



# COLORED

## CONFEDERATES

Myth or Matter of Fact?

a Ken Wyatt documentary



DURATION: 40 minutes



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## *Myth or Matter of Fact?*

### CONTACT



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### TRAILER

<http://vimeo.com/47550942>

### LOGLINE

Did blacks actively 'fight' for the Old South during America's Civil War; and if so, why? Experts, historians, and re-enactors hash out this 150-year-old debate. Trust me, you won't see *this* chapter in your history book!

### MEDIUM SYNOPSIS

We often imagine the soldiers that fought for the Confederate States of America as all white. But, is that accurate? Evidence of Confederate soldiers of color is hard to find in official records. On the other hand, studies and media (e.g., the film, *Glory*) acknowledging 200,000 blacks' participation in the Union army are abundant. The fact is that enlistment of blacks was simply prohibited by the Confederate government. Such a thought of "gun-toting" black southerners was unthinkable in the nineteenth century, because blacks were not recognized (let alone acknowledged) as citizens. Historians agree that stories of black body servants and fortification builders (as seen in the film, *Gone with the Wind*) are plentiful, however did blacks actively fight for the values of the "Old South" and if so why? After years of research and on-camera interviews, ***COLORED CONFEDERATES: Myth or Matter of Fact?***, attempts to shed light on and untangle of this obscure corner of American history. See Civil War experts, historians, and re-enactors hash out this one-and-a-half-century-old debate!

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

We often imagine the soldiers that fought for the Confederate States of America as all white. But, is that accurate? Evidence of Confederate soldiers of color is hard to find in official records; the few that come up easily are the Louisiana Native Guards (pictured above). On the other hand, studies and media (e.g., the film, *Glory*) acknowledging 200,000 blacks' participation in the Union army are abundant. The fact is that enlistment of blacks was simply prohibited by the Confederate government. Indeed, white women were more readily accepted than gun-toting African-Americans. Such a hyphenated epithet was unthinkable in the nineteenth century South, because blacks were not recognized (let alone acknowledged) as citizens. Historians agree that stories of black body servants and fortification builders (as seen in the film, *Gone with the Wind*) are plentiful, however did blacks actively fight for the values of the "Old South" and if so why? When initially considered making a documentary about Confederate black soldiers, I wondered if my work would serve to "smooth over" the Confederacy's doctrine of white supremacy or romanticize the "happy slave" myth? However after months of research on this topic, the purpose for making ***COLORED CONFEDERATES: Myth or Matter of Fact?***, became clear, "to educate and correct the wrongful interpretations of this obscure corner of American history." ***COLORED CONFEDERATES: Myth or Matter of Fact?*** will explore the following causes (as well as others) that may have contributed to black southerners taking up arms and joining the battle, if they in fact did: Did they have loyalty to their masters, or rather to their homes and families? Losing 8% of its army due to desertion, was the South's severe manpower disadvantage a factor? Were blacks inundated with stories about Yankee soldiers treating them badly, as they indeed often did? In addition, ***COLORED CONFEDERATES: Myth or Matter of Fact?*** address possible causes for any misrepresentations: Can photographs clearly elaborate on the exact role of the blacks they portray or the position they fulfilled in the army or do they merely illustrate proximity and not approval of the Confederacy's cause? Since most of the information that exists about "fighting blacks" is anecdotal, are black Confederates promoters over-extrapolating from the available sources or are their conclusions partisan? Since some free blacks were Creole or mulatto and lived as white (in almost all respects), could these men have feared losing their special status with emancipation?

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

Trust me, you won't see this in your history book!

## **BIO**

Ken Wyatt

(Documentarian)

An award-winning mediamaker with "something to say", Ken's projects have been screened and distributed at numerous festivals, TV stations, independent theaters, museums, community events, and internet and educational venues worldwide.

Ken's latest film, ***COLORED CONFEDERATES: Myth or Matter of Fact?***, addresses an arguable corner of American history and explores the causes that contributed to blacks taking up arms for the Old South: if they in fact did.



