

Reconstruction at 150: Equal Protection of the Laws?

working program

Friday, November 16

The Bioeconomy of Slavery and Empire (8:30-10:00)

Jeffrey Insko (chair)

Husbanding Life: Slavery, Livestock, Biocapital

In Foucault's classic formulation, biopolitics—the reorganization of state power towards the end of maximizing the productivity of the population as a whole—first arose at the turn of the nineteenth century with the development of new statistical sciences in the West. This formulation has been challenged, however, by postcolonial critics like Achille Mbembe and Sylvia Wynters, who argue that the origins of biopolitics lie not in European sciences, but in colonial slavery. It was on the plantation, they argue, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that agriculturalists began to experiment with ever more efficient means of husbanding the biocapital—including populations of both slaves and livestock—at their disposal.

This paper will focus on the development of managerial approaches to slave-keeping and animal husbandry on antebellum plantations. There are, of course, long-standing overlaps in the keeping of livestock and slaves: David Brion Davis traces the origins of slavery to the domestication of animals, and common practices such as chaining, collaring, branding, and auctioning clearly link the two institutions. This paper will, however, focus more narrowly on the ways in which antebellum slave-owners increasingly came to approach both slaves and livestock as biological *populations*, developing practices and techniques that were aimed not at disciplining individuals but rather at managing the aggregate health and productivity of the group.

Cristie Ellis

University of Mississippi

cristinellis@gmail.com

Frederick Douglass and the Prospect of Free Soil

When Frederick Douglass attended the first national convention of the Free-Soil Party in August 1848, he was invited to the lectern amidst a wave of cheers. He declined to give a speech, explaining that he was recovering from recent throat surgery, leaving the crowd with a brief statement of encouragement: “One thing however I want to say, God speed your noble undertaking.” Just nine months later, writing in the *North Star* under the headline “What Good Has the Free Soil Movement Done?” Douglass attacked Free-Soilism for failing to deliver on its promises and for “doing much harm” to the abolitionist movement.

The straightforward explanation for this change of heart is that while Douglass did not lose his commitment to political abolition he was disillusioned by the party's poor performance in the 1848 election and found its platform of aiming to restrict the growth of the Slave Power into western territories to be insufficient. I seek to account more fully for Douglass's attraction to and critique of Free-Soilism by attending to the ways in which his writings from 1848 onward identify the Slave Power as a global force

of extraction, enclosure, and violence akin to what Donna Haraway has termed the “Plantationocene.” Free-Soilism, according to Douglass, misdiagnoses the threat posed by the Slave Power and is thus unprepared and incapable of restricting its growth, much less of abolishing it.

James S. Finley
Texas A&M University-San Antonio
james.finley@tamusa.edu

Biocapital and War: Phil Sheridan Goes West

Although the U.S. Army never officially formulated a policy directed toward exterminating the buffalo as a means of managing Native American populations on the Great Plains after the Civil War, unofficially it encouraged the extermination by aiding professional hunters who in a little more than a decade brought the buffalo to the brink of extinction. This encouragement was consistent with the biopolitical approach to warfare that characterized the two campaigns by which the Union army had brought about the end of the Civil War, Sheridan’s Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864 and Sherman’s campaigns through Georgia and the Carolinas in 1864-65, both of which targeted not so much Confederate military forces as those forces’ economic base and means of supply. Focusing on Sheridan as a key figure, I’ll reflect on the analogy between total war in the Civil War and the Great Plains wars, extending historians’ conventional focus on noncombatants to the matter of supply and environment. I’ll go on to examine how the unofficial policy of buffalo extermination was countered by preservationist efforts. I’ll conclude by noting a biopolitical turn on the management of Native American populations given by buffalo preservationist William T. Hornaday.

