

## HI 1740: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION (Fall 2014)

Professor Michael Vorenberg

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Office hours: Mon. 2:15-4:30, and by appointment

Course Meetings: Mon., Wed., 12-12:50 (with Friday lectures 12-12:50, during first two weeks of semester only; after that, third class weekly meeting will be a discussion section).

### DESCRIPTION

This course, covering the period roughly from 1850 to 1877, examines the origins of the Civil War, the war itself, and the period of Reconstruction. The class meetings and readings will focus on the transformation wrought by the war, analyzing in particular the impact of the war on society, politics, and culture. Although there will be some discussion of military events and the military experience of some of the participants, this is not a course in military history. We will pay special attention to the following themes: the imperfections in the republic that led to war; the centrality of slavery and emancipation before and during the war; the war as a revolutionary experience for individuals and institutions; and the meanings and legacies of reunion. Although there will occasionally be some variation in the weekly format, most Monday and Wednesday classes will consist of lectures and some discussion, while the section meetings will be devoted fully to discussion. Although this is technically an upper-level course, there are no prerequisites and no background information is required (though some experience in a high-school level U.S. history course might occasionally help). It is as suitable a course for first-year students and students of any year at Brown who have taken no history as it is for students who are history concentrators. However, the history department generally recommends its HIST0150 courses as gateway courses—that is, courses that serve as an introduction to the discipline. NOTE: This course will be offered in 2015-16, though it is unclear whether it will be a fall or spring semester course that year.

### REQUIREMENTS

EXAMS: There are two required exams: Midterm Exam (Oct. 15, during regular class meeting) and Final Exam (Tues., Dec. 16, 9-12)

PAPERS: Students have two options for writing papers in this course:

Option 1: Three short papers (3-4 pages for each paper) that react to the reading assigned for a section meeting. Before each of the ten section meetings, topics for these “reaction” papers will be made available on the course website. Students must take three of these opportunities, answer the question using examples or quotations from the reading, and turn in the paper at the section meeting. For the topics of these papers, see the “Short Paper Assignment” at the course website. The work done on these papers will also prepare students for section discussions that particular week. NOTE: For those doing the short papers, at least one of these three papers must be written prior to the Midterm Exam.

Option 2: One long research paper (12-15 pages) on a topic to be arranged with the professor. Students are responsible for choosing the topic of their paper, but they must make their choice in consultation with the professor. Topics for these papers, along with preliminary bibliographies (a one-page document) are due by Oct. 15 (the day of the Midterm Exam). If by Oct. 15, the student has not consulted with the professor about the paper topic and turned in a proposal and bibliography, then the student may not select Option 2. For those who do select Option 2, the final papers are due on Monday, Dec. 8, by 4:30 in the History Dept., 79 Brown St.

NOTE: Regardless of which paper option students choose, all students are expected to abide by the Brown University Dean of the College’s Academic Code, which may be found at (see esp. pages 5-7): [http://brown.edu/Administration/Dean\\_of\\_the\\_College/curriculum/documents/principles.pdf](http://brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/curriculum/documents/principles.pdf)

Also, for any and all papers turned in, all students must submit an electronic copy to Professor Vorenberg as an attachment to email ([Michael\\_Vorenberg@Brown.edu](mailto:Michael_Vorenberg@Brown.edu)) These electronic copies must be submitted prior to the due date. If we do not receive both a hard copy AND an electronic copy, your paper will be considered incomplete. (This system allows for software analysis of student submissions to ensure that there has been no plagiarism from written materials, web-based materials, or current or past student submissions.)

FILMS: There are three films that you are expected to watch for this course and that will be discussed in section: “Glory,” “Pharaoh’s Army,” and “Gone With the Wind.” All of these will be on reserve at the media library, top floor of the SciLi. They also are all viewable through your computer screen using the OCRA reserve system.

SECTIONS: Students are expected to attend all section meetings. The assigned reading must be completed by the section meeting, and students should come prepared to discuss the reading. Read the topics for the short “reaction” papers before doing the reading, regardless of whether or not you will do the paper that week, and use these topics as study questions on which to focus as you do the reading. The readings for each week consist of at least one primary document and at least one second document; and the readings provide different perspectives or answers to the Section Topic for that week.

“Section participation” means much more than simply attending sections. You are expected to participate in section discussions. You cannot get an “A” in this class if you have two unexcused absences from section, and you cannot get a “C” or higher in this class if you have four unexcused absences.

We will begin creating section groups in Week 2 of the class, and sections will meet for the first time in Week 3. To help us create section groups, students will submit section request forms in Week 2, specifying their preferences for the time of their section meeting. Possible times will be:

Wed. 1-1:50, Wed. 2-2:50, Thurs., 12-12:50, Fri., 12-12:50

WEB SITE: All materials for the course may be found at the course website on Canvas

GRADING: Exam Grade: 50% (15% for Midterm Exam; 35% for Final Exam)  
Paper Grade: 30%  
Section participation: 20%

BOOKS: The following books are required for the course. All but the Course Pack of readings are on sale at the Brown Bookstore. All of the books for the course except the Course Pack are on reserve at the Rockefeller Library. The Course Pack is on sale at Allegra Print & Imaging, 102 Waterman St..

