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Petersburg
by Joe Escobar – Saturday, February 20, 2016, 8:32 PM

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learning more about the battles
by Mychal Hilario – Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 10:06 AM

I found this new documentary very interesting and for me added a lot to my understanding. I felt like it had more personal information about Grant and had a more positive view of him, omitting some of the criticism he faced and even mentioning his nickname "the Butcher" as a positive rather than the distinctly negative implication given in the Burns documentary. It certainly explained the battles more in depth. The book is good for information about battles and tactics as well but the alternative documentary was far more interesting for me and showed it in away i really understood. For one i liked the real life examples of the defense obstacles. I think this more narrowed focus was great it really made me think about the battles and people involved. I feel like a lot of the Burns film is about the whole nation and conveying emotion, the time and is atmosphere and more of a general historic overview. Where the new documentary is very focused and provides detailed information about specific events or people. I really liked the new film and the more specific focus on the battles in the book and their tactics. Learning more about the siege and how the people involved had to live was very eye opening, I could not believe the miles of trenches and the idea of living life getting used to that happening around you. I think it was worth while to watch this and may even watch the rest in the series. I think it was very complimentary to the other documentary and the book all offer different angles of focus and provide information lacking in the others.

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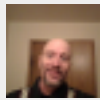


Re: learning more about the battles
by Jake Beckwith – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:17 PM

That was pretty cool to learn about things like the defensive obstacles and geography of the battles. It kind of got me thinking about some of the other battles we have learned about and what it must have been like to be there. I actually went so far as to download google earth on my computer and try and tour a couple of the sites from street view, just so I could get an idea of what it looked like for the soldiers who were fighting

there. I realize it is a very minor thing to be curious about, but speaking as someone who has never visited the east coast or the south, it is pretty neat to see what it looks like.

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Not Any Deeper
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 3:24 PM

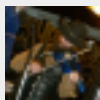
So here we have another source of information to compare with are main course material. Somewhat surprisingly, “*Petersburg: The Graveyard of the Confederacy*”, works fairly well with what I’ve already learned so far about the Civil War. The Film really focused it seemed like, on all the union failures during siege.

Having already learned about what appears to be the main point this film pushes, Union General losses, I doubt my understanding of Civil War history has gotten any deeper. However, it really did help confirm how unexperienced the masses from the north were.

One good example of this is the famous battle of the Crater, (*BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM* p.759). How the thousands of young inexperienced northern soldiers ran down into the crater they blew, and basically trapped themselves in a bowl, while their commander stayed behind and drank rum in the trenches.

It even sounds like a crazy thing to do, and I would agree that in terms of battle, the Union was almost its own worst enemy.

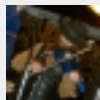
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Re: Not Any Deeper
by [Jake Beckwith](#) – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:24 PM

The battle of the crater was crazy! I really enjoyed learning about that myself. I can't believe they went down there with no escape strategy. You make a really good point that in moments like that, the inexperience of the soldiers was incredibly apparent. During those times, it's obvious that many of the people fighting were just regular people with regular lives who were thrown into a world they didn't previously know.

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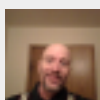


The Siege
by [Jake Beckwith](#) – Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 9:46 PM

While the documentary did add to my in-depth knowledge of the war overall, I’m not sure that it was more effective than the other two sources. It was incredibly interesting to learn the finer points of the siege battle, but I don’t feel like it was all necessary information. The fact that it was such a unique perspective made the documentary fairly interesting, but I don’t feel like I am coming away from the film with a larger understanding of the performance of the commanders, or the grand strategy altogether. It did, however, give me a pretty neat perspective of the qualities of the soldiers who had been fighting these battles. The fact that one reason the siege was because the armies were so tired and were out of room to fight was an interesting fact and really brought to light that the soldiers were indeed just people.

