

Master of American History and Government  
Ashland University

**AHG 504:**  
**THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION**

Professors Mackubin Thomas Owens and Jean Smith  
*Sunday, July 30 to Friday, August 4, 2006*

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will understand how the Civil War and Reconstruction have shaped the political and social consciousness of Americans down to our day.
2. Students will understand the social and political conditions that produced and sustained this conflict from the 1840s to 1865
3. Students will understand the causes that impelled individuals to take up arms for or against the United States, most importantly the arguments for and against secession.
4. Students will understand the political and military objectives of the United States and the Confederacy, the strategies of both sides, and how military strategy related to the political goals in the conduct of the war.
5. Students will understand how to analyze a military campaign, paying special attention to such factors as: a) the strategic objectives of the campaign; b) the plan and its implementation; c) operational factors including movements, combats, deception, intelligence, and logistics; and d) command relations.
6. Students will understand the political, economic and strategic factors affecting both sides in the conflict, including the fate of civil liberties in time of war.
7. Students will understand the role of emancipation as a political-military policy and its consequences for both the war and Reconstruction policy.
8. Students will understand the role of African-American soldiers in the war.
9. Students will understand the social and political consequences of the war and Reconstruction

**Requirements:**

Students will submit a 15 page research paper/essay on an approved topic. The paper is due NLT two weeks after the end of the course

**Students auditing the course as a part of a Teaching American History Grant program must complete the readings and fully participate in the seminars during the week.**

## Required Texts

- David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) ISBN: 0674008197
- Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987) ISBN: 070060328X
- W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America: 1860-1880* (New York: Free Press, 1998). ISBN: 0684856573
- Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. ISBN: 0060937165
- Allen Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation: The End of Slavery in America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004) ISBN: 0743221826
- Richard M. McMurry, *Two Great Rebel Armies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989) ISBN: 0807845698
- James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) ISBN: 019516895X
- \_\_\_\_\_, *For Cause and Comrades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) ISBN: 0195124995
- *Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States of America*. (or "booklet"). ISBN: 1878802232
- Photocopied Reading Packet (PRP)

## Schedule

### Sunday, 30 July

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#### 3:30-5:00 Session 1: The Legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction (Owens)

**Focus:** There are many ways of remembering the Civil War. We see these in movies, Civil War art, and questions concerning the display of the Confederate flag. How do these different ways of remembering the war affect our views of the contemporary United States?

**Readings:**

Blight, *Race and Reunion*

#### 7:00-8:30 Session 2: The Impending Crisis (Owens)

**Focus:** There were many social, political, economic, and technological forces at work during the antebellum period. What were some of them and how did they contribute to the crisis that led to the dissolution of the Union?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 3-201

### Monday, 31 July

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#### 9:00-10:30 Session 3: Causes of the War (Smith)

**Focus:** What were the causes that impelled southerners to break up the Union in 1860? Was the Civil War an “irrepressible conflict? Why or why not?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 202-275

Foner, *America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*

McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*

*Martin v. Hunter’s Lessee*, 1 Wheaton [14 U.S.] 304 (1816) (PRP pp 5)

*McCulloch v. Maryland*, 4 Wheaton [17 U.S.] 316 (1819) (PRP pp 19)

*Cohens v. Virginia*, 6 Wheaton [19 U.S.] 264 (1821) (PRP pp 61)

#### 10:45-12:15 Session 4: The Rights and Wrongs of Secession (Owens)

**Focus:** In 1776, Americans invoked the right of revolution as the basis of their separation from Britain. What was the basis of Southern secession? How did it differ from the claims advanced by the Americans in 1776? Why?

