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Comparing Sources

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, February 24, 2018, 8:16 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Comparing Sources topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

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I love the music

by Rose Thomas - Tuesday, February 27, 2018, 1:14 PM

Out of the three sources I think that Burns explored medical care and hospitals better than the other two. The book touched on it but didn't go in depth like the other two. After reading the Amazon reviews I laughed. The comment about Burns' choice in music caught my eye. I happen to love the music and it is one of the reasons his documentary is so powerful. The music juxtaposed so nicely when they talked about Dix and the hospitals. The Divided Union also uses great music, but I think that an overarching theme, like in Burns' can be helpful to

the audience. It creates a more cohesive documentary. Unfortunately for the book, there is no music. Although I liked one more, there is something to be said about all of them. They all work really well together as a whole and support each others ideas and information.

Sources:

Ken Burns Documentary: The Civil War

The Divided Union Documentary

Battle Cry of Freedom: Chapters 22-26

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The book not in line with other sources

by Paul Geu - Friday, March 2, 2018, 11:55 PM

I agree that I enjoyed the music with the Burns documentary and it moved me as each episode progressed. I did notice that you cited the book chapters 22-26. When I read them I noticed that their focus was not on medical care as in the section of the Burns episode. I looked for medical care and disease in the Mcpherson text and found that it was mainly focused in chapter 15 section IV. I reread this section to refresh my knowledge and I think that, together with the Burns episode, each compliments with other giving us a rounded story of how medical care was in the war. With the visual aids in the Burns documentary in addition to the detail of the textbook I feel that I have a good grasp on the subject.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Textbook is King

by Miles Arnold - Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 11:59 AM

It's hard for me to look beyond the textbook as the "go to" source for the course. I basically just look to the video sources as a way to cross check the text and to see how the documentaries condense the topic while still covering the important facts.

The way it describes Grants rise to the top and the descriptions of Lincolns displeasure with his other generals leading up to that point is second to none. You get a great understanding of who these guys were and why they made the decisions they made.

The text describes Grant by stating, "Unlike so many other commanders, Grant rarely clamored for reinforcements, rarely complained, rarely quarreled with associates, but went ahead and did the job with the resources at hand."

It describes "The incongruity between Lee's private character as a humane, courteous, reserved kindly man, the very model of a Christian gentleman, and his daring, aggressive, but costly tactics as a general" as "one of the most striking contrasts in the history of the war.

Those two descriptions alone, give a solid picture of how the might play out.

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Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



Target audiences of our sources

by Paul Geu - Saturday, March 3, 2018, 12:31 AM

I totally agree with you that the Mcpherson text is the go to source for myself. I also agree that the Civil War documentary is a good way to supplement the textbook and give us a good overall knowledge base on the subject. I feel that the target audience of the documentary does limit the amount of detail that is allowed. If the Burns documentary was any more detailed it would lose its focus and could lead to some audience members becoming bored. The textbook does not have to deal with that because most readers prefer detailed information.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1



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Valley of the Shadow of Death

by Saige Sloan - Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 8:03 PM

Wednesday, February 28th, 2018

Taking into consideration the two web sources, Episode 6: Valley of the Shadow of Death, Chapters 22-26 in The Battle Cry of Freedom, and The Divided Union documentary, I found that Ken Burns most adequate comparison of Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant was best portrayed in Episode 6. Beginning with each of their earlier life, Burns highlights few events that led up to each man's pre-war time. Ulysses S. Grant, born Hiram Ulysses Grant, was born April 27th, 1822. Grant was promoted to Brigadier General by Abraham Lincoln. Both clearly headed bound with "4am courage", Grant's charisma was found to be highly comparable to general Robert E. Lee. Born a Virginian native in 1807, Lee graduated 2nd in his class at West Point. Often being referred to as "The Marble Man", Lee was credited a sense of punctual perfectionism.

Episode 6: Valley of the Shadow of Death offered multiple strengths when discussing the comparison of Grant and Lee. Touching light on each opposing counterpart that the General's held, Burns also made distinct comparisons between the two. Following similar early lifestyles before the eruption of war, both Grant and Lee attended West Point, married, then bore many children with their wives. Unlike the video, Chapters 22-26 in The Battle Cry of Freedom more-so gave readers a descriptive timeline of events that followed alongside the war, rather than general specifics of each man.

