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## A Content Analysis of American Civil War Historical Fiction for Upper Elementary Grades

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## A Content Analysis of American Civil War Historical Fiction for Upper Elementary Grades

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A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN CIVIL WAR HISTORICAL FICTION  
FOR UPPER ELEMENTARY GRADES

A Graduate Research Paper  
Submitted to the  
Division of School Library Studies  
Department of Curriculum and Instruction  
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By  
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the treatment of complex issues of the American Civil War in a fifth grade social studies textbook and historical fiction novels, written for upper elementary readers. The study focused on slavery and racial issues, the stresses of war on families, and the aftermath of war.

A content analysis was conducted, using the fifth grade textbook information as a baseline for concepts to be learned. A sample of American Civil War historical fiction books was gathered using the following method: the *H.W. Wilson's Middle School & Junior High Core Collection* database was searched using the advanced option. The key words entered were United States Civil War, history, and fiction. The recommendation level chosen was Core Collection. Books with a publication year of 1999 or newer were selected. The grade levels criteria used were grades 3-8, which allowed for a variety of reading levels in upper elementary. Twenty-two books met the criteria; however one was removed because it lacked American Civil War details.

The study found that historical novels provide more details of the complexity of slavery and racial issues and the complexity of the stresses of war on families. However, the historical novels did not provide more details of the complexity of the aftermath of the war than the textbook.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

A fifth grade student excitedly renews the book *Stealing Freedom* written by Elisa Carbone. The teacher librarian asks the student if she is enjoying the story. The student's immediate, enthusiastic reply assures the teacher librarian that the story is wonderful. The student begins to retell the story of Ann Maria Weems, a ten year old slave who is separated from her family. Two days later, the student returns the book and proclaims it to be "the best book" she has ever read. The student appears surprised by her enjoyment of the story. This student has unique insight to share when studying slavery.

Authors of historical fiction weave compelling stories which provide students with a vicarious experience for places and people they could otherwise never know (Rycik & Rosler, 2009). Students gain different perspectives of history when reading this genre.

The purpose of this quantitative content analysis is to analyze the treatment of complex issues related to the Civil War in textbook information and historical fiction novels.

#### **Justification**

The American Civil War is taught in upper elementary curriculum. An essential concept listed for history in the Iowa Core Curriculum (Iowa Department of Education, 2009) for grades 3-5 and 6-8 is to understand cause and effect relationships and other historical thinking skills in order to interpret events and issues. In historical fiction, students are exposed to different interpretations of events depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians. The fifth grade social

studies textbook, *Horizons: United States History* (Berson, 2003), used at this researcher's school includes a Civil War unit. The unit focuses on two aspects: the nation divided and the nation reunited.

Historical fiction is important for teaching history. McManus (2008) found historical fiction builds students' background knowledge. Marinucci (2000) opines students still need to know the facts, but historical fiction can be used to augment the more traditional study of history, as supplement to the historical names, dates, places, and events. Teachers are finding the content area textbooks are difficult for students in terms of reading level and concept load (Rycik & Rosler, 2009). Historical fiction is used as an alternative or supplement to textbooks. Villano (2005) set a goal to find supplemental materials to better equip her students to conquer their history texts and learn history.

Rycik and Rosler (2009) note historical fiction books were the winners of the 2008 Newberry Medal, Caldecott Medal, and the Coretta Scott-King Award. Using quality historical fiction in the classroom helps students appreciate this genre.

### **Deficiencies in Research**

Many studies promote the use of historical fiction and the benefits for students. Some content analyses have been written about Civil War literature, including young adult books and coming of age stories (Brooks, 2008). These studies are not specific to the Civil War instructional applications for elementary students. Many issues of the Civil War may not be consistently taught in curriculum because teachers may not understand how these issues relate to the curriculum. These issues can be explored in literature.

### **Significance**

Teachers and teacher librarians will benefit from a greater understanding of ways historical fiction will enrich what is commonly taught in upper elementary curriculum.

### **Problem Statement**

Upper elementary instruction about the Civil War that is based only on textbook information lacks the complexity of understanding issues of the Civil War time period.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this quantitative content analysis is to analyze the treatment of complex issues related to the Civil War in textbook information and historical fiction novels.

### **Hypotheses**

1. The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of slavery and racial issues than the textbook.
2. The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of stresses of war on families than the textbook.
3. The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of the aftermath of the Civil War than the textbook.

### **Definitions**

Historical Fiction-a story with memorable characters set in an authentic place and time in the past (Rycik & Rosler, 2009).

### **Assumptions**

Teachers and teacher librarians seek ways to use historical fiction in the social studies curriculum. Teachers want to pique student curiosity whenever possible.

### **Limitations**

Research will be limited to upper elementary Civil War historical fiction books published in the last ten years.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Upper elementary instruction about the Civil War that is based only on textbook information lacks the complexity for understanding issues of the Civil War time period. The purpose of this quantitative content analysis is to analyze the treatment of complex issues related to the Civil War in textbook information and historical fiction novels.

The following review of research and literature focuses on three areas: Civil War historical analysis, historical fiction in elementary social studies instruction, and content analysis of historical fiction books.

#### **Historical Analysis of Civil War**

Americans disagreed on many issues prior to the Civil War. Slavery in the United States was one of those issues. Today slavery is a difficult topic to teach. Ogden, Perkins, and Donahue (2008) stated issues of racism and injustice arise, as well as students' assumptions. Students often think Northerners were the good guys, being abolitionists, and Southerners were the bad guys, being slave owners. Two of the study's authors were high school history teachers. They wanted to challenge the preconceived notions held by students and encourage deeper thinking about slavery. They wanted students to add the economic perspective on why and how people were enslaved.

The methodology used in this research was the lesson study. Ogden et al. (2008) stated it is different than most educational research because it is designed to yield local knowledge useful to the teachers who prepared the lessons. While it did not yield knowledge to be generalized to all contexts, it did raise questions to be considered by history teachers. Two teachers taught the lesson to 114 high school students, while others

involved in the lesson design observed students. The students read “David Christy’s argument that mid-nineteenth-century slavery was a global economic phenomenon from which no one could entirely disassociate, including abolitionists” (p. 474). The observers asked students to choose a quotation from the reading and explain its significance. It was found that only a few students understood Christy’s argument that slavery was global and even abolitionists could not disentangle from it. Most students could not abandon their prior schema of slavery being supported by sadistic and greedy planters in the southern United States.

Students then looked at additional sources and were asked to complete a final writing assignment. Ogden et al. (2008) noted most students continued to combine their beliefs about slavery being a moral wrong with the new knowledge of slavery as an economic institution.

