

Chapter Fifteen
Primary Source Exercise
HIST 2111 FA 19

Readings:

Primary sources: (1) Alexander H. Stephens, *Cornerstone Address* (March 21, 1861): <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1861stephens.asp>

(2) Abraham Lincoln, *Emancipation Proclamation* (1862):
<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation/transcript.html>

After you have read the primary sources listed above (as well as Chapter Fifteen, and watched the videos for this module), answer the following questions, based on what you know about the American Civil War, as well as what you know about the mid-19th century in America more generally.

1. Despite the fact that these two authors were on opposite sides of the conflict, why are both talking about the same set of issues, namely what? Give an example for each.

2. Why do you think Lincoln was hesitant to include slaves in the Border States in the Emancipation Proclamation? Give an example.

3. Why do you think Stephens was so brazen in his pronouncements about African-Americans, as well as his reliance on historical examples to buttress his arguments? Give an example.

4. Why do you think that the Civil War, as it exists in Americans' 20th-century memory, is often presented as a conflict over "states' rights" or "preserving the union" as abstract concepts, instead of being presented as a straightforward war over the issue of slavery? Could you make an abstract states' rights or union argument using these two documents (respectively) without mentioning slavery? Why or why not?