The episode from the Divided Union documentary did in fact compliment both McPherson's book and Burns other episode documentaries. Journalist John J. O'Connor reviewed the Civil War: Divided Union series played on A&E in his New York Times published article. O'Connor explains that "The Divided Union examines and outlines the major issues clearly, although fierce debates about their significance will certainly continue..." (O'Connor, The New York Times). Though there will always be controversy over the 'correct' Civil War events, the portrayal of both generals Grant and Lee in the Divided Union documentaries offers viewers a eventual representation. Directly corresponding with Burns Episodes, his additional documentaries suggest more beneficial information. For example, though watching Episode 6: Valley of Shadow of Death, I was not aware that Grant and Lee met at Wilderness until watching the other alternative documentary.

Though there are multiple resources that we use throughout this course to educate ourselves on the Civil War era, I have been most fond of Ken Burns episodes. In recent times, Episode 6: Valley of the Shadow of Death portrayed both Grant and Lee's similarities, as well as their individual attributes to both the Northern and Southern states during the war. The episode and documentary sources definitely are the strongest when it comes to introducing information to students and readers. Though highly factual, I have had the most unsuccessful time learning from the The Battle Cry of Freedom in text format.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Very through analysis

by Paul Geu - Sunday, March 4, 2018, 9:26 PM

Saige,

I enjoyed your very through analysis of the material here including the fact that you mention that the book gave a more timeline based narrative of the two men instead of a more generalized information in the videos. One thing that I can suggest to you, in regards to the book, is to watch the episodes first then read the textbook to fill in the gaps. I discovered, for at least me, that when I read a certain section I visualized that material in the Burns documentary.

I hope this helps you.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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Re: Valley of the Shadow of Death

by Andrew Smith - Sunday, March 4, 2018, 10:10 PM

I really enjoyed your analysis of all the sources, I couldn't agree more about the Ken Burns series and documentaries being the best when it comes to introducing information to student. I think a dry approach make the information hard to hold onto. Also, I enjoyed the way Grant and Lee's backgrounds were presented in the series. It heavily showed the strong attributes that made each man the right man for the job. Obviously Lee was an all around incredible leader and general, but it seemed as if Grant was just the right man to relentlessly push back against Lee. I think the Civil war series did a great job in capturing this by explain specifically the type of culture and world that each man was brought up in and how it shaped the great men that they would become.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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So many sources, how do they compare?

by Leah Livesay - Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 8:53 PM

To be honest, we have covered so many different materials in this class that I have a hard time sorting out which source I gathered certain information from at times. In comparing Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant, I personally think that Burns' videos have done a great job in covering both of them. Yes, Burns' series has many episodes, all at about an hour long or more, however, the more time that is spent on something, it only makes sense that there will

be more details covered. The textbook and Divided Union series have great information as well, but there is only so much room for so many details there, so understandably you cannot expect those to cover quite as much material as Burns does. When sources are limited on space or time, generally the basics and most "important" details will be covered. In Burns' videos I feel like there have been many details regarding Lee and Grant throughout each episode, so far. I think that each source, Burns' videos, the text and the Divided Union series do compliment each other. Each source takes the information they think is important and most relevant and displays it and while you may find something in one source that may not be in another source, it all links and fits together.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: So many sources, how do they compare?

by Saige Sloan - Friday, March 2, 2018, 12:20 PM

Leah,

I agree with you when you say that "we have covered so many different materials in this class that I have a hard time sorting out which source I gathered certain information from at times". Each of the episodes, documentaries, book and other sources all provide valid information, yet it's hard to determine which is to be considered the 'best'. When it came to the comparison of generals Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant, I found Ken Burns Episode 6: Valley of the Shadow of Death to do an adequate job of relating the two.

Each source discusses both of the men, their attributes, failures and accomplishments, but all in different ways. The Battle Cry of Freedom offered a more time-lined base of information, which helps further understand as to what went on. I think including each source best educates us on the overall aspects of Civil War, as well as the people and the events that took place. Your response was very similar to mine.

