



HISTORY 130 (SECTION 004):

INTRODUCTION to the CIVIL WAR ERA

1848-1877

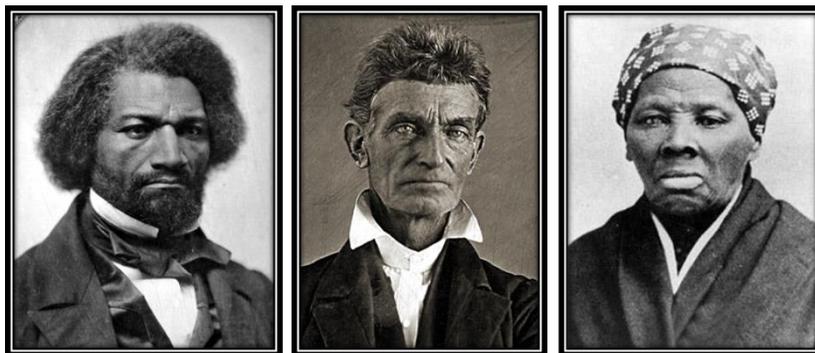
INSTRUCTOR: Sean Trainor | Ph.D. Candidate | History & Women's Studies | Penn State University

DATE AND TIME: TR 1:00pm-2:15pm | 12 January – 1 May, 2014 (Spring 2015)

LOCATION: 358 Willard Building

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 10:30am – 11:30am | Thursdays, 4:00pm – 5:00pm | 115 Pond Laboratory

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INTRODUCTION

The word 'history' has two meanings. On the one hand, it connotes the *stuff of the past*: the Battle of Gettysburg, the passage of the 13th Amendment, the election of 1876, and so on. On the other hand, it refers to the *stories we tell about the past*. The two meanings are related. The past is inaccessible save for the stories we tell about it. We cannot, after all, relive the Battle of Gettysburg. We can only represent the past in words, images, and actions.

Professional historians call these stories narratives. These narratives help transform the messiness of the past into something more orderly: a story from which we can derive wisdom and insight.

Most introductory history courses are only concerned with presenting a narrative. This course is different. Over the course of this semester, I will introduce you to a traditional narrative of the Civil War era, and then, working together, we will systematically deconstruct it, reconvening at the end of the course to build a new narrative from the ground up.



How will we disrupt the traditional narrative found in textbooks? We will do so by considering arguments put forth by some of the best minds in the historical profession. These men and women have produced scholarship that challenges much of what we think we know about the years 1848 to 1877.

The goal of the course, then, is not to instill a particular body of knowledge, but rather to provide you with tools that will allow you to produce your own interpretation of this crucial period in U.S. history.

These tools have wide applicability beyond this class. While I hope that you finish this semester with a better understanding of the history of the United States in the mid-nineteenth century, my main priority is to help you acquire writing and analytical skills that will prepare you for the diverse challenges of a university education, post-graduate employment, and a lifetime of civic, social, and cultural engagement.

