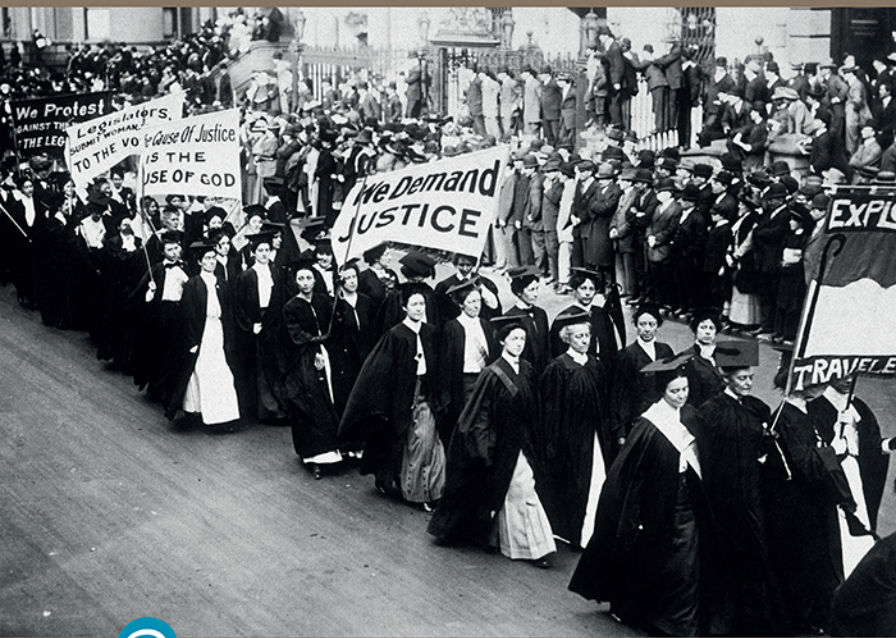


FOURTH EDITION

AMERICAN STORIES

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES • VOLUME 2: SINCE 1865



H. W. BRANDS • T. H. BREEN • ARIELA J. GROSS • R. HAL WILLIAMS

American Stories

A History of the United States

FOURTH EDITION

Volume 2: Since 1865

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Chapter 16 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Andrew Johnson Impeachment Ticket
 Artifacts as Evidence: 1867 Ohio Gubernatorial Ballot
 Bill Brands: Matthew Gains of Texas

Chapter 17 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: “Gold Washers” Snuff Box

Artifacts as Evidence: Sioux Ration Tickets

Chapter 18 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Thomas Edison Stock Ticker

Artifacts as Evidence: Underwood American Typewriter

Bill Brands: Are Strikes a Legitimate Tactic for Workers?

Chapter 19 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Knifemaker’s Shop Sign

Artifacts as Evidence: National Negro Business League Pin

Bill Brands: Is Growing Economic Inequality a Problem in America?

Chapter 20 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: William Jennings Bryan Campaign Items

Artifacts as Evidence: William McKinley “Full Dinner Pail” Lantern

Bill Brands: Mary E. Lease, Militant Populist

Chapter 21 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Sugarcane Machete

Artifacts as Evidence: Handmade Filipino Gun

Bill Brands: TR Makes Himself a Hero

Chapter 22 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Time Clock

Artifacts as Evidence: Poll Tax Receipt

Bill Brands: Tenement District

Chapter 23 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Jailed for Freedom Pin

Artifacts as Evidence: Teddy Roosevelt Teddy Bear

Bill Brands: The Poignant Case of William Howard Taft

Chapter 24 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Stubby the Military Mascot

Artifacts as Evidence: Yeoman (F) Uniform

Bill Brands: The Bad Luck of the Archduke

Chapter 25 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

Artifacts as Evidence: Ku Klux Klan Hood

Bill Brands: The “Smoke-Filled Room” of the Blackstone Hotel

Chapter 26 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Pismo Beach Clamshell Money

Artifacts as Evidence: Civilian Conservation Corps Cartoon

Bill Brands: FDR’s Court-Packing Plan

Chapter 27 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Edward C. Morse’s Purple Heart

Artifacts as Evidence: Japanese Incarceration Camp Luggage

Artifacts as Evidence: Women’s Coveralls

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Chapter 28 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Nuclear Propaganda Artifacts

Artifacts as Evidence: Korean War Cold Weather Gear

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Artifacts as Evidence: Ford Country Squire Station Wagon

Artifacts as Evidence: Greensboro Lunch Counter

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Chapter 30 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Huey Helicopter

Artifacts as Evidence: Apollo 11 Lander

Bill Brands: The 1968 Democratic Convention

Chapter 31 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: Nixon and Mao Ping Pong Paddle Set

Artifacts as Evidence: AIDS Memorial Quilt Panel

Bill Brands: Long Lines at the Gas Pumps: First Oil Shock

Chapter 32 Introduction

Artifacts as Evidence: World Trade Center Officer’s Tool

Artifacts as Evidence: Michelle Obama Inaugural Gown

Bill Brands: The Berlin Wall Comes Down

Revel™ Source Collection Documents

The following documents are available in the Revel version of *American Stories*, Fourth Edition, at the end of each chapter. They do not appear in the print version of the book.

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- President Johnson Vetoes the Civil Rights Act of 1866, 1866
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- Albion W. Tourgee, Letter on Ku Klux Klan Activities, 1870
- The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, 1865–1870

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- Patent for Barbed Wire (1874)
- Chief Red Cloud, Speech After Wounded Knee, 1890
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- Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” 1893

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- Leonora M. Barry, *Report to the Knights of Labor* (1887)
- George Engel, Address by a Condemned Haymarket Anarchist, 1886
- Andrew Carnegie, “*Wealth*,” *North American Review*, 1889
- Thomas Edison, *The Success of the Electric Light* (October 1880)
- “*Statement from the Pullman Strikers*” (1894)
- Technology and the Shoe Industry in *Fincher’s Trade Review* (1864)

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- The Morrill Act (1862)
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- “Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League,” 1898

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- Lyndon B. Johnson, The War on Poverty, 1964
- Lyndon B. Johnson, *Why We Are in Vietnam* (1965)
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- *Roe v. Wade* (1973)
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- Republican Contract With America, 1994
- Bill Clinton, Answers to the Articles of Impeachment, January 11, 1999
- George W. Bush, Address to Congress, 9/20/2001
- Barack H. Obama, *A More Perfect Union* ____ (2008)
- Pres. Obama Delivers a Statement on the Ferguson Grand Jury’s Decision Not to Bring Charges (2014)

Preface

In This Edition

Teachers familiar with previous editions of *American Stories* will find that this fourth edition expands impressively on its predecessors. The major changes include:

Revel for *American Stories*

Revel™

Revel is an interactive learning environment that deeply engages students and prepares them for class. Media and assessment integrated directly within the authors' narrative lets students read, explore interactive content, and practice in one continuous learning path. Thanks to the dynamic reading experience in Revel, students come to class prepared to discuss, apply, and learn from instructors and from each other.

