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TOM WATSON BROWN BOOK PRIZE GOES TO ARI KELMAN

Ari Kelman, McCabe Greer Professor in the American Civil War Era at Penn State University, received the Tom Watson Brown Book Prize at the award dinner in Atlanta, Georgia, on November 14. Kelman won the award for his book, *A Misplaced Massacre*, published by Harvard University Press in 2013. The \$50,000 prize was presented by Tad Brown, son of the late Tom Watson Brown and president of the Watson-Brown Foundation, Inc. (www.watson-brown.org). The book examines the massacre of over 150 Arapaho and Cheyenne people in Colorado by U.S. soldiers in 1864, during the latter days of the Civil War. It then explores contemporary disputes over how to memorialize this event, culminating with the dedication of the National Park Service's Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site in 2007.

"On November 29, 1864, 700 soldiers from the 1st and 3rd Colorado Regiments, led by Colonel John Chivington, attacked an Arapaho and Cheyenne camp nestled in a bend of Sand Creek, near the Kansas border in southeastern Colorado Territory. Chivington's men struck without warning, driving 1,000 Native people, who believed they had recently made peace with white authorities, up the dry creek bed. The onslaught left some 175 Indians dead, the majority of whom were women, children, or the elderly. Chivington's troops disgraced themselves by combing the field for grim trophies: scalps, fingers and toes, and, some observers later recalled, their victims' genitalia. The soldiers then burned the village before returning to Denver, where they were greeted as heroes.

Nearly a century and a half later, on April 28, 2007, the Park Service opened its 391st unit: the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. A lineup of speakers initially suggested that the site would help heal wounds associated with historical trauma. But Sand Creek is an unlikely source for

palliative sentiments. So dissenting voices, those of Native people who had taken part in the memorialization process, rejected what they saw as an offer of reconciliation bought on the cheap. Other participants at the ceremony then expressed suspicions about the site for their own reasons: because federal authority was unpopular on Colorado's plains; because charges of political correctness hovered over what some onlookers saw as gratuitous revisionism; and because of misgivings, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, that the word "massacre" indicted the military.

I suggest in *A Misplaced Massacre* that the controversy in the spring of 2007 echoed a century and a half of struggles over how to remember Sand Creek, struggles that turned on thorny questions about the interplay of politics and violence on the borderlands, and on the righteousness of continental expansion and two wars—the Civil War and the Indian Wars—spawned by that process. When the Sand Creek site's sponsors grappled with those questions, they found that the massacre remained a history front in an ongoing culture war. Collective remembrance, it turned out, could just as easily tear scabs from old wounds as heal them. So while each new fight over American memory highlights the challenge of agreeing on a unified historical narrative within the confines of a pluralistic society like the United States, the case of Sand Creek proved unusually complicated, because competing stories of the massacre haunted the memorialization process.

In my book, I recount stories produced by John Chivington, a Methodist minister and abolitionist, who used the blood spilled at Sand Creek to depict a masterpiece; Silas Soule, who refused to commit the men he commanded to the fight and later insisted that it had been a massacre; Helen Hunt Jackson, a reformer who used Sand Creek as a cudgel in her opus, *Century of Dishonor*; George Bent, a Cheyenne warrior turned historian, who stewarded his tribe's memories of Sand Creek;

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Stephen D. Engle, Book Review Editor

Michael C.C. Adams. *Living Hell: The Dark Side of the Civil War.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. Pp. xi, 292. \$29.95.

Was the American Civil War a “good war”? On the positive side of the ledger, it killed slavery, preserved the Union, and was unquestionably a significant event in the rise of the United States as a world power. There is, however, as Michael C.C. Adams magnificently demonstrates in *Living Hell*, also compelling reason to ask what exactly folks are “celebrating” as they commemorate the war’s sesquicentennial.

In vivid, powerful prose, Adams reminds us that the armies that fought the war were not icons on maps, but composed of flesh and blood individuals enduring painful separations from their families, brutal living conditions, and the danger of being killed and injured in horrific ways. He does an equally skillful job describing the misery the war inflicted on both home fronts in a compelling, sobering, and welcome challenge to those who want to believe in a “good war” that one might grow, in Robert E. Lee’s words, “too fond of”.

Ethan S. Rafuse, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Lawrence A. Kreiser Jr. and Randal Allred, eds. *The Civil War in Popular Culture: Memory and Meaning.* Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2014. Pp. 257. \$40.00.

The Civil War inspires fervent debate and curiosity among Americans. Despite the general public’s fascination, Lawrence A. Kreiser and Randal Allred lament that historians have largely ignored until lately how the war is popularly represented and remembered. In *The Civil War in Popular Culture: Memory and Meaning*, they address this historiographical omission by suggesting ways to view the conflict’s legacies in popular culture. Its thirteen essays use novels, manuscripts, souvenirs, and reenactor interviews to explore topics including battlefield reunions, memory, and Civil War films. A notable strength is its explanation on how Civil War memory is depicted in entertainment. Essays by Alfred Wallace and Christopher Bates persuasively argue that the Lost Cause had considerable sway on board games until the late twentieth century and still does today on reenactors. This collection will appeal to scholars and students interested in the relationship

between popular culture and Americans’ interpretations of the war.

John C. Kennedy, Purdue University

Durwood Dunn. *The Civil War in Southern Appalachian Methodism.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013. Pp. 264. \$42.00.

