

# History 393

## Slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, 1848-1877

Spring 2010  
Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 - 12:15  
1121 Humanities

*This syllabus is your guide to the course. Look here first for answers to your questions. If you email me with a question and do not receive an answer, it is probably because the question is already answered on the syllabus.*

### Teaching Staff

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### About the Course

History 393 is an upper-level undergraduate course exploring the political, social, economic, and cultural history of the United States during the years of the sectional crisis, the Civil War, and Reconstruction. **It is not primarily a course in military history.** The course readings, in addition to four book-length works of history and several shorter articles, include a variety of narratives, speeches, and other personal and political writings from the period. The writing assignments ask you to read such texts closely, place them in their historical contexts, and analyze their overt meanings as well as their tensions, contradictions, and silences. There is no textbook, so many aspects of this history will only be covered in lecture. Midterm and final exams ask you to synthesize material from readings and lectures. This course will challenge you academically. You will not earn the grade you want unless you regularly attend lectures and discussions, do readings with care, and submit assignments on time.

### Sections

**Sections begin meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 26 and 27.**

**Attendance and Participation:** Discussion sections are a required element of the course and account for 20% of your final grade. Attendance is necessary but not sufficient to do well; you must also come well prepared, having digested the assigned readings and whatever other tasks have been assigned for that meeting.

**Switching:** It may be possible for some students to switch from one section to another, but we cannot guarantee that you can switch into any particular section. Use the feature on your online timetable to try to switch. If this does not work during the first week of class, we will compile a register of students who need to switch sections and attempt to accommodate everyone's needs -- but please note, again, that we cannot make any promises.

### Lecture

The midterm and final exams will assume you have attended and taken notes on all lectures. During the first week of lecture, we will encourage you to obtain the email addresses of two students sitting near you. If you miss lecture, obtain the notes from one of them. Office hours are intended for follow-up questions and more intensive discussions of the course material, not as make-up sessions. I do not provide copies of my lecture notes.

### Readings

Several books for the course will be available at Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative, 426 W. Gilman. You should definitely purchase the following works:

Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (Random House edition)  
Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over*  
Bruce Levine, *Confederate Emancipation*  
LeeAnna Keith, *The Colfax Massacre*

Michael Fitzgerald, *Splendid Failure*

Other readings will be made available as PDF files or via links on the Learn@UW page. You may read these online or print them out; the teaching staff will inform you which ones must be printed and brought with you to section.

### Assignments

**Short Essays (7.5% each; 30% total):** Choose four of the essay questions/assignments attached to the various weeks of the course (see below). For each, write an essay of 450-500 words and submit it to the course dropbox no later than the end of the day (midnight) Wednesday of that week. Your essay should begin with clearly stated thesis and should prove that thesis through well-chosen examples drawn from the readings (and, where relevant, from lecture). These are formal assignments and should be revised at least once before submission, carefully proofread, and given a title.

**Newspaper Analysis Essay (15%):** This assignment, an essay of 1200-1500 words, is due at Noon on Friday, April 23, via the Learn@UW dropbox. It will ask you to compare the coverage of an event in two newspapers. A required exercise earlier in the semester, due in section, will familiarize you with the online newspaper databases you will need to use for this assignment. A full assignment description will follow later in the semester.

**In-Class Midterm Exam (15%):** This exam will ask you to integrate material from readings and lectures.

**Final Exam (20%):** The two-hour final exam for this course is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 11 at 12:25 p.m.** It will include an essay synthesizing the entire period of the course; it will be open book and open note. **Do not plan to leave Madison before this exam.**

### Our Social Contract

#### **Electronic Devices in the Classroom**

No texting or other electronic communication is allowed in the lecture or seminar room. Mobile phones, pagers, and other devices must be switched off (not on silent or vibrate) and must remain in your bag or pocket during lecture and section. If the message you are waiting for is so important that it can't remain unread or unanswered for another hour, don't come to class.

Web surfing, chatting, and other internet activities are intensely distracting to those around you, and even to the lecturer or discussion leader. Laptops may be used **only** if the wireless is turned off for the duration of the lecture or section meeting. Violation of this policy will result in laptops being banned from the classroom. Teaching assistants may prohibit laptop use in their sections, at their discretion.