In conclusion, Ogden et al. (2008) noted the importance of students discussing prior knowledge and beliefs before reading any history material, so teachers can point out differences. It was beneficial to ask students to make their thinking visible to themselves and others through discussion and writing as they work to interpret historical text. The researchers found value in making connections between past and present, to help students make empathetic judgments.

### **Using Historical Fiction in Social Studies Instruction**

Dunn (2000) stated over-reliance on textbooks, worksheets, and lectures fail to stimulate students’ interest and support goals of higher-level thinking. The following studies and articles illustrate the importance of including historical fiction in social studies instruction.

Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2008) studied the best pedagogical practices for using historical fiction with elementary and middle school aged students. The authors' research had two parts: to "examine the potential of using literature to strengthen students' understanding of history and to explore researched-based pedagogical strategies to bring history to life in elementary and middle school classrooms" (para. 4). The authors' qualitative study asked teachers how they learned history in their own schooling. They also interviewed teachers about the best pedagogical practices for using historical fiction in their classrooms.

Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2008) reported that teachers eagerly shared their own experiences reading historical fiction including negative comments, overviews of pedagogical memories, and recollections of studying history to pass tests. One teacher recalled reading Mildred Taylor's 1976 historical fiction novel, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, feeling that she had been part of the story, seeing the world through the eyes of Cassie Logan. The authors also asked teachers about their views of the best pedagogical practices for incorporating historical fiction in their curriculum. Teachers reported that the inclusion of reading high quality historical fiction engaged students, built their background knowledge, and provided visual and contextual clues about life in the past.

Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2008) reported greater engagement between the reader and the historical fiction text than with the traditional social studies textbook. Crawford and Zygouris-Coe focused on five pedagogical possibilities to more fully engage readers and improve comprehension of historical fiction: text sets, jacksaws, time lines, literature study groups, and celebrations.

Text sets were collections of books and other resources that shared a common theme, element, or topic. The books were a variety of genres, media, and levels of difficulty, which were chosen to meet the interests and needs of all students. Text sets provided multiple perspectives on issues, encouraging students to make connections across texts and develop meaning (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2008).

Jackdaws were collections formed by a scavenger process. After reading historical fiction, teachers and students found artifacts to bring that specific time period to life. When authentic artifacts were unavailable, students constructed artifacts based on historical research. Jackdaws invited physical exploration and tangible contributions from students who explored them (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2008).

Time lines provided a tangible format for students to sort, group, and order events in history as they read (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2008). Time lines involve abstract ideas and data which challenged some students.

Literature study groups were based on collaborative reading and discussing self-selected readings. Teachers provided students with a variety of books. Students choose books to read, either individually or in small groups. Small group discussions were held and notes were kept in learning logs. Literature study groups provided students with opportunities to interact with the text, with classmates, and with teachers. Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2008) stated historical fiction was ideal for literature study groups, because the genre presented issues for reflection and discussion.

Organizing a celebration as a culminating activity for a certain time period allowed students to be creative and engaged. Music, dances, films, and literature were



part of a celebration. Students developed a deeper understanding and appreciation for a certain time period when they planned a celebration (Crawford & Zygouris-Coe, 2008).

In summary, Crawford and Zygouris-Coe (2008) found historical fiction helped students learn about and question interpretations of the past. Students were able to make connections between historical events and current issues. The five pedagogical possibilities presented were examples of ways to engage students with literature to understand history.

Carbone (2007) researched information to write her own historical fiction novel. She wondered how other writers gathered information. Carbone asked twelve historical fiction writers to state their preferred methods to make their characters and settings come alive. Carbone learned all of the writers used a combination of exploring written materials and experiential discovery. Using primary sources, such as newsletters, was mentioned by one author. Another method was talking to experts for technical information. Other ideas included traveling to the setting to find unique resources, using information from print resources to create a diary of the time period and setting, and reading specific time-period accounts from other cultures. For historical periods not so long ago, authors sought interviews with people who were actually there. Authors explored sensory experiences of the time period: eating food their characters would have eaten, listening to music of the time, and visiting museums to view paintings and other artifacts.

Historical fiction authors work to make history fascinating. Carbone (2007) explained that authors gather information and feed it into their imaginations to create

time travel experiences for their readers. No one can go back in history, but delving into a vivid story written by a historical fiction novelist is the next-best thing to a time machine.

Frye (2009) reported low-achieving readers in 4<sup>th</sup> through sixth grades are being asked to read social studies texts that are too difficult. Few students are able to sustain interest and motivation. Frye explained the need to teach students at the correct reading instructional level. Trade books used in content areas can provide more in-depth coverage of topics than a textbook while accommodating various reading levels.

Teachers must search for good books written at lower difficulty levels. To support this effort, Frye (2009) created lists of social studies trade books for struggling readers in upper elementary grades. Frye used the following criteria as she analyzed books. Good books

- expand awareness and empathy by broadening conceptions and understandings of the world;
- provide an enjoyable read that does not overly teach or moralize;
- tell the truth;
- embody quality, referring to the literary merit of the books;
- have integrity;
- introduce unique characters, settings and situations, which allow readers to experience the world from different perspectives; and
- activate the reader's imagination to envision new places (p. 6).

Frye (2009) determined the reading levels of the books by consulting various texts, formulas, level systems, and websites that provided searchable databases. Where there was a discrepancy, Frye chose the level that was most consistently represented. The final analysis required the books to have a notable or award-winning author, have a notable or award-winning title, or have been successfully used by Frye with struggling readers.

In conclusion, Frye (2009) listed quality children's literature, written at various levels, which can be integrated with social studies content. One section was devoted to Slavery and the Civil War. Frye stated that providing these lists was a first step in helping teachers locate quality social studies trade books that their students can read.

Dunn (2000) studied implemented alternatives to text-centered social studies instruction. Dunn interviewed four teachers, who had been identified through referral and personal observation, as instructors who employed innovative approaches in social studies instruction. Dunn asked specific questions and gave the teachers time to talk about their teaching experiences. Their responses were coded into categories concerning social studies reform.

Teacher A used student-centered activities in an American history class at the high school level. Films, novels and biographies, guest speakers, conversations, student presentations, and field trips are primary tools of instruction. Dunn (2000) learned the highlight of Teacher A's program was the special interest project. Students choose their own topic to develop in the context of the time period being studied by the whole class.

Ricky White used two computer programming tools to aide his fifth-grade students in designing an interactive computer program about the 16<sup>th</sup> century explorer, Magellan. Dunn (2000) listened to students explain about Magellan's voyage and their own hardships and adventures as they designed and developed the program. Their program included Magellan's biography, annotated maps of his voyages, lessons on 16<sup>th</sup> century fashion, math problems, and a time line.

