Overview

Southerners may have talked about “states’ rights” or “property rights” but they were going to war to preserve the political economy of slavery. Northerners made it clear that they were not going to war to abolish slavery. President Lincoln claimed to be fighting to restore the Union. Both sides began to mobilize men and supplies to the battlefield by the summer of 1861. Feeding, clothing, and arming tens of thousands was a monumental problem. Paying for the expense was a staggering proposition -- one that tested the competing political economies of North and South. In 1862, Lincoln adopted the radical Republican position that emancipation was a military necessity. Eventually Lincoln justified the war in abolitionist terms. After the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect (January 1863) the war lasted for almost two more years and public discontent with the war increased. For northerners and southerners alike, the struggle on the home front was intensifying. Despite setbacks, the Confederate Army persisted and the last year of the war was by far the most brutal.

Key Topics The information in chapter 15 introduces your students to the following key topics:

- The shift from limited to “hard” war.
- The comparative military advantages and disadvantages of the North and the South.
- Social and political divisions in the Confederacy.
- The role of slaves in the process of Emancipation.

Chapter Outline

Edmund Ruffin

From Union to Emancipation

The South Secedes

Civilians Demand Total War

Slaves Take Advantage of the War

First Bull Run and the Shift in War Aims

Mobilizing For War

Southern Political Weaknesses

The Union’s Naval Supremacy

Southern Military Advantages

The Slave Economy Inhibits the Southern War Effort

What were Soldiers Fighting For?

The Civil War Becomes A Social Revolution

Union Victories in the West

Southern Military Strength in the East

Emancipation as a “Military Necessity”

The Moment of Truth

The War at Home

The Care of Casualties

Northern Reverses and Antiwar Sentiment

Gettysburg and the Justification for the War

Feature: Youth in Slavery and Freedom

Discontent in the Confederacy

The War Comes to a Bloody End

Grant Takes Command

The Theory and Practice of Total War

Sherman Marches and Lee Surrenders

The Meaning of the Civil War

Conclusion
Annotated chapter outline with review questions

Edmund Ruffin: Edmund Ruffin's activities from 1859 to 1865 personalize the events of the Civil War. For Ruffin this war was not some political abstraction. Ruffin's way of life and his cultural traditions were at stake.

From Union to Emancipation: Southerners may have talked about “states’ rights” or “property rights” but they were going to war to preserve the political economy of slavery. Northerners made it clear that they were not going to war to abolish slavery. President Lincoln claimed to be fighting to restore the Union.

- With news that Lincoln had been elected, the legislators in South Carolina called a secession congress into existence and on December 20, 1860, they withdrew from the Union on the grounds that the North had deprived them of their “rights of property” in slaves. Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas followed suit almost immediately. In April the first shots were fired on Fort Sumpter, South Carolina, and the Union troops there surrendered. When Lincoln called on the states for troops, Southern state governors refused and the second wave of secessions began. Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina joined the others. Kentucky, Maryland, Delaware, and Missouri held out and the western part of Virginia refused to abide by their state's decision. The division between seceded southern states and those that did not secede was slavery. Where slavery thrived, so too, did secession.

- Despite sentiments to the contrary the Civil War soon became a “hard war” with unconditional surrender the only acceptable resolution. Both sides had to get their men in place, officers ready, and equipment in the hands of the troops.

- In the South, an old fear, that of a race war, was given new life. But for the South's slaves, freedom was the buzzword. And runaway slaves found sanctuary with Union troops. For some white southern slave owners, this was the first time they had had to confront the reality that their slaves were not ignorant of events in the outside world. For the time being, Republicans were still pledged to leave slavery alone.

- The Southern defeat of Union troops at Manassas Junction, Virginia, caused Northerners to reevaluate their war aims. Radical Republicans began to articulate their beliefs that emancipation was a military necessity and when Lincoln signed the Confiscation Act, the shift in war aims was clear. The Republicans were also mindful that keeping England and France from recognizing the Confederate States of America was a primary war aim as well.

