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**Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy**by [Joe Escobar](#) - Sunday, February 22, 2015, 2:32 PM

To post, you will click the "reply" link MY post. If you want to reply to a specific comment made by another student, click the "reply" link located on that student's specific post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

As in all forums, put something descriptive in the subject line of your post, based on one of the numerous topics you can choose to discuss. Other students wanting to talk about the same issue can click the "reply" button to your post, thus helping organize this discussion. DO NOT attempt to answer all questions by posting a mini-essay that is difficult to respond to or discuss.

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[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Podcast**by [Heather Reed](#) - Tuesday, February 24, 2015, 4:31 PM

Am I the only one that can't access the podcast? I've even tried the link and nothing please help if anyone has a suggestion.

Sum of ratings: (1) 0

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Re: Podcast**by [Roxanne Lindquist](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 8:45 PM

Have you tried a different search engine sometimes my firefox won't let me open things but my other one will. good luck

Sum of ratings: (1) 0

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)**Checkmate!**by [Edgar Rodriguez](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 5:42 PM

This battle was very important for the Union army because Grant was able to finally in my opinion, route Lee and put an end to the Civil War. I think of the battle of Petersburg as a chess game among generals because of the lengthy time it took to route Lee and force him to send troops to protect Richmond just as Grant had suspected Lee would do. The documentary does a good job at painting a picture for the viewer and I think it does well at explaining the benefits of the siege.

When we look at this battle we have to think of the outcome and how it affected the ability of the Confederacy to defend and protect its capital. General Grant was finally able to do what other Union generals were unable to do and that was to apply pressure to the enemy. President Lincoln from the beginning had been telling his generals to apply pressure to the Confederacy to reduce the risk of death and to bring the war to a quick end.

I don't think that it's narrow minded that we are focused on this single battle, in fact I think that this battle was one of the most important ones during the Civil War. The one thing that I did notice from the reading and the documentary was massive casualties among black soldiers and the fact that the Union blew up a fortification and made a huge hole that resulted in many deaths. These deaths could have been avoided if the white soldier involved in the creation of the "Crater" were trained

to go around as the black soldiers were taught to do and not to mention that fact the Union commander of the operation was drunk.

The Union army was able to put the Confederacy into checkmate because of this battle and that is very important. The Confederacy at this time lacked the man power and supplies need to do any major damage to the Union army. I think if the Union had a general like Grant during the beginning of the war maybe the war wouldn't have gone as long as it did. This battle also gave the American public a glimpse of things to come in the following war, World War 1 because of all the trench warfare that that had begun to do at the battle of Petersburg.

In short, Grant was prepared with his army to end the reign of the Confederacy. Grant was smart and willing to do thing that previous generals in the Union did not. Grant had more men because of the new able bodies of black men willing to fight and had a better logistical system because if the Union's manufacturing abilities during the war. Lee was under supplied and had lost many men to disease and desertion. The inability of the Confederacy to work among each other to help the cause added to this problem. In the end state's rights played a major factor in my opinion in defeating the Confederacy.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

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Applying Pressure

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 10:47 PM

Edgar,

Do you think that if the generals in the beginning would have applied pressure more that the war would have been shorter? Even if the Union would have applied more pressure, I think it still would have been a long war, just because the Confederates had great generals as well. What do you think?

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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History is History.

by [Edgar Rodriguez](#) - Thursday, February 26, 2015, 5:11 PM

In response to your question, yes I do think that the Union would have had a better chance at a quicker victory if the Union generals in the beginning had applied more pressure as I stated in my post. Lincoln was "Commander and Chief", the generals in the Union didn't listen to him from the beginning until Grant finally came along. This being said, I think that if Grant had been in charge from the start of the war it might have been shorter. Lincoln knew that a swift victory was needed to quell the southern rebellion. The amount of life lost during the war could have been cut in half in my opinion.