Learn More about Revel

<http://www.pearson.com/revel>

Rather than simply offering opportunities to read about and study U.S. history, Revel facilitates deep, engaging interactions with the concepts that matter most. By providing opportunities to improve skills in analyzing and interpreting sources of historical evidence, for example, Revel engages students directly and immediately, which leads to a better understanding of course material. A wealth of student and instructor resources and interactive materials can be found within Revel. Some of our favorites are mentioned in the information that follows.

For more information about all the tools and resources in Revel and access to your own Revel account for *American Stories*, go to www.pearsonhighered.com/revel.

American Stories, 4e, features many of the dynamic interactive elements that make Revel unique. In addition to the rich narrative content, *American Stories* includes the following:

- Engaging Video Program:
 - Chapter opening videos. These videos capture the attention of today's students and provide a brief introduction to the key themes and content in the chapter.
 - Author guided videos. Videos, featuring author Bill Brands, presented in a friendly and inviting style, provide learners with complementary and compelling content not in the narrative.
 - Artifacts as Evidence videos. Created in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, these videos focus on a wide range of unique artifacts from the Smithsonian collection, using these artifacts as starting points for explaining and illuminating the American historical experience.
- *Charting the Past* modules combine interactive maps, documents, and images to create in-depth opportunities for students to explore the relationship between geography, demography, and history.
- Key Term Definitions: Key Terms appear in bold and include pop-up definitions inline that allow students to see the meaning of a word or phrase while reading the text, providing context.
- Interactive Maps: Interactive maps throughout the text include a pan/zoom feature and an additional feature that allows students to toggle on and off map details.
- Assessments: Multiple-choice end-of-module and end-of-chapter quizzes test student's knowledge of the chapter content, including dates, concepts, and major events.
- Chapter Review: The Chapter Review—which contains a timeline, Key Term flashcards, an image gallery, video gallery and review questions—is laid out using interactive features that allow students to click on specific topics to learn more or test their knowledge about concepts covered in the chapter.
- Source Collections: An end-of-chapter source collection includes three to five documents relevant to the chapter content. Each document includes header notes, questions, and audio. Students can highlight and make notes on the documents.
- Journal Prompts: Revel is rich in opportunities for writing about topics and concepts and the Journal Prompts included are one way in which students can explore themes presented in the chapter. The ungraded Journal Prompts are included inline with content and can be shared with instructors.
- Shared Writing Prompts: These prompts provide peer-to-peer feedback in a discussion board, developing critical thinking skills and fostering collaboration among a specific class. These prompts appear between modules.
- Essay Prompts: These prompts appear in Pearson's Writing Space and can be assigned and graded by instructors.

ENGAGE STUDENTS AND IMPROVE CRITICAL THINKING

- **Chapter introductory vignettes**
- **Chapter images, maps, and figures** are bigger, visually interesting, and informative. Photographs and pieces of fine art encapsulate emotional and historical meaning. Captions provide valuable information that allows for a fuller understanding of the people who lived the American story.
- **Quick Check Questions** give students the opportunity to review as they read, leading to a more complete understanding of chapter content.

SUPPORT INSTRUCTORS

- **Learning Objective questions** highlight the important issues and themes. Each is linked to one of the chapter's main sections, and they are all emphasized in the chapter overview.

- **Key Terms** throughout the chapters highlight important topics as they are introduced.
- The **thematic timeline** ending each chapter reinforces the essential points of the narrative.

SUPPLEMENTS FOR INSTRUCTORS

Instructor's Resource Center. www.pearsonhighered.com/irc. This website provides instructors with additional text-specific resources that can be downloaded for classroom use. Resources include the Instructor's Resource Manual, PowerPoint presentations, and the Test Bank. Register online for access to the resources for *American Stories*.

Instructor's Resource Manual. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the Instructor's Resource Manual includes an Introduction to Revel section that walks the user through the Revel product using screen shots that identify and explain the numerous Revel features, detailed chapter overviews, and discussion questions.

Test Bank. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the Test Bank contains more than 1,700 multiple-choice, and essay test questions.

PowerPoint Presentations. Strong PowerPoint presentations make lectures more engaging for students. Available at the Instructor's Resource Center for download, www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, the PowerPoints contain chapter outlines and full-color images of maps and art. All PowerPoints are ADA compliant

MyTest Test Bank. Available at www.pearsonmytest.com, MyTest is a powerful assessment generation program that helps instructors easily create and print quizzes and exams. Questions and tests can be authored online, allowing instructors ultimate flexibility and the ability to efficiently manage assessments anytime, anywhere! Instructors can easily access existing questions and edit, create, and store using simple drag-and-drop and Word-like controls.

A Note to My Fellow Teachers

H.W. BRANDS I've been teaching American history for thirty-five years now, and in that time I've noticed something. Our students come to our classrooms with increasingly varied backgrounds. Some students are better prepared, having taken A.P. courses and acquired a solid grounding in historical facts, interpretations, and methods. Other students arrive less well prepared. Many of these are international students; some are students for whom English is a second or third language. Some of these, and some others, simply never took American history in high school.

Different students require different methods of teaching. Students well versed in American history do best with a book that presupposes their preparation and takes them beyond it. Students for whom the subject is new or otherwise challenging are more likely to succeed with a book that focuses on essential themes, and offers features designed to facilitate the learning process. Any textbook can be intimidating, as even

my best students have reminded me over the years. For that reason, whatever reduces the intimidation factor can help students succeed.

This is the philosophy behind *American Stories: A History of the United States*. A single purpose has motivated the creation of this book: to enhance the accessibility of American history and thereby increase students' chances of success. This goal is what brought me to the classroom, and it's one I think I share with you. If *American Stories: A History of the United States* contributes to achieving this goal, we all—teachers and students—will be the winners.

The most frequent complaint I get from students regarding history textbooks is that the mass of information is overwhelming. This complaint provided the starting point for *American Stories*, which differs from standard textbooks in two fundamental respects.

