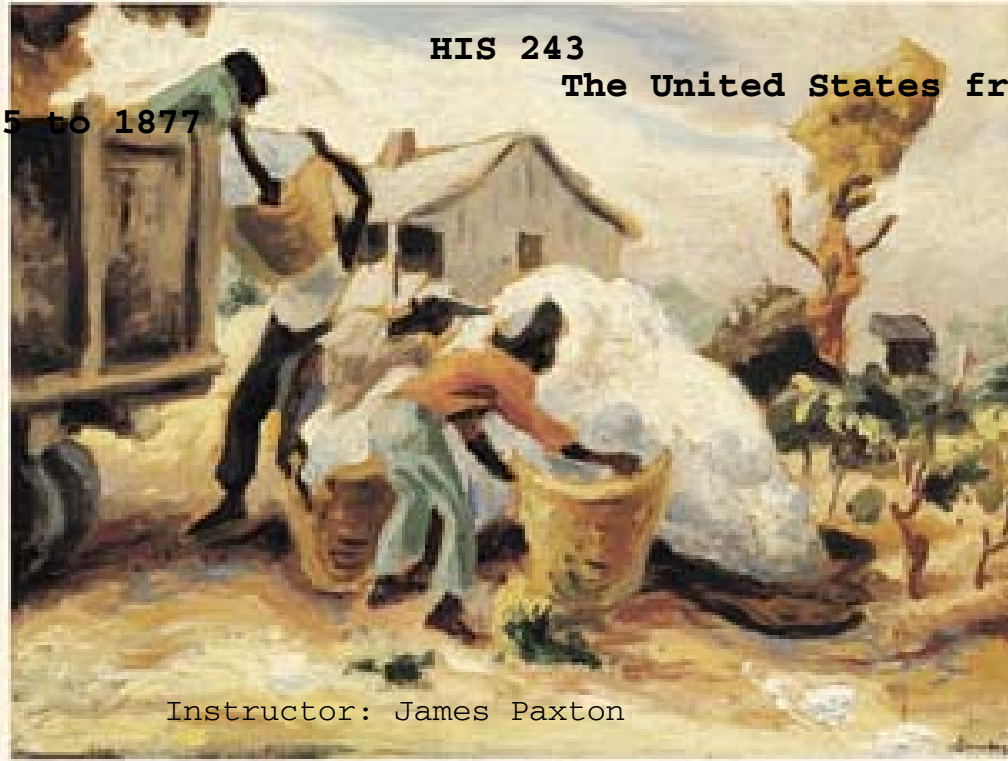


1815 to 1877

HIS 243

The United States from



Instructor: James Paxton

**Spring 2009**

**Office: Comenius 306**

**Office Hours: Monday 2:00-4:00**

**Tuesday 10:00-12:00**

**Or by appointment**

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**610-625-7897**

**Course Description:** The Civil War is the seminal event in American history. The war ended the great contradiction between liberty and slavery and answered questions about the legitimacy of secession. Six hundred thousand Americans died in the conflict. Not surprisingly, no other historical event has generated such popular and scholarly interest or produced such an outpouring of books and articles. Yet, despite all of this attention, historians cannot agree on the causes of the war. To be sure, slavery was at the root of North-South tensions but slavery had existed since before the founding of the nation. What, then, accounts for the secession of eleven slaveholding states secede in the winter and spring of 1860 and 1861? Was the war the inevitable result of two irreconcilable cultures or economic systems or a preventable conflict brought on by fanatics and irresponsible politicians? What developments pushed slave and free states apart? Neither comprehensive nor chronological, this course will explore a variety of themes in the social, cultural, and gendered history of the United States from about 1815 until the end of the Civil War in attempt to assess why Americans went to war with each other in 1861.

In particular, we will focus on important historiographical debates that have shaped historians' understanding of the period.

### **Course Objectives**

Students will

- Locate, evaluate, and use secondary sources.
- Become familiar with the main events and themes in American history from the end of the War of 1812 until 1877.
- Identify major schools of thought and historiographical debates that have shaped historians' understanding of the Antebellum period.
- Understand the ways in which historians have "constructed" the past.
- Learn to critically evaluate secondary sources.
- Further develop clear and effective oral and written communications skills.
- Use writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of history.

