

FW22 AP/HIST 3622 3.0M The U.S. Civil War in American History and Public Memory (Winter term)

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Expanded Course Description (expanded from course calendar description):

If any event in U.S. History can be called pivotal, surely it would be the Civil War. It transformed American society and the relationship of every American citizen to their state and federal governments. The war resulted in over 1 million casualties with nearly 1 in 5 white males between the age of 13 and 43 dying in the South. It dramatically reshaped the nation's economic and political structures. And by war's end, some 3.5 million enslaved African Americans had been freed. In the one hundred fifty years since, the Civil War has emerged as a significant touchstone for historical memory and cultural identity in the United States. "The Civil War is our felt history—history lived in the national imagination," wrote Robert Penn Warren in 1961.

In exploring the history and memory of the Civil War, this single term course will use the conflict as a lens through which to view the evolving American zeitgeist. It will introduce students to the history of the U.S. Civil War and explore its continuing legacy in American culture. We will investigate how historians have debated the causes of the Civil War and why, at various times, they have emphasized political, economic, social or cultural motivations. We will consider the experience of the war and explore its effect on notions of death and dying in the United States. And we will investigate history of Reconstruction, its aftermath, and the enduring memory of the Civil War in American culture.

Required Course Text/Readings:

\*TENTATIVE\*

Louis P. Masur, *1831: The Year of Eclipse* (2005)

Tony Horowitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999)

Weighting of Course:

**\*TENTATIVE Grade Breakdown\***

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| 20% | Essay 1                   |
| 20% | Essay 2                   |
| 10% | Primary Source Assignment |
| 30% | Essay 3                   |
| 20% | Attendance/Participation  |