First, we reduced the number of topics covered, only retaining the essential elements of the American story. We surveyed over five hundred instructors from across the country to find out what topics were most commonly covered in a typical survey classroom. Once we received the results, we culled the most commonly taught topics and selected them for inclusion in *American Stories*.

Second, we integrated a variety of study aids into the text. These were originally developed with the assistance of Dr. Kathleen T. McWhorter and Debby Kalk. Kathleen is a professor and author with more than 40 years of experience who specializes in developmental reading, writing, composition, and study skills. Debby is an instructional designer and author with more than 20 years of experience producing materials. With the help of both Kathleen and Debby, *American Stories* is the first college-level U.S. history survey completely designed to meet the needs of the instructor and the student.

Beyond this, *American Stories* places great emphasis on a compelling narrative. We—I and my fellow authors—have used significant incidents and episodes to reflect the dilemmas, the choices, and the decisions made by the American people as well as by their leaders. Our story of the American past includes the major events that have shaped the nation. We examine the ways in which the big events influenced the lives of ordinary people. How did the American Revolution alter the fortunes and prospects of men, women, and children around the country? What was it like for blacks and whites to live in a plantation society?

Each chapter begins with a vignette that launches the narrative of that chapter and identifies its themes. Some of the vignettes have special meaning for the authors. The vignette that opens Chapter 26, on the Great Depression of the 1930s, reminds me of the stories my father used to tell about his experiences during that trying decade. His family wasn't nearly as hard hit as many in the 1930; Like Pauline Kael, he was a college student and like her, he saw how hard it was for many of his classmates to stay in school. He himself was always working at odd jobs, trying to make ends meet. Times were hard, yet he learned the value of a dollar—something he impressed on me as I was growing up.

By these means and others, I and my fellow authors have attempted to bring history to life for students. We believe that while history rarely repeats itself, the story of the American past is profoundly relevant to the problems and challenges facing the nation today.

PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

The pedagogical elements in *American Stories* have been carefully constructed to be accessible to students and to support a better, deeper understanding of U.S. history. These elements fall into two categories, Narrative Pedagogy that appears throughout the main body of each chapter, and Study Resources collected at the ends of chapters.

- **Narrative Pedagogy** Each chapter follows a consistent pedagogy that maximizes student learning. *Focus Questions* in the chapter openers preview the main idea for each major section and provide a framework for the entire chapter. As a reminder to students, these questions are repeated in the margins after each major section. *Quick Check Questions* follow each subsection for immediate reinforcement. *Key Terms* are highlighted throughout each chapter and are defined in the text's glossary.
- **Study Resources** Each chapter concludes with series of study resources. A chapter *Timeline* surveys the chronology of key events with page references for easy look-up of information. The *Chapter Review* connects back to the Spotlight Questions, providing brief answers that summarize the main points of each section.

A FINAL WORD

My fellow authors and I, with the assistance of the professionals at Pearson, have devoted a great deal of effort to making a textbook of which we are all very proud. Our goal with *American Stories* is to convey our excitement for history to our students in the most accessible manner possible. We've done what we can toward this goal, but we realize that our success depends on you, the classroom instructors. Our job is to make your job easier. All of us—authors and instructors—are in this together. So keep up the good work, and thanks!

A Note to Students: Tips for Studying History

Nearly every semester for many years I have taught an introductory course in American history. Over that time I've come to appreciate the value of devoting the first class session to the fundamentals of studying and learning. Different students have different learning styles, but the experiences of the many students I've taught have convinced me that certain general techniques produce good results.

I always tell students that these techniques aren't the only way to study; they may have their own methods. But I also tell them that these techniques have worked for a lot of students in the past, and might work for them. Here they are:

1. **History is a *story***, not just an assortment of facts. The connections are critical. How do the events and people you are reading or hearing about relate to one another? This is what historians want to know.
Therefore:
Find the story line, the plot. Identify the main characters, the turning points. How did the story turn out? Why did it turn out that way and not some other?
2. **Dates matter, but order matters more.** Students often get the idea that history is all about dates. It's not. It's about what caused what (as in a story: see Rule 1 above). Dates are useful only in that they help you remember what

happened before what else. This is crucial, because the thing that came first might have caused, or at least influenced, the thing that came later.

Therefore:

Concentrate on the order of events. If you do, the dates will fall into place by themselves.

3. **History takes time**—to happen, and to learn. History is a story. But like any richly detailed story, it can take time to absorb.

Therefore:

Spread out your studying. If you have three hours of reading to do, do it over three days for an hour a day. If you have a test coming up, give yourself two weeks to study, allocating a half hour each day. You'll learn more easily; you'll retain more. And you'll have a better chance to enjoy the story.

4. **History's stories are both spoken and written.** That's why most classes involve both lectures and readings.

Therefore:

Read the assigned materials before the corresponding lectures. It's tempting not to—to let the reading slide. But resist the temptation. Advance reading makes the lectures far more understandable—and far more enjoyable.

5. **Less is more**, at least in note-taking. Not every word in the text or lecture is equally important. The point of notes is to distill a chapter or a lecture into a smaller, more manageable size.

Therefore:

Hit the high points. Focus on where the text and lecture overlap. Write down key phrases and words; don't write complete sentences. And if you are using a highlighter on a book, be sparing.

6. **History is a twice-told tale.** History is both what happened and how we've remembered what happened. Think of your first exposure to a particular historical topic as history *happening*, and your second exposure as history *being remembered*. An awareness of both is necessary to making the history stick in your head.

Therefore:

Take a rest after reading a chapter or attending a lecture.

Then go back and review. Your class notes should not be comprehensive (see Rule 5), but as you go back over them, you will remember details that will help you fill out your notes. While you are reviewing a chapter, ask yourself what your notes on the chapter mean, and why you highlighted this particular phrase or that.

To summarize, when approaching a history course:

- **Find the story line.**
- **Concentrate on the order of events.**
- **Spread out your studying.**
- **Read the assignments before the lectures.**
- **Hit the high points in taking notes.**
- **Take a rest, then review.**

A final suggestion: Allow enough time for this course so you aren't rushed. If you give yourself time to get into the story, you'll come to enjoy it. And what you enjoy, you'll remember.