Did secession have to lead to war? Why couldn't the south have been allowed to secede peacefully, as Horace Greeley argued?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, Chapter 9  
Platform of the Alabama Democracy (PRP pp 79)  
Democratic Platform, 1860--Douglas Faction (PRP pp 81)  
Democratic Platform, 1860--Breckinridge Faction (PRP 83)  
Republican Platform, 1860 (PRP pp 85)  
The Justifying Cause of Secession (PRP pp 89)  
Declaration of Causes of Seceding States (PRP pp 97)  
Ordinances of Secession (PRP pp 107)  
Alexander H. Stephens, The 'Cornerstone' Speech (PRP pp 115)  
Mayor Wood's Recommendation of the Secession of New York City (PRP pp 121)  
Lincoln: First Inaugural Address (PPP pp 125)  
Lincoln: July 4, 1861 Message to Congress in Special Session (PPP pp 131)  
Lincoln: August 22, 1862 letter to Horace Greeley (PPP pp 137)  
Lincoln: Proclamation Calling Militia and Convening Congress (PRP pp 139)  
Lincoln: April 15, 1861 Letter to Reverdy Johnson (PRP pp 141)  
Lincoln: April 24, 1861 Letter to Winfield Scott (PRP pp 143)  
Owens, "The Case Against Secession" (PRP pp 145)

**4:30-6:00      Session 5: Influences on the Combatants/Union and Confederate Strategy (Owens)**

**Focus:** What impact did Napoleon and the French military tradition have on the two sides? How about technology? How critical was America's own military tradition? What were the goals of Union and Confederate strategies? What were the obstacles that both sides faced?

**Readings:**

Jones, "The European Inheritance" (PRP pp 153)  
Epstein, "The Transformation of War;" (PRP pp 183)  
McMurray, *Two Great Rebel Armies*

**Recommended:**

Russell Weigley, *A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History*  
(ISBN: 0253217067) chapters 2-3.

**Tuesday, 1 August**

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**--9:00-10:30      Session 6: Limited War: 1861-1862 (Owens)**

**Focus:** Although there were many bloody battles in 1861-62, most historians argue that the objectives of the war were still limited. What were these objectives and how did they affect the conduct of the war?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 276-590

**Recommended:**

Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, Chapters 4-5

**10:45-12:15 Session 7: Civil War Diplomacy (Smith)**

**Focus:** the founders believed that a strong union was necessary for republican government to succeed in America. President Lincoln needed to prevent European powers from exploiting the rebellion to discredit republican government and expand their power in the Western Hemisphere. How did his administration keep the great powers at bay? What were the conflicting views among and within the great powers (especially Great Britain) about the American Civil War? What problems of international law did the unclear "nature of the war" present?

**Readings:**

McPherson, ch. 18.

Norman Graebner, "Northern Diplomacy and European Neutrality," in *Why the North Won the Civil War*, 55-78. (PRP pp 211)

Henry Blumenthal, "Confederate Diplomacy: Popular Notions and International Realities," *Journal of Southern History* 32 (1966), 151-171. (PRP pp 225)

Max Beloff, "Great Britain and the American Civil War," *History* 37 (1952), 40-48. (PRP pp 247)

Josiah Herson, "British Sympathies," *Journal of Southern History* 33 (1967), 356-67. (PRP pp 251)

**4:30-6:00 Session 8: Transition to Total War: 1863 (Owens)**

**Focus:** The intensity of the war increased substantially in 1863. What conditions changed to bring about this situation?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 591-674

**Recommended:**

Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, Chapters 7-8

**Wednesday, 2 August**

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**9:00-10:30 Session 9: Civil Liberties, North and South (Owens)**

**Focus:** Lincoln claimed to be fighting a war that would lead to "a new birth of freedom," yet some claim he violated civil liberties on an unprecedented scale. How can a war for liberty be reconciled with such violations of civil liberties?

Were the steps he took during the war constitutional? Why or why not? Was he ever a "dictator" as Clinton Rossiter has claimed?

Compare and contrast Taney's opinion *ex parte Merryman* and Lincoln's apologia in his letter to Erastus Corning and the New York Democrats.

