

HISTORY 461: THE CIVIL WAR IN HISTORY & MEMORY
SPRING 2014

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Office hours: Mondays 10-11; Wednesdays 10-12

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Since its conclusion in 1865, Americans have repeatedly found ways to memorialize the US Civil War: through monuments to the dead, through political speeches, even in the form of blockbuster motion pictures. These various forms of memorialization have told us less about the actual war, and more about the kinds of memories that people, living after the war, needed to create. This course examines the long and varied process of memory-making whereby Americans have thought about, invoked, and depicted, the experience of the Civil War, from the immediate post-war period up to the present. Paying attention to recent scholarship devoted to the study of historical memory, we will consider what it means to shape and construct memories about a pivotal historical phenomenon, trying to understand why different people remembered the war in so many different ways, and why certain memories held sway at certain moments.

In order to provide a common foundation for understanding the Civil War in memory, we begin with a very brief overview of the war and its significance. We will then look more carefully at memory: the theoretical framework for studying memory; how historical memory has been invoked to address issues other than the Civil War; the Civil War memories created by southern and northern whites as well as by African Americans; and the powerful stories that were constructed about the war in the twentieth century.

Aside from the various assignments indicated below, students in HI 461 are required to complete an 18-20 page research paper that will be drawn mostly from primary source material and that advances an original interpretation of a specific historical problem connected with Civil War memory. It is important to begin thinking early on about your topic and to set aside time for your independent research and writing.

GRADING: Your grade will be based on: three short reading responses, answering specific questions about a reading assignment (these will count, collectively, for 15% of the grade); one in-class midterm exam (25%); class participation (10%); in-class report on topic and primary source and the thesis statement turned in on April 24 (all these will count, collectively, for 15%) and the final research paper (35%).

Because the class meets only once a week, students are allowed only one unexcused absence. A greater number of absences could result in a lower grade.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT: Students will be required to complete all the readings assigned as well as the required papers. Papers must be turned in on the dates specified in the class schedule; late papers will be accepted but penalized. References to all secondary and primary sources quoted or consulted in your written work (including paraphrasing) must be acknowledged and cited fully. Failure to do so is plagiarism. For more information on plagiarism see the Boston University Department of History Writing Guide (http://www.bu.edu/history/writing_guide.html). You should also consult this Writing Guide for assistance in shaping and crafting your papers for this class.

REQUIRED READINGS:

The books listed below can be purchased at the bookstore.

David Blight, *Race and Reunion*
Brooks Simpson, *America's Civil War*
Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*
Robert Penn Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War*
Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*

All other readings can be found by following the links indicated on the syllabus or by looking on the Blackboard Learn course website:

https://learn.bu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_14145_1%26url%3D

CLASS SCHEDULE:

January 27: The Memory Problem and the Civil War

Readings for this week's class can be found at the links below.

Reading: Claire Needell, "A Novel Scorned,"
New York Times, November 20, 2013
<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/11/20/a-novel-scorned/>

 "Kanye West Co-opts Confederate Flag,"
CNN Nov. 6, 2103
<http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/04/us/kanye-west-confederate-flag/>

 Mark Auslander, "'Holding on to Those Who Can't be Held':
Reenacting a Lynching at Moore's Ford, Georgia", *Southern
Spaces* (November 8 2010)
<http://www.southernspaces.org/2010/holding-those-who-cant-be-held-reenacting-lynching-moores-ford-georgia>

February 3: An Incredibly Quick Review of Civil War History

Reading: Brooks Simpson, *America's Civil War*, all
(Since our goal doesn't require a detailed assessment of all that transpired in the war, you should read this book with an eye toward larger themes and issues that may be critical in postwar memory.)

February 10: History & Memory

Reading: David Thelen, "Memory and American History", *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No. 4. (Mar., 1989), pp. 1117-1129.

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past*, 1-11

Thomas Brown, *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration*, 1-14

David Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 1-5

Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 37-40, 46-53, 167-189

For this class, students should prepare a 500-word reading response on a memory, or memory site, that they are familiar with - a story (can be personal and not necessarily "historical") passed down in family lore, or a historical marker or memorial in your local community - and offer some thoughts on the "constructed" nature of that memory. For example: how has the memory changed over time? Who has participated in shaping that memory and what type of agenda might they have had in doing so? We will discuss these reflections in class.