Best wishes,
H. W. BRANDS

About the Authors



H.W. BRANDS Henry William Brands was born in Oregon, went to college in California, sold cutlery across the American West, and earned graduate degrees in mathematics and history in Oregon and Texas. He taught at Vanderbilt University and Texas A&M University before joining the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin, where he holds the

Jack S. Blanton Sr. Chair in History. He writes on American history and politics, with books including *The General vs. the President, Reagan, The Man Who Saved the Union, Traitor to His Class, Andrew Jackson, The Age of Gold, The First American*, and *TR*. Several of his books have been bestsellers; two, *Traitor to His Class* and *The First American*, were finalists for the Pulitzer Prize. He lectures frequently on historical and current events, and can be seen and heard on national and international television and radio programs. His writings have been translated into Spanish, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Ukrainian.



T. H. BREEN T.H. Breen, currently the William Smith Mason Professor of American History at Northwestern University Emeritus, the James Marsh Professor At-Large at the University of Vermont, and the John Kluge Professor of American Law and Governance at the Library of Congress, received a Ph.D. from Yale University. At North-

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ARIELA J. GROSS Ariela Gross is John B. and Alice R. Sharp Professor of Law and History, and Co-Director of the Center for Law, History and Culture, at the University of Southern California. She has been a visiting Professor at Stanford University, Tel Aviv University, the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, the Université de Paris 8, and Kyoto Uni-

versity. Her book *What Blood Won't Tell: A History of Race on Trial in America* (Harvard University Press, 2008, ppb. 2010), a Choice

Outstanding Academic Title for 2009, was awarded the J. Willard Hurst Prize for outstanding scholarship in sociolegal history by the Law and Society Association, the Lillian Smith Book Award for a book that illuminates the people and problems of the South, and the American Political Science Association's award for the best book on race, ethnicity, and politics. Gross is also the author of *Double Character: Slavery and Mastery in the Antebellum Southern Courtroom* (Princeton University Press, 2000; ppb., University of Georgia Press, 2006), and numerous articles and book chapters. She edited a symposium in the February 2017 issue of *Law and History Review on Slavery and The Boundaries of Legality, Past and Present*. Her research has been supported by a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, an American Council for Learned Societies Collaborative Research Fellowship in 2017-19 and a Frederick J. Burkhardt Fellowship in 2003-04, a Stanford Center for the Advanced Study of the Behavioral Sciences Fellowship, as well as an NEH Long-Term Fellowship at the Huntington Library. She is currently working on a comparative history of law, race, slavery and freedom in the Americas with Alejandro De La Fuente, the Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American History and Economics at Harvard University.



R. HAL WILLIAMS R. Hal Williams was professor of history emeritus at Southern Methodist University. He received his A.B. from Princeton University in 1963 and his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1968. His books include *The Democratic Party and California Politics, 1880–1896* (1973); *Years of Decision: American Politics in the 1890s* (1978); *The*

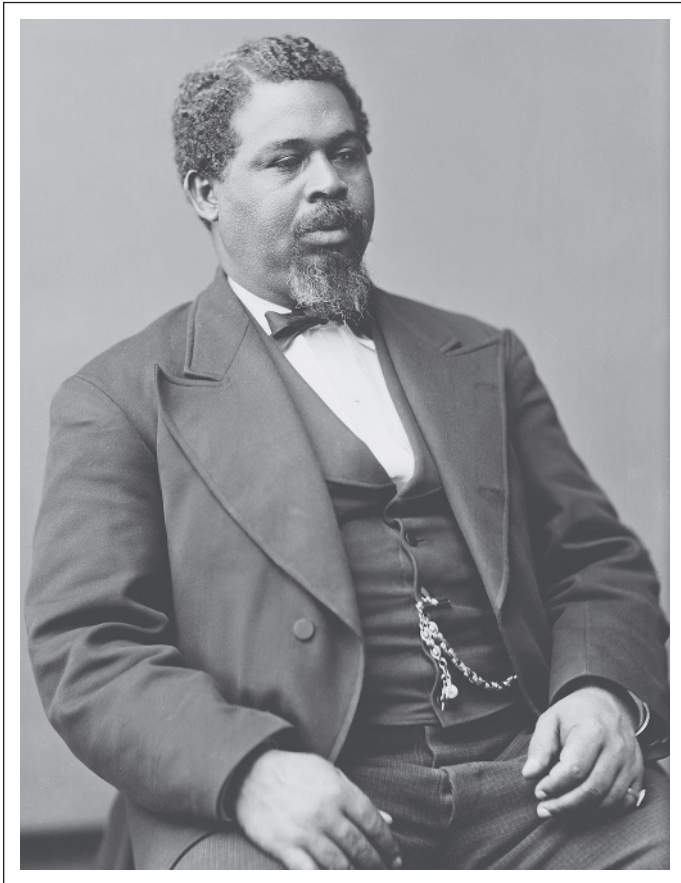
Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age (1990); and *Realigning America: McKinley, Bryan, and the Remarkable Election of 1896* (2010). A specialist in American political history, he taught at Yale University from 1968 to 1975 and came to SMU in 1975 as chair of the Department of History. From 1980 to 1988, he served as dean of Dedman College, the school of humanities and sciences, and then as dean of Research and Graduate Studies. In 1980, he was a visiting professor at University College, Oxford University. Williams has received grants from the American Philosophical Society and the National Endowment for the Humanities, and he has served on the Texas Committee for the Humanities. Mr. Williams passed away in February of 2016.

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Chapter 16

The Agony of Reconstruction 1865–1877



ROBERT SMALLS With the help of several black crewmen, Robert Smalls—then twenty-three years old—commandeered the *Planter*, a Confederate steamship used to transport guns and ammunition, and surrendered it to the Union vessel, USS *Onward*. Smalls provided distinguished service to the Union during the Civil War, and after the war went on to become a successful politician and businessman.



Contents and Focus Questions

- 16.1** The President Versus Congress
What conflicts arose consecutively involving President Lincoln and then President Johnson and Congress during Reconstruction?
- 16.2** Reconstructing Southern Society
What problems did southern society face during Reconstruction?
- 16.3** Retreat from Reconstruction
Why did Reconstruction end?
- 16.4** Reunion and the New South
Who benefited and who suffered from the reconciliation of the North and South?

Robert Smalls and Black Politicians During Reconstruction

During the Reconstruction period immediately following the Civil War, African Americans struggled to become equal citizens of a democratic republic. Remarkable black leaders won public office. Robert Smalls of South Carolina was perhaps the most famous and widely respected southern black leader of the era.