I think that great generals have an advantage but as some people know, generals don't win wars all by themselves it takes time and manpower. We all know in this class that the south could have defeated the north in 3 different ways. The south could have won in the beginning but didn't because of the action of its generals in charge. I think in the end if a general doesn't have the manpower or the logistical support from the government than there's no point to starting a war in the 1st place. Napoleon was a great general, he managed to conquer much of Europe with his force but in the end poor planning and dwindling supplies and manpower in his Russian campaign ended his reign among other things involved. So I would say that it's a tough question to answer from my stand point.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Janey Willis](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 7:10 PM

This battle ended up being extremely important for Grant and the Union, making this an important single battle to focus on. At this point Grant was willing to do far more than previous generals and badly wanted the war to come to end. What I took from the films and readings this week is that strategy became very important at this point and while man power was still essential, it all came around to being about strategy and determination on Grants part. Once again the Ken Burns documentary did a wonderful job of putting the war into a storytelling perspective.

Another thing made clear was at this point in the war, there were considerably more blacks in the union army, and giving Grants army much needed man power. It was also at this point that Confederacy was beginning to fall into worse shape (lack of supplies and men) This battle further crippled the south and put much needed pressure on the Confederacy. Basically

Grants skill, smarts and general willingness to work harder than previous generals, on top of the weakening confederacy won this battle. And this battle is something I can see being very important in the Union eventually ending and winning the war.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:18 PM

I was very pleased to know that black troops were now receiving equal pay to the white troops. However, I was sickened by what had happened at Fort Pillow. The fact that 300 black troops of Company B 6th US heavy artillery were killed after they surrender was repulsive. Then to hear about the Confederate prison in Andersonville, Georgia where they kept 33,000 men in a place that was meant to hold a maximum of 10,000 was mind blowing. The idea of them drinking from the same stream that was used as a bathroom is despairing. 13,000 men died in one year in this prison alone. I have heard about concentration camps but had never heard about this until now, absolutely heart breaking.

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Petersburg

by [Roxanne Lindquist](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 8:43 PM

I feel that the focus on the Pittsburg battle was important. I think that there was a lot to come from it, not just the win but also the battle techniques, industries and strategies. Also it was the battle to end the war and had more blacks fighting for the union.

The union had an upper hand with all the blacks giving them the manpower they needed. Also having the supplies that were needed gave them an advantage. Having Grant as a general, someone who was willing to pressure the confederates and not retreat when others would have, is what really mattered. I think that the documentaries did a good job representing General Lee and Grant as far as I can tell. I feel that it gave me more insight to them.

Though the union did have a big technique casualty with the "crater" losing black and white men due to poor strategy, the confederates still made big strategy issues and not enough supplies or manpower to take on the union.

I think that the documentaries did a good job at painting the picture of a siege but I also feel that the book did an adequate job explaining it.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Pressure

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 10:51 PM

Roxanne,

Even though Grant put so much pressure during this campaign than other generals, do you think that it could have ended a different way? I agree that putting pressure was a good tactic, but from past battles this caused the Union to lose so many troops. I don't know if putting pressure and not retreating made so much of a difference than having more people in the army.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Pressure

by [Roxanne Lindquist](#) - Thursday, February 26, 2015, 9:58 PM

Though I think that having more men was a big advantage, I think that strategy and tactic was more important. Someone could have more people but go about it the wrong way or a less effective way and still not be as good or accomplish as much as someone who goes about it with better tactics or strategies. I think General Grant and General Bedford both had strategies and tactics on their sides and is why they accomplished what they did. Do I think it could have gone different? Of course I do.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Petersburg

by [Jal Rial](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 3:55 PM

Roxanne,

Are you saying that Grant not retreating like what most union Generals would of one is why the union had success during Petersburg? Don't you think the cutting the rail road supply lines, siege, and trench warfare tactics had a lot more to do with there victory. Everyone is saying how much reassure was put on the confederates which I agree with but I think we are missing a big part of what really led t success in the campaign.The union hit the confederates from so much different angle weather it was surrounding the capital, cutting off supplies, out numbering the in men because of the blacks or even just the way they where fighting.

Yes there was tons of pressure put on Lee but lets not forget about what the Union really did in order to gain success. All of the different elements are eventually what ended up really pressuring Lee and his army, I don't feel Grant not retreating is as big of a deal as what I stated above.