Timothy Sweet
West Virginia University
tsweet@wvu.edu

Bison, Cattle, and the Course of Empire

This paper highlights the conference location as a pivotal coordinate in the historical transformation of the American West from a bison habitat to a landscape—and an industrial foodscape—entirely dominated by the cow. The paper will track that transformation from the original publication of Francis Parkman’s *Oregon Trail* in 1849 to its last edition during his lifetime in 1892. While the original text already observed the unfolding eradication of the buffalo and the Indigenous economies that relied on it, Parkman’s 1892 preface registered the completion of the process of replacement, as “tame cattle and fences of barbed wire [had] supplanted [the] vast herds and boundless grazing grounds” of the bison. This transformation of the prairie biosphere was further reflected in the changing urban landscape of Kansas City. Whereas the town of Westport—now a neighborhood not far from the conference hotel—served as an outfitting center and point of departure for antebellum settlers and tourists like Parkman, by the century’s end Kansas City would be the second largest industrial meat processing center in the country. But if the literature and infrastructure of the period combine to tell a story of replacement—the eradicated bison supplanted by the industrial cow—this paper suggests that the story of the bison and the cow is

really one of convergence, as the bison was returned from the brink of extinction largely through its incorporation into the very same meat industry that would seem to have displaced it.

John Levi Barnard
College of Wooster
jlb@tragos.org

The Black Press and the Long Civil War (10:15-11:45)

Nathan Grant (chair)

Colored American Nativism in the Age of Colonization

My paper studies New York's *Colored American* newspaper (1837-41) and its reporting on the trial of the Mendenian Africans, who had successfully commandeered the Spanish slave ship *Amistad* illegally transporting them from Cuba, and, due to the deceit of a Spanish navigator, were ultimately intercepted by a US brig offshore of Long Island. In the sixteen months between the *Amistad*'s capture by the US and the Supreme Court case of *United States v. Schooner Amistad*, *The Colored American*'s editors and readers discussed the legal and natural rights that guaranteed the Mendenians' freedom and right of repatriation. These discussions drew extensive analogies between the rights entailed by Colored American nativity in the US and Mendenian nativity in "Mendi country." At the same time, these articles made crisp distinctions between Africans and Colored Americans as different peoples, in order to counter the increasingly energetic print campaigns of the American Colonization Society with elaborations of the specific meaning and history of Colored American nativity. The central concern of this paper will be to show how real and theoretical Africans figured in *The Colored American*'s explications of the meaning of Colored American nativity and the relationship of Colored Americans to other Americans and to the US state.

Jordan Wingate
University of California-Los Angeles
jordanwingate@g.ucla.edu

"Hens and Shawls" on the Battlefield: Gendered Politics and Early Black Social Media"

This paper uses a brief attack from James McCune Smith on William Howard Day, editor of the *Aliened American* (1853-1855), to recover, partially, the *Aliened American*'s history and to meditate on questions of gender and pseudonymity in black periodicals. Near the end of a May 12, 1854, correspondence under his pseudonym, Communipaw, Smith challenges Day to a debate with "an express'd condition that *hens* and shawls should be kept from the battleground." The "hens" to which Communipaw refers is a coterie of black women correspondents to *Aliened American*, "Maria," "Becky," "Nancy," and "Fanny Homewood," who, apparently wrote for the paper regularly and who were partners in its operations. Communipaw suggests that women's participation would make a mockery of what should be a serious intellectual battle. His dismissive tone makes visible the attitudes against which black women, like Mary Ann Shadd Cary (editor of the *Provincial Freeman*), fought as they attempted to take more visible roles in activism and print. Yet, Communipaw's challenge speaks to more than a casual misogyny. The revelation of this collective offers a tantalizing trace of an inter-periodical cohort and a cultural movement in early black print, tantalizing, because scholars only have access to the *Aliened American*'s first issue. The

moment serves as an entree into a larger printscape of aesthetic play and unwritten codes of social experiences that twenty-first century readers might find reminiscent of modern social media.

Derrick Spires
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
dspires@illinois.edu

The Languages of War in the *New Orleans Tribune/La Tribune Nouvelle-Orleans*

On March 29, 1865, the Union Army began a draft in the city of New Orleans. Over the course of the next month, as Richmond fell and the Confederate armies surrendered, the Union drafted over four thousand men into its ranks. This talk focuses on the coverage of this draft in *The New Orleans Tribune/La Tribune de la Nouvelle-Orleans*, a daily black newspaper that printed two pages in English, and two in French. Rather than simply translations of one another, the newspaper's two linguistic sections largely carried separate content. This feature has led scholars to conclude that the journal's different languages addressed different audiences. However, the paper's coverage of the 1865 draft moved between the English and French sections. For example, the editors regularly informed readers of the English section that if they wished to consult the daily list of those drafted, they would need to turn to the French pages. With the coverage of the draft as an entry point, this talk explores the nuanced bilingual character of the newspaper and its readers.