Born a slave in 1839, Smalls was allowed as a young man to live and work independently, hiring his own time from a master who may have been his half brother. Smalls worked as a sailor and trained himself to be a pilot in Charleston Harbor. When the Union navy blockaded Charleston in 1862, Smalls, who was working on a Confederate steamship called the *Planter*, saw a chance to win his freedom. At three o'clock in the morning on May 13, 1862, when the white officers were ashore, he took command of the vessel and its slave crew, sailed it out of the fortified harbor, and surrendered it to the Union navy. Smalls immediately became a hero to antislavery northerners who were seeking evidence that the slaves were willing and able to serve the Union. The *Planter* became a Union army transport, and Smalls was made its captain after being commissioned as an officer. During the remainder of the war, he rendered conspicuous and gallant service as captain and pilot of Union vessels off the coast of South Carolina.

Like other African Americans who fought for the Union, Smalls had a distinguished political career during Reconstruction, serving in the South Carolina constitutional convention, the state legislature, and the U.S. Congress. He was also a shrewd businessman and owned extensive properties in Beaufort, South Carolina, and its vicinity. The electoral organization Smalls established was so effective that he controlled local government and was elected to Congress even after the election of 1876 had placed the state under the control of white conservatives bent on depriving blacks of political power. Organized mob violence defeated him in 1878, but he bounced back to win a contested congressional election in 1880. He did not leave the House of Representatives for good until 1886, when he lost another contested election.

To defeat him, Smalls's white opponents charged that he had a hand in the corruption that was allegedly rampant in South Carolina during Reconstruction. But careful historical investigation shows that he was, by the standards of the time, an honest and responsible public servant. In the South Carolina convention of 1868 and in the state legislature, he championed free and compulsory public education. In Congress, he fought for federal civil rights laws. Not especially radical on social questions, he sometimes bent over backward to accommodate what he regarded as the legitimate interests and sensibilities of South Carolina whites. Like other middle-class black political leaders in Reconstruction-era South Carolina, he can perhaps be faulted for not doing more to help poor blacks gain access to land of their own. But in 1875, he sponsored congressional legislation that opened for purchase at low prices the land in his own district that the federal government had confiscated during the war. As a result, blacks soon owned three-fourths of the land in the Beaufort area.

Robert Smalls spent the later years of his life as U.S. collector of customs for the port of Beaufort, a beneficiary of the patronage that the Republican Party continued to provide for a few loyal southern blacks. But the loss of real political clout for Smalls and men like him was a tragic consequence of the fall of Reconstruction.

For a few years, black politicians such as Robert Smalls exercised more power in the South than they would for another century. But political developments on the national and regional stage made Reconstruction "an unfinished revolution," promising but not delivering true equality for newly freed African Americans. National party politics; shifting priorities among northern Republicans; white southerners' commitment to white supremacy, which was backed by legal restrictions and massive extralegal violence against blacks—all combined to stifle the promise of Reconstruction.

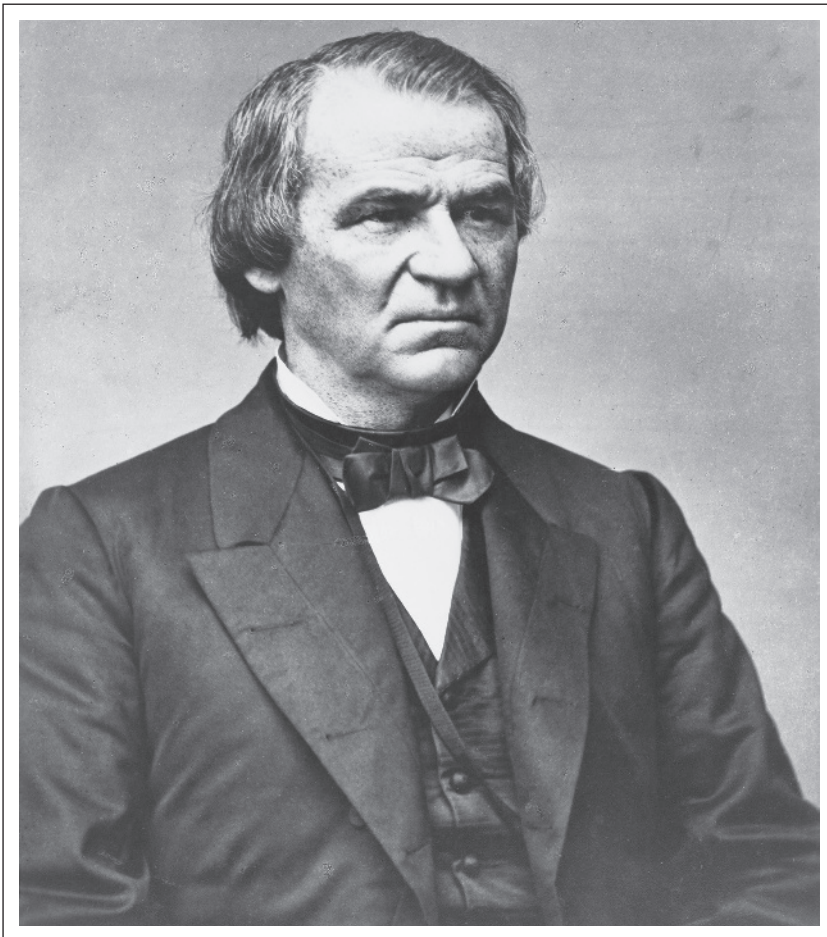
Yet during the Reconstruction era, American society was transformed—by new ways of organizing labor and family life, new institutions within and outside the government, and new ideologies about the role of institutions and government in social and economic life. Many of the changes begun during Reconstruction would revolutionize American life.

16.1 The President Versus Congress

What conflicts arose consecutively involving President Lincoln and then President Johnson and Congress during Reconstruction?

Reconstructing the Union after the South's defeat was one of the most difficult challenges American policymakers ever faced. The Constitution provided no firm guidelines, for the Framers had not anticipated that the country would divide into warring sections. After emancipation became a northern war aim, a new issue compounded the problem: How far should the federal government go to secure freedom and civil rights for 4 million former slaves?

The debate led to a major political crisis. Advocates of a minimal Reconstruction policy favored quickly restoring the Union with no protection for the freed slaves except prohibiting slavery. Proponents of a more radical policy demanded guarantees that "loyal" men would displace the Confederate elite in power and that blacks would acquire basic rights of American citizenship as preconditions for readmitting the southern states. The White House favored the minimal approach. Congress came to endorse the more radical and thoroughgoing form of Reconstruction. The resulting struggle between Congress and the chief executive was the most serious clash between two branches of government in the nation's history.



