The American Yawp

A Free and Online, Collaboratively Built American History Textbook

Beta Edition
About | Contributors

Digital History

using new technologies to enhance teaching and research

TIMELINE

pre-1492	1490	1760	1770	1780	1790	1800
The First Americans		Colonial Era		American Revolution		Earl

MEDIA

DOCUMENTS

TEXTBOOK

TEACHING

DRAG ME

ROLL OVER AND CLICK ON AN AREA ABOVE FOR MORE INFORMATION

ERAS

TOPICS

RESOURCES

REFERENCES

HISTORY ERAS
- The First Americans
- Colonial Era
- American Revolution
- Early National Period
- Pre-Civil War Era

DO HISTORY TOPICS
- Advertisements
- Architecture
- Art
- Beauty & Fashion
- Cemeteries

PRIMARY SOURCES
- Landmark Documents
- Court Cases
- Supreme Court Cases
- Newspaper Articles
- Obituaries

GENERAL REFERENCE
- Timelines
- Reference Room
- Glossaries
- History Profession
- Image Sites

US History

1. Preface
2. Introduction

Colonial America (1690 - 1754)

1. Pre-Columbian Societies (Before 1492)
2. European History (Before 1492)
3. Transatlantic Encounters and Colonial Beginnings (1492 - 1620)
4. Colonial North America (1620 - 1754)
5. Colonial Religion (1690 - 1754)

The Early Republic (1754 - 1837)

1. Road to Revolution (1754 - 1775)
2. American Revolution (1775 - 1787)
3. The Federal Period (1787 - 1800)
4. Jeffersonian Democracy (1800 - 1812)
5. War, Nationalism, and Division (1812 - 1837)
6. Religious Movements (1754 - 1837)

The Crisis of the Republic (1837 - 1877)

A **printable version** of US

"Overall, however, my impression is that the textbook itself and the use of the textbook in introductory history survey classes has not changed much in the last decade."

Eric Foner

"Bad writing abounds in open- source materials, which tend to read more like chronologies of U.S. history than analyses."

Amy Kinsel

Textbooks Today and Tomorrow: A Conversation about History, Pedagogy, and Economics

Readers may contact Casper at casper@umbc.edu.

Debates over what belongs in U.S. history textbooks have long reflected conflicts over whose stories belong at the center of the national narrative. Especially for K-12 textbooks, those conflicts have mirrored concerns about the cultural and political cultivation of young citizens. Ideas about inclusion or omission carried "the significant undertone of what sorts of social, cultural, religious, and political implications this would have on students."[1]

In 2005, when the "Textbooks and Teaching" section of the *Journal of American History* last focused on the first word in its title, contributors discussed methodological changes within the historical profession, the economic and academic "ecosystem" that influenced publishers' decisions, and the varied ways instructors supplemented textbooks with other readings. Steve Forman of W. W. Norton & Company wrote then that "notable change has come in three broad areas: technology, teaching conditions and practice, and student culture." The Web sites and multimedia materials packaged with textbooks; colleges' and universities' growing reliance on part-time or adjunct instructors who may be dependent on "the course-support materials publishers can provide"; and students' willingness "to opt out of the purchase of books entirely, whether new or used" contributed to the much-maligned rising prices of textbooks. None of these trends has abated, even as today's ecosystem harbors new growth—especially online. The English version of Wikipedia, many students' library of first resort, contained fewer than one-half million articles in 2005 but has grown ninefold in the years since. Online textbooks appear in many varieties, from peer-reviewed open textbooks to, as David J. Trowbridge observes in this conversation, less reputable "open-source" works that merely "aggregate content" from Wikipedia and elsewhere.[2]

