THE U.S. CIVIL WAR
BEGINNINGS

- Americans enamored with Civil War
  - Millions of visitors to Vicksburg, Gettysburg
  - Battle of Glorieta reenactment
  - Authentic and replica weapons, uniforms, equipment
  - McPherson’s Battle Cry of Freedom- Pulitzer Prize winner
  - The Movie: Lincoln

- Why? Reasoning for interest…
  - Interesting people: Lincoln, Grant, Lee, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Clara Barton
BEGINNINGS

Why?

- It happened here! Not a foreign war; inside our borders
- Brother fighting brother
- Human costs of war
  - 620K soldiers died
  - Many more wounded
  - Battle of Antietam: Bloodiest day of the War: 25K dead; four times D-Day
  - Battle of Shiloh- more dead and wounded than ALL wars in 19th c.
  - Until Vietnam War; more dead than all wars combined
BEGINNINGS

- South was severely impacted
  - For most part, fought on their turf
  - Only American defeat in 19th c.
  - Totally changed way of life
  - Departure to the modern age; ending slavery and Old South

- Many have written as to why war broke out to begin with
  - Differences in economy, politics, society, culture
  - Economic disparities between North and South
  - Different values and norms
  - Blundering politicians who could not agree on a compromise
BEGINNINGS

- WITH PROFOUND DIFFERENCES, THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH FOUGHT OVER WHAT AMERICA WAS ABOUT AND WHAT AMERICA WAS TO BECOME.
CAUSES OF THE WAR

- North and South were different civilizations
  - Started in 1787 with U.S. Constitution
    - 3/5 Compromise
    - Only deep question not answered
  - Charles C. Jones 1861 “in this country have arisen two races (North and South) which, although claiming a common parentage, have been so entirely separated by climate, by morals, by religion, and be estimates so totally opposite to all that constitutes honor, truth, and manliness, that they cannot longer exist under the same government.”
  - The heart of the issue: 1858 Charleston Mercury, “On the subject of slavery, the North and the South…are not two Peoples, but they are rival, hostile Peoples.”
    - The “peculiar institution”
    - Lincoln: “A house divided against itself cannot stand (as the) government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free.”
CAUSES OF THE WAR

- Slavery (cont)
  - By 1858, slavery existed for 70 years
  - Jefferson recognized the issue would heat up in 1820 based on the territories acquired in the Louisiana Purchase
  - At core of conflict for Missouri admission into the Union in 1821
  - Heated and deadly arguments between abolitionists and Southerners in the 1830s
  - Debate over Texas statehood in 1845
  - Compromise of 1850
  - By 1858, options were closing
Causes of the War

- Slavery (cont)
  - Missouri Compromise temporarily settled argument
    - Divide nation along 36.30 parallel
  - Admittance of Texas in 1846 reopened issue
    - Wilmont Proviso- all areas acquired from Mexican-American War would exclude slavery passed House, lost in Senate
  - 1848; 15 free and 15 slave; new admittances would tip the scale
  - Northerners began arguing that slavery affected more than just the slaves themselves; cancer on a nation; demeaned free people and lowered wages of all workers
CAUSES OF WAR

- Slavery (cont)
  - Southerners argued that black slavery was basis of liberty for white Americans
    - Ensured all whites gained an equality of status by assigning lowest jobs to black slaves
    - If blacks become free, creates a “caste” system and will mean whites do menial jobs
    - 70% of all Southerners who owned no slaves defended the institution
    - Southerners believed the institution must expand into the new territories
CAUSES OF WAR

- Expansion of slavery into territories major issue of late 1840s and 1850s
  - Southerners led movement to annex Mexico, Cuba, and Nicaragua into U.S. as slave states; Spain refused to sell Cuba

- Some Northerners with Southern Democrats passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854
  - Repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1821
  - Coalition of Northern Whigs, Northern Democrats, Free Soilers opposed the Act and formed a new Republican Party dedicated to containment of slavery
CAUSES OF WAR

- Slavery (cont)
  - Southern-dominated Supreme Court handed down Dred Scott decision in 1857; increased tensions
  - 1858-59; violence in Kansas territory between pro and anti-slavery settlers
  - John Brown in Harper’s Ferry; captured by Lee and Brown hanged
  - Lincoln’s victory in 1860 revealed the South had no control over federal government; not a single electoral vote from the South
    - South Carolinian, “the North has gone so far toward being abolitionized as to elect a man avowedly hostile to our institutions.”
CAUSES OF WAR

- Northerners would not tolerate a dissolution of the U.S. with Southern succession.
- North’s belief in sanctity of the U.S. and the South’s belief in slavery hardened the positions; impossible to compromise.
- Firing on Fort Sumpter on April 21, 1861 was decisive act, igniting four long years of war.
THE MILITARY