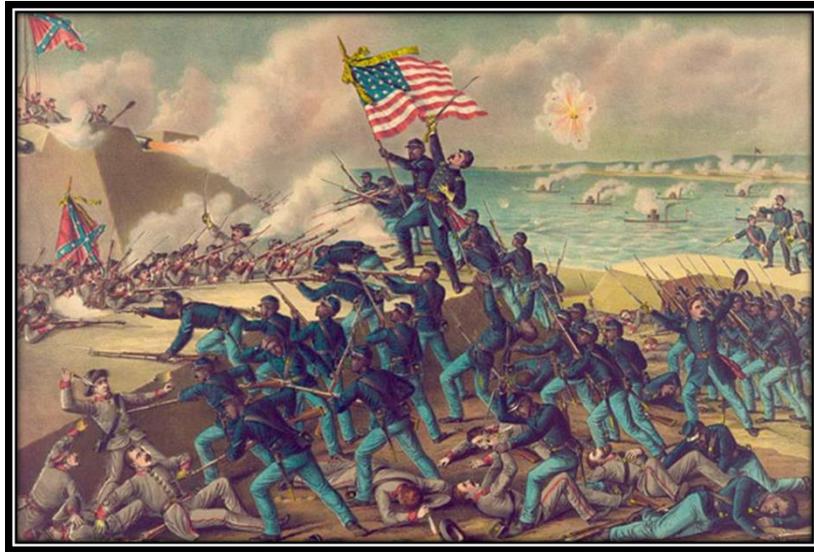
COURSE TEXTS

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* / Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (Random House, 1999), ISBN: 9780345478238 (**REQUIRED**).
- James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (Oxford University Press, 1998), ISBN: 9780195124996 (**REQUIRED**).
- Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (Knopf / Doubleday, 1999), ISBN: 9780679758334 (**REQUIRED**).
- James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford University Press, 2003), ISBN: 9780195168952 (**OPTIONAL**).

GRADING AND EVALUATION

- Please note: there will be NO final exam in this class. -

- *Attendance: 10%*
- *Quizzes: 15%*
- *Participation: 15%*
- *Papers: 45%*
- *Presentation: 15%*



Attendance

Students are allowed two absences over the course of the semester. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences (although I will consider extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis). Otherwise, students are expected to attend class daily. Attendance will be taken at the start of every session.

Quizzes

Students will be required to take ten quizzes over the course of the semester. These will consist of one-paragraph, open-ended, in-class written reflections on the week's readings, testing basic reading comprehension. Quizzes will be administered at random.

Students will be awarded one point per quiz if they demonstrate a firm understanding of the readings, a half point if they demonstrate basic familiarity, and no points if they clearly have not read the texts or read them with such inattention that they do not grasp their basic premise. Students' lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Discussion

Classroom discussion is a key component of this course. **We will be discussing readings and core concepts in every session.** Students will be awarded one point per class for a comment or question of nearly any quality – so long as it is not offensive, disrespectful, or intentionally irrelevant. **Students are expected to participate in at least half of all class sessions.** N.B. Students are strongly encouraged to 'interrupt' my lectures with question, comments, or observations.

Please note: I recognize that some students may find verbal participation discussion difficult or uncomfortable. While I believe that learning to express one's thoughts and feelings aloud is an important part of a college education, **I would nevertheless like to accommodate quieter students. Persons in the latter category should feel free to post comments or questions (for full credit) on the ANGEL message board or to compose a Tweet with the hashtag #Hist130Sect004.** I will respond to electronic comments in the medium in which I receive them.



Papers

Students will write three 4-6 page essays on, or related to, the three assigned texts: Frederick Douglass's *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* **OR** Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (students are required to read only one of these narratives); James McPherson's *For Cause and Comrades*; and Tony Horwitz's *Confederates in the Attic*. Paper prompts are available on ANGEL. **All papers must be submitted in both hard and electronically copies, double spaced, with one-inch margins, in twelve-point Times New Roman font. Electronic copies of papers should be submitted to the ANGEL drop box in either .doc or .docx format.** I am a PC user and cannot read .odx or .pages files! If you do not have access to Microsoft Word, please copy and paste the text of your paper into either the body of your ANGEL submission or into the body of an email message.

Presentation

At the end of the semester, students, working in groups (see below), will be required to make a 1-hour and 15-minute presentation, recapping the contents of the semester. Students should review the presentation prompt at their earliest convenience and begin thinking about the presentation as early in the semester as possible.

GROUPS

All students will be assigned to one of two groups. Groups assignments are posted on ANGEL. Students' group assignments will be important for a number of activities throughout the semester (including the first paper, class debates, and, most importantly, the final presentation [see presentation prompt for details]).

LATE PAPERS

Late papers will be marked down one half letter grade for each day that they are late, unless students provide me with documentation of extenuating circumstances.