The issues in the "Interchange" that follows range far beyond textbooks and into the politics and economics of higher education, the changes and opportunities fostered by new publishing and teaching ...
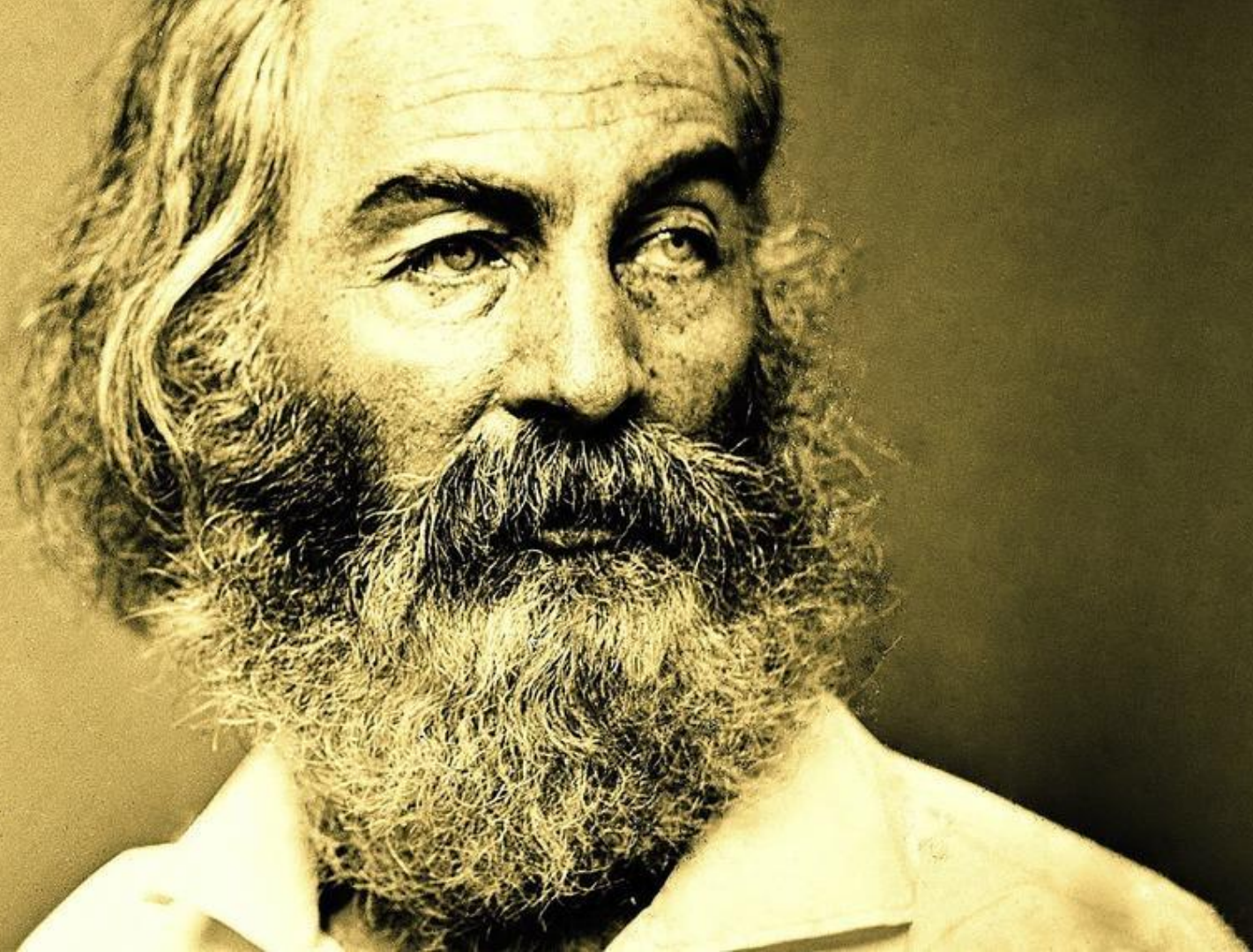
Chapter 14 – The Civil War

500 – election 1860

500 - secession

500 – slaves react to the Civil War

1,200 – military history of the Civil War

300 – black soldiers in the Civil War

300 – soldier motivation (Union and Confederacy)

800 – emancipation

1,500 – women and the Civil War

500 – widowhood and the CW

300 – music and art of the CW

700 – disease and medicine

300 – election of 1864

14 – The Civil War
[Included: 1,000 words on the election of 1860 and secession, 12/1/13 by David Thomson]
[Included: 500 words on secession, 12/1/13 by Tom Balcerski]
[Included: 500 words on Confederate nationalism, 1/1/14 by Ann Tucker]
[Included: 800 words on Union war aims, 2/1/14 by Matt Hulbert]
[Included: 1,500 words on military history of the Civil War, 2/1/14 by Angela Rioto]
[Included: 800 words on black soldiers in the Civil War, 2/1/14 by Andy Lang]
[Included: 800 words on the Naval history of the Civil War, 1/1/14 by Gregory N. Stern]
[Included: 800 words on soldier motivation in the Civil War, 2/1/14 by John Riley]
[Included: 1,200 words on women and the Civil War, 2/1/14 by Becky Zimmer]
[Included: 500 words on widowhood and the Civil War, 12/1/13 by Angela Esco Elder]
[Included: 1,000 words on slaves and the Civil War, 1/1/14 by William Black]
[Included: 300 words on music and the Civil War, 12/1/13 by Rebecca Zimmer]
[Included: 700 words on disease and medicine in the Civil War, 2/1/14 by John Riley]
[Included: 300 words on election of 1864, 1/1/14 by Matthew Hulbert]
[Included: 800 words on processes of emancipation, 1/1/14 by Tom Balcerski]
[Included: 800 words on processes of emancipation, 1/1/14 by Frank Cirillo]

Civil War Widows
The American Yawp
Angela Esco Elder

"Now I'm a widow. Ah! That mournful word. Little the world think of the agony it contains!" wrote Sally Randle Perry in her diary in the years after the Civil War. After her husband's death at Sharpsburg, Sally received the label she would share with more than 200,000 other white women, all of them unwillingly drafted into the ranks of Civil War widowhood. For these women, the war did not merely visit their homes but reordered their households. The death of a husband had the potential to shatter a life and lifestyle, especially with the loss of financial, physical, and emotional support. It also had the perverse power to free women from bad marriages and set them on a road to financial and psychological independence. Widows, in short, may have worn a uniform, but they were not uniform.