Mobilizing for War: Both sides began to mobilize men and supplies to the battlefield by the summer of 1861. Feeding, clothing, and arming tens of thousands was a monumental problem. Paying for the expense was a staggering proposition—one that tested the competing political economies of North and South.

- Even though the Confederate States of America modeled its constitution after that of the United States, except for a constitutional protection of slavery, the Confederacy was not a very sophisticated government. For example, there was no opposition political party. The Democratic Party ruled without serious opposition but that does not mean there was consensus of opinion throughout the South. It means that there was no outlet for political dissent to be voiced. The other serious problem was more fundamental. The Southerners favored strong state governments and a correspondingly weak national government.

- The North had a strong Navy and used it to blockade southern ports. The North's strategy was successful except for the Confederacy's remarkable new weapon: an iron-clad ship. The Confederate ship, the Merrimac, was countered with the Union’s iron-clad, Monitor. As long as the Union could keep the blockade functioning and keep cotton in the South rather than on the world market two things could be certain: the Confederate government would be financially strapped and European nations kept their distance from the Confederacy.

- The Southern military advantage was psychological and very powerful. They were fighting to defend their land, their homes, and their families. The Confederate army was surrounded by friendly civilians on land and in an environment they were familiar with. The Union army on the other hand was a “foreign” army that had to contend with difficult problems of re-supply and re-provisioning its troops.

- Initially the Confederacy had a number of advantages. Slaves continued to work the plantations which enabled white men to go to war and southern soldiers were usually raised in the country and therefore more adapted to the soldier's life. But these conditions were not always advantages. With factories located in the North, the South had a difficult time arming its soldiers and an even more difficult time
provisioning them. But the Confederacy's real problem was economic. Southerners resisted almost all attempts to finance the war through taxation and by 1863 inflation made the Confederate dollar worthless. The Union Congress passed the Legal Tender Act and the National Bank Act to facilitate financing the war and in the end, modernize the nation's monetary system.

- Union and Confederate soldiers fought for a patriotic cause. Each group defined patriotism according to its own perspective. Southerners defined patriotism in terms of liberty and independence; Northerners defined it in terms of freedom. Early on in the war, Union soldiers would have recoiled from the notion that they were risking their lives to free blacks. But as war aims changed, so too did the northern soldiers’ reasons for fighting for emancipation.

What were the political differences between the Union and the Confederacy?

**The Civil War becomes a Social Revolution:** In 1862, Lincoln adopted the radical Republican position that emancipation was a military necessity. Eventually Lincoln justified the war in abolitionist terms.

- By early 1862 the war evolved into a “hard” war. The principle of unconditional surrender and the confiscation of supplies from southern civilians characterized this new “hard” war. The Civil War quickly became a fight for the total destruction of the enemy’s forces. This change became especially important and costly as the battles became more fierce and casualty numbers escalated. In order to conduct the war more efficiently Lincoln and the Congress enacted a number of reforms, especially in the area of economic and monetary policies, and passed legislation denied them by earlier Democratic congressional opposition.

- Both the Confederate and Union troops focused their attention on Virginia. The Confederate States of America capital was in Richmond and it was also the location of the South’s largest industrial plant. For these reasons alone, the Union army was as equally determined to take it as the Confederates to defend it. Inconsistent and hesitant leadership by Union Commander of the Potomac George B. McClellan prevented Union troops from taking Virginia and staggering Confederate losses at Antietam prevented Confederate troops from invading Pennsylvania. Both forces had reached something of a stalemate in the autumn of 1862.

- Lincoln searched for something to break the stalemate and convince European powers to side with the Union. He decided to issue an Emancipation Proclamation. A popular idea, the Emancipation Proclamation recognized a reality: too many slaves had runaway to sanctuary behind Union lines to deny them their freedom. Lincoln justified the Emancipation Proclamation as a “military necessity” and eventually sanctioned the enlistment of blacks in the Union Army. Despite vocal opposition to it from many sides, the Emancipation Proclamation transformed the Civil War into a social revolution, especially with the enlistment of African-Americans in the military.