EMAIL POLICY

Barring extenuating circumstances, I will respond to all student emails in 36 hours or fewer. I will not respond to emails between the hours of 10pm and 9am.

GRADE SCALE

<i>Grades for Papers and Presentations</i>	<i>Final Course Grades</i>
A+ = 100	94-100 = A
A/A+ = 98	90-93.9 = A-
A = 95	88-89.9 = B+
A-/A = 92.5	82.5-87.9 = B
A- = 91	80-82.4 = B-
B+/A- = 89.5	78-79.9 = C+
B+ = 88	72.5-77.9 = C
B/B+ = 87	70-72.4 = C-
B = 85	68-69.9 = D+
B-/B = 82.5	62.5-67.9 = D
B- = 81	60-62.4 = D-
C+/B- = 79.5	Less than 60 = F
C+ = 78	
C/C+ = 77	
C = 75	
C- = 71	
D+ = 68	
D = 65	
D- = 61	
F = 60	

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

University policies related to academic matters (for example, rules governing academic dishonesty) are strictly upheld in this course.

Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary actions.



For more on the university's academic integrity policy, please visit the following website:
<http://handbook.psu.edu/content/academic-integrity>.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

I warmly welcome students with disabilities to History 130 and will be happy to make any accommodations necessary to ensure that their time in the classroom is safe, pleasurable, and productive. Students with disabilities that require adjustments to the syllabus or course assignments should contact the Office for Disability Services as early in the term as possible. Students with disabilities should also notify the instructor as soon as possible and be aware that documentation from ODS will be required before adjustments can be made. For further information regarding policies, rights, and responsibilities please visit the ODS website at: www.equity.psu.edu/ods/.

I am particularly sensitive to the fact that the paper assignments for this course are largely open-ended. While I firmly believe that successfully tackling these kinds of assignments is an important part of a humanities education, I recognize that students with certain kinds of learning and intellectual disabilities require more structured prompts. Pending proper documentation, I will be happy to accommodate students' needs.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Penn State is committed to provide all persons equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by Commonwealth or Federal authorities. Penn State does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, gender, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

For further information, please visit the Affirmative Action Office Web site at:
<http://www.psu.edu/dept/aaoffice/>.

TEACH ACT STATEMENT

The materials for this course are only for the use of students enrolled in this course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS / SCHEDULE OF READINGS

All readings (save required texts) available on ANGEL. Readings due in class on assigned date.

WEEK 1 (LESSONS 1-2)

Tues., 13 Jan. 1: *Introduction to the Class / Introduction to Historical Methodology*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Discussion of the syllabus, as well as goals and expectations for the course; overview of historical methodology and what it means to think like an historian; description of final presentation; introductions and ice breakers.

Thurs., 15 Jan. 2: *The Road to Disunion, Part I (The American Revolution to the Annexation of Texas)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of major events in American history between 1776 and 1845 and their role in driving the sectional conflict between the Northern and Southern United States.

WEEK 2 (LESSONS 3-4)

Tues., 20 Jan. 3: *The Road to Disunion, Part II (The Revolution in Texas to the Compromise of 1850)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of major events in American history between 1836 and 1850 and their role in driving the sectional conflict between the Northern and Southern United States.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read Caleb McDaniel, “How to Read for History” (on ANGEL: stop at ‘Stage 2: The Slow Read’); Gary W. Nash, “Could Slavery Have Been Abolished?” *The Forgotten Fifth: African Americans in the Age of Revolution*, 69-122.

Thurs., 22 Jan. 4: *The Road to Disunion, Part III (The Compromise of 1850 to Fort Sumter)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of major events in American history between 1850 and 1861 and their role in precipitating the secession crisis and civil war.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read George Fitzhugh, “Southern Thought,” *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860*, ed. Drew Gilpin Faust, 272-299. **Group 1:** begin reading Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* and Eliza Potter, *A Hairdresser’s Experience in High Life*. **Group 2:** begin reading Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* and James Thomas, *From Tennessee Slave to St. Louis Entrepreneur*.