Benjamin Fagan
Auburn University
fagan@auburn.edu

Framing Black Feminist Futures in the Essays of Julia C. Collins

Known for her 1865 serialized novel *The Curse of Caste; or, The Slave Bride*, educator Julia C. Collins (c. 1842-65) made her publishing debut in the culture-defining periodical *The Christian Recorder*, the national newspaper of the A.M.E. church. In addition to the novel, the author also published a series of essays that redefined women's roles beyond the domestic sphere. These six essays—"Mental Improvement," "School Teaching," "Intelligent Women," "A Letter from Oswego: Originality of Ideas," "Life Is Earnest," and "Memory and Imagination"—helped frame the future of Black Feminism during the Civil War era. This discussion situates Collins' essays within the larger conversation of Black Feminism, placing the author at the genesis of what would become recurring debates of women's roles in social and political movements. As the author captured the *Recorder's* audiences issue after issue with episodes of *The Curse of Caste*, she also encouraged—or even advised—women to emerge from their Victorian-Age sensibilities and move toward the modern era as unapologetically intellectual women—which is to say, women of the mind, rather than merely the home. Paying careful attention to the author's emphasis on a life of the mind, I argue that Collins gestures toward a lasting feminist future that contested patriarchal systems of power.

Julia Charles

Auburn University
jsc0037@auburn.edu

“A Queer Semblance of a Baby”: Alice Dunbar-Nelson’s Queer Futurity

In Alice Dunbar-Nelson’s short story, “His Heart’s Desire,” Andy is a five-year-old boy, “and boys don’t tell their hearts out, and he would have died rather than confess his weakness for the world to laugh at and jibe and jeer. For Andy wanted a doll” (416). Because he will not ask for one, Andy makes a rag-doll instead. We read that he “had gathered together material...had fashioned it into a queer semblance of a baby” (416). Dunbar-Nelson’s manuscript story (first published in a 2016 issue of *Legacy*) is a story about intersectional childhood, doll-play, and desire. This essay examines the object of Andy’s desire – the baby-doll – in both its material substance and its symbolic resonance, in light of the implied futurity of childhood play. The “queer semblance of a baby” that Andy creates for himself suggests alternative childhoods to be realized. Andy’s desire for the doll is also a desire for his own alternative performance of boyhood and masculinity more generally. But, framed as desire, this alternative is always unfulfilled, always yet-to-be-realized.

I read this story alongside Toni Morrison’s 1970 novel, *The Bluest Eye*, a literary touchstone that explicates and critiques normative imaginings of the relationship between doll-play, desire, and childhood’s reproductive futurity. Examining these texts through queer theory’s discussions of childhood and time and Afrofuturism’s discourses of technology and the speculative, we can see how doll-play might project a speculative futurity of intersectional identity that defies normative trajectories. “His Heart’s Desire” thereby paints children’s doll play not only in nonnormative gender roles but also with relation to nonnormative time. Rather than the iconic Child destined for a reproductive future, Andy’s queer orientation to the future is tempered by doll-play that locates pleasure in the now-ness of the material object and which imagines queer futures that do not project the reproduction of future children but dwells in the hope for a sustained relationship to childhood, itself.

Brigitte Fielder
University of Wisconsin-Madison
brigitte.fielder@gmail.com

Kathleen Diffley, “Frederick Douglass’s *New National Era*: How Big a Tent?”

In 1870, when Frederick Douglass and his new Washington weekly were promoting the Fifteenth Amendment that guaranteed voting rights to black men, neither the celebrated abolitionist nor the *New National Era* lingered very long on Civil War or paused much at all on recollective stories. So it is peculiar that one of the few extended war narratives the weekly included on its “Home Circle” page was “The Mutiny” (11 August 1870), a story of soldier revolt and work stoppage while the Army of the Potomac was approaching Richmond in 1862. As a representative focus, a story reprinted from New York’s *Galaxy* has several surprising upsides, especially for probing a Washington weekly that paid increasing attention to black Anacostia and its unusual perspective on what was worth remembering from the war. In the first place, the measured rows of so many government-issued camp tents suggest the measured purposes of the *New National Era* from 1870 to 1874: its editorial focus on “equal justice for all

men,” Douglass’s abiding support for black male suffrage, and a postwar rhetoric of personal responsibility. In addition, the edge of “parade” space, where officers and civilians slip into eclectic social clusters, points by contrast to a competing model of Civil War memory that is associational, fluid, and the readier view of Douglass’s sons, soon to take over as the paper’s editors. Finally, these two recollective models for advocating a national Reconstruction can be tied to a Union camp’s differing tents, which will help explain how the remembered tale of a mutinous regiment fit so seamlessly into the *New National Era*, even when set a year before black men began to enlist.

