



Remixing the Civil War: Meditations on the Sesquicentennial

Thomas J. Brown

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In 1961, the historian and poet Robert Penn Warren remarked that "the Civil War is, for the American imagination, the great single event of our history." This volume reconsiders whether, fifty years later, Warren's claim still holds true.

Essays from specialists in art, literature, and history examine how contemporary culture represents and interprets the Civil War. They look at the works of more than thirty artists and writers as well as multiple movements?political and social?to reveal the many and provocative ways in which Americans engage the Civil War today. The book includes chapters on the place of Abraham Lincoln in Barack Obama's presidential campaign, controversies over the symbolism of the Confederate flag, and the proliferation of "Juneteenth" observances.

Remixing the Civil War pays special attention to the works of African Americans and white southerners, for whom the Civil War was a revolutionary and defining moment. Such prominent scholars as Robert H. Brinkmeyer Jr., W. Fitzhugh Brundage, Kirk Savage, and Elizabeth Young explore the works of major artists and lesser-known figures, including Bobbie Ann Mason, Kara Walker, Dario Robleto, and John Huddleston. The authors find that Americans today openly and playfully manipulate familiar images of the Civil War to explore the malleability and permeability of traditional social categories like national identity, gender, and race.

This collection continues the conversation Warren began fifty years ago, although taking it in unorthodox and challenging directions, to offer fresh and stimulating perspectives on the war's presence in the collective imagination of the nation.

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Sergio Espinoza:

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