WEEK 3 (LESSONS 5-6)

Tues., 27 Jan. 5: *Inhuman Bondage, Part I (Slavery, Modernity, and Capitalism)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of two positions on the relationship between slavery, modernity, and capitalism: an older position claiming that slavery was pre-modern and pre- or anti-capitalist; and a newer position arguing that slavery was a key component of a modern, capitalist economy.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read James M. McPherson and James K. Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 27-35; Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, “Partners in Inequity,” *New York Times*; Edward E. Baptist and Louis Hyman, “American Finance Grew on the Back of Slaves,” *Chicago Sun-Times*; Katie Johnston, “The Messy Link Between Slave Owners and Modern Management,” *Forbes*. Continue reading Douglass, *Narrative*, and Potter, *Hairdresser’s Experience*, **OR** Jacobs, *Incidents*, and Thomas, *Tennessee Slave*.

Thurs., 29 Jan. 6: *Inhuman Bondage, Part II (The Lived Experience of Slavery)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Class viewing of portions of the film *12 Years a Slave*; introduction to Paper Prompt #1.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Continue reading Douglass, *Narrative*, and Potter, *Hairdresser’s Experience*, **OR** Jacobs, *Incidents*, and Thomas, *Tennessee Slave*.

WEEK 4 (LESSONS 7-8)

Tues., 3 Feb. 7: *How Modern Was Slavery? – CLASS DEBATE*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Was slavery modern, or was it a retrograde system of labor exploitation? Was it part and parcel of a capitalist world economy, or was it a throwback to pre-modern, even feudal, modes of production? Students should come prepared to argue both sides of these questions (using their reading of Douglass, Jacobs, and the primary source of their choice to support their arguments). Positions will be assigned on the day of the debate.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Finish reading Douglass, *Narrative*, and Potter, *Hairdresser’s Experience*, **OR** Jacobs, *Incidents*, and Thomas, *Tennessee Slave*.

Thurs., 5 Feb. 8: *What Caused the War?, Part I (Environmental Causes of the Civil War)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the role of soil exhaustion and failed agricultural reform efforts in shaping the South’s desire to push the institution of slavery into the West – a key sticking point for antislavery politicians in the newly-formed Republican party.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read Eugene D. Genovese, “Cotton, Slavery, and Soil Exhaustion,” *The Political Economy of Slavery*, 85-105.

WEEK 5 (LESSONS 9-10)

Tues., 10 Feb. 9: *What Caused the War?, Part II (Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Coming of War)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the South’s ambitions for expanding the institution of slavery into Cuba and Nicaragua (which it hoped to bring under American dominion), and why the controversy surrounding slavery in Kansas is best understood in light of the Southerners’ dreams of Caribbean empire.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of Caribbean Empire*, 3-47.

***** PAPER #1 DUE ON 10 FEB. *****

Thurs., 12 Feb. 10: *What Caused the Civil War? – CLASS DEBATE*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Was the Civil War caused by soil exhaustion? Was it a conflict between the North and the South over slaveholders' imperial ambitions in the Caribbean? Was it driven by a series of political crises over the fate of slavery in the territories? Students should come prepared to argue all sides of these questions. Positions will be assigned on the day of the debate.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Review of Genovese, "Cotton, Slavery, and Soil Exhaustion"; May, *Slavery, Race, and Conquest in the Tropics*; and class lectures 2-4 (available on ANGEL,).

WEEK 6 (LESSONS 11-12)

Tues., 17 Feb. 11: *Fearsome Adversaries (Men of Honor v. Mudsills)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of why many Southerners believed that horsemanship, marksmanship, and the experience of mastery made the Confederacy a more fearsome military power than the industrializing North.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read McPherson and Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire*, 201-226; Michael C. Adams, *Our Masters the Rebels*, vii-47.