- Black men in the uniform of the Union army enraged white southerners and exhilarated free blacks and slaves and they were proof that the Civil War had become a social revolution. By the war's end 186,000 blacks had enlisted, 134,111 of them recruited in the South and although they were in segregated units and had inferior supplies and weapons, their presence in the war was not just symbolic.

Define “hard war” and trace its development from 1861 to 1865.

What caused the North to shift to a policy of Emancipation?

**The War at Home:** After the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect (January 1863) the war lasted for almost two more years and public discontent with the war increased. For northerners and southerners alike, the struggle on the home front was intensifying.

- The Civil War presented a number of challenges to the Union and the Confederate States of America militaries. Casualties in unprecedented numbers challenged the primitive medical profession and each side was forced to contend with inept military leadership. Battlefield strategy did not match new military technology and thousands died. Sickness killed thousands more, despite the heroic efforts of field nurses and mobile hospital units. Opposition to the war escalated as the casualty figures escalated.

- Union military defeats fueled the antiwar sentiment. So, too, did northern opposition to the emancipation policy especially from northern democrats who had always favored some sort of compromise with the South. Northern Democrats were also opposed to military conscription. Anti-war rhetoric escalated from verbal attacks on President Lincoln and his programs to draft riots and lynchings. Improving military fortunes mitigated some of the anti-war rhetoric.
The Union victory at the battle of Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg were the two greatest Union victories of the war. Lincoln’s speech at the Gettysburg battlefield profoundly justified the Union efforts in terms of democracy and human equality. With the Gettysburg address, Lincoln elevated the meaning of the war. Anti-war sentiment in the North subsided; in the south it exploded.

Confederate President Lee was not without his own detractors. Politically he was seen as acquiring power to the confederate government at the expense of the states. Military defeats, food shortages, drought, and worthless confederate money added to the president’s woes.

What were the differences between northern and southern military strategies?

The War Comes to a Bloody End: Despite setbacks, the Confederate Army persisted and the last year of the war was by far the most brutal.

When Union troops extended their control of Tennessee and the Confederate troops retreated into Georgia it looked as if the union might prevail. However, Confederate troops broke through the Union line at Chickamauga Creek in eastern Tennessee. Lincoln put General Ulysses Grant in charge of the Union forces between the Mississippi River and the Appalachian Mountains and Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman routed the Confederates from Tennessee. Grant was then placed in charge of all Union troops. He and Sherman attacked the Confederates in Georgia and the “hard” war was on once again.

The spring of 1864 was horrific. Tens of thousands were killed or wounded on both sides as Grant’s Union troops tried to take control of the war. As 1864 closed, and President Lincoln was reelected to a second term, the Union had broken the Confederates’ hold on Georgia and the Shenandoah Valley. Lincoln’s reelection sanctioned the hard war and reiterated the goal of unconditional surrender. All Confederate attempts at a negotiated peace were rejected.

With the Confederate defeat in Georgia, the Union troops moved north and swept through South Carolina, home of secession on their way to Virginia. The Confederates were defeated. Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Courthouse and the war was over.

What did the Civil War mean? It vindicated the northern political economy of free labor and it destroyed the political economy of slavery. Much of the South lay in ruins and one quarter of the white male population lay dead. On the other hand the war energized the North’s economy. Politically the north and west were in a position to dominate the south and did so for the remainder of the nineteenth century. The national government was stronger than the state governments and there was no question of the supremacy and indivisibility of the nation. People now referred to the nation as the United States; not these United States. The national government controlled the nation's economy and modernized it. But the dramatic change was the emancipation of more than four million African-Americans -- a change made constitutional in the Thirteenth Amendment.

What were the major consequences of the Civil War?

