

**The Graduate Center**  
**Ph.D. Program in History**  
**First Year Examination in American History**  
**May 19, 2022**

Please answer one question from PART I and one from PART II.

Make sure that you answer the questions that are posed. Avoid broad, untethered generalizations that are not grounded in discussions of events, movements, and issues. Cite authors and works that have deepened your understanding of points which you raise and on which your own interpretations are based. You may discuss differences of interpretation, but make sure that you offer your own. You have eight hours to complete the exam. Please remove your name from your response and email it as an attachment to [mweber@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:mweber@gc.cuny.edu).

Part I:

- 1.) The subtitle of Foner's book describes Reconstruction as an "unfinished revolution." To what extent (if at all) is this framework useful for interpreting race relations in the century after the Civil War? Please use examples from at least three decades in your response.
- 2.) Discuss how incorporating issues of gender or sexuality enhance or alter our understanding of late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. history. The answer should feature examples from at least three decades, and please be as specific as possible in your response.

Part II:

- 1.) Does a local or regional focus—through either case studies or as a general method of analysis—help us better understand 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. history? Or should historians lean toward a national (or international) framework? Use examples from both before and after 1945 in your response.
- 2.) To what extent do you find treatments of U.S. history since 1900 as a contest between reform and reaction effective? Explain by discussing multiple examples from both before and after 1945. Alternatively, if you see this concept as too vague and ever-changing to be useful, suggest and discuss another overriding theme that you find more compelling.