Saige

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Two sources complimenting each other, while the third not so much

by Paul Geu - Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 10:01 PM

I chose the topic of medical care and the evolution of hospitals due to my background as a healthcare professional. After reviewing all three sources I felt the Mcpherson text was more in depth on this topic than the other two sources. The main strength of the textbook is the ability to go into more detail on almost every subject of the war because it was not limited by a run time like the video sources. One weakness of the textbook was that the main section on medical care was limited to the peninsular campaign that was early in the war and did not evolve as the conflict progressed. When comparing the other two video sources I felt that the strength of the Burns documentary was that it was able to focus on certain details and not just give a standard timeline of important events like in the Union divided video does.

Both video sources were able to convey the information in a way that is easier to digest than the more dry way that the Mcpherson text does but that is a strength of video or written word. When taken as a whole I felt that all three sources compliment each other well to fill in the gaps that the other sources left out. For example, in the Burns episode, there is a specific

section called "Now, fix me" that completely focused on the medical treatment and the evolution of the hospital system during the war. In contrast the high tide of the confederacy did not have any focus on the medical care of men except for a section on the Andersonville prison camp. I feel that the Mcpherson text gives the most detailed focus on the care of the troops and that information is complimented by the Burns video. One example of how the two compliment each other was how each source dealt with Dorothea Dix. In Battle Cry, it simply mentions Dix as being named "Superintendent of Female Nurses" and working uneasily with the Sanitary Commission while the Burns documentary goes at length of what she actually accomplished during the war. Overall, while Battle Cry gave us a more detailed picture of medical care during the civil war, I feel that all three sources are needed to compliment each other, fill in the gaps left out by the other sources, and give us a more rounded picture of this important topic in the background of this large subject.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Lee vs. Grant source comparison

by Andrew Smith - Sunday, March 4, 2018, 12:45 PM

When comparing Lee vs. Grant, I preferred the books descriptions of the men. The Civil War series by Kens Burns painted a beautiful picture of the two men and presented them on a grand scale. Throughout the series, the information presented seems to be lacking a more detailed description of the men and their deeds. The book presented more information about the battles they fought in and, in my opinion, shed a greater light on the character of the two men when it came to battle. The Divided Union seemed more similar to the book than Ken Burns series. Like one of the Amazon reviews said, the Divided Union got to the point quicker. Although the Ken Burns series was much better to watch, the Divided Union gave a much more clear and concise description of the men and their battles. Having said all that, the Ken burns series did an incredible job at making the information it did present very interesting. Although the book and Divided Union gave a clearer view of these two generals, the information learned in the Ken Burns series stuck in memory much deeper than the other two sources.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Getting to the point: the divided union

by Paul Geu - Sunday, March 4, 2018, 9:16 PM

I also agree that the divided union documentary seemed to get to the point quicker than the Burns Documentary. I believe the main reason was the target audience that each piece was trying to reach. While the divided union was main set for those in the classrooms the Burns documentary was for a larger at home audience for sure. I remember actually watching some of the divided union in my history class in high school. I also agree that Battle Cry of Freedom is a better source that all of them mainly because I am more of a learner when I read the material than watching it on video. Overall the use of all three sources has given me a good foundation of the personalities and battle tactics of these two titans of the war.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Book vs. Ken Burns

by Andrew Smith - Sunday, March 4, 2018, 10:00 PM

In giving raw facts and explaining in detail the full scope of battles, generals, men, etc. the book gave much more information. Obviously because it is not limited to a time frame it can do that. However, just because the book gives tons of information doesn't mean all that information sticks, even despite being tested on it. It's too much information to be boringly presented. I can't speak for everyone, but the information being presented in Ken Burn's series sticks much easier. The overall presentation of each episode is enjoyable to watch. The combination of the historians, narrator, historical quotes, and music creates an experience where it's actually fun to learn the information. We've been presented with sources that present a vast amount of information and out of all of them; the Civil War series creates the best educational experience.

Sum of ratings: 1 (1)

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