



AM 103 considers how Americans have remembered and commemorated the Civil War from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Drawing on depictions of the war in fiction, film, popular history, memorial sites, music, television and re-enactors' conventions among other cultural sources, it focuses on how memory and history have interacted in the popular imagination to shape the cultural legacy of the conflict.

The course serves as a gateway course to the American Studies major or minor, although it is open to any student in the college and no prior background is needed

Mon/Wed/Friday 10:10-11:05 and TBA
4 credits

Tisch 301

“The People made their recollection fit in with their sufferings.

--Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*

“The capacity to live in the past by memory also emancipates the individual from the tyranny of the present. He can choose, if he wants, to reverse a present trend of history in favor of some previous trend. He can, if he wishes, seek asylum from present tumults in a past period of history, or use the memory of a past innocency to project a future of higher virtue.”

--Reinhold Niebuhr, *Faith and History*

Goals for Students Enrolled in this Course:

To study in considerable detail the causes, events, personages, and results of the American Civil War and to evaluate the ways in which the conflict between 1861 and 1865 influenced subsequent political, social, economic and cultural development.

To reflect on how cultures remember (especially complex and tragic moments such as the Civil War) and how memories take shape and are circulated within cultures.

To examine how each generation of Americans after the war rewrote the master narrative of the Civil War to suit its own needs and how the past has been appropriated by particular groups to advance particular agendas.

To consider how race, gender, class and diversity have served as significant categories of analysis for understanding how the Civil War has been used by successive generations.

To expand the definition of what constitutes history to include interdisciplinary sources and perspectives, including film, visual culture, commemorative sites, music, television programs and re-enactors' demonstrations.

To think of the history of the Civil War as contested and mediated than fixed and unimpeachable. To quote what Emily Rosenberg said about a different but equally mutable historical episode: This course "attempts not to stabilize some truth about this iconic event but to investigate its instability."

Course Mechanics

This is a four-credit course that meets three times a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:10-11:05) and on several occasions outside the classroom throughout the term for movie showings and field trips (see the syllabus). It is always a challenge to schedule TBA sessions. Students will be asked to participate in these activities at times that accommodate the largest numbers. For those who cannot make a designated viewing or travel schedule, alternative opportunities will be provided. The midterm exam will also be scheduled outside of class.

Students are expected to attend class, to keep up with the reading, to participate regularly in discussion, and to complete all assignments in a timely fashion. Late work will be penalized. There will be several short (3-5 page papers) as well as a midterm and a final exam.

Grades will be apportioned as follows:

Unit 1: Website Analysis Paper	10%
Unit 2: Midterm Exam	15%
Unit 3: Memorial Paper	10%
Unit 4: Woodrow Wilson Paper	10%
Unit 5: Gone with the Wind Paper	10%
Unit 6: Centennial Civil Rights Paper	10%
Unit 7: Final Exam	20%
Class participation	15%

Students should purchase the following required books from the bookstore:

Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*

James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry for Freedom: The Civil War Era*

Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, eds., *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*

Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*

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

Andrew Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America*

Unit 1: Introduction to American Memory Studies

Week I: Definitions and Methodologies

Monday

January 25 – What is American Studies?

Wednesday

January 27 – Myth and Memory as Historical Tools

Reading: Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 3-39;
David Thelan, "Memory and American History," in *Memory and American History*, vii-xix.

Friday

January 29 – Re-Enactment as Symbolic Ritual

Reading: Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*, 3-17; 45-124.

Week 2: Historical Memory and a Re-Usable Past

Monday

February 1 – Participatory History and Experiential Learning

Reading: Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*, 209-390.

Wednesday

February 3 – The Stuff of History: Material Culture and Memory

Reading: Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America*, ix-xiv, 1-38, 117-151.

Friday

February 5 – Impersonating Lincoln: The Illusion of Presentism

Reading: Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America*, 90-116, 152-166.

* * * Civil War Website Paper due

Unit 2: The Civil War as Historical Moment

Week 3: The Coming of War

Monday

February 8 – The Post-Heroic Generation and the Mexican War

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 3-77.

Wednesday

February 10 – Opening Pandora's Box: Slavery and the
"Constitutional" Issue of Race

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 78-169.

Friday

February 12 – Abolitionists, Fire-eaters and the Impending Crisis

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 170-307.

* * * Field Trip: New York Military Heritage Museum

Week 4: Fighting the War

Monday

February 15 – Ordeal by Fire: Sentimentalizing the War

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 308-427.

Wednesday

February 17 – The Dark and Bloody Ground: Realities of War

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 428-510.

Friday

February 19 – Long Remember: The Summer of 1863

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 511-590.

* * * Movie Showing: Ken Burns, episodes 5 and 6

Week 5: Reconstructing the Nation

Monday

February 22 – Burning Atlanta: Sherman's March to the Sea

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 591-717.

Wednesday

February 24 – Appomattox and the Culture of Conciliation

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 718-830.

Friday

February 26 – Death and Commemoration: The Apotheosis of Lincoln

Reading: McPherson: *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 831-862.

* * * Midterm Exam on the Civil War

Unit 3: Twenty-Five Years and the “Afterwar” Generation

Week 6: Reconstruction and Reconciliation

Monday

March 1 – The Unwritten War and Collective Memory

Reading: Daniel Aaron, “The Fallen Angel and the Risen Saint,” in *The Unwritten War*, 1-38 (xerox).

Wednesday

March 3 – Sentimentalizing the War: Children’s Literature

Reading: James McPherson, “Long-Legged Yankee Lies: The Southern Textbook Crusade,” and Alice Fahs, “Remembering the Civil War in Children’s Literature from the 1880s and 1890s,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, 64-93.