February 19: The Holocaust in American Memory
(Wednesday) & Visit to Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center

Reading: Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 1-263

For this class, students should prepare a 500-word reading response on Novick's book in which they summarize the author's central thesis and raise some criticisms and/or questions for further consideration.

We will break at 1:30 and then reconvene at the Gotlieb Archives (5th Floor of Mugar) at 1:45 to look at materials that may be useful in research.

February 24: The South & The Lost Cause

Reading: David Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 255-299

“Introduction”; “Anatomy of the Myth” and “Jubal Early, the Lost Cause and Civil War History” in Gary Gallagher and Alan Nolan, eds. *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington, IN, 2000), 1-59

Use this link for the above title:

<http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/lib/bostonuniv/docDetail.action?docID=10565324>

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, “A Duty Peculiarly Fitting to Women” from Brundage, *The Southern Past*

Thomas Brown, *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration*, 79-108

March 3: Reunion and Reconciliation

Readings: Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion*, 66-123, 159-196

David Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 171-254

Caroline Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*, 3-11; 160-231

For this class, students should prepare a 500-word reading response that considers the arguments, and counter-arguments, regarding the power and pervasiveness of reconciliation in the post-Civil War era.

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS ON MARCH 10

March 17: IN-CLASS MIDTERM (45 minutes)

Black Memory of the Civil War (rest of class)

Readings: David Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 300-337

W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "Black Remembrance in the Age of Jim Crow" from Brundage, *The Southern Past*

Booker T. Washington, excerpt from *Up From Slavery*

Thomas Brown, *Public Art of Civil War Commemoration*, 109-134

Scott Sandage, "A Marble House Divided: The Lincoln Memorial, The Civil Rights Movement, and the Politics of Memory, 1939-1963", *Journal of American History* 1993 80(1): 135-167

March 24: The Civil War at the Movies

Readings: Jim Cullen, "Screening the Book" in *The Civil War in Popular Culture*, 65-107

Melvyn Stokes, "The Civil War in the Movies" from Susan-Mary Grant and Peter Parish, *Legacy of Disunion: the Enduring Significance of the American Civil War*

Michael Rogin, "'The Sword Became a Flashing Vision': D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*" *Representations* 9 (Winter, 1985), 150-195

Gary Gallagher, "Hollywood Has it Both Ways: The Rise, Fall, and Reappearance of the Lost Cause in American Film" in Waugh and Gallagher, eds. *Wars within a war: Controversy and Conflict Over the American Civil War*

1-PAGE TOPIC STATEMENT IS DUE IN CLASS

STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT THEIR PRIMARY SOURCES BY MARCH 28 AT 4 PM

March 31 &
April 7 Topics & Sources

At the next two classes each student will make a brief presentation on their research topic, including a discussion of a short primary source document that will be used in your research and that will have been posted on the course website (after 9 am on March 29) for everyone to read before the class meeting.

April 14: The Civil War Centennial

Readings: Robert Penn Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War*

Jon Wiener, "Civil War, Cold War, Civil Rights: the Civil War Centennial in Context, 1960-1965" in Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, eds., *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*

Robert Cook, "Unfinished Business: African Americans and the Civil War Centennial" in Grant and Parish, *Legacy of Disunion*

April 24:
(Thursday) The Civil War in American Culture Today/Writing Workshop

Readings: Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*, 3-88, 125-189, 282-335, 352-378

Thomas Brown, "The Confederate Battle Flag and the Desertion of the Lost Cause Tradition" and W. Fitzhugh Brundage, "African American Artists Interpret the Civil War in a Post-Soul Age" in Thomas Brown, ed., *Remixing the Civil War* (Baltimore, 2011)

Review the Boston University History Department Writing Guide (http://www.bu.edu/history/writing_guide.html) for class discussion on preparing the final paper

***A 2-3 PAGE INTRODUCTION/THESIS STATEMENT AND DETAILED OUTLINE
ARE DUE IN CLASS***

April 28: NO CLASS

Students can meet with me individually, in my office, as they do final preparations on their papers.

FINAL PAPERS DUE ON FRIDAY MAY 2