### **Required Texts**

Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996).

Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Walter Lenoir, *Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir's Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Required texts are available in the Moravian College bookstore. Additional readings are available via JSTOR or another database or will be placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

### **Attendance**

While there is no penalty for missing classes, students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Comprehension of the material and success in the course depends upon your participating in class discussions.

### **Grade Distribution**

Topic	2%
Bibliography	5%
Book Review	10%
Abstracts (2 books)	10%
Historiographic Essay	20%
Reading Logs 9@1%	9%
Participation	24%
Final Exam	20%

The participation grade reflects the quality and quantity of your participation. It is not an attendance grade. However, if you do not attend class, then you cannot participate.

## **Reading Logs**

Throughout the semester you will be keep a weekly reading log in which you identify and evaluate the thesis, arguments, and evidence of articles and books you read. I will hand out forms which you can use to model your logs. I will read every log entry to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading and take them seriously. In terms of format and style, logs may be less formal than the essays. They will be graded for content, regularity, and willingness to engage with ideas, rather than for stylistic concerns such as spelling and grammar. Nonetheless, I do expect you to proofread your reading logs before handing them in. Reading logs are due at the **beginning** of class. Late logs will not be accepted. Logs will receive a grade of 1 or 0.

## **Assignments**

During the course, you will write a major ten-page historiographical essay in stages. In consultation with me, you will select a topic and compile a ten-book bibliography. Together we will choose five books (or four books and three articles) from the bibliography, which you will use to write the historiographical essay. Between selecting a topic and writing the final paper, you will also write a book review of one of the books as well as abstracts of two other books (also from your bibliography). A historiographical essay should have a thesis and provide analysis on a number of works pertaining to one subject. Do not summarize the contents of the books. Instead, analyze the book's evidence and conclusions and then compare the author's evidence and conclusions with what you have found in other works.

## **Late Policy**

Papers turned in after the beginning of the class on which they are due will be assessed a penalty of 10% for the first day they are late and 2% for each day thereafter. Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for lateness.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: "as the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment." Plagiarism will result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students with physical, learning, or medical disabilities should speak to me and contact Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodations. Please make these arrangements in the first weeks of the semester.

## **Week 1 – Introduction**

### **Jan. 20**

Antebellum America: An Overview  
Reading and Writing Essays

**Week 2 – Nation and Section**

**Jan. 27**

COMMON READING

Edward Pessen, “How Different from Each Other Were the Antebellum North and South?” *American Historical Review* 85 (1980): 1119-1149. JSTOR

AND EITHER

Eugene Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery* (New York: Vintage, 1964), 3-10, 13-39. Reserve

OR

James McPherson, “Antebellum Southern Exceptionalism: A New Look at an Old Question,” *Civil War History* 50 (2004): 418-433. JSTOR

LOG ONE DUE

**Week 3 – The Great Transformation: The Transportation Revolution in the North**

**Feb. 3**

Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), 1-78.

LOG TWO DUE

TOPIC DUE

**Week 4 – The Great Transformation Continued**

**Feb. 10**

Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1996), 79-177.

BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

**Week 5 – The Market Revolution in the North and South**

**Feb. 17**

COMMON READING

Susan Hirsch, *Roots of the American Working Class: The Industrialization of Crafts in Newark, 1800-1860* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 3-13.

AND EITHER

Paul Faler, “Working Class Culture and Politics,” *Journal of Social* 9 (1976): 466-480. JSTOR

William Barney, “Toward the Civil War: The Dynamics of Change in a Black Belt County,” in eds., Orville Burton and Robert McMath, *Class, Conflict and Consensus: Antebellum Southern Community Studies* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 146-65.

OR

Susan Hirsch, *Roots of the American Working Class: The Industrialization of Crafts in Newark, 1800-1860* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 77-108.