Tom Mix, a high school teacher, provided opportunities for his students to approach social studies topics from a variety of avenues. These learning experiences

included field trips, feature movies, visual models, research papers, oral presentations, simulations, and discussions (Dunn, 2000). Viewing films, reading primary resource materials, and engaging in formal discussions helped students understand the meaning of historical events.

Anne Jones Smith used historical fiction and biographies to emphasize the people in history. Dunn (2000) learned Smith approached her social studies lessons from the point of view of a storyteller. Smith valued the textbook as a resource, in a supporting role in her instruction.

In summary, Dunn (2000) reported these teachers have been supported by other teachers, administrators, and parents. Suggestions extracted from the teachers' experiences included: pretesting, team planning and teaching, developing interdisciplinary units, and communicating with administrators, teachers, and parents to build support for unconventional lessons.

### **Content Analysis of Historical Fiction**

Norton and Norton (2007) included a chapter about historical fiction in *Through the Eyes of a Child: An Introduction to Children's Literature*. The authors stated benefits for children who read historical fiction: reliving the past, as they read for enjoyment; gaining an understanding of their own heritage; discovering universal truths, identifying feelings and behaviors that encourage them to consider alternative ways to handle their own problems, empathizing with viewpoints that are different from their own; realizing history consists of many people who have worked together; discovering that people have depended on one another and had similar needs regardless of the time period; learning

when human relationships deteriorate, tragedy usually follows; and realizing their present and future are connected to actions in the past.

Norton and Norton (2007) examined characteristics of quality historical fiction writing: plot, setting, characterization, and theme. The authors used the following eight questions as evaluation criteria for historical fiction:

1. Do the characters' experiences, conflicts, and resolutions of conflict reflect what is known about the time period?
2. Do characters' actions express values and beliefs that are realistic for the time period?
3. Is the language authentic for the period without relying on so many colorful terms or dialects that the story is difficult to understand?
4. Is the setting authentic in every detail?
5. Are details integrated into the story so that they do not overwhelm readers or distract from the story?
6. If the setting is the antagonist, are the relationships between characters and setting clearly developed?
7. Is the theme worthwhile?
8. Does the style enhance the mood and clarify the conflicts, characterizations, settings, and themes? (p. 417).

Examples of quality historical fiction, linked to the time period reflected, were analyzed and described throughout the chapter.

Norton and Norton (2007) presented nine eras and themes in historical fiction. They suggested some background knowledge of historical events must be known for readers to better understand historical fiction stories. Themes are repeated in stories throughout time. The themes found in Civil War historical fiction pieces included:

War creates tragedy.  
 Moral obligations must be met even if one's life or freedom is in jeopardy.  
 Moral sense does not depend on skin color, but on what is inside a person.  
 People should take pride in themselves and in their accomplishments.  
 Prejudice and hatred are destructive forces.  
 People search for freedom.  
 Personal conscience may not allow some people to kill others.  
 Strong family ties help people persevere (p. 425).

Many books were analyzed and presented for each theme. The authors acknowledged more than one theme frequently appeared in a single book. Books from different historical times had similar themes and were discussed.

In summary, Norton and Norton (2007) presented criteria to evaluate historical fiction stories and described many quality historical fiction books in detail.

Longee (2001) reviewed contemporary portrayals of slaves and slavery in young adult literature, seeking to determine whether stereotypes of slave characters and slave life exist in young adult novels written within the past 20 years. The study also compared the findings against the ethnicity of the author to answer the question: "Does the ethnicity of the author affect the depiction of slaves and slavery in young adult historical novels?" (p. 3).

For the content analysis, Longee (2001) chose historical fiction books containing the following criteria: the main characters were slaves, the setting was a Western Hemisphere environment in which slavery was practiced, and the story had been published within the past 20 years. Longee used professional resources, the local library catalog, and electronic databases to generate a list of 53 qualifying books. Continuing to use the criteria, the list was narrowed to 13 books: five were written by white authors and eight by African Americans. To balance the study, Longee used the five books written by white authors and chose five books written by African Americans, based on their availability at the local library.

In summary, Longee (2001) found the authors of both races abandoned the historical stereotypes of slaves and no longer wrote of the horrific nature of slavery. All

authors positively portrayed slaves and uniformly condemned slavery. African American authors used many of the same adjectives to describe the slave characters: strong, kind, angry, and proud. Most of these characters ran away from their masters. White authors described slave characters as intelligent, yet fearful. Most of these characters obtained freedom legally. Longee stated the authors freed their writing of historical misconceptions and stereotypes to provide readers with a clear and accurate portrayal of the lives of slaves. Slavery was presented to young readers in a realistic and interesting manner.

Stone (2004) analyzed current Civil War novels and identified four major common characteristics. Readers will gain some understanding of the plight of African Americans, some knowledge of the rigors and struggles soldiers faced, information about civilian life, and an understanding of children's lives during the Civil War period. Stone reported the emergence of the black perspective in novels, including characters who were slaves, freed slaves, and soldiers. Both male and female characters from Union and Confederacy were included in Stone's analysis.

Authors of Civil War historical fiction novels have been responsible for depicting the most devastating losses suffered by American soldiers. Stone (2004) acknowledged the talented writers who have taken on the task of describing the war with the seriousness it deserves. The authors wrote of soldiers enlisting eagerly, only to face imminent battle with great fear. Stone felt a meaningful contribution Civil War novels make to young readers was the serious depictions of how soldiers felt when going into battle.

Many Civil War novels begin at home with the soldier leaving. The author conveys the loss felt by the family. Not all stories are dominated by military life. Some

writers present stories of civilian life in urban areas. Other stories focus on families struggling and suffering while the war continued.

Readers appreciate child protagonists who are authentic. Stone (2004) stated turn-of-the-century authors often tried to put an adult in a child's body. Young readers can empathize with believable male and female protagonists in more recent novels.

Stone (2004) concluded that historical fiction is used in classrooms to provoke deeper thinking from students. Civil War novels are leading the genre in popularity. Authors are setting high standards and generating new ideas. Students in today's social studies classes will profit from the efforts of these authors.