Thurs., 19 Feb. 12: *Turning Points, Part I (Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the role of the Battle of Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation in turning the tide of war in favor of the Union.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read James M. McPherson, "Why Did the Confederacy Lose?" in *Drawn with the Sword*, 113-136; McPherson and Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire*, 227-236, 257-317.

WEEK 7 (LESSONS 13-14)

Tues., 24 Feb. 13: *Turning Points, Part II (Gettysburg and the Mississippi Valley)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the role of the Battle of Gettysburg and the Union victory at Vicksburg in shaping the final outcome of the Civil War.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read McPherson and Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire*, 327-348, 349-369.

Thurs., 26 Feb. 14: *Turning Points, Part III (Atlanta and the Election of 1864)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the role of the fall of Atlanta to Union forces in the Autumn of 1864 and the subsequent re-election of Abraham Lincoln in securing a final victory for the North.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read McPherson and Hogue, *Ordeal by Fire*, 443-470, 471-494. Begin reading James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, and **other required sources for the paper topic of your choice**. See paper prompts on ANGEL for details.

WEEK 8 (LESSONS 15-16)**Tues., 3 Mar.** 15: *What They Fought For, Part I (U.S.A.: Union or Abolitionism)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the sources of combat motivation for Union soldiers. Were they fighting for the concept of Union (a concept we will discuss at length in class) or for the freedom of enslaved men and women in the South?

ASSIGNMENT(S): Continue reading McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*; required sources of your choice.

Thurs., 5 Mar. 16: *What They Fought For, Part II (C.S.A.: Hearthstone or Herrenvolk Democracy)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the sources of combat motivation for Confederate soldiers. Were they fighting for the defense of their homes and loved ones or for slavery and white supremacy?

ASSIGNMENT(S): Finish reading McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*; required sources of your choice.

WEEK 9 (SPRING BREAK)

*** TUES., 10 MAR. and THURS., 12 MAR.: **NO CLASS** ***

WEEK 10 (LESSONS 17-18)**Tues., 17 Mar.** 17: *The Progress of Emancipation, 1861-1865*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the progress of Union policy toward the emancipation of slaves from the outbreak of the war in April 1861 to the passage of the 13th Amendment in January 1865.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Barbara J. Fields, "Who Freed the Slaves?" *The Civil War: An Illustrated History*, 178-181; James M. McPherson, "Who Freed the Slaves?" *Drawn with the Sword*, 198-207.

***** PAPER #2 DUE ON 17 MAR. *****

Tues., 19 Mar. 18: *Who Freed the Slaves? – CLASS DEBATE*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Who ended slavery in America? Did enslaved men and women destroy the institution themselves by abandoning Southern plantations, fleeing to the North, and abetting the Union cause? Or did Lincoln play the decisive role? Students should come prepared to argue both sides of these questions. Positions will be assigned on the day of the debate.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Review Fields, "Who Freed the Slaves?" and McPherson, "Who Freed the Slaves?"