PRESIDENT JOHNSON Andrew Johnson became president in 1865 after the assassination of President Lincoln. He was the first president to be impeached, after a lengthy battle with Congress over the fate of Reconstruction.

16.1.1 Wartime Reconstruction

Tension between the president and Congress over how to reconstruct the Union began during the war. Preoccupied with achieving victory, Lincoln never set forth a final and comprehensive plan to bring rebellious states back into the fold. But he favored a lenient and conciliatory policy toward southerners who would give up the struggle and repudiate slavery. In December 1863, he issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, which offered a full pardon to all southerners (except certain Confederate leaders) who would take an oath of allegiance to the Union and accept emancipation. This **Ten Percent Plan** provided that once 10 percent or more of the voting population of any occupied state had taken the oath, they could set up a loyal government. By 1864, Louisiana and Arkansas, states that Union troops occupied, had established Unionist governments. Lincoln's policy was meant to shorten the war. He hoped to weaken the southern cause by making it easy for disillusioned or lukewarm Confederates to switch sides and support emancipation by insisting that the new governments abolish slavery.

Congress was unhappy with Lincoln's Reconstruction experiments and in 1864 refused to seat the Unionists that Louisiana and Arkansas elected to the House and Senate. A minority of congressional Republicans—the strongly antislavery **Radical Republicans**—favored protection for black rights (especially black male suffrage) as a precondition for readmitting southern states. But a larger group of congressional moderates opposed Lincoln's plan because they did not trust the repentant Confederates who would play a major role in the new governments. Congress also believed the president was exceeding his authority by using executive powers to restore the Union. Lincoln operated on the theory that secession, being illegal, did not place the Confederate states outside the Union in a constitutional sense. Since individuals and not states had defied federal authority, the president could use his pardoning power to certify a loyal electorate, which could then function as the legitimate state government.

After refusing to recognize Lincoln's Ten Percent governments, Congress passed a Reconstruction bill of its own in July 1864. Known as the **Wade-Davis Bill**, it required that 50 percent of the voters take an “ironclad” loyalty oath before the restoration process could begin. Once this had occurred, those who could swear they had never willingly supported the Confederacy could vote in an election for delegates to a constitutional convention. The bill did not provide for black suffrage, but it did require states to adopt constitutions banning slavery. Faced with this attempt to nullify his own program, Lincoln exercised a pocket veto by refusing to sign the bill before Congress adjourned. He said that he did not want to be committed to any single Reconstruction plan. The bill's sponsors responded angrily, and Lincoln's relations with Congress reached their low point.

Congress and the president remained stalemated on the Reconstruction issue for the rest of the war. During his last months in office, however, Lincoln showed a willingness to compromise. He tried to obtain recognition for the governments he had nurtured in Louisiana and Arkansas, but seemed receptive to setting other conditions—perhaps including black suffrage—for readmitting those states in which wartime conditions had prevented execution of his plan. However, he was assassinated before he made his intentions clear, leaving historians to speculate whether his quarrel with Congress would have been resolved. Given Lincoln's record of flexibility, the best bet is that he would have come to terms with the majority of his party.

Ten Percent Plan

Reconstruction plan proposed by President Abraham Lincoln as a quick way to readmit the former Confederate states. It called for pardon of all southerners except Confederate leaders, and for readmission to the Union for any state after 10 percent of its voters signed a loyalty oath and the state abolished slavery.

Radical Republicans

Congressional Republicans who insisted on black suffrage and federal protection of civil rights of African Americans.

Wade-Davis Bill

In 1864, Congress passed the Wade-Davis Bill to counter Lincoln's Ten Percent Plan for Reconstruction. The bill required that a majority of a former Confederate state's white male population take a loyalty oath and promise permanent freedom to African Americans. President Lincoln pocket vetoed the bill.

Quick Check

In what ways did Congress thwart presidential Reconstruction?

16.1.2 Andrew Johnson at the Helm

Andrew Johnson, the man an assassin's bullet suddenly made president, attempted to put the Union back together on his own authority in 1865. But his policies set him at odds with Congress and the Republican Party and provoked the most serious crisis in the history of relations between the executive and legislative branches of the federal government.

Johnson's background shaped his approach to Reconstruction. Born into poverty in North Carolina, he migrated to eastern Tennessee, where he worked as a tailor. Lacking formal schooling, he was illiterate until adult life. Entering politics as a Jacksonian Democrat, his railing against the planter aristocracy made him the spokesman for Tennessee's non-slaveholding whites and the most successful politician in the state. He advanced from state legislator to congressman to governor and then, in 1857, the U.S. Senate.

In 1861, Johnson was the only senator from a Confederate state who remained loyal to the Union and continued to serve in Washington. But his Unionism and defense of the common people did not include antislavery sentiments. Nor was he friendly to blacks. In Tennessee, he had objected only to the fact that slaveholding was the privilege of a wealthy minority. He wished that "every head of family in the United States had one slave to take the drudgery and menial service off his family."

During the war, while acting as military governor of Tennessee, Johnson endorsed Lincoln's emancipation policy to destroy the power of the hated planter class rather than as recognition of black humanity. He was chosen as Lincoln's running mate in 1864 because a pro-administration Democrat, who was a southern Unionist in the bargain, would strengthen the ticket. No one expected this fervent white supremacist to become president. Radical Republicans initially welcomed Johnson's ascent to the nation's highest office. Their hopes made sense given Johnson's fierce loyalty to the Union and his apparent agreement with the Radicals that ex-Confederates should be severely treated. Unlike Lincoln, who had spoken of "malice toward none and charity for all," Johnson seemed likely to punish southern "traitors" and prevent them from regaining political influence. Only gradually did the deep disagreement between the president and the Republican congressional majority become evident.

The Reconstruction policy that Johnson initiated on May 29, 1865, created uneasiness among the Radicals, but most Republicans were willing to give it a chance. Johnson placed North Carolina, and eventually other states, under appointed provisional governors chosen mostly from among prominent southern politicians who had opposed the secession movement and had rendered no conspicuous service to the Confederacy. The governors were responsible for calling constitutional conventions and ensuring that only "loyal" whites could vote for delegates. Participation required taking the oath of allegiance that Lincoln had prescribed earlier. Confederate leaders and officeholders had to apply for individual presidential pardons to regain their political and property rights. Johnson made one significant addition to the list of the excluded: all those possessing taxable property exceeding \$20,000 in value. He thus sought to prevent his longtime adversaries—the wealthy planters—from participating in the Reconstruction of southern state governments.