### **Summary**

The articles and studies reviewed support the idea that the Civil War was an important event in American history (Iowa Department of Education, 2009; Ogden, Perkins & Donahue, 2008). Historical fiction as part of social studies instruction has several beneficial outcomes for students such as increasing background knowledge (McManus, 2008), supplementing the traditional study of history (Marinucci, 2000), and providing concepts at a variety of reading levels (Rycik & Rosler, 2009). Context analyses of historical fiction literature identified authors' authenticity of setting (Longee, 2001; Norton & Norton, 2007), characterizations (Longee, 2001; Norton & Norton, 2007; Stone, 2004), plot (Norton & Norton, 2007), and themes (Longee, 2001; Norton & Norton, 2007; Stone, 2004). The information gathered in this study will assist teachers and teacher librarians in choosing Civil War historical fiction for use in the social studies curriculum.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

Upper elementary instruction of the Civil War using information presented in social studies textbooks lacked complexity of understanding issues of the historical time period. The purpose of this study was to analyze the treatment of complex issues related to the Civil War in textbook information and historical fiction novels.

#### **Research Design**

Quantitative content analysis was used in this study. Spurgin and Wildemuth (2009) defined content analysis as a research method used with recorded information and people's relationships with it. White and Marsh (2006) described content analysis as "a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use" (p. 23). The analysis was based on scientific method and was valid, reliable, unbiased, and replicable.

#### **Book Sample**

The books in this study were Civil War historical fiction books. To obtain a sampling representative of Civil War historical fiction books, the *H.W. Wilson's Middle School & Junior High Core Collection* database was searched using the advanced option. The key words entered were United States Civil War, history, and fiction. The recommendation level chosen was Core Collection. Books with a publication year of 1999 or newer were selected. The grade levels criteria used were grades 3-8, which allowed for a variety of reading levels in upper elementary. This search resulted in 22 books, which were the sample used in this quantitative analysis (see Appendix A for book list).

### Data Collection

The data collection instrument (see Appendix B) was designed by the researcher based upon criteria developed from analyses described in the literature review: character, setting, plot, and themes. For example, considerations about characters in Civil War novels led to the inclusion of character criteria in Appendix B. The main character was analyzed by role as a slave, freed slave, soldier, civilian, relative, or child, and ethnicity (Frye, 2009; Norton & Norton, 2007; Ogden, Perkins, & Donahue, 2008). This analysis also included personality traits of slaves identified in the literature review, typically found to be kind, angry, and proud by Black authors, but rather intelligent yet fearful in books by White authors (Longee, 2001). Setting considerations included country, town, or urban places in the North or South. Plot analysis included consideration of losses, battles, and family struggles. Themes considered included a list of eight themes by Norton and Norton (2007) about the tragedy of war, moral obligations, skin color, pride, prejudice, freedom, conscience, and family ties. These analyses of character, setting, plot, and theme supported this researcher's hypotheses about the complexity of slavery and racial issues, family struggles, and the aftermath of the Civil War in comparison with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade textbook.

The fifth grade social studies textbook, *Horizons: United States History* (Berson, 2003), used at this researcher's school included a Civil War unit. The unit focused on two aspects: the nation divided and the nation reunited. This content was analyzed for evidence of the inclusion of slavery and racial issues, the stresses of war on families, and the aftermath of the war. Table 1 shows facts found in the textbook. The facts were also compared to the content of chapter books analyzed in hypotheses 1-3.

Table 1

## Textbook Topics and Facts

Topic	Facts Presented in the Textbook
<b>Slavery and Racial Issues</b>	<p>States had argued about slavery since the writing of the Constitution</p> <p>Missouri Compromise kept peace for almost 30 years.</p> <p>Compromise of 1850 applied to land outside of Louisiana Purchase.</p> <p>Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854 led to conflict known as "Bleeding Kansas."</p> <p>By 1860, one of four white Southern families owned slaves.</p> <p>Virginia adopted Slave Codes.</p> <p>By 1860, there were more than 500,000 free African Americans in the United States.</p> <p>Underground Railroad helped slaves to freedom.</p> <p>In 1860, Lincoln is elected president and southern states started seceding.</p>
<b>Stresses of War on Families</b>	<p>Battle of Bull Run made Americans realize the war would last longer than they first believed.</p> <p>People in border states were divided in which side to support.</p> <p>Anaconda Plan would cut off trading to South.</p> <p>Antietam Creek had the highest number of casualties in one day.</p> <p>Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863) hurt South's hopes of victory.</p> <p>African Americans joined the Union army.</p> <p>European immigrants joined the Union forces.</p> <p>Battle of Gettysburg was the deadliest battle, lasting from July 1-3, 1863.</p> <p>Over 600,000 soldiers died during the war, either in battle or from disease.</p> <p>Thousands returned home wounded, scarred both physically and emotionally from the terrible devastation the war had brought.</p>

<b>Aftermath of the War</b>	Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865. Thirteenth Amendment is ratified in December 1865. Black Codes limited rights of former slaves. Congress's Plan of Reconstruction replaced the President's Reconstruction Plan. Fifteenth Amendment was ratified in 1870. Freedmen's Bureau, created in March 1865, provided food and supplies to former slaves, helped white farmers rebuild, and built more than 4,000 schools, and hired thousands of teachers. Sharecropping Increased taxes. Segregation Settling the West.
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Spurgin and Wildemuth (2009) described manifest content as being easily noticed and countable. For example, the main character's gender and the number of people living in the household was easily noticed and counted. Latent content was described as conceptual and was not directly observed in the text (Spurgin & Wildemuth). Therefore, latent content was not analyzed due to issues of validity in this quantitative content analysis method.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher read each book twice. During the first read, the data collection instrument was used. The second read began seven days after the completion of the first read. The researcher used a clean data collection instrument. When the second read was completed, the researcher prepared and organized the data of each item for analysis. Creswell (2008) recommended the use of descriptive statistics to indicate general tendencies in the data to address each hypothesis. The researcher reported data for each hypothesis.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The researcher conducted a content analysis by looking for details that showed the complexity of slavery and racial issues, the stresses of the war on families, and the aftermath of the war.

#### Findings

Each book was read twice and content was analyzed using the data collection instrument found in Appendix B. *Beautiful Creatures* was removed from the study because it did not contain any details relating to experiences during the Civil War. Therefore, data was collected from 21 books. Tables were created to report general information about the main characters and settings, evidence of the complexity of slavery and racial issues, evidence of the complexity of stresses of war on families, and evidence of the complexity of the aftermath of the Civil War.