#### **Academic Responsibility**

All work that you turn in should be your own, and you are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism; claiming ignorance will not help you after the fact. If you repeat someone else's words, you must use quotation marks and must cite the relevant author, work, and page numbers (either in parentheses or in a footnote). Likewise, if you closely paraphrase another writer or rely on his or her ideas, you must acknowledge your debt with an appropriate citation. Appropriation of another author's work without citation—whether or not you use direct quotations—always constitutes plagiarism. Some clear guidelines are available on the Writing Center's website at [http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA\\_plagiarism.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html). We will formally pursue all cases of possible academic misconduct.

#### **Late Work and Missed Exercises**

Absences or missed deadlines are only considered "excused" if the student provides a note from a medical professional or dean confirming the personal or medical emergency. In the absence of such a note, your work will be reduced by a tenth of its total possible point value for each day it is late (beginning, as in taxi, the moment the clock starts on the first day).

#### **Special Needs and Requests**

We will make every effort to accommodate students' needs. Students requiring accommodation must work through the McBurney Center and must alert their T.A. well before the first time they require such accommodation; otherwise, in a class this size, we cannot guarantee that we can make arrangements.

### Schedule of Lectures, Readings, and Assignments

The “week” in this course begins with Thursday’s lecture, moves through the following Tuesday’s lecture, and concludes with your section meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday.

Readings should be completed as early as possible in the week, but in any event before sections meet.

Short Essays are due in the Learn@UW dropbox no later than midnight Wednesday, the day after the week’s second lecture.

• = documents available as .pdf files or via links under "Content" at the course Learn@UW page

Douglass = Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*

Manning = Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over*

Levine = Bruce Levine, *Confederate Emancipation*

Keith = LeeAnna Keith, *The Colfax Massacre*

Fitzgerald = Michael Fitzgerald, *Splendid Failure*

#### WEEK 1 - Introductory lecture

1/19 **The Civil War in Myth and Memory**

#### WEEK 2

##### **Readings:**

Douglass, chs. 1 - 18

- Stephanie McCurry, “The Politics of Yeoman Households”

##### **Lectures:**

1/21 **The Meanings of Freedom**

1/26 **Slavery and the South**

**Essay Topic:** *What role do contests over property and/or authority among white men (as analyzed by McCurry) play in the narrative of Frederick Douglass?*

#### WEEK 3

##### **Readings:**

Douglass, chs. 19 – 25

- George Aiken’s stage adaptation of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852)
- Debate at New Bedford, MA, from *The Liberator*, 1858
- James Henry Hammond, “Letter to an English Abolitionist,” 1845

##### **Lectures:**

1/28 **"Free Labor" and the Emergence of Northern Distinctiveness**

2/2 **Antislavery and Abolitionism**

**Essay Topic:** *How might Frederick Douglass's experiences in slavery have shaped his response to the conversation about slave revolt at New Bedford?*

#### WEEK 4

##### **Readings:**

Keith, 3-36

- Territorial Kansas Online, “Border Disputes and Warfare” (background for Higginson reading)
- Higginson, *A Ride Through Kansas*
- Whitman, "A Boston Ballad"

##### **Lectures:**

2/4 **Proslavery and Anti-Abolitionism**

2/9 **Compromises and Crises of the early 1850s**

**Essay Topic:** *How does Higginson draw distinctions between the “Free States” and their enemies without referring more than incidentally to actual enslaved people?*

**WEEK 5****Readings:**

- Greenberg, "Pirates, Patriots, and Public Meetings: Antebellum Expansionism and Urban Culture"
- Gorn, "'Goodbye Boys, I Die a True American': Homicide, Nativism, and Working-Class Culture in Antebellum New York City"
- Trodd & Stauffer, *A Meteor of War*, 109-139
- Georgia Secession Debates: speeches by Stephens and Toombs

**Lectures:**

- 2/11 **Looking West**  
 2/16 **Conspiracies, Real and Imagined**

**Essay Topic:** *Where do the historical figures in these readings seek to set limits on democracy? Identify one important instance and explain its broader significance for the 1850s.*

**WEEK 6****Readings:**

- Manning, 3-53
- South Carolina Secession Convention: "Declaration of the Immediate Causes"
  - Constitution of the Confederate States of America, 1861

- 2/18 **Secession, pt. 1**  
 2/23 **Secession, pt. 2**

**Essay Topic:** *In what ways (or to what extent) are the "politics of yeoman households" (readings, week 2) reflected in the South Carolina Declaration and in the Confederate Constitution?*

**WEEK 7****Readings:**

- Manning, 54-111
- Faust, "Trying to Do a Man's Business"