I feel like focusing on the single campaign for the documentary was worthwhile, but I have to admit that I’m glad we didn’t have to watch one of these for each battle. I really appreciate the broad overview of mostly just the necessary information that Burns presents. I think the way that he paces it really keeps me interested, whereas this documentary left me a little bit bored by the end of it. I don’t think I retained as much information from this piece as I do from the Burns films or the book.

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Re: The Siege
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 8:30 PM

Jake,

I'm not really too sure the documentary was more effective than our other main course material either.

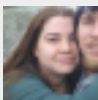
The episode we seen didn't cover near as much information as any of the episodes in Ken Burns "The Civil War".

What little information was given about the Civil War as a whole, in this Petersburg film was accurate compared to the Burns film. I will also agree that it was from a completely different perspective than the Burns film too. But Escobar used the best word to describe the focus of this film.

The Petersburg film had an extremely narrow focus I thought.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: The Siege
by [Mychal Hilario](#) – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 8:23 PM

I would have to agree, while the documentary did add to my knowledge I dont think it was more effective or complete than the other sources. I liked that it had a more focused scope on the battle and showed stuff they used. It made me feel a bit more connected with the actual battle part of the war. Like you said it really made me think of the soldiers, the men who lived these conditions and still fought. I think was a good addition to help round out our knowledge but was definatly more dry and did not stick with me as much. Another good point i agree with is that while i did like this documentary and looking more closely at a single battle and its tactics was interesting and helpful i would not want to do it for every single battle.

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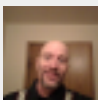


Battles, the Bad, the Worse and the Bloody
by [Sara Baker](#) – Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 10:38 PM

Battles, the bad, the worse and the bloody. While most would feel that mentioning every battle that happened (which we know of) during the Civil War, I found the narrow focus in Burns documentary helpful and necessary, considering it is more of an introduction and overview than "Battle Cry of Freedom." Each battle is horrific, and terrible, but do we name and know of every battle fought during the Vietnam War? Does not knowing every battle lessen the reality of the loss on both sides? Sometimes, we must pick and choose, we do it every day in the classes we take, the hobbies we learn and even the people we choose to associate with. We do the same with history, near or far. It doesn't mean that the others shouldn't be noted, or talked of, but we can only learn so much at a time, take in only so much. I found the extra video insightful, and enlightening. It humanized the two opposing forces more than even the book had managed, while also adding and repeating information that was important and cemented it further in my mind, which is helpful. Whatever you think, whether it be that every facet and battle should have been mentioned in Burn's film, or the opposite, I think most will at least agree that the additional video was helpful and informative.

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Re: Battles, the Bad, the Worse and the Bloody
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 5:23 AM

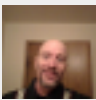
Sara,

In regard to the additional video, while I can certainly agree with you about the repeated information, I'm not too sure what part of it was actually needed in terms of providing any important historical Civil War facts not already covered in our main course material.

I'm curious, if this film does help provide a deeper understanding of civil war battle, what is it? And, how helpful is it in terms of understanding the bottom line?

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Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Thursday, February 25, 2016, 12:54 PM

In regard to ‘*Petersburg: The Graveyard of the Confederacy*’, here’s a case where I’m glad to have seen the entire film before weighing in. If the basic question is whether this film’s main focus was needed or not? Well the answer may vary, depending on who you ask.

I’m sure to those who still haven’t gotten over it, anyone still holding on to that good old southern boy confederate spirit, the answer could be yes.

They might feel like the efforts put forth to show how inefficient the northern Generals were compared to those in the south such as General Lee, well worthwhile. Just in order to set the record straight on which side actually had the best military and all.

Obviously to those who did produce this documentary, they don’t want anyone thinking the Union won the war because it had a better ran military. They are still on the defense about it, and who knows, maybe still think the South should have won.