Table 2

#### Profiles of the Fictional Texts

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Main Character</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race/Role(s)</b>	<b>Time period</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	Arabella	Female	13	White: child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Liza	Female	16	Black: Child who becomes a spy, freed slave	before the war, during the war

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Main Character</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race/Role(s)</b>	<b>Time period</b>
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Gabriel Alexander	Male	12	Black: slave	during the war
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Gabriel Alexander	Male	13	Black: Freed slave, jockey	during the war
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	Sarah	Female, posing as a male	15	White: Child, soldier, spy	during the war
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	Haswell	Male	13	White: Child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Hannah	Female	13	White: Child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Frank	Male	10	White: Child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>Imperfections</i>	Rosemary Elizabeth	Female	14	White: child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	Tom Carroll	Male	13	White: Child with family responsibilities, worker	during the war
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Juliet Bradshaw	Female	12	White: Child, sister of soldier	during the war
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	Jennie Hodgers	Female, posing as a male	14	White: Child, immigrant, worker, soldier	before the war, during the war

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Main Character</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Race/Role(s)</b>	<b>Time period</b>
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	Jennie	Female	16	White: Child, sister of soldier, worker	during the war
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Jesse Sherman	Male	12	White: Child	during the war
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	India Moody	Female	14	White: Child	during the war
<i>Scrib</i>	William Stanley Christmas	Male	16	White: Child, worker	during the war
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	Stonewall Hinkleman	Male	12	White: Child, soldier	during the war, after the war (present day)
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Homer	Male	12	White: Child, brother of soldier	during the war
<i>The River Between Us</i>	Tilly	Female	15	White: Child with family responsibilities	during the war
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	Jeremy DeGroot	Male	10	White: Child, drummer boy, soldier	during the war
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	Lizzie	Female	15	White: Child with family responsibilities	during the war

Of the 21 books analyzed, two were about Gabriel Alexander. Gabriel was a black slave in the first book who gained his freedom in the second story. Gabriel was a year older in the second story. For reporting purposes, Gabriel Alexander was treated as the

main character in each of the books, *Gabriel's Horses* and *Gabriel's Triumph*. Eleven of the main characters were female and 10 were male. Two of the female characters posed as males. Sarah, the main character in *Girl in Blue*, posed as a male in order to join the army. She was discovered to be a female after four months. Jennie Hodgers lived most of her 80 years as a male, as told in *My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier*. The average age of the main characters was slightly over 13 years. Eighteen of the characters were white and three were black.

### Slavery and Racial Issues

The researcher analyzed 21 books, noting details that showed the complexity of slavery and racial issues. Table 3 shows the ethnicity and role of the main character, along with interactions with people of a different race and slaves.

Table 3

#### Slavery and Racial Issues

Title of Book	Ethnicity of main character	Role	Interact with people of different race	Interact with slaves	Interact with freed slaves
<i>Assassin</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	No	No	No
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Black	Child	Yes	Yes	Yes



<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Ethnicity of main character</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Interact with people of different race</b>	<b>Interact with slaves</b>	<b>Interact with freed slaves</b>
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Black	Slave, works with horses	Yes, with Master Giles, soldiers	Yes, with Annabelle, a child slave living in owner's house	Yes, Jackson is a jockey, Ma becomes free
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Black	Child, freed slave, jockey	Yes	Yes	Yes. Ma and Jackson.
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	White	Child, soldier, spy	yes	yes	yes
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	No	No	No
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	Yes	No	Yes
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	Yes	Yes, Buck is his friend	Yes, Buck becomes free
<i>Imperfections</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	No	No	No
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	No	No	No
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	White	Child, sister of soldier	Yes	Yes	Yes

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Ethnicity of main character</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Interact with people of different race</b>	<b>Interact with slaves</b>	<b>Interact with freed slaves</b>
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	White: Irish immigrant	Worker, soldier	Yes, Euripides is hired as a guide. (p. 73)	Yes, runaways (p. 116)	Yes, soldiers (p.116)
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	White	Sister of soldier, worker	No	No	No
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	White	Child	Yes	Yes: Lydia was a runaway slave, Perry was born into slavery	Yes
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	Yes	Yes	Yes: she sees them traveling North
<i>Scrib</i>	White	Worker: scribe	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	White	Child, soldier	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	White	Child	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>The River Between Us</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	Yes	No	Yes
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	White	Child, soldier	Yes: Dulcie	Yes: Dulcie	No

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Ethnicity of main character</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Interact with people of different race</b>	<b>Interact with slaves</b>	<b>Interact with freed slaves</b>
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	White	Child with family responsibilities	Yes, Amos, the is black	No	Yes

Eighteen of the characters were white and three were black. The white characters interacted with people of a different race in 13 of the books. They interacted with slaves in ten books and with freed slaves in 11 books. Slaves were not characters in five of the stories analyzed. Four of those stories were set in the North. The fifth story, *Hear the Wind Blow*, was set in Virginia and focused on the travels of Haswell Mcgruder. Haswell tells a friend, “We never had slaves. Papa thought it was wrong.” (p. 155) when the two boys discuss the reason his Papa and brother joined the Confederate Army. The reason for joining, “To keep the Yankees off our land” (p. 155) was given by Haswell.

Of the 21 stories in this analysis, three of the main characters were black. Liza, in *Dear Ellen Bee: A Scrapbook of Two Union Spies*, was a freed child slave who was sent to school in the North by her former owner. Gabriel, in *Gabriel’s Horses*, was a child slave who worked with his Pa in caring for horses on his master’s farm. Gabriel’s pa was born free, but his mother was a slave. During the story, Pa buys Ma’s freedom from their owner. In *Gabriel’s Triumph*, Master Giles gives Gabriel his freedom when Gabriel risked his life to save the horses from Confederate Rebels.

The portrayal of slaves was also analyzed by this researcher, using the following questions to gather data: How are the personalities of slaves described? Do slaves behave

in stereotypical or non-stereotypical ways? The data in Table 4 shows slave behavior was non-stereotypical in ten of the stories. Slave behavior was not noted in five of the books, leaving stereotypical behavior portrayed by slaves in six stories. Non-stereotypical slaves were most often described as being kind, intelligent, and proud. Sarah, in *Girl in Blue*, describes Nubbin, a young slave boy, as having “more brains than any soldier she’d met yet in the Army of the Potomac.” (p. 56). In *The Storm Before Atlanta*, Dulcie is a runaway slave who finds herself working for a Union doctor during combat. The main character, Jeremy, befriends her and together they write letters for the wounded soldiers. Jeremy is amazed “how Dulcie could remember everything the soldiers wanted written, and even the addresses.” (p. 249). Kind and fearful described slaves who exhibited stereotypical behavior. Slaves are hidden in Mr. Brewster’s basement in the story, *The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg*. “The fugitives look thin and hungry and scared. They jump at every sound from above.”(p. 55). Buck, a slave in *How I Found the Strong*, is “so strong you don’t even notice it. When you ask Buck to lift, he lifts. Say chop, he chops.” (p. 3).