**Readings:**

Lincoln, Suspension of the Writ of Habeas Corpus (PRP pp 267)

Taney, "Ex Parte Merryman" from Edward McPherson, *The Political History of the United States of America during the Great Rebellion, 1860-1865* (PRP pp 269)

Lincoln: Letter to Erastus Corning and Others (PRP pp 279)

Fehrenbacher, "Lincoln and the Constitution" (PRP pp 285)

Belz, "Lincoln and the Constitution: The Dictatorship Question Revisited" (PRP pp 295)

**10:45-12:15 Session 10: Slavery and Equality (Smith)**

**Focus:** The essence of the Civil War revolution that freed the slaves in racial, social, and economic context. What did Black equality mean for property values in the South? What was the effect of emancipation on plantation balance sheets? What was the social impact? The political consequences?

How did a war to preserve the Union become a fight to eradicate slavery? What was the meaning of freedom? How effective was Negro suffrage?

**Readings:**

*United States Constitution: XIII, XIV, and XV Amendments* (booklet)

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 1-175.

DuBois, *Black Reconstruction*, 3-181, 580-636.

**Recommended:**

James McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964).

**4:30-6:00 Session 11: Andrew Johnson: Equality Short-Circuited (Smith)**

**Focus:** What historians sometimes call presidential reconstruction is a euphemism for Andrew Johnson's efforts to restore White supremacy in the South. This segment involves an intense look at Johnson's strategy and Congress's response.

**Readings:**

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 176-227.

DuBois, *Black Reconstruction*, 182-324.

**Recommended:**

Hans L. Trefousse, *Andrew Johnson: A Biography* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989).

Eric L. McKittrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

**7:30-9:00      Session 12: Institute Lecture**

**Thursday, 3 August**

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**9:00-10:30      Session 13: Total War/War Termination 1863-1865 (Owens)**

**Focus:** Historians argue that the conduct of the Civil War after 1863 adumbrates the total wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. How valid is this argument?

In retrospect, most of us conclude that Union victory was assured by at least the fall of 1864 when Sherman captured Atlanta most likely assuring Lincoln's reelection. Why did the Confederacy continue to resist? Why did they give up when they did? Could resistance have continued? Did it in fact continue during Reconstruction?

**Readings:**

McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, pp. 675-688, 718-852

**Recommended:**

Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, Chapter 10-12

Mark Grimsley and Brooks Simpson, eds., *The Collapse of the Confederacy* (ISBN: 0803271034)

**10:45-12:15      Session 14: Congress Takes Charge (Smith)**

**Focus:** Confronted with the president's obstructionism, Congress took charge of Reconstruction. This segment looks at postwar legislation including the three Reconstruction Acts, the Civil Rights Act, the Enforcement Act, the XIV and XV Amendments, the Tenure of Office Act, and Johnson's impeachment. So intent was Congress to take charge, or at least prevent Johnson from influencing policy, that it reduced the size of the Supreme Court from ten justices to eight to prevent Johnson from making an appointment.

**Readings:**

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 228-345.

DuBois, *Black Reconstruction*, 325-380

**Recommended:**

Hans L. Trefousse, *The Radical Republicans* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969).

David Donald, *Charles Sumner and the Rights of Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1970).

**1:00-3:30      Session 15: Movie: *Glory* (Optional)**

#### 4:30-6:00      **Session 16: Emancipation/Black Troops (Owens)**

**Focus:** The Emancipation Proclamation did not free a single slave under the authority of the Federal government, e.g. the border states of Maryland, Kentucky, Delaware, or Missouri. What did it accomplish?

On emancipation, Lincoln moved too slowly for the radicals and abolitionists and too fast for the Democrats. How would you assess Lincoln's actions?

How do you respond to the charge that recruiting black troops only raised the stakes and hardened the position of the Confederacy? What was the effect of black recruitment? Was the outcome primarily positive or negative?