In the voluminous Civil War literature, the role religion played in the conflict still remains rather minor. Durwood Dunn’s book goes far in filling this gap. Specifically, he chronicles how the Civil War touched off an internecine struggle “within Holston Methodism that had been waged surreptitiously” for the remainder of the 19th century. Based extensively on primary and secondary sources, Dunn highlights how pro-Confederate and pro-Unionist forces, through their religious interpretation, justified their political stance. Simultaneously, he weaves how Appalachian culture, slavery, and regional identity all contributed to the division. A division that far outlasted the conflict about slavery that precipitated it. Dunn concludes “there was never any real healing in these internal divisions visibly scarring communities with the bitter memory of the Civil War.” A highly readable, and informative, work, I fully recommended for Civil War and history buffs alike.

Christopher B. Bean, East Central University, Ada, Oklahoma

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lesser-known Coloradoans, including veterans of the 3rd Regiment, who memorialized Sand Creek as a battle; and Dee Brown, whose *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* includes a chapter on the massacre.

My book interweaves these narratives with the modern story of memorializing Sand Creek, a tale that pivoted on a mystery: where, precisely, had the massacre taken place? It turned out that before Sand Creek could be memorialized, it had first to be found. The hunt became contentious when disagreements over how to interpret the historical record divided the searchers. The NPS tried to locate the killing field by scouring documents produced by troops who fought at Sand Creek. Descendants of the massacred Arapahos and Cheyennes, by contrast, understood the event's history and geography by relying on traditional methods and sources generated by Indian people. They were outraged when records produced by perpetrators rather than victims figured so prominently for the Park Service. The NPS eventually crafted an elegant compromise—a site with boundaries capacious enough to encompass many interpretations.

All of which leads back to April 28, 2007. But even then, even almost 150 years after the massacre, it remained unclear where Sand Creek fits into the national narrative. Americans typically favor neat depictions of their history as marked by steady progress, punctuated by righteous wars. But the massacre story, as recounted at the historic site, bucks redemptive, reconciliationist currents that run through most national memorials. The politics of memory surrounding Sand Creek thus underscore a basic truth: the people of the United States are so various that they should not be expected to share a single tale of a common past. At the massacre site, they are encouraged to grapple with competing historical narratives, to struggle with how the American past is shot through with painful ironies. I suggest in the final pages of *A Misplaced Massacre* that because of this, the massacre may no longer be misplaced in the landscape of national memory.”

Ari Kelman

Lincoln Seminar Requests Nominations

The Hertog Foundation is requesting nominations for a unique summer seminar for college undergraduates on the thought of Abraham Lincoln to be led by Professor Allen C. Guelzo. This weeklong seminar will examine how Lincoln was shaped by five important issues in his day: religion, politics, Romanticism, race, and slavery. It will explore the great intellectual problems Lincoln faced, the books he read, the ideas he defended, and the kind of democracy he thought was worth saving. At the end, students will come to know Lincoln, not just as the greatest of presidents, but as a man of great ideas as well.

The seminar will take place Sunday, August 2 to Friday, August 7 at the New-York Historical Society in New York City. Up to twenty highly qualified college undergraduates and recent graduates will be selected. Lodging and most meals will be provided. Students will also receive a \$750 stipend. If you have outstanding students who might be interested in this seminar, please send their name, email address, and a brief description of their abilities to Cheryl Miller, Hertog Foundation-Tikvah Fund (202-499-5267) or email her at cherylm@hertogfoundation.org. The deadline for applications is February 9. Further information can be found the website (www.hertogfoundation.org).

Save the Date—June 2016

The Society of Civil War Historians will host its next biennial conference on June 16-18, 2016, at The Chattanooga Hotel, 1201 Broad Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee (<http://www.chattanooga.com/>). Plan to visit historic Chattanooga in 2016. For more information on proposing sessions or papers, go to <http://scwh.la.psu.edu> as the conference nears.

Civil War Trust Conference Offers Scholarships

The Civil War Trust Annual Conference will be held June 3 to June 7 in Richmond, Virginia, and titled "The Road to Appomattox." The speakers include Chris Calkins, Emmanuel Dabney, Antonio Emaleh, Gary Gallagher, A. Wilson Greene, Robert E. L. Krick, Gordon Rhea, Patrick Schroeder, and Dick Sommers.

Through the generosity of donors, the Civil War Trust is pleased to offer ten full scholarships to enable ten individuals to attend the conference. There will be six student scholarships available to college students who are studying, and have an interest in the Civil War. In addition, there will be four teacher scholarships available to current teachers who are teaching about the Civil War in classrooms. Learn more about the program at www.civilwar.org/conferencescholarship and apply online. Submit your application before February 27. Contact Bonnie Repasi at breppasi@civilwar.org or call 800-298-7878, ext. 7229, for additional details.

The conference base will be at the Omni Richmond hotel, 100 S. 12th street, Richmond (800-THE-OMNI). The Civil War Trust group room rate is \$132 per night plus tax; valet parking is \$20 per night plus tax.

General conference registration is \$565 per person. To take advantage of the internet regular rate, you must sign up for the conference online by January 30. After January 31 the rate goes to \$595 (online registration rate per person) or \$605 (over the phone or mail in registration per person).

*For back issues of the newsletter, go to
<http://scwh.la.psu.edu/journal.shtml>*

*For a short history of the SCWH, go to
<http://scwhl.la.psu.edu/about.shtml>*

Future Meeting Dates of the SCWH and SHA

2015 - November 11-14
Little Rock Marriott
Little Rock, Arkansas

2016 - November 2-5
Trade Winds Island Resort
St. Pete Beach, Florida

2017 - November 9-12
Sheraton Dallas Hotel
Dallas, Texas

2018 - November 9-12
Sheraton Dallas Hotel
Dallas, Texas

2019 - November 8-11
Sheraton Birmingham Hotel
Birmingham, Alabama 35203

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