



Understanding The Red Badge of Courage: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents (The Greenwood Press "Literature in Context" Series)

Claudia Durst Johnson

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Every generation of readers has interpreted the meaning of *The Red Badge of Courage* anew. Its appeal is both historical and universal?historical in its Civil War setting and universal in its relating of the experiences of a young man who is thrust into a situation he does not understand and cannot cope with. This collection of historical documents, collateral readings, and commentary will promote interdisciplinary study of the novel and enrich the reader's understanding of its themes and historical context. A wide variety of more than 40 primary documents and firsthand accounts brings to life the Civil War experiences of leaders and soldiers of the Union and Confederacy, especially in the Battle of Chancellorsville, which is the setting for the novel. Carefully selected memoirs, poems, short stories, newspaper articles, and interviews illuminate the historical setting, the themes of cowardice and desertion, battlefield experiences, the soldier's life in camp, and the issue of pacifism as it relates to *The Red Badge of Courage* as an antiwar novel.

Many of these documents appear in print here for the first time. The documents include: memoirs of Civil War generals at Chancellorsville who were in marked disagreement with one another, remembrances of cavalry and foot soldiers, poems by those who experienced the war, short stories by Civil War veterans, a series of newspaper articles on World War II veterans who experienced Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, The War Prayer by Mark Twain and The Wound Dresser by Walt Whitman, poems and a short story by Stephen Crane, and an interview with a conscientious objector in World War II. Each section of this casebook contains study questions, topics for research papers and class discussions, and lists of further reading. A selection of photos and a map complete the work. This is an ideal companion for teacher use and student research in interdisciplinary, English, and American history courses.

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