This is a reading course with an emphasis on surveying some of the most important issues and major interpretations of the origins of the Civil War, the war itself, and Reconstruction. As usual, we have attempted a balance of older “classic” works and more recent scholarship.

The reading will be relatively heavy but the written assignments relatively light. Over the course of the semester each student will write three reviews, five-pages each, of a book related to the week’s readings but not on the reading list. Students will consult with one of the professors for advice on the appropriate books. Everyone is expected to distribute their reviews at least two full days prior to the weekly meeting, meaning no later than mid-day on Tuesday of each week. Final grades will be based on the written work but participation in weekly discussions will weigh heavily.

Please note that there is a reading assignment for the first week. Students are expected to come prepared for the discussion. None of the book have been placed on reserve or ordered at a bookstore, but they should all be available at libraries throughout the city and most can be purchased used at online bookstores.

Sept. 1  CIVIL WAR REVISIONISM AND NEO-REVISIONISM


Sept. 8  THE ANSIALVERY ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL WAR

- William Sewell, *Ballots for Freedom*

Sept. 15  THE PROSLAVERY AND THE ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL WAR

- William J. Cooper, *Liberty and Slavery*
- Don Fehrenbacher, *The Slaveholding Republic*, pp. 204-338.
- Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*, pp. 1-84.
Sept. 22  THE CRISIS OF THE 1850’s

- David Potter, *The Impending Crisis*

Sept. 29  No classes scheduled

Oct. 6  SLAVERY AND ANTISLAVERY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

- Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation, and Human Rights*

Oct. 13 THE SECESSION CRISIS

- Kenneth M. Stampp, *And the War Came*, chap. 9, pp. 165-203.
- Russell McKlintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*

Oct. 20 THE SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION


Oct. 27 WAR AND EMANCIPATION

- Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War*

Nov. 10 RECONSTRUCTION: DUNNING AND HIS CRITICS

- William Dunning, *Reconstruction, Political and Economic*
Nov. 17 REVISIONISM

- Kenneth Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction*
- John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction after the Civil War*

Tuesday, Nov. 22 POST-REVISIONISM (Thursday class day in CUNY calendar)

- Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving

Dec. 1 THE FONER SYNTHESIS

- Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution*

Dec 8 BEYOND FONER

- Elliott West, “Reconstructing Race,” *Western Historical Quarterly* XXXIV:1 (Spring 2003): 7-26