27 September: The Causes of the Civil War

Today, southerners claim the war was about “rights” in the abstract. Scholars reject this “harmony history,” insisting that slavery – the right to buy, own, sell, and destroy humans as property – was the cause. We will also explain why the south was so unwilling to even consider giving up slavery.

OUTLINE

I. Battling Interpretations
   a. States’ Rights
   b. Slavery
   c. Engal’s Economics is Everything
   d. Culture Matters
   e. The Modern “Rights” Argument
   f. My Conclusions: way down at the base, it was

II. Slavery
   a. What is Slavery and What Were Slaves Doing?
   b. Would Slavery Have Ended from Economics Alone?
   c. What Did Abolitionists Ask of the South?
   d. What Slavery Meant to Southerners

III. Why the Southern States Went to War
   a. The South was not monolithic – what were the differences and why do they matter?
   b. What Did the Election of Lincoln Mean to the Deep South
   c. Why South Carolina and then the Lower South Seceded
   d. Why the Upper South Seceded

IV. “UNION” and Why the Northern States Went to War
   a. UNION – What it meant North and South
   b. Why was the North willing to “Let the Erring Sisters Go”
   c. What Changed and Why
   d. The North Went to War to PRESERVE THE UNION?

V. Conclusion: What Caused the War

SOME GOOD BOOKS:

Gary W. Gallagher, The Union War (2010)
Elizabeth R. Varon, Disunion! The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859 (2008)
Chandra Manning, What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War (2007)
Edward L. Ayers, What Caused the Civil War?: Reflections on the South and Southern History (2005)