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Re: Petersburg

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:05 PM

I don't believe it was just Grant not re-treating that won the campaign, it was a combination of things. There was Sherman who broke Hoods grip on Atlanta and caused him to re-treat. Farragut also caused the Confederacy to re-treat into submission. There was also Sheridan and 45,000 men in Shenandoah who were attacked by Early at Cedar Creek. Yet, Union lines reformed and won back the field causing Early to flee. Which in turn closed Shenandoah forever to the Confederates.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Petersburg

by [Roxanne Lindquist](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 11:27 PM

No I do not think it was just Grant applying pressure to Lee. I think that like you said it is all a big deal when put together, the cut off of the rail road supply lines, siege, and trench warfare tactics all added up to the union victory. One with out the other could of ended in a different outcome. Who knows what would of happened if it did not all come together the way it did and all the different people that played a part in this war. In no way did I mean for it to sound like it was all Grants doing.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Jal Rial](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 9:57 PM

This documentary definitely helped add a lot more knowledge about the battle and what was going on. When it is all said and done this battle was very important for both general Grant and the union as a whole. Grant was willing to go above and beyond unlike generals before him because he wanted to see the war come to a complete end. Grant did exactly what Lincoln wanted the whole time and that was to put pressure on the confederates which he did by pretty much forcing them to protect Richmond(siege) which I believe was a great strategy. From reading I came to the conclusion that the end of this war was won on strategy, and willpower. After reading about all the battles we came across both in our text and through the Ken Burn's series I personally don't believe focusing on this battle was even close to narrow-minded. If anything it was the right thing to do. The strategy and methods used by Grant were huge and had Blacks helping the union, which ultimately made a big difference. The confederates just couldn't handle it all, they where low in men, barley had supplies and where out smarted by Grant. He used the industries and manufactures for supplies, used the new manpower provided by the blacks, combined with his own will and heart to overcome what past leaders didn't do in order to win. The whole siege was just brilliant.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 9:55 PM

I believe it was a little of everything that helped win this battle. I am not too certain if Grant was placed in the same exact position at the start of the war that he would have succeeded. I think it had a lot to do with wanting it to be over and have black troops fighting alongside of them. And for Lincoln it couldn't have happened at a better time. I am almost certain that he would have lost the election if it hadn't been for Grant and the Union troops not giving up. Sherman and Sheridan's victories had changed the odds and the South had no more men to spare.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Micah McJunkin](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 2:06 PM

I think Heather made a great point about this happening at the perfect time for Lincoln. Talk about a campaign boost, and how fortunate Lincoln was to have Grant on his side. In the original post, I like how you included willpower in your interpretation. At this point in the war, with so many endless battles and lack of proper supplies, moral certainly must have been very low. I would think the willpower to not give up that was shown by Grant was exactly what his soldiers needed, especially the blacks that were fighting alongside him. The reassurance that the cause is still great enough to stay and fight for, and not retreat must have been a powerful reminder that helped the Union soldiers get through the low moral.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Petersburg - Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Heather Reed](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 10:40 PM

No one has mentioned the spies that both sides had. Who truly knows what part they had in the war. None of our sources this week really went into detail about the role that these spies had. Burns' film mentioned that Alan Pinkerton ran the northern secret service and that Confederate Major William Norris had a spy network all the way to Montreal. Yet it didn't really tell us the point or the effect that these spies had on the war. I was impressed that women were also in on the spy game, especially having a black woman in the Confederate white house. Also Rose O'Neal being part of a Confederate spy ring. I am very curious now to learn more about not only what effect these spies had on the Civil War but also learning more about these women that were doing something that they felt was right to do for their country at a time when women weren't taking on daring roles.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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The Battle of the Crater

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 10:37 PM

I think that all three sources covered the Petersburg campaign in good detail. Since so much was happening, I do think that it was a good thing to put so much emphasis on this campaign. What I liked about all three sources is that you were able to view it from different angles, even though they were pretty similar.

What stuck out most to me was the Battle of the Crater. All three sources covered it and it was interesting to see what they said about it. When watching Ken Burns' film, it was more emotional. I could tell though that it was biased because Burns was sympathizing with the Union making it sound like they were attacked. In the end of that segment Grant says, "It was the saddest affair I have ever witnessed in the war" which does make the Union look like the victims. When I watched the production of Petersburg-Graveyard of the Confederacy, I could see how the producer did give the Confederacy the victim role. He talked about the scene with piles of earth and bits of pieces of Confederates' bodies laying around. The narrator also described the battle as no one side won, while Ken Burns made it seem that the Union had lost. McPherson also talked about the battle. The author did a good job describing visuals such as how deep and wide the crater was. He also was the one who most made it more of an even playing field not being as biased. What was kind of cool is that, McPherson also ended the segment with the same quote that Burns had ended with.