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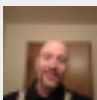


Re: Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It
by [Sara Baker](#) – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:02 PM

Robert,

I agree with several of your points, but I also would like clarification on the meaning behind "good old southern boy." In addition, I believe that no matter the opinion or reasons behind the war, each side still needs to have its history and "last word." If we don't explain or communicate how the southerns felt (no matter how wrong they were) aren't we just being biased and not trying to at least acknowledge their fears, concerns and reality, valid or not? Also, what would be the point in history if we only looked at it from the winning side? I'm sure, no matter how terrible Hitler was, there are those that study him, his docturne and beliefs. If we didn't, we would loose a vital part to understanding the war. I think the same applies to the Civil War. Still, enjoyed reading your response and viewpoint. Looking forward to hearing more.

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Re: Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It
by [Robert Johnson](#) – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 10:51 PM

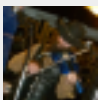
Sara,

Actually I will admit that the term I used “good old southern boy”, was a sarcastic way of saying pro confederate, nothing more. I probably went to far there, and I apologize if I offended anyone.

I do actually agree with what your saying also about acknowledging how the southerner’s felt, I really thought my point was a little different than that.

But now I really do see another perspective. Thank you.

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Re: Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It
by [Jake Beckwith](#) – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:05 PM

Personally, I don't think the issue was who had the better military. There are plenty of moments in the Burns documentary and the book that stress the brilliance of Lee and the other southern leaders. I think the Petersburg documentary was more focused on the ins and outs of that particular incident. I feel like it was meant to introduce us to the particulars and not to fuel a bias towards who were the good and the bad guys.

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Re: Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It

by Sara Baker – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:10 PM

Good point, thank you for better explaining what I was trying to convey.

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Re: Those Who Still Haven't Gotten Over It

by Robert Johnson – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 10:53 PM

Point taken, and noted...I do appreciate your opinion.

Sum of ratings: 1 0

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Saving Southern Pride

by Robert Johnson – Friday, February 26, 2016, 6:18 AM

If the level of detail included in the Petersburg documentary, compared to that provided by either Burns or McPherson is important for the accurate understanding of Civil War history, then I don’t know why.

What part of the Petersburg film brought forth new information? While this documentary does correspond ok with our main course sources, besides focusing on how poorly coordinated and managed the Union military was, it does not provide anything additional.

Since it doesn’t really offer any missing pieces to the true story, and besides attempting to save some Southern pride, what else does the film help.?

Sum of ratings:1 1

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Re: Saving Southern Pride

by Sara Baker – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:08 PM

Robert,

While I agree that the film doesn't offer any "new" information, isn't it important to get the same, or varying details, from more than one source? If we took all history at face value and only from one account how much would we loose? I feel that though the information was repetitive, it was important confirmation and in some areas clarification. It would be like taking "How I Met Your Mother" as an original, and totally independent creation, without outside inspiration (like Friends, or other comedy shows). Still, enjoy reading your perspective, thanks for your point of view.

Sum of ratings:1 1

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Re: Saving Southern Pride

by Jake Beckwith – Sunday, February 28, 2016, 9:12 PM

I'm not sure that it was new information that was introduced, however there were a lot more details in the Petersburg documentary. Each Burns episode is only slightly longer than the documentary, however they cover much more material. The trade off is the depth and amount of information that we receive. While the information is not necessary for our overall understanding of the war and the competencies (or lack of) on each side, I did find some of the finer points fairly interesting.

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Beating a Dead Horse

by Robert Johnson – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 10:01 PM

While giving credit to the Petersburg film for keeping within true boundary’s, the film did just narrowly focus an entire hour on the Petersburg siege, in what turned out to be about the final days of the war. The question is

why?

First consider the source, the Petersburg film is a Virginia Series, made for Blue Ridge Public Television none the less. So it only stands to reason it’s a pro south version of the war, and I thought that was very obvious.

That being said, it’s the perspective of this film that is narrow to me. It is more from an actual “come to the defense of the confederate army” type of a perspective. The Petersburg film has an objective of something like beating a dead horse. That doesn’t add anything to me.

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