

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/the-civil-war-diary-of-emma-mordecai/>

This video is a transcript from an interview with Melissa R. Klapper about her work on the "Civil War diary" of Emma Morde, a Southern Jewish woman living during the Civil War. Melissa discusses her motivations for becoming involved with this project, which was initiated by her late mentor, Dianne Ashton. After Dianne's passing, Melissa felt compelled to complete the book in her honor.

Melissa details the significance of Emma Morde's diary, which offers insights into daily life during the Civil War from a woman's perspective, highlighting themes around race, gender, and the complexities of historical narratives. Emma, a slave-owning white woman, had complex views shaped by her societal position, and while she was dedicated to the Confederacy and slavery, she also played a pivotal role in her Jewish community.

Melissa conducted extensive research using Diane's personal library and existing scholarship about the Civil War, women, and slavery to understand the broader context of Emma's life. She emphasizes the importance of grappling with the complexities of historical figures and the societal norms of the time.

The interview concludes with Melissa expressing hopes that readers will recognize the messiness of history and the multifaceted nature of individuals within it. She suggests that future research should continue examining the roles of women and enslaved people in Southern households to gain better insights into the era, as well as consider the nuances of the Confederacy's demise.