Overall, this closer look and detailed account of the Petersburg Campaign gave more insight to what happened and helped

paint the picture of what was happening on both sides at this time period.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: The Battle of the Crater

by [Jal Rial](#) - Friday, February 27, 2015, 1:31 PM

Bethany,

I disagree, it think emphasizing on this campaign was a positive thing. It was very important for both sides and even for the Blacks. The north and there trench war fair tactics, and railroad cut off where new and the strategy of limiting supplies for the confederates by surrounding the capital was something we haven't seen before. The union had Blacks finally fighting for them which was history in the making so I also think that it is a great reason to focus on the campaign. Emphasizing on this campaign help me and maybe a lot of others really realize why the south was on the verge of losing the war, which obviously was because of there lack of manpower, and supplies to keep up with the north and just pure out strategize.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Emphasis on the Campaign

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:08 PM

Jal,

I wasn't saying that the emphasizing wasn't a good thing. I do think it was good that we learned about the campaign in detail because there was so much going on. What I was trying to talk about was that it was interesting that the three sources kind of took sides indicating that one side had it worst that the other. I do agree that though with you that it did help to learn all the details of the campaign because just like you said it showed why the south was on the verge of losing the war.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Superior Strategy Leads to the Siege

by [Micah McJunkin](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 11:10 PM

I think the documentary definitely added some in- depth knowledge that I didn't have before. I certainly appreciate an opportunity to learn from a new source because the more perspectives I hear, the greater the chance I learn something new. The part that I found most interesting were the specifics about the battle strategies and how Grant operated on the battle field. He was truly a great leader who was willing to do whatever it took to win. Grant knew that Petersburg was very important to the Confederates because it was one of their main railroad checkpoints for supplies, so digging in for the eventual siege was the perfect way to lengthen the campaign. I absolutely think this campaign was worth the extra focus. The siege of Petersburg was different than other battles because it sent a definitive message to the south, that the Union would not back down and that they were willing to do anything to win. It also sent a strong message that Grant and the Union were well trained and very skilled in their battle strategies.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Importance of Petersburg

by [Kayla Janis](#) - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 11:23 PM

I think that this battle is important to focus because it demonstrates the attitudes of the Union and Confederate armies and people. The fact that the siege lasted so long shows the determination of both sides the end the war as winners.

Grant chooses to do what no Union general has done so far in the war- keep pushing after defeat. In both the Burns' documentary and the Blue Ridge documentary, the civilians of Petersburg are described as growing accustomed to shells, lack of supplies, and being under siege. These are examples of both sides doing whatever they can to win the war. I think that's what makes this battle so important. You have two generals who continue to come at each other and not retreating. You've got an entire city making it a point of pride to see how little they can live off of.

While both sides are determined to beat the other, it's clear that they're becoming tired of war. This is evident in the 1864

presidential election. The Confederacy is funding an anti-war/anti-Lincoln campaign and trying to fuel anti-war sentiment. In the Union, the Democrats have nominated McClellan, who is running on an anti-war platform.

While I found the Blue Ridge documentary less entertaining than the Burns documentary, I think they were both important to watch. Combined, they give a more complete picture of Petersburg and what it meant for the Confederacy and the Union. The two documentaries showed how ready everyone was for the war to end; yet, no one was ready to admit defeat.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

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Re: Importance of Petersburg

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 9:44 PM

I agree with you on your opinion that the Blue Ridge documentary was less entertaining. It didn't grab my attention as much as the Burns film clips have. I caught myself having to go back and really listen to what was being said. However, I did find it useful as a learning tool. The main thing I noticed was it talking about Drewry's Bluff and that Union gun boats took a beating yet nothing about that was mentioned in Burns' film. I also noticed that the Blue Ridge film seemed to favor Lee as opposed to Grant. The film even called Lee handsome, brilliant and a premier soldier. While saying that Grant was slouchy and non-inspirational.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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Re: Importance of Petersburg

by [Micah McJunkin](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 1:58 PM