Kathleen Diffley
University of Iowa
kathleen-diffley@uiowa.edu

Material Cultures of the Civil War (2:15-3:45)

Christopher Hanlon (chair)

Vacant Chairs and Absent Bodies: Material Disruptions of Domestic Spaces in a Southern Poetry Scrapbook

Based on close study of the M. J. Solomons scrapbook (Savannah, Georgia, 1861-1863) and the poems included by the scrapbook’s author, this paper examines literary and cultural responses to the material disruptions of domestic spaces during the war. My analysis focuses on four particular poems within the scrapbook that address the topic of the war’s impact on domestic spaces in terms of material objects and the theme of vacancy. As I argue in this paper, tracing these particular themes within the context of one author’s scrapbook not only highlights their popular appeal to readers during the war, but also spurs further reflection on the nature of scrapbook keeping itself. The recurrence of poems portraying wartime disruptions of domestic spaces is particularly relevant to the study of Civil War scrapbooks, which by their very nature blur the boundaries between private and public expression and often feature an ambivalent attitude toward the author’s dependency on news from the war.

Vanessa Steinroetter
Washburn University
vanessa.steinroetter@washburn.edu

Kristen Treen, “A Shell and What Became of It: Projectile Narratives and Commemorative Trajectories at Gettysburg”

In July 1863, the McClean family of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, constructed a remarkable memorial to one of the Civil War’s most momentous battles. During the heavy bombardments of the fight’s final day, a stray shell burst through the McCleans’ roof and came to rest on their first floor landing. Shaken by the invasion, the family was nevertheless quick to preserve the object that had terrorized them – and mortar it back into the hole it had created. The McCleans were not alone in their peculiar commemorative practice. Across Gettysburg, families preserved bullet marks and shell holes in the walls of their homes, while tourists coveted spent missiles, and the narratives of fear and chance that followed in their wake.

This paper will propose that Gettysburg's wartime souvenir culture, and the sorts of remembering such objects generated, had a significant impact upon the grander attempts to bury and commemorate the Union dead that materialised after the battle. I will explore the anxieties that plagued those 'official' endeavours. And I'll suggest that the epistemological and ritualistic uses individuals found for Gettysburg's missiles offered a pervasive rhetoric of remembrance, which would shape commemoration at Gettysburg for decades to come. By re-reading Lincoln's magisterial Address with wartime souvenir culture in mind, I will refocus established arguments about the transcendent, symbolic power of his words and demonstrate the projectile's rhetorical role: both in Lincoln's vision of a new democratic collective, and in the communities of living and dead that spent missiles, and their long trajectories, brought together.

Kristen Treen
University of St. Andrews
ket4@st-andrews.ac.uk

Carnal Knowledge: The Body of Christ in *Leaves of Grass*

To assess Walt Whitman's place within the religious culture of his day is to grapple with a paradox: on the one hand, Whitman appears to be a poet grounded in the material plane and evincing what one prominent critic has described as "a wholly secular attitude toward the world"; on the other, his poetry carries undeniably spiritual elements that inspired a dedicated army of disciples drawn to a "poet-prophet" of a post-Christian religion. Rather than endorse the vision of either a worldly or a spiritual poet, this paper will show how the paradox of Whitman's religiosity arises partly from the poet's interpretation and deployment of a theological metaphor central to the Christian faith, the material sign of the body of Christ. By assuming and incorporating the complex image of the body of Christ both figuratively and literally within his poetry, Whitman sought to wed the material and transcendent aspects of his own work in order to generate a spiritually inspired and politically active readership. This image informed Whitman's entire career, though this paper will focus on its importance within the 1867 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the first version of his masterwork to include his poetry of the Civil War.