Table 4

## How Slaves Were Portrayed

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Description of slave personalities</b>	<b>Slave behavior</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	N/A	N/A
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Kind, proud	Non-stereotypical
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Kind, intelligent	Stereotypical
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Kind, over-worked	Non-stereotypical

Title of Book	Description of slave personalities	Slave behavior
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	Kind, intelligent	Non-stereotypical
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	N/A	N/A
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Kind	Non-stereotypical
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Kind, intelligent	Stereotypical
<i>Imperfections</i>	N/A	N/A
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle of the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	N/A	N/A
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Kind, intelligent, motherly, responsible	Non-stereotypical
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	Kind	Stereotypical
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	N/A	N/A
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Angry, proud, intelligent, fearful	Non-stereotypical
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	Fearful	Stereotypical
<i>Scrib</i>	Fearful	Stereotypical
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	Proud	Non-stereotypical
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Kind, fearful	Stereotypical
<i>The River Between Us</i>	Kind, proud, intelligent	Non-stereotypical
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	Intelligent, fearful, has a good memory, hard worker	Non-stereotypical
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	Kind, intelligent	Non-stereotypical

Hypothesis 1 postulated that the majority of books would depict more details of the complexity of slavery and racial issues than the textbook. In fact, 13 of the 21 main characters interacted with people of a different race. The main characters in almost 50% of these books interacted with slaves and freed slaves. Slave behavior was depicted as being non-stereotypical in ten of the 21 stories. Often slaves were described as being kind and intelligent. Hypothesis 1 is supported by the findings in that at least one complexity of the slavery issue is raised in 16 of the 21 texts.

### **Stresses of War on Families**

The following questions were used to gather data pertaining to stresses of the war on families: What is the main character's rank in the family? Who does the main character live with? How many people are in the household? Is a family member directly involved in the war? In what way is the family member involved in the war? Is there a mental/emotional/physical condition, resulting from the war, affecting the main character/member of the household? Where does the main character live? Does the main character interact with soldiers?

Information in Table 5 shows that six characters were the only child in the family, five were the oldest child, three were the middle child, four were the youngest child, two were orphans, and one was a step-niece. Ten characters lived with a parent, one lived with a grandma, and ten lived in other situations. Of those ten, four had no home, one lived with a brother, one lived with a sister-in-law, two lived with uncles/aunts, one lived with an appointed guardian, and one lived in a Shaker village. The number of members in the household varied from one to five. Rosemary Elizabeth, in *Imperfections*, lived in a Shaker community so it was not possible to assign a number to her situation.

Table 5

## Family Information

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Rank in family</b>	<b>Lives With</b>	<b>Number in household</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	Female	13	Only child	Grandma	2
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Female	16	Only child	Mom, Dad, Other	5
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Male	12	Only child	Mom and Dad at owner's farm	3
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Male	13	Only child	Mom and owner	2
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	Female, posing as a male	15	Middle	Mom and Dad	5
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	Male	13	Middle	Other: homeless	2
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Female	13	Oldest	Other: goes looking for relative	4
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Male	10	Middle	Mom and dad	5
<i>Imperfections</i>	Female	14	Oldest	Other: Shaker village	N/A
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	Male	13	Youngest	Mom	3
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Female	12	Youngest	Other: brother's wife	3

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Rank in family</b>	<b>Lives With</b>	<b>Number in household</b>
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	Female, posing as a male	14	Youngest	Other: brother	2
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	Female	16	Other: step-niece	Other: Uncle/Aunt	4
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Male	12	Orphan	Other: Uncle	3
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	Female	14	Oldest	Mom and Dad	4
<i>Scrib</i>	Male	16	Only child	On his own out west	1
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	Male	12	Only child	Mom and Dad	3
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Male	12	Youngest	Other: on the road to find his brother	2
<i>The River Between Us</i>	Female	15	Oldest	Mom	4
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	Male	10	Orphan	Other: guardian	2
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	Female	15	Oldest	Mom and Dad	3

There were mental, emotional, or physical stresses of war on families. At times, a family had more than one member who was suffering because of the war. Table 6 shows data pertaining to affects from the war.



Table 6

## Affects of War on Families

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Condition affecting main character</b>	<b>Condition affecting family member</b>	<b>Where main character lives</b>	<b>Interact with soldiers?</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	No	No	North, city	Yes
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Emotional: split from family	Emotional: being a spy	North, South, city	Yes
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Emotional: Having to be the man of the family, misses Pa	Emotional: Ma misses Pa, goes to live with Pa	North, country	Yes: both sides
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Emotional: misses Pa, has to take care of horses	Ma is emotionally upset being away from Pa	North, country	Yes
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	Physical: War injury	Emotional: Ma's son-in-law died in war, daughter ran off	North, country, other: lives as a soldier	Yes
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	Emotional: responsible for sister, loss of Pa and Ma	Physical: Avery has a head injury	Country	Yes: at uncle's house in city
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Physical: Lives in filth, works hard. Emotional: misses Ma	Emotional and Physical: Ma dies of broken heart. Kids live in filth, work hard.	North, country, then homeless	Yes

Title of Book	Condition affecting main character	Condition affecting family member	Where main character lives	Interact with soldiers?
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Emotional: Frank kills a man and loses his brother	Physical and Emotional: Pa loses his arm in war	South, country	Yes
<i>Imperfections</i>	No	No	North, country Other: Shaker Community	Yes: for food and rest
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle Between the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	Emotional: misses Pa. Physical: works hard	Physical and Emotional: Ma works hard, misses Pa, worries about Tom	North, city, Other: shipyard	Yes
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Physical: Head injury Emotional: keeps secrets, kills a man	Emotional: Martha's sisters die Physical: she is injured.	South, country, house	Yes: kills one
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	Emotional: loses friends	No	North, country, city	Yes
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	Emotional: lost brother and fiancé	Physical: Quinn is recovering from injuries	North, city	Yes

Title of Book	Condition affecting main character	Condition affecting family member	Where main character lives	Interact with soldiers?
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Physical: soldiers beat Jesse	No	South, country, homeless when traveling	Yes
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	Emotional: loses Pa and Ma has a breakdown	Pa dies, Ma has breakdown	North, town, house	Yes
<i>Scrib</i>	No	No	West, country	No
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	No	No	South	Yes
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Emotional: he is without his brother	Physical: Harold loses his leg in war	North, country	Yes
<i>The River Between Us</i>	Emotional: loses Pa, Ma	Physical: Noah loses arm Emotional: Ma commits suicide	North, town	Yes
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	Emotional: sees messmates killed, injured	N/A	South, country	Yes, messmates
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	Physical: Takes over the butcher shop	Physical: Pa is missing a foot	North, town	Yes

Thirteen of the main characters lived in the North, while five lived in the South. Liza, in *Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies*, spent equal amounts of time in the North and South. One story was set in the West. Finally, one story was set in the country, but an exact location was not given.