WEEK 11 (LESSONS 19-20)**Tues., 24 Mar.** 20: *Women in the American Civil War***LESSON OVERVIEW:** Lecture / discussion of the role of women in the American Civil War.**ASSIGNMENT(S):** Read Judith Giesberg, *The Army at Home: Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front*, 69-91; Stephanie McCurry, "Women Numerous and Armed: The Confederate Food Riots in Historical Perspective," *OAH Magazine of History*.**Thurs., 26 Mar.** 21: *Civil War? Modern War? Total War?***LESSON OVERVIEW:** Lecture / discussion of several questions that have long vexed Civil War historians: how 'modern' was the Civil War? Was it the first 'modern' war? The first 'total' war? Did it revolutionize medicine? Did it revolutionize governance?**ASSIGNMENT(S):** Read Mark E. Neely, Jr., "Was the Civil War a Total War?" *Civil War History*; Reid Mitchell, "The First Modern War, R.I.P.," *Reviews in American History*, 552-558; Emily Sohn, "How the Civil War Changed Modern Medicine," *Discovery News*; Jeffrey S. Sartin, "Infectious Diseases during the Civil War: The Triumph of the 'Third Army,'" *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 580-584; Lisa Rein, "Civil War Gave Birth to Much of Modern Federal Government," *Washington Post*.**WEEK 12 (LESSONS 21-22)****Tues., 31 Mar.** 21: *Film Day – Glory (Part I)***LESSON OVERVIEW:** Class viewing of the film *Glory*.**ASSIGNMENT (S):** Begin Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*, read / view a primary source of your choice (see Paper #3 prompt for details).**Thurs., 2 Apr.** 22: *Film Day – Glory (Part II)***LESSON OVERVIEW:** Class viewing of the film *Glory*. During class, I will also provide an introduction to Paper Prompt #3.**ASSIGNMENT (S):** Continue Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*; read / view a primary source of your choice.**WEEK 13 (LESSONS 23-24)****Tues., 7 Apr.** 23: *Remembering the War, Part I (Union Triumphalism)***LESSON OVERVIEW:** Lecture / discussion of the Civil War in American memory, with particular attention to the pro-Union, 'triumphalist' narrative of the Civil War: the notion that the war remade America for the better and effectively resolved some of the most troublesome contradictions of the nation's founding.**ASSIGNMENT (S):** Continue Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*; read / view a primary source of your choice.

Thurs., 9 Apr. 24: *Remembering the War, Part II (The Lost Cause)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the Civil War in American memory, with particular attention to the pro-Southern, ‘Lost Cause’ narrative of the Civil War: the notion that the South’s cause was just, its soldiers brave.

ASSIGNMENT (S): Finish Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*.

WEEK 14 (LESSONS 25-26)

Tues., 14 Apr. 25: *Reconstruction, Part I (Presidential and Radical Reconstruction)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of major events in the federal political history of Reconstruction, 1863 to 1877.

ASSIGNMENT(S): Read Eric Foner, “The Failure of Presidential Reconstruction” and “The Making of Radical Reconstruction,” *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 82-123.

Thurs., 16 Apr. 26: *Reconstruction, Part II (Social, Economic, and Political Reconstruction in the South)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of major events in the social, economic, and political history of Reconstruction in the Southern United States, 1865 to 1877.

ASSIGNMENT (S): Read Eric Foner, “Blueprints for a Republican South” and “Reconstruction: Political and Economic,” *A Short History of Reconstruction*, 124-179.

***** PAPER #3 DUE ON 16 APR. *****

WEEK 15 (LESSONS 27-28)

Tues., 21 Apr. 27: *Reconstruction, Part III (The Rise of Jim Crow and ‘America’s Unfinished Revolution’)*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Lecture / discussion of the rise and fall of Jim Crow in the decades following the end of Reconstruction, 1877 to 1965.

ASSIGNMENT (S): C. Vann Woodward, “Of Old Regimes and Reconstructions,” “Forgotten Alternatives,” and “Capitulation to Racism” in *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 11-109.

Thurs., 23 Apr. 28: *Class Presentations – Part I*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Final Presentation by Group 1.

WEEK 16 (LESSONS 29-30)

Tues., 28 Apr. 29: *Class Presentations – Part II*

LESSON OVERVIEW: Final Presentation by Group 2.

Thurs., 30 Apr. 30: *What Should We Remember? – CLASS DISCUSSION*

LESSON OVERVIEW: What lesson should we take from the Civil War era?

SYLLABUS AGREEMENT

To be signed and returned to your professor after carefully reading the syllabus by Thurs., 15 Jan., 2015.

I, _____, have read and agree to adhere to the terms of the syllabus for History 130 (Section 004, Spring 2015), including, but not limited to:

1. The attendance policy.
2. The participation policy.
3. The essay and grading policy.
4. The email policy.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