Course Pack of Readings (available only at Allegra)

William Freehling and Craig M. Simpson, eds., *Showdown in Virginia: The 1861 Convention and the Fate of the Union*

LeeAnna Keith, *The Colfax Massacre: The Untold Story of Black Power, White Terror, and the Death of Reconstruction*

James M. McPherson, *For Cause & Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*

Philip Paludan, *Victims: A True Story of the Civil War*

Michael Vorenberg, *The Emancipation Proclamation: A Brief History with Documents*

The following book is recommended only: Robert Cook, *Civil War America, 1848-1877*

Although this book by Cook is not required, I highly recommend that you use the book as a reference book, especially if this period of American history is new to you. In the assigned readings for every week, I will also put the relevant pages of Cook’s *Civil War America*, though this is not required reading. If you do not do this reading, you should at least have a basic textbook understanding of the major events covered during that week; that understanding could come from the Cook textbook, but it also could come from a good high school or college U.S. history textbook. An old but decent multivolume work is available on Google Books: James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*. Although there are biases in this work (which we’ll see in week 12 of the class), it provides valuable information on specific terms or events in the political history of the United States, 1850-1877. Using Wikipedia for background information is not recommended.

## SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, TOPICS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Readings marked with an \* will be found in the Course Pack of readings (available only at Allegra)  
Readings marked with # are recommended only, not required (the Robert Cook textbook)

### Week 1: Introduction

**Sept. 3            The Centrality of the Civil War--An Introduction**  
**Sept. 5            The Creation of the Slave South    (Friday Lecture)**

Week 2: How were the North and the South Different? (readings to be discussed following week)

**Sept. 8            Southern Nationalism and Proslavery Ideology**  
**Sept. 10           Antislavery and Abolitionists**  
**Sept. 12           Territorial Expansion and Conflicts, 1845-1856    (Friday Lecture)**  
Reading: [required readings for this week will be discussed at the first section meeting next week; the readings below are the secondary documents for that first section meeting, and they address specifically the question: "What, if anything, united the American South?"]  
#Cook, *Civil War America*, 1-38  
Primary sources: Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 1-10, 29-39  
Secondary sources: \*James M. McPherson, "Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism"; \*Stephanie McCurry, "The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina"

### Week 3: What Were Americans' Competing Views of the Constitution?

(Sections meet for the first time--be ready to discuss all readings from weeks 2 and 3)

**Sept. 15           The Dred Scott Case: Its Meaning for Law and Life in the 1850s**  
**Sept. 17           The Secession Crisis: The Southern View**  
**SECTION MEETING #1—Topic: "What, if anything, united the American South?"**  
Reading: #Cook, *Civil War America*, 42-111

Primary sources: Freehling and Simpson, eds., *Showdown in Virginia*, pages 1-113 and documents from Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 29-39, from Week 2  
Secondary sources: the McPherson and McCurry essays from Week 2

### Week 4: Why did Americans Choose War?

**Sept. 22           The Secession Crisis: The Northern View and Fort Sumter**  
**Sept. 24           Morality and Expediency: Americans Go to War**  
**SECTION MEETING #2—Topic: "How principled were soldiers' reasons for fighting?"**

Reading: #Cook, *Civil War America*, 114-141  
Secondary sources: McPherson, *For Cause & Comrades* (all); \*Joan E. Cashin, "Deserters, Civilians, and Draft Resistance in the North," 262-285 in Cashin, ed., *The War Was You and Me*  
Primary sources: \*Letter of Sullivan Ballou; \*Letter of John Emmens

### Week 5: How Did Civil War Combat Shape American Culture?

**Sept. 29           The Experience of Combat: A Hollywood Overview**  
**Oct. 1            The Experience of Combat: What Hollywood Leaves Out**  
**SECTION MEETING #3—Topic: "Was the experience of battle more ennobling or devastating?"**

Reading: Primary sources: \*John B. Gordon, account of battle of Chickamauga from *Reminiscences of the Civil War*; \*Ambrose Bierce, "Chickamauga"  
Secondary sources: \*Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative*, vol. 2, 316-319;  
\*Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 3-43

Week 6: Was the Civil War a Different Kind of War?