Four books had main characters who did not suffer from stresses caused by the war. Rosemary Elizabeth, in *Imperfections*, was split from her brother and sister while living in a Shaker Village. However, this separation was not caused by the war. In *Scrib*, the war is rarely mentioned since the story is set out West. Scrib does have troubles, but they are not war-related. Time travel takes Stonewall back to the Civil War in *Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run*. Stonewall suffers stressful moments that are caused by traveling through time. Arabella, in *Assassin*, is emotionally upset because she befriended John Wilkes Booth before he killed President Lincoln. Six main characters suffered physical conditions resulting from the war; none of these were fatal. Emotional suffering affecting the main character was obvious in 14 stories. Family members died in ten of the stories. This does not include multiple deaths occurring in families. Soldiers are encountered by the main character in 20 of these stories.

Hypothesis 2 posited that the majority of books would depict more details of the complexity of stresses of war on families than the textbook. In fact, nine of the main characters were children with family responsibilities, while four characters were soldiers. Hypothesis 2 is supported by the findings in that 13 of 21 main characters acted in non-traditional roles during the Civil War. Eleven characters did not reside with parents and four were homeless. Additionally, Hypothesis 2 is supported by the findings in that main characters suffered stresses as a result of the war in 17 of the 21 novels.

### Aftermath of the War

The Civil War ended when Lee surrendered to Grant on April 9, 1865 (Berson, 2003). Many of the stories in this study concluded before that time, therefore a setting after the war was not available. Table 7 shows how slaves obtained freedom in each story, and losses incurred by the main characters. Choices for the antagonist of the main character were self, setting, society, or other. This data is also included in Table 7.

Table 7

#### Affects of the Civil War

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Way slaves became free</b>	<b>Losses</b>	<b>Antagonist of main character</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	Unknown	Moral sense, personal conscience	Self
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Obtained legally	Money	Society
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	Obtained legally	None	Society
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	Obtained legally	Respect for others in the north, other: animals	Society
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	Ran away	Family members, other: identity	Self
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	Unknown	Family members, home, buildings, food, crops, other: innocence	Setting
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Unknown	Family members, home, buildings, money, personal conscience, food, crops	Self

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Way slaves became free</b>	<b>Losses</b>	<b>Antagonist of main character</b>
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Obtained legally	Family members, personal conscience, respect for others	Self
<i>Imperfections</i>	Unknown	Family members	Setting
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle of the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	Unknown	Family members, Other: trust	Setting
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Obtained legally, then hired back	Family members, land, home, buildings, crops, Other: innocence	Self
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	Ran away	Respect for others	Society
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	Unknown	Family members, respect for others. Other: trust	Setting
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Ran away	Respect for others	Self
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	Obtained legally	Family members, home	Setting
<i>Scrib</i>	Unknown	N/A	Other: bad guy
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	Ran away, obtained legally	N/A	Self
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Ran away	Money	Society
<i>The River Between Us</i>	Obtained legally	Family members: Pa	Society

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Way slaves became free</b>	<b>Losses</b>	<b>Antagonist of main character</b>
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	Ran away	Respect for others	Self
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	Obtained legally	Building, money	Setting

In five of the books, slaves ran away to freedom. Freedom was legally obtained by slaves in eight of the books. In seven of the books, the way slaves became free was unknown. In one story, *Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run*, slaves obtained freedom in legal ways and by running away. Main characters in ten of the books lost family members. Other losses included homes, buildings, crops, money, animals, and respect for others. Two characters lost their innocence when they gained adult responsibilities quickly. The antagonist of the main character was found to be self in eight books, society in seven books, the setting in five books, and other in one book.

Finally, there were important events and groups that affected people during and after the Civil War: the Emancipation Proclamation, the Underground Railroad, the assassination of President Lincoln, and the Freedmen's Bureau. Table 8 shows how many times each was mentioned in the books.

Table 8

## Important Events and Groups

<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Emancipation Proclamation</b>	<b>Underground Railroad</b>	<b>Lincoln's Death</b>	<b>Freedmen's Bureau</b>
<i>Assassin</i>	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Dear Ellen Bee: A Civil War Scrapbook of Two Union Spies</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Gabriel's Horses</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Gabriel's Triumph</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Girl in Blue</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Hear the Wind Blow</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Hearts of Stone</i>	Yes	No	No	No
<i>How I Found the Strong</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>Imperfections</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>Iron Thunder: The Battle of the Monitor and the Merrimac</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Juliet's Moon</i>	Yes	No	No	No
<i>My Last Skirt: The Story of Jennie Hodgers, Union Soldier</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Picture the Dead</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Promises to the Dead</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>Red Moon at Sharpsburg</i>	Yes	No	No	No
<i>Scrib</i>	No	Yes	No	No



<b>Title of Book</b>	<b>Emancipation Proclamation</b>	<b>Underground Railroad</b>	<b>Lincoln's Death</b>	<b>Freedmen's Bureau</b>
<i>Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>The Mostly True Adventures of Homer P. Figg</i>	Yes	Yes	No	No
<i>The River Between Us</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>The Storm Before Atlanta</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>Two Girls of Gettysburg</i>	No	No	No	No

The Emancipation Proclamation was mentioned in nine of the books. Six books referred to the Underground Railroad, and only two books mentioned the assassination of President Lincoln. The Freedmen's Bureau was not mentioned in any of the books.

Hypothesis 3 anticipated the majority of books would depict more details of the complexity of the aftermath of the Civil War than the textbook. Many of the stories concluded before the end of the Civil War, so findings failed to support this hypothesis. Important historical events and groups were not mentioned in most of the stories.

### **Summary**

In 1860, Lincoln became president and southern states started seceding. By 1860, one out of every four southern families owned slaves. By that same time, there were more than 500,000 free African Americans in the United States. The Civil War historical fiction novels used in this content analysis did show evidence of the complexity of slavery and racial issues. Thirteen of the 21 books had white main characters that

interacted with people of a different race. Those 13 characters interacted with slaves in ten books and with freed slaves in 11 books. Sixteen books had slaves as characters. Non-typical behavior was exhibited by slaves in 63% of the books, whereas 37% of the books presented slaves stereotypically.

The fifth grade textbook stated that thousands returned home wounded, scarred both physically and emotionally from the terrible devastation the war had brought. The historical fiction novels provided opportunities to learn more about these conditions, as well as learning about family dynamics during the Civil War. Main characters interacted with soldiers in 20 of the books in this study.