##### **Readings:**

Allen Guelzo, *Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation*

Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm*

Lincoln, "Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation" (PRP pp 315)

Lincoln: Annual Message to Congress (1862) (PRP pp 317)

Lincoln: January 1, 1863 Final Emancipation Proclamation (PRP pp 329)

Lincoln: March 26, 1863 Letter to Governor Andrew Johnson (PRP pp 331)

Lincoln: August 5, 1863 Letter to General N.P. Banks (PRP pp 335)

Lincoln: August 26, 1863 Letter to James C. Conkling (PRP pp 337)

Lincoln: March 13, 1864 Letter to Governor Michael Hahn (PRP pp 343)

Lincoln: October 10, 1864 Letter to Henry W. Hoffman (PRP pp 347)

Lincoln, "Order of Retaliation" (PRP pp 351)

Lincoln, "To Stephen A. Hulburt" (PRP pp 353)

Lincoln, January 31, 1864 Letter to General N. P. Banks (PRP pp 355)

Lincoln: Annual Message to Congress (1864) (PRP pp 357)

Frederick Douglass, "Condition of the Country" (February 1863) (PRP pp 369)

Douglass, "Men of Color, To Arms!" (Mar 1863) (PRP pp 371)

Douglass, "Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln" (PRP pp 373)

Fehrenbacher, "Only His Stepchildren: Lincoln and the Negro" (PRP pp 379)

#### **Friday, 4 August**

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#### **9:00-10:30      Session 17: The Supreme Court and Reconstruction (Smith)**

**Focus:** The Supreme Court of the United States played a pivotal role in restricting Reconstruction, restoring States rights, and minimizing the effect of the XIV and XV Amendments. This segment looks closely at the decisions of the Court in the Reconstruction context.

##### **Readings:**

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 346-459.

*Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 19 Howard [60 U.S.] 393 (1857). (PRP pp 393)

*Blyew v. United States*, 13 Wallace [80 U.S.] 581 (1872). (PRP pp 403)

*Slaughterhouse Cases*, 16 Wallace [83 U.S.] 36 (1873). (PRP 415)  
*United States v. Reece*, 92 U.S. 214 (1876). (PRP pp 421)  
*United States v. Cruikshank*, 92 U.S. 542 (1876). (PRP pp 439)  
*United States v. Harris*, 106 U.S. 629 (1883). (PRP pp 449)  
*Civil Rights Cases*, 109 U.S. 3 (1883). (PRP pp 457)  
*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). (PRP pp 463)

**Recommended:**

Harold M. Hyman, *A More Perfect Union: The Impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction Upon the Constitution* (New York: 1973).

**10:45-12:15 Session 18: Jim Crow: The Election of 1876 and its Consequences (Smith)**

**Focus:** The withdrawal of the United States Army from the South after the Hayes-Tilden election sounded the death knell of Black equality. This segment looks closely at the legalized segregation of the South that followed. A snippet from *Gone With The Wind* provides a starting point.

**Readings:**

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 460-601.  
DuBois, *Black Reconstruction*, 670-710.

**Recommended:**

C. Vann Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction*.

**1:30-3:00 Session 19: The Historiography of Reconstruction (Smith)**

**Focus:** A critical look at the “Dunning School” and its afterbirth. Professor William A. Dunning of Columbia University and the white graduate students from the South who studied with him rewrote the history of Reconstruction from the standpoint of White supremacy. Their work shaped how Americans viewed Reconstruction for almost a century: the carpetbaggers and scallywags were the villains and the KKK the heroes. A snippet from *Birth of a Nation* speaks volumes. Claude G. Bowers’s 1927 best seller *The Tragic Era* represents the popular version of Dunning scholarship.

**Readings:**

Foner, *Reconstruction*, 602-612.  
DuBois, *Black Reconstruction*, 711-729.

**Recommended:**

William A. Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Macmillan, 1897).

\_\_\_\_\_, *Reconstruction: Political and Economic, 1865-1877* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1907).