Leonard P. Curry, “Urbanization and Urbanism in the Old South: A Comparative View,” *Journal of Southern History* 40 (Feb. 1974): 43-60. JSTOR

BOOK REVIEW DUE

## **Week 6 – Second Great Awakening and Reform**

**Feb. 24**

READ EITHER

Donald Mathews, “The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process, 1780-1830,”  
*American Quarterly* 21 (1969): 23-43. JSTOR

Nancy Hewitt, “Yankee Evangelicals and Agrarian Quakers: Gender, Religion, and Class  
in the Formation of Feminist Consciousness in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Rochester, N.Y.,”  
*Radical History Review* (1984): 327-42. Reserve

OR

Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale  
University Press, 1989), 3-16, 39-66, 193-209. Reserve

James Brewer Stewart, *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery* (New  
York: Hill and Wang, 1996), 35-50. Reserve

LOG THREE DUE

## **Week 7 – NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS**

## **Week 8 – Women, Family, and Households**

**Mar. 10**

COMMON READING

Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 18  
(1966), about 4 pages. Found in abridged form at  
<http://www.pinzler.com/ushistory/cultwo.html>

AND EITHER

Eugene Genovese, “‘Our Family, White and Black’: Family and Household in the  
Southern Slaveholders’ World View,” in Carol Blesser, ed., *Joy and Sorrow:  
Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South* (New York: Oxford  
University Press, 1991), 69-87. Reserve

Brenda Stevenson, “Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families, 1830-1860” in  
Carol Blesser, ed., *Joy and Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the  
Victorian South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 103-124.

OR

Nancy Grey Osterud, *Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-  
Century New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 1-13, 139-158.  
Reserve

Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860* (New York:  
Alfred A Knopf, 1986), 105-129. Reserve

LOG FOUR DUE

## **Week 9 – Unorthodox Sects**

**Mar. 17**

Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and  
Salvation in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

LOG FIVE DUE

## **Week 10 – The World the Slaveholders Made**

**Mar. 24**

Michael Wayne, “An Old South Morality Play: Reconsidering the Social Underpinnings of the Proslavery Ideology,” *Journal of American History* 77 (1990): 838-863.  
JSTOR

Douglas Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-23. Reserve

Walter Lenoir, *The Making of a Confederate*, ed. William Barney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3-45.

ABSTRACTS DUE

## **Week 11 – Slavery**

**Mar. 31**

Stanley Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Intellectual Life* (1959), 81-115, 133-39.  
Reserve

Eugene Genovese, *Roll Jordan Roll* (New York: Vintage, 1976), 3-25, 209-232, 566-584.  
Reserve

LOG SIX DUE

## **Week 12 – Worrying About the Civil War**

**April 7**

COMMON READING

Edward Ayers, “Worrying About the Civil War,” in eds., Karen Halttunen and Lewis Perry *Moral Problems in American Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 145-165. Reserve

James McPherson, “What Caused the Civil War?” *North South* 4 (November 2000): 13-22. Reserve

LOG SEVEN DUE

## **Week 13 – Sectional Crisis**

**April 14**

COMMON READING

Avery Craven, “Coming of the War Between the States: An Interpretation,” *Journal of Southern History*, 2 (Aug. 1936): 303-322. JSTOR

James Oakes, “From Republicanism to Liberalism: Ideological Change and the Crisis of the Old South,” *American Quarterly* 37 (Autumn 1985): 551-571. JSTOR

AND EITHER Joel Silbey, “The Surge of Republican Power,” *The Partisan Imperative: The Dynamics of American Party Politics before the Civil War* (1985), 166-89.  
Reserve

OR Peter Wallenstein, “Incendiaries All: Southern Politics and the Harpers Ferry Raid,” *His Soul Goes Marching On: Responses to John Brown and the Harpers Ferry Raid* (1997), 149-70. Reserve

LOG EIGHT DUE

**Week 14 – The Civil War**

**April 21**

Walter Lenoir, *The Making of a Confederate*, ed. William Barney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 46-107.

Reid Mitchell, “The Northern Soldier and His Community,” in *The Vacant Chair: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 19-37. Reserve

James M. McPherson, “Who Freed the Slaves?” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association* 139 (1995): 1-10. Reserve

Barbara J. Fields, “Who Freed the Slaves?” in *The Civil War: An Illustrated History*, ed. Geoffrey Ward (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 178-81. Reserve

FINAL PAPER DUE

**Week 15 – Aftermath and Reconstruction**

**April 28**

Walter Lenoir, *The Making of a Confederate*, ed. William Barney (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 108-229.

LOG NINE DUE