Recently Wyatt's, *PRAY FOR ERIC* (a film about the rural Western North Carolinians whom allegedly supported Atlanta Olympics/abortion clinic serial bomber Eric Rudolph during his five-year evasion from the FBI) won "Best Coming of Age Film" at the Mountain Film Festival. In addition, it was an official selection of the DocMiami Film Festival, Black Cinema International Berlin, Bare Bones Film & Music Festival, San Diego Black Film Festival, and others. A side note: Ken says his brother told him to "up your life insurance before shooting this film" because he's the sole beneficiary.

*NIGGER OR NOT?* explores the origins, modern contexts and differing opinions regarding black (and white) Americans' use of the word 'nigger'. It won the 2003 Athens International Film & Video Festival - Documentary Competition; Boston International Film Festival - Outstanding Cinematic Achievement; 3rd Annual Chattahoochee Film & Video Competition - 1st Place; 2003 Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame - Honorable Mention. "I thought it was time someone directly addressed the subject on screen. My goal was to provide realistic commentary from Black America, non-blacks, and myself." says Wyatt. Ken's ten-minute pilot of *N.O.N.?*, named *REMOVE NIGGER FROM MY NAME*, was broadcast nationally on cable's "Unquote TV" and Philadelphia and Chicago PBS affiliates WHYY and WTTW, respectfully. He has won the Motion Picture Association of America Scholarship, Temple University's Future Faculty Fellowship, and Ramona Broomer Award for Creativity. Some of Wyatt's other projects include *ONE OF A KIND - Rufus Harley, the world's greatest jazz bagpiper*, *PORTRAIT OF JUANITA*, and *WHAT IS THAT JAZZ?*.

In addition, Ken was hired for various crew positions on many east coast film and video production shoots. He also was a news (and occasional sports) photographer/editor with nearly every major network television affiliate in Rochester, NY. Initially, Wyatt began his career as a jazz radio host/producer and a freelance music journalist contributing numerous articles, profiles, and album reviews for various national and international publications including *JAZZIZ*, *CD Review*, *The Beat*, *LA Jazz Scene*, and many others.

Ken earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in Film and Media Arts from Temple University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics Technology from Norfolk State University. Since 1997, he has been a college-level educator teaching at Temple University, Augusta State University, Hofstra University, and University of New Orleans. In 2007, Professor Wyatt joined East Carolina University's faculty.

Says Wyatt, "My goal has always been to produce compelling edu-tainment and share my passion for mediamaking with others."

*(For video clips and more information about Ken Wyatt, visit [www.IMDB.com](http://www.IMDB.com) and [www.kenwyatt.com](http://www.kenwyatt.com))*

## CREDITS

### **PRODUCER, DIRECTOR & WRITER**

Ken Wyatt

### **FILM IDEA ORIGINATOR**

Gerard M. Eggert, Ph.D.

### **DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Taylor Hellhake

### **ADDITIONAL CAMERAS**

Kyle Kettler  
James Gould  
Wesley Sommer  
Ken Wyatt

### **MUSIC SUPERVISOR**

Ed Jacobs

### **ORIGINAL FILM SCORE COMPOSER**

Musa James Muhammad

### **ANIMATION**

Warren Bass

### **LOCATION SOUND**

Lauren Hunter  
Kyle Kettler

### **PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS**

Thai Nguyen  
Dinecia Gates  
Katie Perros  
Christina Powell

### **EDITORS**

Jeremy Rosenberg  
Ken Wyatt

### **POST-PRODUCTION CONSULTANT**

Mary Sweeney

### **PROMOTIONAL GRAPHICS**

Kelly Smith

### **WEBSITE**

Beth Moeller

### **SOCIAL MEDIA, PUBLICITY, & MARKETING**

Chloe McCall  
Molly Weise

### **FUNDING**

Pitt County Council on the Arts  
East Carolina University  
ECU College of Fine Arts & Communication

### **STILLS**

A. "Chandler" Battaile  
Bobbie Chandler  
Corbis  
Flicker  
Kevin Levin  
Bruce Levine  
National Archives  
NC Museum of History  
Nelson Winbush

### **ADDITIONAL VIDEO/FOOTAGE**

H.K. Edgerton  
Nelson Winbush

### **MUSICIANS FOR ORIGINAL SCORE**

Musa James Muhammad  
Peter Weise

### **THANKS**

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