I agree with you that it seemed all sides were becoming tiresome at this point in the war. Petersburg is one of the most fascinating parts of the war for me, because it involved an entirely new way of thinking and strategy. The fact that Grant refused to retreat is such a huge decision and turning point in the way the battles were fought, I think its important that enough attention be given to that event. I can't imagine defeating an enemy in a battle which would have been thought of as a victory, like many times before, only to find out the enemy has not retreated and is still staked out waiting for more. That must have been intimidating and very frustrating.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Re: Importance of Petersburg

by [Jal Rial](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 3:28 PM

Kayla,

The courage that both the Generals displayed during this time was very important. Generals Grant attitude to never give up and do whatever it takes I believe gave the North a little light and sense of urgency .It's like he sparked a flame in the union that wouldn't be put out with out Confederate defeat which was amazing. The Confederate and the city of Petersburg also did the same thing trying to show the north that they could lie off what they have and there supply cut off couldn't affect them which show great pride like you stated ,but it was obvious they just couldn't do it.

The war coming to an end played a huge part with the election and I was glad you brought that up, I think your the only one on the whole forum to do so. Even though the North nominated George McClellan to run against Lincoln it was still blatant that they wanted to win the war and keep Lincoln because he wins the popular vote with a little more then half. So in some sense the anti war campaign ran by the union Democrats doesn't affect Lincoln. I think Ken burns documentary painted a little better picture then the Blue ridge because of how much focus he put in the war and letting us know exactly what the people where feeling. I think the ken burns documentary was kind of in a storytelling type of way which definitely made it more clear am easy to follow.

Sum of ratings: 2 (1)

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"Let Him Up Easy"

by [Justin Wright](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 1:32 AM

The Gray Fox was stuck. Grant knew it.

I suppose after four years of being on the brink of losing everything, after telling his staff "If there's a worse place than Hell, I

am in it", after being almost dead certain he'd not get re-elected, that Lincoln, upon incredible reversals-of-fortune, knowing how terrible it feels to be on the brink of disaster, should tell Grant that when he does get his hands on Lee, to "Let him up easy."

Says so much about the leaders of this war. A war I still can't fully comprehend. And I'm repulsed when I get somewhere close to understanding it. As if my mind doesn't want to.

First book I ever read about the war, oddly enough started with Lee's surrender at Appomattox. I cried.

Starving men, desperate, weeping, and begging to be given orders to attack, rather than surrender. Although I was familiar with some famous battles, oddly enough, I didn't know about Petersburg, where the Gray Fox finally got stuck. Leading to retreat, and Appomattox.

The point about the Army of Northern Virginia no longer having the mobility it depended on resonated with me the most about this battle. It's what I keep thinking about. Certainly Lee knew the score in advance, just as well as Grant did. Good men, terrible war.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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"Good men, terrible war"

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:21 PM

Justin,

I really liked how you ended your post with "Good men, terrible war". For me it's hard to see one side the "bad" side because they were mostly just men who believed in something that they were fighting for. I really appreciate what you wrote!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: "Good men, terrible war"

by [Jal Rial](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 4:08 PM

Bethany,

I mean a title is a title but lets get real "good men terrible war" doesn't really suit the confederates does it? They where fighting to keep slavery and to separate from the United states I don't think that's really a positive thing. You said it was right because they were fighting for what they believe in so does that mean terrorist who fight for what they believe in are doing right, or even African countries who commit genocide against there people because they believe Christianity is not the way are doing the right thing? I don't think so, that statement is a little extreme but I mean that's just my opinion.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Misunderstood

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 9:19 PM

Jal, I think you misunderstood my point and opinion. I wasn't saying that slavery was okay I was trying to make the people in this war seem more human, not just two different sides. Just because someone fought for the South does not mean that they believed in slavery. For example, one reason why Lee chose to fight for the South was because he loved his home state and could not fight against it. I have also done research on my family line and learned that my great great grandfather fought for the Confederacy. But it wasn't because he had slaves or wanted some, it was because his family was killed by Northern troops and his farm destroyed. My point was that both sides were passionate for their own reasons. It wasn't all about slaves.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: "Good men, terrible war"

by [Justin Wright](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 10:47 PM

Hey Jal,

I can agree that it was a little hyperbole on my part. But it's still kind of true. Especially, if looked through the lens of Lee/Grant.

However, your point is about Confederates, and that I'll have to concede to a degree. Lee's personal life is almost absurdly flawless with exception to 1. Being a confederate. 2. Acting just a little too dignified. I'll add that his decision to turn down Lincoln was a crisis for him.