Johnson urged the convention delegates to declare the ordinances of secession illegal, repudiate the Confederate debt, and ratify the **Thirteenth Amendment** abolishing slavery. After state governments had been reestablished under constitutions meeting these conditions, the president assumed that the Reconstruction process would be complete and that the ex-Confederate states could regain their full rights under the Constitution.

The results of the conventions, which prewar Unionists and backcountry yeoman farmers dominated, were satisfactory to the president but troubling to many congressional Republicans. Delegates in several states approved Johnson's recommendations only grudgingly or with qualifications. Furthermore, all the constitutions limited suffrage to whites, disappointing the many northerners who hoped, as Lincoln had, that at least some African Americans—perhaps those who were educated or had served in the Union army—would be given the vote. Republican uneasiness turned to anger when the new state legislatures passed **Black Codes** restricting the freedom of former slaves. Especially troubling were vagrancy and apprenticeship laws that forced African Americans to work and denied them a free choice of employers. Blacks in some states could not testify in court on the same basis as whites and were subject to a separate penal code. The Black Codes looked like slavery under a new guise. More upsetting to northern public opinion in general was the election of prominent ex-Confederates to Congress in 1865.

Thirteenth Amendment

Ratified in 1865, it prohibits slavery and involuntary servitude.

Black Codes

Laws passed by southern states immediately after the Civil War to maintain white supremacy by restricting the rights of the newly freed slaves.



THE AFTERMATH OF EMANCIPATION “Slavery Is Dead?” asks this 1866 cartoon by Thomas Nast. To the cartoonist, the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 and the North’s victory in the Civil War meant little difference to the treatment of the freed slaves in the South. Freed slaves convicted of crimes often endured the same punishments as had slaves—sale, as depicted in the left panel of the cartoon; or beatings, as shown on the right.

Quick Check

Why did northerners and Republicans grow uneasy and disillusioned with Johnson’s approach to Reconstruction?

Johnson himself was partly responsible for these events. Despite his lifelong feud with the planter class, he was generous in granting pardons to members of the old elite who came to him, hat in hand, and asked for them. When former Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens and other proscribed ex-rebels were elected to Congress even though they had not been pardoned, Johnson granted them special amnesty so they could serve.

The growing rift between the president and Congress came into the open in December, when the House and Senate refused to seat the recently elected southern delegations. Instead of recognizing the state governments Johnson had called into being, Congress established a joint committee to review Reconstruction policy and set further conditions for readmitting the seceded states.

16.1.3 Congress Takes the Initiative

The struggle over how to reconstruct the Union ended with Congress setting policy all over again. The clash between Johnson and Congress was a matter of principle and could not be reconciled. Johnson, an heir of the Democratic states’ rights tradition, wanted to restore the prewar federal system as quickly as possible and without change except that states would not have the right to legalize slavery or to secede.

Most Republicans wanted guarantees that the old southern ruling class would not regain regional power and national influence by devising new ways to subjugate

blacks. They favored a Reconstruction policy that would give the federal government authority to limit the political role of ex-Confederates and protect black citizenship.

Republican leaders—except for a few extreme Radicals such as Charles Sumner—lacked any firm conviction that blacks were inherently equal to whites. They did believe, however, that in a modern democratic state, all citizens must have the same basic rights and opportunities, regardless of natural abilities. Principle coincided with political expediency; southern blacks, whatever their alleged shortcomings, were likely to be loyal to the Republican Party that had emancipated them, and thus increase that party's power in the South.

The disagreement between the president and Congress became irreconcilable in early 1866, when Johnson vetoed two bills that had passed with overwhelming Republican support. The first extended the life of the **Freedmen's Bureau**—a temporary agency set up to provide relief, education, legal help, and assistance in obtaining land or work to former slaves. The second was a civil rights bill to nullify the Black Codes and guarantee to freedmen “full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property as is enjoyed by white citizens.”

Johnson's vetoes shocked moderate Republicans. He succeeded in blocking the Freedmen's Bureau bill, although a modified version later passed. But his veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 was overridden, signifying that the president was now hopelessly at odds with most of the legislators from what was supposed to be his own party. Congress had not overridden a presidential veto since Franklin Pierce was president in the early 1850s.

Johnson soon revealed that he intended to place himself at the head of a new conservative party uniting the few Republicans who supported him with a reviving Democratic Party that was rallying behind his Reconstruction policy. In preparation for the elections of 1866, Johnson helped found the National Union movement to promote his plan to readmit the southern states to the Union without further qualifications. A National Union convention in Philadelphia called for electing men to Congress who endorsed the presidential plan for Reconstruction.

Meanwhile, the Republican majority on Capitol Hill, fearing that Johnson would not enforce civil rights legislation or that the courts would declare such laws unconstitutional, passed the **Fourteenth Amendment**. This, perhaps the most important of all the constitutional amendments, gave the federal government responsibility for guaranteeing equal rights under the law to all Americans. Section 1 defined national citizenship for the first time as extending to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States.” The states were prohibited from abridging the rights of American citizens and could not “deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person ... equal protection of the laws.” The amendment was sent to the states with the understanding that southerners would have no chance of being readmitted to Congress unless their states ratified it (see Table 16.1).

Freedmen's Bureau

Agency established by Congress in March 1865 to provide freedmen with shelter, food, and medical aid, and to help them establish schools and find employment. The bureau was dissolved in 1872.

Fourteenth Amendment

Ratified in 1868, it provided citizenship to ex-slaves after the Civil War and constitutionally protected equal rights under the law for all citizens. Radical Republicans used it to enact a congressional Reconstruction policy in the former Confederate states.

TABLE 16.1 RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS, 1865–1870

Amendment	Main Provisions	Congressional Passage (2/3 majority in each house required)	Ratification Process (3/4 of all states required, including ex-Confederate states)
13	Slavery prohibited in United States	January 1865	December 1865 (27 states, including 8 southern states)
14	National citizenship; state representation in Congress reduced proportionally to number of voters disfranchised; former Confederates denied right to hold office; Confederate debt repudiated	June 1866	Rejected by 12 southern and border states, February 1867; Radicals make readmission of southern states hinge on ratification; ratified July 1868
15	Denial of franchise because of race, color, or past servitude explicitly prohibited	February 1869	Ratification required for readmission of Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia; ratified March 1870

The congressional elections of 1866 served as a referendum on the Fourteenth Amendment. Johnson opposed the amendment on the grounds that it created a “centralized” government and denied states the right to manage their own affairs; he also counseled southern state legislatures to reject it, and all except Tennessee followed his advice. But bloody race riots in New Orleans and Memphis weakened the president’s case for state autonomy. These and other atrocities against blacks made it clear that the southern state governments were failing abysmally to protect the “life, liberty, or property” of the ex-slaves.