**Oct. 6            The Civil War as Total War**

**Oct. 8            The War for Emancipation, Part 1**

**SECTION MEETING #4—Topic: “Was the Civil War a total war?”**

Reading:        #Cook, *Civil War America*, 141-155

Secondary sources: \*Mark E. Neely, Jr., “Was the Civil War a Total War?”;  
\*Everard H. Smith, “Chambersburg: Anatomy of a Confederate Reprisal”

Primary sources: \*George B. McClellan, “Harrison’s Landing Letter” (to  
Abraham Lincoln, July 7, 1862); \*William T. Sherman to Ulysses S.  
Grant, Nov. 6, 1864;

Week 7 (No section meeting this week because of the Midterm Exam)

**Oct. 13           Fall Weekend Holiday: No Class**

**Oct. 15           MIDTERM EXAM**

[MIDTERM covers all reading through Week 6 and all lectures through Oct. 6 (i.e.,  
not lecture of Oct. 6)]

**NOTE:** Although there is no section meeting during Week 7, you are responsible for  
beginning the reading for Week 8, which is longer than usual, and also for viewing  
the film “Glory”]

Week 8: How did a War for Union Become a War for Emancipation?

**Oct. 20           The War for Emancipation, Part 2**

**Oct. 22           The African Americans’ War**

**SECTION MEETING #5—Topic: “Was the Civil War a slave rebellion?”**

Reading:        Primary sources: Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 11-25 (intro.),  
40-103, 124-127 (documents, including images)

Secondary sources: Essay by James McPherson and essay by Ira Berlin in  
Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 128-151

Film: “Glory” (viewed last week)

Week 9: How did Southerners on the Home Front Experience the War?

**Oct. 27           The Home Front: The South, Part I**

**Oct. 29           The Home Front: The South, Part II**

**SECTION MEETING #6—Topic: “Did the Civil War tend to disrupt or reinforce the  
conventions of southern society?”**

Reading:        #Cook, *Civil War America*, 158-188

Primary sources: \*Mary Chesnut, excerpt from *A Diary for Dixie*; \*Dolly  
Hunt Burge, excerpt from *A Woman’s Wartime Journal*

Secondary sources: Paludan, *Victims*; \*Drew Gilpin Faust, “Altars of  
Sacrifice”

Film: “Pharaoh’s Army”

Week 10: How did Northerners on the Home Front Experience the War?

**Nov. 3           The Home Front: The North**

**Nov. 5           Wartime Elections: The Struggle to Define the Ends of War**

**SECTION MEETING #7—Topic: “Did the Civil War tend to disrupt or reinforce the  
conventions of northern society?”**

Reading:        #Cook, *Civil War America*, 191-226

Primary sources, set 1: \*Lauren Cook Burgess, ed., *An Uncommon Soldier:  
The Civil War Letters of Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, alias Pvt. Lyons  
Wakeman*, 1-23, 30-33, 40-47, 58-61; \*Louisa May Alcott, “My  
Contraband” (also printed as “The Brothers”)

Primary sources, set 2: Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 108-109 (Noyes  
Wheeler’s account of New York City Draft Riots); \*two 1863 newspaper  
accounts of the New York City Draft Riots

Week 11: What Was the Immediate Impact of the Civil War?

**Nov. 10            The Trauma of War: Soldiers**

**Nov. 12            The Trauma of War: Wartime Occupation**

**SECTION MEETING #8—Topic: “What can present generations learn about the experience of war from the Civil War, and what can we learn about the Civil War from modern experiences of war?”**

Reading:            #Cook, *Civil War America*, 229-266

Secondary Sources: \* Eric T. Dean, Jr., “‘We Will All Be Lost and Destroyed’: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Civil War”; \*Diane Miller Somerville, “‘Will They Ever Be Able to Forget?’: Confederate Soldiers and Mental Illness in the Defeated South”; \*Edward L. Ayers, “The First Occupation”

Week 12: How Radical Was Reconstruction?

**Nov. 17            Reconstruction Under Andrew Johnson**

**Nov. 19            Radical Reconstruction?**

**SECTION MEETING #9—Topic: “How did different groups understand the purpose and impact of Reconstruction?”**

Reading:            #Cook, *Civil War America*, 302-335

Primary sources: Vorenberg, *Emancipation Proclamation*, 104-108, 110-123; \*Maria Carter, testimony before congressional “Ku Klux Klan” hearings, 1871; \*Thomas Dixon, *The Clansmen*, excerpts

Secondary sources: \*James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, vol. 5, 555-563; \*W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 381-405

Week 13: Resistance to Reconstruction

**Nov. 24            Retreat from Reconstruction**

**Nov. 26            Thanksgiving Holiday: No class**

Reading:            #Cook, *Civil War America*, 245-266

Secondary Source: LeeAnna Keith, *The Colfax Massacre*, all

Week 14: Was Reconciliation Achieved?

**Dec. 1             The Ends of Reconstruction**

**Dec. 3             Remembering the Civil War**

**SECTION MEETING #10—Topic: “Why is the Civil War fondly remembered, while Reconstruction is remembered as a failure?”**

Reading:            Primary Source / Film: “Gone With the Wind”

Secondary Sources: \*Robert Penn Warren, excerpts from *The Legacy of the Civil War*; \*Tony Horwitz, “A Death for Dixie”

**RESEARCH PAPERS (OPTION #2) DUE Dec. 8, 4:30 pm, History Dept. (79 Brown St.)--  
submit as attachment by email to professor by same time**

**FINAL EXAM: December 16, 9am**