Sam Graber
Valparaiso University
samuel.graber@valpo.edu

Lincoln's Fido: Visual Culture and the Dogs of War

Animals populate Civil War culture: they were metaphorically invoked as political labels ("Copperheads"), as rhetorical symbols, and as shapes for visual caricature; and they were literally embodied as pets left behind, as regimental companions, and as laborers in battle. In this talk, I examine the material traces left by one exceptional Civil War-era animal: Abraham Lincoln's Fido, a mixed-breed dog whom Lincoln left in Springfield when he became President, and who was stabbed to death in 1866. Fido was photographed in several studio poses in Springfield, and these photographs circulated widely after Lincoln's death and as cartes-de-visite in the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. They became material commodities for mourning Lincoln, with Fido metaphorically likened to the president as well as metonymically leashed to him. More specifically, I argue that the Fido photographs testify to multiple

forms of fidelity – the fidelity of the dog to his male master, of the soldier to his regiment, of the nation to its fallen leader, of the photograph to its indexical referent, and of the souvenir to its receding event. Yet these fidelities were fickle; for example, as the photographs became mythologized, they were misdated. These images also point toward the mutable political connotations of postwar dog images. In an era of racialized obsession with “breed purity,” for example, the Fido photographs celebrate the mixed-breed mutt. As Lincoln relics, the Fido photographs suggest the complexities of canine representation as well as presidential remembrance in the decades after the Civil War.

Elizabeth Young
Mount Holyoke College
eyoung@mtholyoke.edu

New & Noteworthy: And the War Came (4:00-5:30)

Julia Stern (chair)

Benjamin Fagan, author of *The Black Newspaper and the Chosen Nation*

Jeffrey Insko, author of *The Ever-Present Now: Time, History, and Antebellum American Writing*

Christopher Hager, author of *I Remain Yours: Common Lives in Civil War Letters*

Saturday, November 17

Postbellum Absences: A Roundtable (8:30-10:00)

Greg Laski (chair)

Phantoms of the Hospital: Haunting Absences in Soldiers' Civil War Hospital Writings

This paper uses Silas Weir Mitchell's "The Curious Case of George Dedlow" as a springboard to consider phantoms of battle and the Civil War hospital that haunt soldiers' personal writings. Just as the protagonist of Mitchell's story grapples with the haunting sensation of his amputated limb, I argue that we can identify other elements of the hospital that become phantasmic to contemporary and distant readers. My thinking about these hospital phantoms has led to the following research questions my paper will uncover: How do authors create spaces of absence in their work by omitting details of the trauma of surgery or battle, and how might readers fill these the gaps with their own cultural knowledge of such scenes? How does the abrupt death of a soldier in his diary rattle his contemporary and distant readers with the record of his living subjectivity's abrupt end? What does the rumination of writers on the absence of return correspondence from non-combatants in their letters suggest about the haunting sentiments of home-life? To consider these questions about phantoms of the hospital, I will partner my reading of Mitchell's "The Curious Case of George Dedlow" with the prison diary of wounded Confederate Charles Foster and select soldiers' letters. Using the neuroscientific principle of the phantom limb as way to access absences of detail in hospital writings permits us to understand the way in which writers and readers articulate and respond to scenes and places of trauma, as what is seemingly missing becomes hauntingly uncanny.

Marla Anzalone

Duquesne University
anzalon1@duq.edu

Tales Told by Empty Sleeves, or, The Economics and Aesthetics of Post-Civil War Mendicant Texts

This talk considers how amputee Civil War veterans used the genre of the “mendicant” text to comment upon the relationship between disabled veterans and the national body politic. Reading mendicant texts in relation to the expansion of pension law over the last decades of the nineteenth century, I suggest that mendicant texts offer glimpses into the evolution of disability into a social, rights-bearing (rather than private) category. When, for example, Pennsylvania veteran and amputee David Gingry writes, “Oh! Grand Republic! Give me leave/ To proudly flaunt this empty sleeve!,” he reveals the contingent nature of disability signification and its enmeshment with issues of market economics, calling on his interlocutor to make his amputation a sign of patriotic sacrifice rather than a badge of poverty. Mendicant texts by amputee veteran narrators constitute an understudied area of life writing that complicates studies of the relationship between disability and literature, which have tended to focus on disability as a character device or metaphor. In post-war mendicant texts, disability is not confined to metaphor but is an inaugurating condition of authorship; a visible, embodied impetus toward the citizen’s consumption; and a factor that mediates the relationship between the writer-performer and reader-consumer. As such, this body of work offers a vantage point from which to consider shifting understandings of embodiment in the postwar era, during which disability became an increasingly politicized category amidst broader transformations in ideas about state and community responsibility and social welfare.