**Lectures:**

- 2/25 **Men and Nations at War, pt. 1**  
 3/2 **Men and Nations at War, pt. 2**

**Essay Topic:** *How did Lizzie Neblett's difficulties 'doing a man's business' reflect broader troubles within the Confederacy?*

**WEEK 8****Readings:**

- Manning, 111-179
- Cecelski, "Abraham H. Galloway"
  - Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment*, 27-77

**Lectures:**

- 3/4 **In-Class Midterm Exam**  
 3/9 **Who Freed the Slaves?**

**Essay Topic:** *How do the experiences of Galloway and/or Higginson challenge Glory's depiction of black Union military service?*

**WEEK 9****Readings:**

- Levine, 1-77  
 Keith, 36-45
- Forten, *Journal*, 27-33, 158-185

**Lectures:**3/11 *Glory*3/16 **Nation(s) and Emancipation**

**Essay Topic:** *Make an argument about the most surprising or important similarity or difference you note between Higginson's and Forten's depictions of the war.*

**Assignment for section meetings, 3/16 and 3/17:**

Using one or more of the databases listed below, locate, read, and print out a newspaper article from the 1860s dealing directly with one of the events discussed in this week's reading. Write a 150-word explanation of the relationship between the article's and the readings' discussions of this event. Bring the article and explanation to section with you for discussion.

**Databases (all accessible via the e-gateway or a search at <http://library.wisc.edu/#databases>):**

ProQuest Civil War Era

19th Century U.S. Newspapers

America's Historical Newspapers

**WEEK 10****Readings:**

Manning, 181-221

Levine, 77-147

**Lectures:**3/18 **Gettysburg and the Fog of War**3/23 **Rehearsals for Reconstruction**

**Essay Topic:** *How did Confederate wartime debates reflect the persistence of antebellum struggles?*

**WEEK 11****Readings:**

Levine, 148-164

Fitzgerald, 3-46

**Lectures:**3/25 **The Hard Hand of War**

\*\*\*SPRING BREAK\*\*\*

4/6 **1865****No Essay this week****WEEK 12****Readings:**

- Stanley, "Beggars Can't Be Choosers: Compulsion and Contract in Postbellum America"

- Perman, ed., *Major Problems*, 311-341

- "Address by a Committee of Norfolk Blacks," 1865

**Lectures:**4/8 **Visions of Freedom in the Postwar Nation**4/13 **The Transformation of Reconstruction**

**Essay Question:** *Drawing on at least two of these readings, make an argument about what forms of compulsion Americans found legitimate in the aftermath of slave emancipation.*

**WEEK 13****Readings:**

Fitzgerald, 72-164

Keith, 45-87

- Perman, ed., *Major Problems*, 342-76

- Wish, ed., *Reconstruction in the South*, 153-171

**Lectures:**

4/15 **White Terror**

4/20 **Radical Reconstruction**

**Essay Topic:** *Do the competing explanations offered for Klan (or other white supremacist paramilitary) activity represent various perspectives on a common set of facts, flatly contradictory stories, or something else?*

\*\*\*NEWSPAPER ANALYSIS PAPER DUE NOON, FRIDAY 4/23, VIA THE DROPBOX\*\*\*

**WEEK 14**

**Readings:**

Fitzgerald, 165-193

- DuBois, "Outgrowing the Compact of the Fathers: Equal Rights, Woman Suffrage, and the Constitution, 1820-1878"
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Speech at Lawrence, Kansas," 1867
- Debate at American Equal Rights Association convention, 1869

**Lectures:**

4/22 **Reconstruction Beyond the South, pt. 1**

4/27 **Reconstruction Beyond the South, pt. 2**

**Essay Topic:** *How did the dynamics of Reconstruction shape the fate of woman suffrage in the late 1860s?*

**WEEK 15**

**Readings:**

Keith, 88-171

Fitzgerald, 194-212

- Perman, ed., *Major Problems*, 407-409
- Tillman, *The Struggles of 1876*, 15-26

**Lectures:**

4/29 **The Crisis of Reconstruction**

5/4 **Redeployment and "Redemption"**

**Essay Topic:** *What would have been necessary in order for democratically elected Republican governments to continue to govern in former Confederate states past 1876?*

**WEEK 16 – Concluding Lecture**

5/6 **The Meanings of Freedom**

\*\*\*FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 11, at 12:25 p.m., location TBA\*\*\*