One of the most significant things I've learned in this course is how much Lincoln's own language repeatedly insisted that he would end the war with slavery in tact. Could we still call him a good man? Prolly/Maybe? Yikes.

Even in 1864, he stated that Emancipation was just a "lever" he pulled to win the war. I think that emancipation was largely unpopular, even in the north.

So I guess I just wanted to add that it's hard to judge these people. It's muddled. And honestly, I can get sick when I read about the things they did to slaves. TOTALLY SICKENING. But, I'm trying to understand. I really am. And it's really hard.

Lastly, terrorists make me sick. But I have to concede that whatever ideology they are acting on....that they actually BELIEVE it, and that they are acting on behalf of God. And so do Christians that shoot abortion doctors.

It's really hard to judge a man.

And it's really hard to know when to call one good.

Sum of ratings: 3 (1)

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Re: "Good men, terrible war"

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 11:50 PM

Justin,

I like that you brought up the fact that Lincoln has said that he would end the war with slavery in tact. What I was trying to convey in my earlier post is that each individual has their own story in why they were fighting, being about slavery or loyalty to one's state. It shows that even "good guys" in history are not always the heroes. Finally, I love what you said at the end saying, "It's really hard to judge a man. And it's really hard to know when to call one good." You completely read my mind!! Thanks for sharing!

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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Knowledge

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 9:30 PM

Watching the Petersburg: The Graveyard of the Confederacy stood out to me in the fact that it seemed to favor Lee over Grant. It stated that Lee was handsome, brilliant and a premier soldier. While calling Grant slouchy, not inspirational, sledgehammer and of course butcher. The film also called Butler portly and cross-eyed. To me it almost seemed as though the film favored the Confederacy over the Union.

All three of the sources this week did a good job on discussing the accomplishment and the failures of the commanders on both sides. The northern soldiers losing lives due to a "Crater" which was created by a tunnel filled with explosives and being slaughtered by the Confederacy. General Grant not re-treating and doing what Lincoln wanted the time.

I absolutely believe that narrowing the focus on Petersburg was a worthwhile task. The Union troops suffered numerous times yet kept fighting. They were not willing to give up thanks to Grant. The Union was at one point losing control. Even with the election coming Lincoln refused to drop emancipation as a condition with the South. Many more black soldiers were fighting with the Union and now they were getting equal pay to the white soldiers. General Jackson of the Confederacy was even removed by Davis and replaced with John Bell Hood. However, he was forced to withdraw in less than 30 minutes when the Union smashed down on them. Hood's grip on Atlanta was finally broken down and he abandoned the city.

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Petersburg: the Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:14 PM

Heather, I agree with you that the movie Petersburg: the Graveyard of the Confederacy did favor Lee. Even though it was biased, I do think that it provided insightful information. You said that all 3 sources did a good job talking about the campaign, which was your favorite source and your least?

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Re: Petersburg: the Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Heather Reed](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:27 PM

Bethany,

I would have to say that my favorite source would have to be Ken Burns. I have an easier time understanding and taking information in for the series than the book. I truly think that Burns' knows how to capture an audience that is "new" to this information. Don't get me wrong McPherson does a great job and seems like a very intelligent man, I just find it hard to focus on the reading. I have to go over the reading over and over again to really absorb it. I usually watch the Burns films first and then do the readings to make it easier for me. As for the other clip we watch this week I honestly wasn't that impressed. Yes it had good information but I had to stop it a few times to take it all in. They gave a lot of facts and dates very quickly and it was hard to keep up. It also didn't keep me entertained like the Burns' films do. Plus the one guy's voice drove me nuts and I was glad he didn't speak the whole time.

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Re: Petersburg: the Graveyard of the Confederacy

by [Bethany Hunter-Lehman](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 9:22 PM

Heather,

I too think it helps to watch the film before reading the chapters. It really helps to watch it before reading it, maybe because we are more visual learners. The other clip did give the information way too fast. Maybe if it slowed down a little and had better picture, it would be a better source.