Jean Franzino
Beloit College
jean.franzino@gmail.com

In “Histotomizing Narratives” I survey women writers from the eve of the Civil War through Reconstruction who variously conceive what I call parthenogenetic citizenship as an alternative to national myths of masculine self-making. A materialist account of missing reproductive organs, among which I include the wandering uterus of clinical hysteria, the resected ovaries of experimental ovariectomy, and the broken heart of sentimental fiction, my talk proposes a cartography of visceral absences in the era of Reconstruction, analyzing racialized notions of the democratic-republican body in the severed and reconstructed tissues of women’s bodies. I read the fiction of Frances E. W. Harper, Alice Dunbar Nelson, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman alongside case studies, lectures, and addresses by the first generation of African American women physicians, such as Halle Tanner Dillon and Rebecca J. Cole, to show how national belonging in the nineteenth century was informed by categories of race, injurability, and reproduction.

Rachel Blumenthal
Indiana University Kokomo
rablumen@iu.edu

Post-Reconstruction’s Post-Racialist Legal Fictions”

When the 2008 election encouraged heady claims of a “post-racial” era, scholars objected strenuously; the Trump presidency has cemented their contention that the United States was far from being beyond race. In my paper, instead of adding to the chorus of insistence that postracialism was not true, I will show that it also was not new. My title should seem counterintuitive at best: far from post-racial, the post-Reconstruction period was marked by an openly racist popular culture, forced labor that Douglas Blackmon calls “slavery by another name,” and campaigns of violent racial terrorism. This last occurred with the sanction of state governments, the acquiescence of the North, and the tacit approval of the Supreme Court. Yet, when read closely, those same legal decisions that enabled the violence of the “nadir” reveal aspects of the deceptive colorblindness that we usually associate with Nixon’s Southern Strategy and the post-racialism of the early twenty-first century. In *The Civil Rights Cases* (1883), Justice Bradley declares it time that the freedmen “cease[] to be the special favorite of the laws”; in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), Justice Brown writes that if segregation seems to constitute a “badge of inferiority,” that is “solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction on it.” I will trace such resonances with contemporary post-racialist rhetoric and briefly comment on how Charles Chesnutt in his essays and *The Marrow of Tradition* showed these fallacies of post-racialism to be a feature—if not a form in themselves—of violent racial backlash.

Emily Donaldson Field
Bridgewater State University
e1field@bridgew.edu

Huckleberry Finn’s Freedom

My paper examines the evasion sequence of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884/5) in relation to the forms of unfreedom formerly enslaved persons confronted in the decades following the Civil War. Twain composed *Huckleberry Finn* in the wake of Reconstruction, and in that time, as Saidiya Hartman has shown, the discourses and institutions of liberalism presented freedpeople with attenuated conceptions of liberty and new forms of domination. I argue that the novel’s evasion sequence constitutes an effort to pull away from that historical milieu and reflect on emancipation and freedom in terms beyond those of the liberal tradition. More specifically, I suggest that those closing chapters are distinguished from the foregoing narrative by virtue of how they foreground speculative thought and writing, in the Hegelian sense that David Kazanjian has lately introduced to American studies. Such speculative discourse continually unsettles its premises and unfolds without a predetermined endpoint. My paper tracks how the speculations of *Huckleberry Finn’s* conclusion project a non-liberal sense of freedom as spontaneous, relational, and non-teleological. To be sure, this analysis departs from prevailing critical assessments of the novel’s conclusion, which criticize the closing chapters for featuring a breakdown of realism, a lapse in moral commitment, or a reversion to romance. Through such a critical departure, though, my reading aims to extend existing scholarship on the ethical dimensions of Twain’s evasions of realism, offer an expanded sense of how the novel engages with and turns from its context, and bring into sharper focus *Huckleberry Finn’s* political imagination.

