



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **Why the Civil War Still Matters**

**October 25<sup>th</sup> Conference at Boise State University Features Prominent Historians on the Nation's Defining Event**

Boise, Idaho – A collection of some of the most prominent and respected historians of the American Civil War will be at Boise State University on October 25, 2012 for a major, day-long conference entitled – Why the Civil War Still Matters.

The Andrus Center for Public Policy will sponsor the seminar in cooperation with the Idaho Humanities Council and the Idaho Council for History Education.

*“The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of what might be considered the defining event in our history seems an appropriate moment to reflect on why and how the war that once threatened to destroy the great American experiment continues to influence our politics and our culture,”* said Marc C. Johnson, president of The Andrus Center.

The one-day conference is open to the public and will be held in the Simplot Ballroom in the Boise State University Student Union.

*“We are extremely pleased to have assembled such an outstanding line-up of presenters, including some of the most respected historians of the war. If you are a Civil War buff, a student of history or just want a better understanding of how a conflict 150 years ago shaped, and continues to shape, our history this event should be on your calendar.”*

Conference presenters include:

**Dr. Gary Gallagher**, professor of history at the University of Virginia, will keynote the conference. Gallagher is a prolific author of books and articles on the war and speaks frequently about the conflict, its causes, consequences and lasting importance.

Gallagher's most recent book – *The Union War* – was reviewed by Jonathan Yardley in the *Washington Post* who said, “Gallagher makes a very strong case – in my view a virtually irrefutable one – that the overriding motive for the North was preservation of the Union. ‘Students and adults interested in the Civil War, Gallagher writes, ‘are reluctant to believe that anyone would risk life or fortune for something as abstract as ‘the Union.’ A war to end slavery seems more compelling.’ Indeed it does, but it embroiders historical truth in order to suit the cultural and ideological mood of the moment.”

**Jeffrey Wert** is a widely published Civil War and military historian and the author of eight books on subjects ranging from George Armstrong Custer to the Battle of Gettysburg.

Wert's most recent book is *A Glorious Army*, a history of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia and its celebrated commander Robert E. Lee. *Kirkus Review* said Wert has produced, “An energetic, evenhanded assessment that gets at the heart of Lee's genius and the heroic achievements of the army he so ably led.”

**Dr. Joan Waugh**, a professor of history at UCLA, is the author of *U.S. Grant – American Hero, American Myth*. Waugh's book is a fascinating study of the Civil War general and later president and his place in American history.

A review of Waugh's book in *The Boston Globe* said, “In the years after the Civil War many saw Grant as among the republic's titans. Upon his death in 1885, one speaker declared that there were three true heroes in American history: ‘Washington, who was the father of his country; Lincoln, who guided the Ship of State through the storm of civil strife; and Grant, the Great General, who saved the nation from over-throw in the sanguinary struggle for national life.’ Waugh's purpose is to recover this larger than life image of Grant.”

Waugh will give an evening lecture on October 25<sup>th</sup> at Boise State University.

**Dr. Lisa Brady**, associate professor of history at Boise State University and author of the recently published *War Upon the Land: Military Struggle and the Transformation of Southern Landscapes during the American Civil War*.

*Civil War Monitor* said of Brady's book, “Her fundamental interest is not the impact war had on the land (although she offers observation in this area) but its nature as historical agent, primarily how the military – primarily the Union military – used nature in its strategies of war.”

**Dr. Matthew Pinsker**, professor of history at Dickinson College and author of *Lincoln's Sanctuary: Abraham Lincoln and the Soldier's Home*.

*Publisher's Weekly* said of Pinsker's book, “All told, this account comprises that most rare of things: a book that actually adds to the Lincoln literature, telling us

stories we haven't heard before.”

**Dr. David Adler**, the Director of The Andrus Center and the Cecil D. Andrus Professor of Public Affairs at Boise State University, will draw upon his scholarship and writing to discuss Abraham Lincoln and the Constitution.

Adler is the author of five books on the presidency and the Constitution, including *The Presidency and the Law: The Clinton Legacy*, of which one reviewer wrote, “With an eye on the intent of the framers of the Constitution, authors explore the impact of scandals and crises on presidential power, the independent counsel, and the impeachment process. They use Clinton's Hamiltonian view of the presidency to show an ever-growing tendency of our presidents, both Democrat and Republican, to follow their own rulebook.”

Adler's latest book *The Constitution and Presidential Power* will be released in 2013.

Teachers and students are particularly encouraged to attend the conference. The \$25 registration fee, that includes lunch, will be waived for any current high school or college student.

Advance registration is required and can be done online at [www.andruscenter.org](http://www.andruscenter.org) where the full conference schedule is also posted.

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