When men left for war, the ways in which they could meet their demise were nearly innumerable—disease, prisons, bullets, even lightning and bee stings, took men slowly or suddenly. Before the war, a wife expected to sit at her husband's bed, holding his hand, and ministering to him after a long, fulfilling life. This type of death, the Good Death, changed during the Civil War as men died often far from home among strangers. Because casualty reporting was inconsistent, a woman was often at the mercy of the men who fought alongside her husband to learn not only the details of his death, but even that the death had occurred.

Widows' responses to the news of death were as diverse as the widows themselves. From shock to denial, depression to acceptance, wives came to terms with their new identities as widows in different ways. Some women felt disoriented by the news, like Octavia "Tivie" Stephens, who wrote her brother "I know not how to write I am so bewildered." Though she had been told numerous times that her husband was dead, she felt, "I can not realize the whole truth, it seems dark and mysterious." For others, shock brought silence, such as the widow who responded "unnaturally calm and has not shed a tear…poor girl, I fear the reaction when his body arrives—she had a sad and heavy responsibility left upon her and so young." Others responded with "frantic grief." The amount of time this process took varied tremendously as well. Some mourned the rest of their lives. Some remarried quickly, shocking their communities.

No matter the response, one thing was certain: the woman was now a widow and expected to play a certain social role. The ideal widow wore black, mourned for a minimum of two and a half years, resigned herself to God's will, focused on her children, devoted herself to her husband's memory, and brought his body home for burial. Many tried, but not all widows were able to live up to the idea. For one, the war created widows in higher numbers than ever

The American Yawp

14. The Civil War

Collecting the Dead. Cold Harbor, Virginia. April, 1865. Via [Library of Congress](#).

The American Yawp is currently in beta draft. Please [click here](#) to help improve this chapter

CONTENTS

HELP US IMPROVE

¶ 1   The American Yawp has been a highly collaborative project: hundreds of contributors and over two dozen editors have worked to build our beta edition. We are excited to continue that collaboration as we work toward a more polished draft for the following academic year. And we need your help.   ⬮ 0

¶ 2   What's missing? What's extraneous? What sounds awkward? What's just flat-out wrong?   ⬮ 2

¶ 3   As you find something that could be improved, just click the speech bubble to the right of the paragraph and let us know what you think. Copy-editing will be useful, but we especially need your content-expertise. Global reflections and suggestions on what to add or trim are appreciated (and can be made by clicking on "Special Pages" in the table of contents and selecting "General Comments"), but practical contributions will be the most helpful. If you find a clunky sentence, please suggest smoother prose. If you think the framing of a topic could be handled better, suggest alternate language. If you think we need to add additional content, please consider drafting possible sentences or a paragraph.   ⬮ 4

¶ 4   Putting together a textbook is hard work, and synthesis inevitably frustrates specialists. We are committed to capturing innovative scholarship, but we must do so in a manner that balances detail with summary, narrative with analysis, and complexity with accessibility. Every addition will require a corresponding subtraction, so we appreciate suggestions for streamlining material just as much   ⬮ 0

COMMENTS   ACTIVITY

1 COMMENT ON THE WHOLE PAGE

0 COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH 1

2 COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH 2

4 COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH 3

0 COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH 4

0 COMMENTS ON PARAGRAPH 5

¶ 54 African American soldiers defied the inequality of military service and used their positions in the army to reshape society, North and South. The majority of USCT had once been enslaved, and their presence as armed, blue-clad soldiers sent shockwaves throughout the Confederacy. To their friends and families, African American soldiers symbolized the embodiment of liberation and the destruction of slavery. To white southerners, they represented the utter disruption of the Old South's racial and social hierarchy. As members of armies of occupation, black soldiers wielded martial authority in towns and plantations. At the end of the war, as a black soldier marched by a cluster of Confederate prisoners, he noticed his former master among the group. "Hello, massa," the soldier exclaimed, "bottom rail on top dis time!"