Timothy Donahue
Oakland University
tdonahue@oakland.edu

Just as New & Noteworthy: War's Aftermath (10:15-11:45)

Kathleen Diffley (chair)

Benjamin Cooper, author of *Veteran Americans: Literature and Citizenship from Revolution to Reconstruction*

Christopher Hanlon, author of *Emerson's Memory Loss: Originality, Communitality, and the Late Style*

Ian Finseth, author of *The Civil War Dead and American Modernity*

From the Archives: Sexual Relations between Men and Boys in the Mid-19C Military (2:15-3:15)

Elizabeth Young (chair)

One paper, three co-authors:

Our panel will discuss how we can use court martial records to better understand the policing of sexual relations within the mid-nineteenth century military, and the extent to which a distinct sexual subculture existed within the military, particularly as regards sexual contact between men and boys. Historians have noted that consensual sex between soldiers and sailors did not preoccupy military officials in the mid-nineteenth century. In striking contrast to British military law, from which the American Laws of War were lifted almost wholesale, the charge of “sodomy” did not exist in the U.S. military. And during the Civil War, of the 80,000 general court martials held by the Army, only a handful concerned soldiers’ consensual sexual relationship with one another. Yet the U.S. Army took charges involving *coercive* sex seriously and subjected both those accused of such acts and their accusers to extensive questioning about the alleged acts. Our paper will consider two cases tried during the Civil War, both involving adult men who were suspected of attempting forcible sex with a number of different music boys under the age of eighteen. The court martial trial transcripts for these cases – which reveal the frank language that both music boys and adults employed to describe the attempted sexual contact – offer a window onto a sexual culture that differed markedly from that of Victorian moralists. We will examine the strengths and limitations of these sources, and ask what insights they provide into the way boys and male youth understood their own sexuality and the unwanted sexual advances of older men.

Frances Clarke
University of Sydney
frances.clarke@sydney.edu.au

Rebecca Jo Plant
University of California-San Diego
rplant@ucsd.edu

Judith Giesberg
Villanova University
judith.giesberg@villanova.edu

Texts Forgotten and Forsaken: A Roundtable on Civil War & Reconstruction Pedagogy (3:30-5:30)

Benjamin Fagan (chair)

Samuel Hall's *47 Years a Slave*: The Most Important Slave Narrative We're Not Reading
Reconstruction, fiction, peace: Hall's narrative complicates these keywords and more

Greg Laski
United States Air Force Academy
gmlaski@gmail.com

Rose Terry Cooke's 'The Two Villages': Viral Poetry in Wartime
In one poem's kaleidoscope-turn, a generation reading eternity in newspapers

Christopher Hager
Trinity College (CT)
Christopher.Hager@trincoll.edu

Rebecca Harding's *Other Civil War Stories*: Alternative Imaginings of Slavery's Demise
War? We don't need no war. We got this!

Sarah E. Gardner
Mercer University
gardner_se@mercer.edu

John Greenleaf Whittier's "To the 39th Congress": Poetry, Policy, and Print
Emerging as a postwar literary celebrity, Whittier pioneers a post-abolitionist poetics

Michael Stancliff
Arizona State University
Michael.Stancliff@asu.edu

Elizabeth Keckley's *Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House*: Mrs. Lincoln & Mrs.
Keckley, a Love Story-Manqué
Literary identification; the old dresses scandal; and Robert Lincoln's revenge

Julia Stern
Northwestern University
j-stern3@northwestern.edu

Timothy Sweet (chair)

Cora Semmes Ives' *The Princess of the Moon*: Lunar Colonization and Other Confederate Fairy Tales
A tale for tiny Confederates: Escape Reconstruction on the moon

Coleman Hutchison
University of Texas at Austin
coleman.hutchison@utexas.edu

Fanny Stenhouse's *Exposé of Polygamy in Utah: Sex and Obscenity in the 1870s*
The exposé genre in the age of the Comstock laws

Justine S. Murison
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
jmurison@illinois.edu

Sherwood Bonner's 'A Volcanic Interlude': Mixed Messages about Miscegenation
Bonner linked death, sex, the color line before Chopin did

Katie McKee
University of Mississippi
kmckee@olemiss.edu

Edward Bellamy's "An Echo of Antietam": The Erotics of Sacrifice
Looking backward to Abraham, forward to Riefenstahl, and inward too

Ian Finseth
University of North Texas
Ian.Finseth@unt.edu

Eudora Welty's "The Burning": Melted Mirrors, Maps, and Mnemosyne Unmasked
Welty remaps the southern racial landscape via mnemonic shards

Jane E. Schultz
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
jschult@iupui.edu