Compare the effects of social divisions on the northern and southern war efforts.

Feature: Youth in Slavery and Freedom: Litt Young spent his childhood as a slave and when the war moved to his home in Vicksburg, Litt’s owners moved their slaves to Texas. He was not freed until the war was over.

Conclusion: On April 14, 1865, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. At the time he died there was no plan in place for the reconstruction of the Union.

Making links to other ideas Using the maps and websites, in addition to your prepared lectures and other assignments, can give you more resources to enable your students to see that history is much more than memorizing names and dates. You will find that the websites are even more comprehensive and adaptable than described and because they have been collected here in one volume you have a world of information no further away than the click of your mouse. If you are new to the web’s opportunities, you will be pleasantly surprised at the breadth and depth of the information available in these sites.

Maps 01: Which slave states did not secede? Why was it important for the Union to keep these states part of the Union? Was this an important strategic need?
Maps 02 through 08: For each theater of the war illustrated in the maps, identify the forces, the strategies, and aims of the contestants (see the chart at the end of this chapter). Why were these regions vital to the larger war aims of the Union and Confederacy?

**Web connections and resources** Consider using these websites to supplement your students’ reading and analytical skills. The sites were chosen because of their relevance to the material in the chapter -- not just to mirror it but to provide additional materials and perspectives. Questions from the student study guide have been included so that you can use or amend them to your own needs. Your students may find it insightful for you to guide them through the site as you help them develop research strategies.

“War for Union” [www.prenhall.com/boydston/fortpillow](http://www.prenhall.com/boydston/fortpillow)

With the outbreak of conflict, African Americans, North and South, had clambered to serve in the Union Army. Lincoln had initially resisted, first on the grounds that such an action might drive some of the Border States (slave states like Delaware which had not seceded) to join the Confederacy. Later he hesitated because he thought such troops would be at special risk if captured. Ultimately he acceded to the demand, but in 1864 at Fort Pillow his worst fears were realized. What did happen at Fort Pillow?


On this site, read about the plight of slaves and black freedpersons, the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation, and the experiences of black civil war soldiers. On the “related entries” section is a link to the full text of the Emancipation Proclamation and a personal account of a former slave in an army camp.

1. Why would the editor of *The Christian Recorder* print George W. Hatton’s letter? What is important about this letter?
2. Why were the states in “open rebellion” listed in the Emancipation Proclamation? In cautioning freed men and women to work and abstain from violence was he cautioning them or was he trying to make whites feel comfortable?

“Selected Civil War Photos” [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/cwphome.html](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/cwphome.html)

Over 1,100 photos of the Civil War fill this web site. These photos depict military units, battle preparation, and the aftermath of warfare.

1. Consider this site and its material. Why would Americans want to see photographs of the Civil War battlefields and the dead? To what purpose could the photographs serve then?

“Civil War Women: Primary Sources on the Internet” [http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/women/cwdocs.html#1](http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/women/cwdocs.html#1)

This site contains a wealth of primary source documents that address women’s experiences during the Civil War. These documents include diaries, letters, memoirs, photos, and prints.

1. Read the material in “Rose O’Neal Greenhow Papers, 1861-1864.” What kinds of information does Greenhow transmit to her superiors about Union forces? Why would a woman like Greenhow, make a good spy? In the end, what happened to her?


See the original document and read the full text transcript of this important document. Also, this site contains one scholar’s view on the proclamation’s meaning and significance.

1. Read John Hope Franklin’s “The Emancipation Proclamation: An Act of Justice” and answer the following questions: Who is John Hope Franklin? What does he have to say about the Emancipation Proclamation and the notion of “justice?”