The historical novels described the war-related losses of the characters: family members, homes, money, crops, animals, and respect for others. Important factual events and groups were rarely mentioned in the books.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Problem**

This study was conducted to see if Civil War historical fiction novels contained detailed information relevant to the facts presented in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade social studies textbook used at this researcher's school. Specifically, the complexity of slavery and racial issues, the stresses of war on families, and the aftermath of the war were analyzed.

#### **Conclusion**

This researcher found that most of the books in the sample dealt with slavery and racial issues. However, the majority of the main characters were neither slaves nor Black. Those stories with black main characters focused on racial issues, not slavery issues. Almost two-thirds of the books portrayed slaves in non-stereotypical ways.

The stresses of the war on families were very evident in the book sample. While the textbook does mention physical and emotional scarring, the novels provided opportunities to feel the characters' emotions. There were many different types of families portrayed in the books. This is something that is not found in the textbook.

This researcher found that actual important post-war events and groups were not frequently mentioned in these books. This might be explained by the fact that most of the stories focused on a certain time period, which did not include the end of the Civil War.

#### **Recommendations**

This study focused on Civil War historical fiction novels. For a future study, a researcher may want to examine the resources the authors of the books used in writing the stories. Would books based on actual people be more widely-read? If a study were to

be conducted concerning stereotypical/non-stereotypical behavior, the researcher may want to provide definitions and examples of behaviors to ensure the study remains a quantitative content analysis. Examining the presentation of the material in historical fiction novels (scrapbook, diary, graphic novel) and the interest level of students could be the topic for a future study. For example, one might investigate whether students prefer to read a novel with actual photographs or whether a novel written in the form of a diary piques interest.

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## APPENDIX A

### LIST OF HISTORICAL FICTION BOOK TITLES

- Avi. (2007). *Iron thunder: The battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac, a Civil War novel*. New York: Hyperion.
- Durrant, L. (2008). *Imperfections*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Durrant, L. (2006). *My last skirt: The story of Jennie Hodgers, Union soldier*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Ernst, K. (2006). *Hearts of stone*. New York: Dutton Children's Books.
- Garcia, K. & Stohl, M. (2009). *Beautiful creatures*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Griffin, A. (2010). *Picture the dead*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Fire.
- Hahn, M. D. (2003). *Hear the wind blow*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Hahn, M. D. (2000). *Promises to the dead*. New York: Clarion Books.
- Hart, A. (2007). *Gabriel's horses*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.
- Hart, A. (2007). *Gabriel's Triumph*. Atlanta, GA: Peachtree.
- Hemphill, M. & Riddleburger, S. (2009). *Stonewall Hinkleman and the Battle of Bull Run*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Ives, D. (2005). *Scrib*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Klein, L. M. (2008). *Two girls of Gettysburg*. New York: Bloomsbury U.S.A. Children's Books.
- Lyons, M. E. & Branch, M. M. (2000). *Dear Ellen Bee*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- McMullan, M. (2004). *How I found the strong*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Myers, A. (2005). *Assassin*. New York: Walker & Company.
- Peck, R. (2003). *The river between us*. New York: Dial Books.

- Philbrick, W. R. (2009). *The mostly true adventures of Homer P. Figg*. New York: Blue Sky Press.
- Rinaldi, A. (2008). *Juliet's moon*. New York: Harcourt.
- Rinaldi, A. (2001). *Girl in blue*. New York: Scholastic Press.
- Schwabach, K. (2010). *The storm before Atlanta*. New York: Random House.
- Wells, R. (2007). *Red moon at Sharpsburg*. New York: Viking.



**APPENDIX B**  
**DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

Title of Book:

Author:

Copyright:

Publisher:

Summary:

What is the gender of the main character? Male/Female

What is the name of the main character?

What is the age of the main character?

0-12 years    13-18 years    older than 18 years

Evidence:

Are there other important characters? Yes/No

Name:

Gender: Male/Female

Race:

Age: 0-12 years    13-18 years    older than 18 years

When does the story take place?

          before the war            during the war            after the war

Evidence:

Hypothesis 1: The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of slavery and racial issues than the textbook. These questions pertain to slavery/racial evidence of hypothesis one.

What is the ethnicity of the main character?

          White            Black            Mixed            Other/Unknown

Evidence:

What is the role of the main character?

Slave          Freed Slave    Soldier  
 Brother/Sister of soldier    Child          Child with family responsibilities  
 Worker          Other

Evidence:

Does the main character interact with people of a different race? Yes/No

Evidence:

Does the main character interact with slaves? Yes/No

Evidence:

Does the main character interact with freed slaves? Yes/No

Evidence:

How are personalities of slaves described?

kind          angry          proud          intelligent    fearful

Evidence:

Do slaves behave in stereotypical or non-stereotypical ways?

Evidence:

Hypothesis 2: The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of stresses of war on families than the textbook. These questions pertain to stresses of the war on family evidence of hypothesis two.

What is the main character's rank in family?

Oldest/Middle/Youngest    Only child    Orphan          Other

Evidence:

Who does the main character live with?

Mom    Dad    Grandparents    Owner    Other

Evidence:

How many people are in the household, including the main character?

1-3    4-6    7-9    10+

How many are children?

How many are adults?

Evidence:

Is a family member directly involved in the war? Yes/No

In what way is a family member directly connected to the war?

active soldier	enlisting	soldier who has returned home
helping soldiers	fatality	other

Evidence:

Is there a mental/emotional/physical condition, resulting from the war, affecting the main character?

Evidence:

Is there a mental/emotional/physical condition, resulting from the war, affecting a member of the household?

Evidence:

Where does the main character live?

North/South	country	town	city
cabin	house	homeless	other

Evidence:

Does the main character interact with soldiers? Yes/No

Evidence:

Hypothesis 3: The majority of books will depict more details of the complexity of the aftermath of the Civil War than the textbook. These questions pertain to the complexity of the aftermath evidence of hypothesis three.

How did slaves in this story become free?

Ran away	obtained legally	unknown
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Evidence:

Did the main character and/or family lose any of the following?

family members	land	home	buildings	money
moral sense	personal conscience		food	crops
pride	respect for others		other	

Evidence:

What is the setting after the Civil War?

North/South	country	town	city	farm
plantation	other			

Evidence:

What is the main character's antagonist in the story?

self	setting	society	other
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Evidence:

Does the story mention the Emancipation Proclamation? Yes/No

Evidence:

Does the story mention the Underground Railroad? Yes/No

Evidence:

Does the story mention the assassination of the president? Yes/No

Evidence:

Does the story mention the Freedmen's Bureau? Yes/No

Evidence: