

Stefanie Greenhill

Dissertation Abstract: *Escaped from Dixie: Civil War Refugees and the Creation of a Confederate Diaspora*

A surprisingly understudied topic, the Civil War refugee crisis is important in order to understand the precedents for current refugee policies in the U.S.—and sheds important light on similar crises throughout the world today. After successfully completing my qualifying exams in April 2017, I embarked on my dissertation, *Escaped from Dixie: Civil War Refugees and the Creation of a Confederate Diaspora*, which examines the experiences of refugees who fled from the Confederacy under duress during the Civil War. My research examines the experiences of various groups of refugees, especially in the absence of any formal institutions for the aid of refugees in the nineteenth century. I defended my dissertation prospectus on this topic in March 2018, proposing a dissertation with two parts. Part 1 analyzes the wartime experiences of those who fled from the Confederacy, and each chapter focuses on a distinct group of refugees. Chapter 1 focuses on native Northerners who fled from the Confederacy to return to the Northeast, often using their pre-existing social connections to make their transition to a new life smoother, while Chapter Two turns to native Southerners by analyzing the social networks of Quakers who fled North Carolina as conscientious objectors. Chapter Three moves farther South and considers the wartime experiences of the thousands of Texans who fled into Mexico, paying special attention to the significance of the international border and the unpreparedness of the United States government to address the thousands of destitute refugees asking them for aid. Finally, Chapter Four expands on the federal government's unpreparedness to address a refugee crisis by examining the experiences of the nearly thirty thousand American Indian refugees who fled from Confederate-controlled Indian Territory to seek protection of the United States in Kansas.

Part Two of the dissertation follows the refugees in the aftermath of the war and highlights the long-term consequences of their displacement on themselves, and on the nation. This section has two chapters and distinguishes the experiences of those who chose to return to the former Confederacy from those who did not return. I have found that those who returned to the South did so because they thought their future was in the South, and in helping reconstruct and reshape the region; whereas those who did not return believed their future prospects were better outside of the war-ravaged South than within it—and many of them would go on to have prosperous and influential lives elsewhere.

The modern day refugee crisis has inspired numerous historians to produce new research on displacement and refugee crises in the past, and this trend is evident in Civil War historiography as well. Much of this research has focused on the experiences of formerly enslaved refugees who fled to Union Army lines, as illustrated in Amy Murrell Taylor's *Embattled Freedom*. My research, however, focuses on free people who fled from the Confederacy, often fleeing under entirely different circumstances than those fleeing from slavery, and facing entirely different questions and obstacles along the way. The handful of studies that exist on free people who became Civil War refugees all look inward, focusing on those migrating within the Confederacy, for insight into the wartime refugee crisis and the experience of the war on the Confederate home front. This insular focus of the refugee crisis obscures the movement of refugees who fled from the Confederacy to Union lines, and beyond. My research expands the geographic scope to those who left the Confederacy, and also expands the discussion of the Civil War refugee crisis into the postwar years to consider the long-term effects of displacement on individuals, their communities of origin, their host communities, and on the reunited nation as a whole. The expanded geographic and temporal boundaries of my research suggests that, in addition to creating a refugee crisis during the war itself, one of the most enduring legacies of the Confederacy was the movement and influence of its people throughout the nation.

STEFANIE GREENHILL

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EDUCATION

- PhD** University of Kentucky, Department of History (expected) December 2020
Dissertation: “Escaped from Dixie:” Civil War Refugees and the Creation of a
Confederate Diaspora
Advisor: Amy Murrell Taylor
- Qualifying Exams passed April 2017
- MA** North Carolina State University August 2015
Thesis: “Consent and Coercion: Disloyalty in the Piedmont of North Carolina during the
Civil War”
Advisor: Susanna Lee
Minor: Public History
- BS** North Carolina State University May 2013
Graduated Magna Cum Laude in History

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Kentucky, Department of History, Lexington, KY

Teaching Assistant:

HIS 108: United States History through 1876

Spring 2017

HIS 109: United States History since 1877

Fall 2016

HIS 112: History of Kentucky

Spring 2016

Civil War Governors of Kentucky Digital Documentary Edition, Kentucky Historical
Society, Frankfort, KY

Graduate Intern

Summer 2016

North Carolina State University, Department of History
Raleigh, NC

Teaching Assistant

HIS 252: American History II

Spring 2015

HIS 341: Technology in History

Fall 2014

HIS 251: American History I

Spring 2014

HA 240: Visual Culture

Fall 2013

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Fraternal Flight: Civil War Loyalty and Displacement Through the Experiences of the Watson Brothers,” Society of Civil War Historians Biennial Conference, Raleigh, June 2020 (upcoming).

“Yankee Skedadlers”: Unionism, Displacement, and Native Northerners who Fled from the Confederacy,” Southern Historical Association Annual Conference, Louisville, November 2019.

“Conflict, Confusion, and Common Humanity: Federal Government Efforts to Aid American Indian Refugees during the U. S. Civil War,” Ohio Valley History Conference, Frankfort, October 2019.

“Escaped from Dixie’: North Carolina’s Unionist Refugees and Social Networking during the Civil War,” North Carolina Association of Historians Conference, 2018.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Bryan Dissertation Fellowship (\$9,000) Fall 2020
A one-semester fellowship awarded by the Department of History to aid in the completion of the dissertation.

Gilbert and Crowe Fellowship for Graduate Student Development (\$1,500) Summer 2019
Awarded to graduate students in the Department of History to support their scholarship and research.

College of Arts & Sciences

Dean’s Competitive Research Fellowship (\$10,000) Fall 2018
One of eight awards from sixty applicants, these fellowships recognize well-developed research plans to offer time released from assistantship duties to promote progress through degree programs, including dissertation completion.

Charles Roland Fellowship (\$2,500) Summer 2018
Awarded by the University of Kentucky Department of History, this fellowship supports outstanding students at the University who are pursuing research interests in American history, especially the history of the Civil War, race relations, and the American South.

Lance Banning Memorial Fellowship (\$2,500) Summer 2018
Awarded to graduate students in the Department of History to support students in American history, especially those in Banning’s area of Early America.

Archie K. Davis Fellowship (\$1,200) Fall 2017
Awarded by the North Caroliniana Society to assist scholars in gaining access to resources contributing to knowledge of the state’s past, and, especially, potential of the subject to advance among citizens of the state knowledge and understanding of their own history and culture.

Seth and Mary Edith Hinshaw Fellowship (\$2,000) Fall 2017
Awarded by the North Carolina Friends Historical Society for the use of resources of the Quaker Archives at Guilford College to study an aspect of southern Quaker history.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Southern Association for Women Historians, 2018 – present

Southern Historical Association, 2015 – present

Society of Civil War Historians, 2016 – present

North Carolina Association of Historians, 2018 – present

University of Kentucky History Graduate Student Association, Vice President, 2016

LANGUAGES

English – Native language

Spanish – Advanced reading, writing, and speaking