Friday

March 5 – Grant’s Memories and Memoirs

Reading: Joan Waugh, “Ulysses S. Grant, Historian,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, 5-38; excerpts from Grant’s Memoirs, edited by Mark Twain (Xerox)

* * * Field Trip: Grant Cottage, MacGregor Mountain

Week 7: Memorializing the War

Monday

March 8 – The Relics of War: Decoration Days

Reading: Blight, “The Origins of Memorial Day in the North and South,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, 94-129.

Wednesday

March 10 – Sermons in Stones: Statuary and Historical Memory

Reading: Thomas J. Brown, “The Monumental Legacy of Calhoun,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, 130-156; David Blight, “‘For Something beyond the Battlefield’: Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War,” in Thelan, *Memory and American History*, 27-49.

Friday

March 12 – Memory as a Social Frame: The Old South/New South

Reading: selections from the works of Joel Chandler Harris and Henry Grady (xeroxes).

* * * Memorial paper due

Unit 4: A Peace Jubilee: Fifty Years Removed

Week 8: Spring Break

Monday March 13- Sunday March 21

Suggestions: Visit a Civil War Battlefield; read *Gone With the Wind*

Week 9: The Romance of Reunion

Monday

March 22 – “Emotionless as Rocks”: Romanticizing the War

Reading: Stephen Crane, *Red Badge of Courage* (xerox).

Wednesday

March 24 – Proto-Nationalism: Fighting the Spanish American War

Reading: Patrick J. Kelly, “The Election of 1896 and the Restructuring of Civil War Memory,” in *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, pp. 180-212.

Friday

March 26 – “No Ordinary Celebration”: The Great Reunion of 1913

Reading: David Blight, “The Dead and the Living” and “Epilogue” in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, 6-30, 381-397.

* * * Movie Showing, “Birth of a Nation”

Week 10: The Politics of Memory

Monday

March 29 -- History Written with Lightning: D. W. Griffith’s “Birth of a Nation”

Reading: Thomas Cripps, “Birth of a Nation,” in *Slow Fade to Black*, 41-69 (xerox).

Wednesday

March 31 – What Would Lincoln Do? Fighting the Great War

Reading: Barry Schwartz, “Abraham Lincoln in World War I: Strengthening America,” in *Abraham Lincoln and the Forging of National Memory*, 224-255.

Friday

April 2 – The Lincoln Memorial: Daniel Chester French's Lincoln

Reading: "Themes and Variations," in Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 195- 256; Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America*, 259-267.

* * * Woodrow Wilson Historical Paper due

Unit 5: Seventy-Five Years: The Jaded Generation

Week 11: Irrepressible Conflicts: the Great Depression and the Civil War

Monday

April 5 – Hard Times: Anti-Capitalism and the Civil War

Reading: Charles Beard, selections from *The Rise of American Civilization* (xerox).

Wednesday

April 7 – Preserving Slave Voices: Oral Histories

Reading: WPA Slave Narratives (selections, xerox).

Friday

April 9 – Theater of the Mind: The Civil War on the Radio

Reading: Michelle Hilmes, "Who We Are, Who We are Not: The Emergence of National Narratives," in *Radio Voices*, 75-129; select audio recordings of the "Cavalcade of America

* * * Movie Showing: *Gone With the Wind*

Week 12: The Lost Cause and Causes Not Lost

Monday

April 12 – “Of Cavaliers and Cotton Fields”: The Lost Cause Tradition

Reading: Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*, Parts 1 and 2

Wednesday

April 14 – A New Deal for the Old South

Reading: Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*, Parts 3 and 4

Friday

April 16 – The Good War: World War II and Civil War Memory

Reading: Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind*, Part 5

* * * Gone with the Wind paper due

Unit 6: The Reflective Generation: One Hundred Years

Week 13: Patriotic Gore and the Emancipationist Vision

Monday

April 19 – Celebrating a Tragedy: The Civil War Turns 100

Reading: Jon Wiener, “Civil War, Cold War, Civil Rights: The Civil War Centennial in Context, 1960-1965,” *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, 237-257.

Wednesday

April 21 – Promissory Notes: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech

Reading: Robert Penn Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War*, Part I.

Friday

April 23 – The Great Alibi and the Treasury of Virtue: Psychological Responses to the Civil War

Reading: Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War*, Part II.

* * * Movie Showing: "Roots"

Week 14: The Media is the Message

Monday

April 26 -- Television's Civil War

Reading: William Huntzicker, "Alex Haley's Roots: The Fiction of Fact," in *Memory and Myth: The Civil War in Fiction and Film*, ed., David B. Sachsman, 187-234.

Wednesday

April 28 – Killer Angels: The Cinematic Struggle for Gettysburg

Reading: Crompton Burton, "History Thrice Removed: Joshua Chamberlain and Gettysburg," in *Memory and Myth*, 146-186.

Friday

April 30 – Ken Burns and the Documentary Form

Reading: Geoffrey C. Ward, "Refighting the Civil War," and Ken Burns, "Four O'Clock in the Morning Courage," in Robert Brent Toplin, *Ken Burns's "The Civil War": Historians Respond*, 141-184.

* * * Centennial and Civil Rights Paper

Unit 7: One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years and Counting

Week 15: The Civil War in Retrospect

Monday

May 3 – Reflections on the Civil War

Reading: Stuart McConnell, "The Geography of Memory," in
The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture, pp. 258-266.

* * * Final Exam: Wednesday, May 12, 9:00-12:00

