

Hist/AS1241 {139}

The Civil War Era

Prof. Patrick Rael, Bowdoin College, Fall 2014

Meets: M, W 11:30-1:00, Cleveland 151
Office hours: TuTh2:00-4, by apt.

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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, from the American Revolution through Reconstruction. We focus equally on the causes of the war and the war itself. We touch upon Reconstruction only briefly. (I teach an advanced seminar on that topic, which all students completing this course are well-suited to take.) 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, popular history 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, 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.

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 2000 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 WEBSITE: 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.

Sheehan-Dean, Aaron. *Concise Historical Atlas of the US Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN 9780195309584.

Additionally, there is a packet of course readings available in .pdf format (filename USAS_SuperQuiz.pdf) through the course website on blackboard. On the syllabus, readings from this packet are denoted with the symbol: ®

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ▶ To introduce students to the historical events surrounding the Civil War, its causes, and consequences
- ▶ 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

Assessments (best 10 @ 2 points each)	20
Exams (2 @ 20 points each)	40
Historical atlas project	15
Legislative history project	15
Participation	10

Assessments (20%): I will randomly start some class sessions with a quick writing exercise or quiz. For each quiz, you will receive a 0 (fewer than one question clearly correct), a 1 (at least one question clearly correct), or a 2 (more than half questions clearly correct). Your assessment grade will be compressed into a 20-point scale (if I give more than 10, you will receive credit for your best 10 assessment scores).

Exams (2 @ 20% = 40%): Two exams (a midterm and a final), each worth 20% of your final grade. Each (including the final) will be timed for 90 minutes, and will be cumulative of all course materials to date. The final exam date is set by the College, and is *unchangeable*. Please understand this now and make your travel plans accordingly. I will not be able to change the date of the final for anyone.

Historical atlas project (15%): Historical map-making project to be explained. Students will work in groups to produce "pages" for an online historical atlas we will construct.

Legislative history project (15%): Historical research project to be explained. Students will work in groups to research legislation of concern to their interest group.

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.

Antebellum politics simulation: In addition to these assignments, we will be running a simulation of antebellum politics all semester long. Students will belong to interest groups seeking to pass or deny legislative measures of concern to their group. The spoils here are bragging rights, though leading teams may earn a few points toward their final grade.

COURSE CONTRACT

Attendance: No absences are "excused" -- you are responsible for all material covered during missed class days. As a courtesy, please inform me of planned absences. If special considerations (such as an illness) prevent you from fulfilling course obligations (such as exams), please provide me with documentation so we may consider an exception. Remember that it is *your* responsibility to initiate any discussion about missed work. 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. I do not mind the use of laptops in the class for taking notes, but the use of laptops for personal use during class is disruptive and prohibited. Same goes for cell phones: please keep them turned off and out of sight.

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. 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. For resources on avoiding plagiarism, look on the blackboard website for this course.

Offensive materials disclaimer: Students occasionally find some course materials offensive. Views expressed in the material we will cover do not reflect my own personal opinions. The academic enterprise invites vibrant class discussion, which balances critical thinking with mutual respect. Students are expected to take responsibility for their experience in this course by examining their own reactions to material they consider offensive. At all times, our priority will be critical engagement with scholarly material. By continuing with this course, you are agreeing to be held academically accountable for all required materials in the syllabus, regardless of your own personal reactions to it. Students who are unwilling either to hear or think critically about such material are encouraged to drop this course at their discretion.

Disabilities: Students who have documented learning disabilities with the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs may be entitled to various accommodations. It is your responsibility to initiate with me any conversion over accommodations.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

- This schedule is liable to change to suit class needs. *The online syllabus always offers the most recent version of the syllabus.*
- Complete readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss them. Multiple readings are listed in order of significance.
- 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.
- “@” indicates that the reading can be found in the course reader (USAS_SuperQuiz.pdf).
- “(Blackboard)” indicates that the reading is available on the course Blackboard website. Click on “course readings” to find a .pdf of the reading.
- “Jstor”, “Muse”, “Online” all indicate the location of the reading. On the online syllabus, simply click on the link, and you should be taken directly to the reading.

Sept. 8	<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"> • Edward Ayers, "Worrying About the Civil War," in <i>What Caused The Civil War?: Reflections on the South and Southern History</i> (New York: Norton, 1993), ch. 5. (Blackboard) • 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.
Sept. 10	<p>The legacy of the revolution</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Hope Franklin, "Slavery Left America with a Weak Moral Foundation," in <i>Slavery: Opposing Viewpoints</i> (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2002), 270-79. (Blackboard) • Herbert J. Storing, "America's Founders Recognized the Dilemma of Slavery," in <i>Slavery: Opposing Viewpoints</i> (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 2002), 280-89. (Blackboard)

Sept. 15	<p>North and South</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Michael Chevalier, <i>Society, Manner and Politics in the United States: Being a Series of Letters on North America</i> (Boston: Weeks, Jordan and Company, 1839), 113-20. (Blackboard)
Sept. 17	<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. (Blackboard) William Lloyd Garrison, selections from <i>The Liberator</i>. (Blackboard) Henry David Thoreau, selection from <i>Civil Disobedience</i> (1846). (Blackboard) Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" (Online)
Sept. 22	<p>Politics and expansion to 1848</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. (Blackboard) David Brown, "Jeffersonian Ideology and the Second Party System," <i>The Historian</i> 62, no. 1 (September 1999): 17-30. (Blackboard) <p><i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> preliminary assessment.</p>
Sept. 24	<p>Introduction to historical atlas project</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical atlas project assignment Explore Aaron Sheehan-Dean, <i>Concise Historical Atlas of the US Civil War</i> (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
Sept. 29	<p>Uncle Tom's Cabin</p> <p><i>This is a long book. Start reading it at the beginning of the semester, so you'll have it finished by the time it is due.</i></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>Historical atlas workshop:</u> Groups A-F</p>
Oct. 1	<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>Historical atlas workshop:</u> Groups G-L</p>
Oct. 6	<p>Antiabolitionism and proslavery</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabeth R. Varon, "Ruinous Tendencies: The Anti-Abolition backlash," in <i>Disunion!: The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859</i> (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), ch. 3. (Blackboard) 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. (Blackboard) John C. Calhoun, "Speech on the Reception of Abolition Petitions" (1837). (Blackboard) Excerpts from Edmund Ruffin, <i>The Political Economy of Slavery</i> (1853). (Blackboard)
Oct. 8	<p>The Sectional Crisis, 1848-1860</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. William H. Seward, "A Higher Law" (1850) (Online) John C. Calhoun, "The Clay Compromise Measures" (1850) (Online) Abraham Lincoln, "A House Divided" (1857) (Online)

Oct. 13	Fall vacation – no class
Oct. 15	<p>Precipitants: The Dred Scott decision</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority opinion from <i>Dred Scott vs. Sandford</i> (1857). (Online) • Bruce Catton, "Black Pawn on a Field of Peril: Dred Scott V. Sanford," <i>American Heritage</i> 15, no. 1 (December 1963). (Online) • Frederic D. Schwarz, "The Worst Supreme Court Decision Ever?" <i>American Heritage Online</i> (Tuesday March 6, 2007). (Online)
Oct. 20	<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"> • Paul Finkelman, "John Brown: America's First Terrorist?" <i>Prologue Magazine</i> 43, no. 1 (Spring 2011). (Online) • Address by J. Sella Martin on John Brown (1859). (Online) <p>Historical atlas assignment due</p>
Oct. 22	<p>Election and Secession</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bertram Wyatt-Brown, "Shameful Submission and Honorable Secession," in <i>The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s</i> (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), ch. 8. (Blackboard) • 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. (Blackboard)
Oct. 27	In-class mid-term examination
Oct. 29	<p>From Secession to Second Manassas</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Holden Reid, "First Blood to the South," <i>History Today</i> 42, no. 3. ® • Winston Groom, "Why Shiloh Matters," <i>New York Times</i>, April 6, 2012. (Online)
Nov. 3	<p>From Antietam to Gettysburg</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary W. Gallagher, "The Maryland Campaign in Perspective." ® • Stephen W. Sears, "God's Chosen Instrument." ® <p><i>Killer Angels</i> preliminary assessment.</p>
Nov. 5	<p>Homefront issues</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Leslie M. Harris, "The New York City Draft Riots of 1863," excerpt from <i>In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City, 1626-1863</i>. (Online)
Nov. 10	<p>Killer Angels</p> <p><i>Killer Angels</i> is another novel, of good length. Remember to begin reading this early.</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>Legislative history workshop:</u> Groups A-F</p>
Nov. 12	<p>Killer Angels</p> <p><i>Killer Angels</i> is another novel, of good length. Remember to begin reading this early.</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>Legislative history workshop:</u> Groups G-L</p>

Nov. 17	<p>Emancipation</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. (Blackboard)
Nov. 19	<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. (Blackboard)
Nov. 24	<p>The Confederacy's inner civil war</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) Eric Foner, "The South's Inner Civil War." ® James M. McPherson, "Why did the Confederacy Lose?" in <i>Drawn with the Sword</i>.
Nov. 26	Thanksgiving – no class
Dec. 1	<p>1864-1865</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victor Davis Hanson, "Sherman's War." ®
Dec. 3	<p>Reconstruction: Wartime and Presidential</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jeffrey D. Wert, "A Silent Gloom Fell Upon Us Like a Pall." ® John David Smith, "The Enduring Myth of 'Forty Acres and a Mule,'" <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> (February 21, 2003). (Blackboard) <p><u>Legislative history assignment due</u></p>
Dec. 8	<p>Reconstruction: Congressional and Redemption</p> <p><u>Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christine Gibson, "Who Gets to Let States Back Into the Union?" ® Leon Litwack, "Blues Falling Down Like Hail: The Ordeal of Reconstruction." ® Eric Foner and Olivia Mahoney, "The Ending of Reconstruction." ®
Dec. 10	<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. (Blackboard)
Dec. 21	<p>Final exam</p> <p>2pm-5pm</p> <p><i>I cannot change the final exam date for any reason!</i></p>