**Analytical reading** Your students may need more experience analyzing a short reading passage so that he or she can determine its component parts. They may need help identifying primary and supporting information as well as the author’s analysis. The analytical reading passages and the questions from the student study guide have
By mid-July of 1862 Lincoln had privately decided to issue an Emancipation Proclamation. Five days later the President announced his intentions to his cabinet. For Lincoln emancipation had become an inescapable reality. Too many slaves had run away to Union lines. To deny them the freedom they claimed would have been unthinkable. “I do not believe it would be physically possible to return persons so circumstanced to actual slavery,” the President conceded. “I believe there would be physical resistance to it which could neither be turned aside by argument nor driven away by force.” Even conservative Republicans had come around to supporting a policy of emancipation. A year after radicals had first made the argument, Lincoln was prepared to issue a proclamation declaring the emancipation of the slaves. He justified his move as a “military necessity” even though most of his generals opposed emancipation on the ground that it would bog the Union Army down with a mass of runaway slaves. In fact “military necessity” was Lincoln’s pretext more than his motive for proclaiming emancipation. On the advice of his cabinet, however, the President waited for a battlefield victory to make his proclamation public.

1. According to Lincoln, why was emancipation an inescapable reality?
2. Why did he believe it to be a military necessity?

Writing

The questions or writing prompts from the student study guide have been duplicated here for your use. These writing topics make good lecture topics especially if you help your students see the development of the idea in lecture format before they refine the idea in their writing assignments.

1. What was it about the election of 1860 that caused the southern states to secede from the Union?
2. What problems did the President of the United States and the President of the Confederate States of America have to deal with?
3. What role did African Americans play in the broad strategy of the North and South? What role did they play in fighting the war?
4. Why did emancipation become the significant goal of the war for the Union?
5. Was the South always fighting to prevent emancipation? Explain your answer.
6. What social and economic problems faced the North and the South in 1865?

Lecture Strategies

Ultimately the lecture is where you impart, or profess, your knowledge for the benefit of your students. These strategies were designed around the textbook and if your classroom strategy is to use the organization of the text to organize your course content, these lecture ideas may prove helpful. However, if you lecture around themes please see the section entitled “Thematic Lecture Topics.” You may find that you are more comfortable with and your students are more responsive to a combination of the two. Consider, too, the projects suggested in the student study guide. If your students complete these before your lecture, their comprehension will surely be enhanced.

If you are on the semester system, and you have planned well, and your students have progressed according to your preconceived plans, then you are fortunate enough to have time to cover the Civil War and Reconstruction (chapter sixteen); others will not be so lucky. The chapter on the civil war, ironically, the destiny of the semester or so it seems, enables you to bring to conclusion the threads you have discussed all semester: you can compare northern and southern economic and logistical reserves, strategy, leadership (both military and political), international affairs, social revolutionary change, and so on. The consequences of this war are also compelling topics. Ask your students to consider whether the war solved more problems than it created. Ask your students to consider the importance of this war to our present society. It seems that the Civil War has a timelessness that few other wars have.

Penguin Classics

captive narratives written by women between the years 1682 and 1892. See especially Sarah Wakefield, "Six Weeks in the Sious Teepees: A Narrative of Indian Captivity Emeline Fuller, "Left by the Indians. Story of My Life"


In Immigrant Voices: Twenty-four Narratives on Becoming an American, edited by Gordon Hunter, New York: A Signet Classic, 1999, Hunter has chosen twenty-four narratives of immigrants to tell the stories of immigrants’ transformations to Americans. Added to the predominantly European immigrant stories in this late 19th century section of the text are Joseph Pickering, "Inquiries of an Emigrant" features an excerpt from the 1831 guidebook for immigrants; Rebecca Burlend, "A True Picture of Emigration," written in 1846 is the story of her experiences; Anna Howard Shaw, "Story of a Pioneer" is the story of her adjustment to life in the United States in the 1880s. She was a physician and suffragette.

Andrew Delbanco, editor, The Portable Abraham Lincoln, edited and with an introduction by Andrew Delbanco. New York: Penguin Books, 1992. The speeches, the Gettysburg Address, and Lincoln's second inaugural address are among the works collected here along with a host of letters and notes.