- Strategies based on objectives:
  - South bent on defending its political independence and geographic borders; no intention of “defeating” the North; just maintain independence
    - Initial strategy- “dispersed defensive”; small number of troops dispersed around 6000 miles of Confederate border to prevent Union attacks
    - State governors had control over their militias; would not send troops to Virginia or Mississippi due to leaving state defenseless
    - Only in 1864 did the militias consolidate to Army of Tennessee and Army of Northern Virginia
    - Some argued strategy flawed and caused Confederate defeat
South’s strategy (cont)

- South had less manpower than North
  - By dispersing troops, many vulnerable areas to be penetrated by North
    - Happened in 1862; Kentucky and Tennessee; Fort Henry, Donelson, and Island Number 10, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland rivers
  - Initially, Southern leaders had extensive use of railroads to overcome problems
    - 1st Manassas; Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley meeting with Army of Northern Virginia; Battle of Shiloh
Southern strategy (cont)

- Use of scattered forces to concentrate together to fight Union was a modification of dispersed defensive strategy—“offensive-defensive strategy”
  - At time necessary to take an offensive posture
  - Victories would erode Northern morale
  - Recognition from Europe as possible victors
  - Aggressive offensive battles: Seven Days Battles, Shiloh, Antietam, Gettysburg
- By concentrating, created large gaps
- Take the offense in the North, surrounded and destroyed; Antietam and Gettysburg
MILITARY

❖ Southern strategy
  • Huge cost in human casualties for the South
    • South lack the soldiers to continue the fight
    • 1864 battles forced leadership to change strategies for last time
  • Last strategy was one of attrition; entrenched defensive position
    • New technologies and battle tactics supported attrition strategy
      • New rifled muskets- range and accuracy prevented frontal attacks
      • Civil War created new tactics for dismounted cavalry, dispersed infantry attacks, flank attacks, etc.
      • Elaborate trench system in Petersburg in 1864
MILITARY

- Southern strategy (cont)
  - Attrition (cont)
    - Almost worked
      - Northern public opinion waning in 1864; election

- Northern Strategy
  - Lincoln and Grant’s strategy- maintain the Union government and geographic integrity; Union prior to succession.
    - Conciliatory policy with the South
    - Suppressing insurrectionists and ensuring border states remain with Union; “We must have Kentucky”
MILITARY

- Northern Strategy (cont)
  - Worked overall and created West Virginia
  - By 1862, realization that current strategy will not bring over South
  - North would need to conquer South territory
  - By end of 1862, became clear must also destroy Confederate armies
  - 1863, goal of North was to destroy Confederate armies
    - Grant in Vicksburg and Chattanooga
    - Lincoln furious with timidity of generals; much turnover and Lincoln getting personally involved with military strategies and movements
  - 1864, North devised new strategy—most devastating; war to destroy the Confederacy’s capacity to fight and to attack the will of Southerners for continued resistance
Northern strategy (cont)

- Previous to strategy: Naval blockade in 1861 and Emancipation Proclamation in 1863; South only
  - North recruited 180K blacks into black regiments
- “Terror and destruction” was the mantra to the North’s ultimate goal to defeat the South
  - Grant moves to total victory by overwhelming lesser South army along with Sherman’s March through the South
- April 1865 Lee surrenders and the South capitulated
- Bloodiest war in American history
THE IMPACT OF THE WAR

- Nothing would ever be the same
  - Especially for 3.5MM slaves
  - Changed the very nature of government and institutions

- One major change was power shift from South to North
  - Democrats to Republicans
  - Prior to War, Southerners in Congress prevented the Free Soil and Whig agenda
  - Once War started, Republican-controlled Congress made sweeping changes
    - Higher protective tariffs, built transcontinental railroad, homestead act, Morrill Land Grant Act, National Banking Act
THE IMPACT OF WAR

- War forced the government to find ways to prosecute and finance it.
  - Congress followed three paths: increase taxes, borrow funds and print more money
    - Morrill Tariff, manufacturers excise taxes, and printed $450MM greenbacks
    - Provided 2/3 of monies necessary; other 1/3 came from bonds to domestic and foreign investors
  - Entrepreneurs took advantage of the War; selling goods to gov’t
  - Government enacted conscription; enthusiasm waned
    - Either enter age 20-45 or pay $300 commutation fee
THE IMPACT OF WAR

- North suspended habeas corpus and violated civil rights and liberties
- Government played larger role in American life
- War affected roles of African-Americans and women
  - Black regimens and also subverted South efforts
  - Created generation of women as caretakers of disabled veterans, widows, and spinsters
  - Mothers lost entire families
  - New role of nurses
  - Took on men’s jobs in factories, farmers, plantation managers
THE IMPACT OF WAR

- Role of African-Americans and women
  - Clara Barton famous for accelerating women’s roles in the workplace
  - Most women reverted to traditional roles
  - Still significant change in status of women
  - Led to passage of 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments
    - All are free
    - All native born are American citizens
    - All male suffrage