>Film at night:</u> “Glory”</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armstead L. Robinson, “In the Shadow of Old John Brown: Insurrection Anxiety and Confederate Mobilization, 1861-1863,” <i>Journal of Negro History</i> 65, no. 4 (Autumn 1980), 279-97. (Jstor) • John David Smith, “The Enduring Myth of ‘Forty Acres and a Mule,’” <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> (February 21, 2003). (Reserve) • (Recommended) James M. McPherson, “The <i>Glory</i> Story,” in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), ch. 7. • (Recommended) Ira Berlin, “Glory Be,” <i>Radical History Review</i> 53 (Spring 1992), 141-48. (Reserve)
Nov. 24	<p>Thanksgiving vacation – no class</p>

Nov. 29	<p>The total war debate</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James M. McPherson, "From Limited to Total War, 1861-1865," in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 66-86. • Mark Neely, "Was the Civil War and Total War?" in <i>On the Road to Total War: The American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, 1861-1871</i>, Stig Forster and Jorg Nagler, eds. (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 29-51. (Reserve)
Dec. 1	<p>Wilderness to Appomattox</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Endgame" ® • Victor Davis Hanson, "Sherman's War," <i>American Heritage</i> 50, no. 7 (November 1990), 58-66. ® • James M. McPherson, "Lincoln and the Strategy of Unconditional Surrender," from <i>Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution</i> (New York: OUP, 1992). (Reserve) • James M. McPherson, "Why Did the Confederacy Lose?" in <i>Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), ch. 8. <p><u>GIS project due</u></p>
Dec. 6	<p>Reconstruction</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Reconstruction" ® • Leon F. Litwack, "'Blues Falling down Like Hail': The Ordeal of Black Freedom," in <i>New Perspectives on Race and Slavery in America: Essays in Honor of Kenneth M. Stampp</i>, Robert H. Abzug and Stephen E. Maizlish, eds. (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 109-27. ® • James M. McPherson, "The Second American Revolution," in <i>Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-22. (Reserve)
Dec. 8	<p>Historical memory and the remaking of the Civil War</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Pettegrew, "'The Soldier's Faith': Turn-of-the-Century Memory of the Civil War and the Emergence of Modern American Nationalism," <i>Journal of Contemporary History</i> 31, no. 1 (January 1996), 49-73. (Jstor) • David Blight, "The Civil War in History and Memory," <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> (July 12, 2002), B7. (Reserve)