¶ 55 In addition to a majority of USCT garrisoning and occupying the South, other African American soldiers performed admirably on the battlefield, shattering white myths that docile, cowardly black men

💬 1

💬 0

COMMENTS   ACTIVITY

EJB
August 29, 2014 at 12:57 am

ok, I'm fine with your division and breakdown but this is WAY TOO East Coast, too white-black … if you want this to be serviceable as the years go on, you are going to need US in the world perspective AND you need some stuff west of the Mississippi River. How about California being included? How about Maximillean and Mexico?
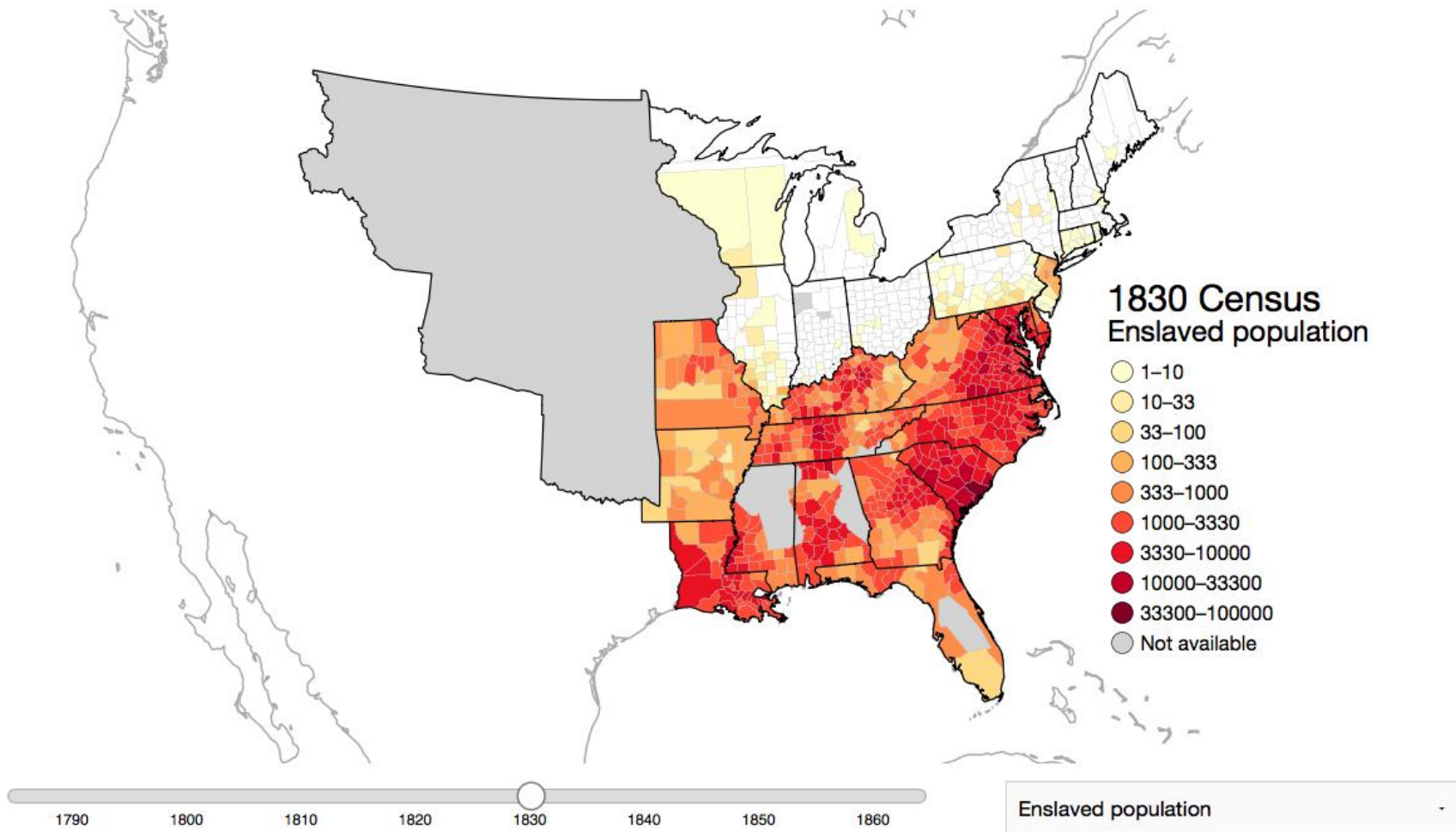
REPLY TO EJB

LEAVE A COMMENT ON PARAGRAPH 54

NAME

Ben Wright

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bgwright@gmail.com

NAVIGATE   **CONTENT**   **DISCUSS**

The Spread of U.S. Slavery, 1790–1860

1830 Census
Enslaved population

- 1–10
- 10–33
- 33–100
- 100–333
- 333–1000
- 1000–3330
- 3330–10000
- 10000–33300
- 33300–100000
- Not available

1790   1800   1810   1820   1830   1840   1850   1860

Enslaved population

YAWPAPALOOZA, 2015!

Scholars Lab, University of Virginia

Center for History and New Media
George Mason University

University of Mary Washington

Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond

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