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Re: Knowledge

by [Micah McJunkin](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 12:02 PM

The video definitely favored Lee over Grant, but I think it was a valuable perspective for us too see. Much of the material on the Civil War seems to be from the perspective of the Union, and I have often wondered what it would be like to see a perspective that was angled more from the viewpoint of the south. So I found this material pretty interesting. Throughout all three of these sources, the main takeaway for me was the perseverance of the Union. Between Lincoln not backing down from the enforcement of the emancipation, and Grant refusing to retreat, I would like to think it was that same attitude that reflected on the Union soldiers that ultimately helped win the war.

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Best Men Die First?

by [Justin Wright](#) - Saturday, February 28, 2015, 10:49 PM

I first heard this theory while reading about Hitler's final days. As the Russians were closing in, Hitler lamented to someone that "you know all the best men die first."

This is a tough one. I'd have to concede that there is SOME truth in it, but I'd also argue that it's somewhat negligible.

Perhaps those early-comers reflect how much they're invested in the cause. But we also add value to veterans of the war. An experienced soldier is feared because he's somewhat hardened to "seeing the elephant" But why is he still alive?

Pure chance plays a role, but so do implications of a desire to live. Which, as a commander, one might desire at one moment, and loathe the next. As Lee remarked of Hood, he was "All lion, and none of the fox." So on this ground can we argue a little for the more cautious soldier being more dangerous?

I also believe that one could build quite the argument for the reluctant soldier. He DOESN'T want to be there. Wouldn't he then be all the more angry about it?

In the end I have to concede that a soldier who has abandoned all self-regard and instinct for self-preservation as the most deadly. However, I would argue that soldiers like this can be found at nearly all stages of the war, albeit, I would concede, with a slight decrease as attrition wears on.

Like I said, it's a hard one. I'll close with a story that may help muddle our analysis of the matter. While reading *Black Hawk Down* about the battle in Mogadishu, there was a scrawny kid in a unit that was taking heavy fire for hours, and many soldiers witnessed him sort of transform and take over. He suddenly became braver. He stopped cowering. He was jumping around, and actually became eager to attack. Everyone in his unit noticed.

After everyone made it out of that nightmare, he was interviewed about why he changed. He simply said that he had finally accepted the idea that he wouldn't make it out of Mogadishu alive.

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Re: Best Men Die First?

by [Micah McJunkin](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 1:04 PM

Very interesting post. I have always found it fascinating listening to different soldiers takes on battle. Although I myself have never been there, many of my family members have. World War II, Vietnam, and Iraq are all theatres of war where my family has seen combat. Of course perspectives change from war to war, with the advancement of technology and strategy, but also from changing responsibilities. Whether its from land, sea, or air, war is still war, and the possibility of death is still there. My family members have told me there are two types of people in battle. The first is the soldier that is fully aware of the consequences and possibility of death, and they can still function properly without outside intervention. The second is a soldier who is also fully aware of the consequences and possibility of death, but for this soldier, they will not be able to function until they basically accept the fact that they are already dead. Once they do accept it they can finally let go and perform their duty, until then, they are putting not only themselves, but also the soldiers around them in danger.

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Re: Best Men Die First?

by [Justin Wright](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 10:08 PM

That's very insightful. Thank you. I've read a lot of war stories and first-person accounts and always wondered about the story of that kid in Mogadishu.

Your response is very helpful.

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Hallowed Ground

by [Heather Reed](#) - Sunday, March 1, 2015, 10:26 PM

I never knew that Arlington National Cemetery was the former grounds of Robert E. Lee. I was taken back a little when I heard this on Burns' film. I did a little more research on this after hearing about it. I went to the website for Arlington National Cemetery and the following is just some of what I learned. Secretary of War Stanton had ordered Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs to find a new site for Union troops because the ones in Washington and Alexandria had become full. He chose the Arlington House in 1864. His intentions were to make the house uninhabitable if the Lee family had ever returned. Meigs' even gave orders to have a monument built containing the remains of 1,800 Bull Run casualties. Lee and his wife never tried to return to their home and in 1882 the U.S. Supreme Court returned the property to the Lee family, stating that it had been taken without process. Congress then purchased the property for \$150,000. Arlington became the Union's most hallowed ground. Meigs' I believed took this property to "stick" it to Lee. It had to be very upsetting knowing that another man has taken your home. Meigs' knew full well what he was doing and he choose Arlington for a reason. I had always know that Arlington National Cemetery had existed but now I know how it came about and now have a lot more respect for it and the men and women that are laid to rest there.

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