The Civil War was the most divisive period in American History. Even today, it remains a defining moment in the construction of the modern American nation. Its meaning and causes remain hotly contested. The purpose of this project will be to explore some of the issues and conflicts that produced the tensions that ultimately caused the secession of the South and the initiation of hostilities. As we attempt to assign relative importance to each of these causes, we must be mindful of the influence of our positions as twenty-first-century observers. Teleology (seeing the past through the lens of the present), is always a temptation, but let us strive to put ourselves in the shoes of the historical actors themselves.

**Project Overview**

Students will work in small groups to research at least one point of tension that contributed to the conflict between the North and the South. They will, then, use their research to do the following:

- Create a 15 minute mini-lesson for the class, which illustrates the significance of your event as a cause of the Civil War.

**Grading Criteria**

**Lessons Must:**

- Illustrate multiple perspectives and perceptions of the issue.
- Incorporate primary source materials including document excerpts and/or graphics.
- Demonstrate creativity and/or innovation.
- Be historically accurate.
- Involve every group member.
- Last for approximately 15 minutes.
- Explain how the event may have been perceived in both the North and the South.
- Clearly explain how the issue contributed the coming of the Civil War.
- Be clearly and audibly delivered using good public speaking skills.
- Incorporate at least one visual or audio aid.

"**History has to be rewritten because history is the selection of those threads of causes or antecedents that we are interested in.**"

-O. W. Holmes, Jr.