Johnson further hurt his cause by taking the stump on behalf of candidates who supported his policies. In his notorious “swing around the circle,” he toured the nation, slandering his opponents in crude language and engaging in undignified exchanges with hecklers. Enraged by southern inflexibility and the antics of a president who acted as if he were still campaigning in the backwoods of Tennessee, northern voters repudiated the administration. The Republican majority in Congress increased to a solid two-thirds in both houses, and the Radical wing of the party gained strength at the expense of moderates and conservatives.

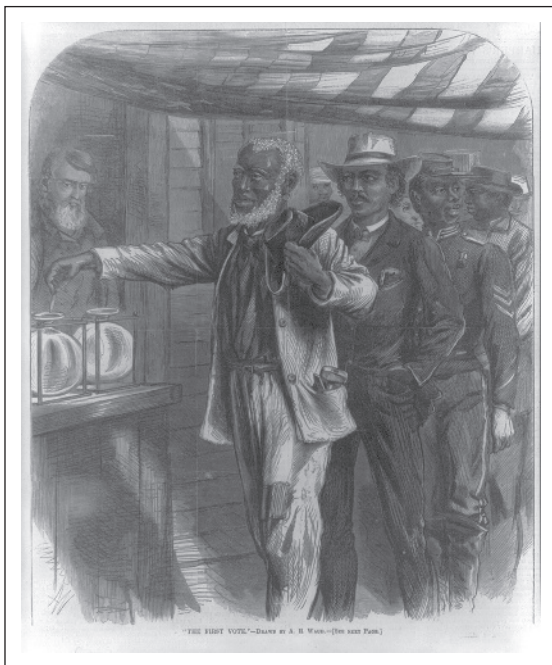
Quick Check

What events caused Congress to take the initiative in passing the Fourteenth Amendment?

16.1.4 Past and Present

The Reconstruction Amendments

The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution are known as the “Reconstruction Amendments,” because they were passed in the aftermath of the Civil War to secure the rights of newly freed slaves. The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery; the Fourteenth Amendment established the rights of due process and equal protection of the laws for all persons; and the Fifteenth Amendment provided for the right to vote. Yet despite these hard-won changes to the Constitution, the rights that Radical Republicans sought to secure for the freed people did not become a reality for over a century. Reconstruction is often referred to as the “unfinished revolution” because the Reconstruction Amendments, as well as the legislation passed to protect civil rights during the 1860s and 1870s, remained to a great extent dead on the books—used only to protect the rights of business corporations. Today, the meaning of these amendments, especially the Fourteenth, is still hotly contested—and in particular the question of whether equal protection of the laws requires affirmative action to remedy past injustice, and whether due process includes the right to reproductive choice.



THE FIRST VOTE This drawing portrays “The First Vote” of African American freed men after the end of slavery and the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment.



FIGHTING FOR VOTING RIGHTS Protestors in the 1960s demanded legislation to enforce the Fifteenth Amendment, winning passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, a full century after the end of the Civil War.

16.1.5 Congressional Reconstruction Plan Enacted

Congress now implemented its own plan of Reconstruction. In 1867 and 1868, it nullified the president's initiatives and reorganized the South. Generally referred to as **Radical Reconstruction**, the measures actually represented a compromise between genuine Radicals and more moderate Republicans.

Radicals such as Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts and Congressmen Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and George Julian of Indiana wanted to reshape southern society before readmitting ex-Confederates to the Union. Their program of "regeneration before Reconstruction" required an extended period of military rule, confiscation and redistribution of large landholdings among the freedmen, and federal aid for schools to educate blacks and whites for citizenship. But most Republican congressmen found such a program unacceptable because it broke too sharply with American traditions of federalism and regard for property rights, and might have taken decades to implement.

The first Reconstruction Act, passed over Johnson's veto on March 2, 1867, reorganized the South into five military districts (see Map 16.1). But military rule would last for only a short time. Subsequent acts allowed for quickly readmitting any state that framed and ratified a new constitution providing for black suffrage. Ex-Confederates disqualified from holding federal office under the Fourteenth Amendment were prohibited from voting for delegates to the constitutional conventions and in the elections to ratify the conventions' work. Since blacks could participate in this process, Republicans thought they had ensured that "loyal" men would dominate the new governments. Radical Reconstruction was based on the dubious assumption that once blacks had the vote, they would be able to protect themselves against white supremacists' efforts to deny them their rights. The Reconstruction Acts thus signaled a retreat from the true Radical position that sustained federal authority was needed to complete the transition from slavery to freedom and prevent the resurgence of the South's old ruling class. Most Republicans were unwilling to embrace centralized government and

Radical Reconstruction

The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 divided the South into five military districts. They required the states to guarantee black male suffrage and to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment as a condition of their readmission to the Union.



Quick Check

What was Radical Reconstruction, and how did it differ from previous plans?

an extended period of military rule over civilians. Yet a genuine spirit of democratic idealism did give legitimacy and fervor to the cause of black male suffrage. Enabling people who were so poor and downtrodden to have access to the ballot box was a bold and innovative application of the principle of government by the consent of the governed. The problem was enforcing equal suffrage under conditions then existing in the postwar South.

16.1.6 The Impeachment Crisis

The first obstacle to enforcing congressional Reconstruction was resistance from the White House. Johnson sought to thwart the will of Congress by obstructing the plan. He dismissed officeholders who sympathized with Radical Reconstruction and countermanded the orders of generals in charge of southern military districts who zealously enforced the new legislation. Conservative Democrats replaced Radical generals. Congress then passed laws to limit presidential authority over Reconstruction. The Tenure of Office Act required Senate approval for the removal of officials whose appointment had needed the consent of the Senate. Another measure limited Johnson's authority to issue orders to military commanders.

Johnson objected that the restrictions violated the constitutional doctrine of the separation of powers. When it became clear that the president was resolute in fighting for his powers and using them to resist establishing Radical regimes in the southern states, congressmen began to call for his impeachment. A preliminary effort foundered

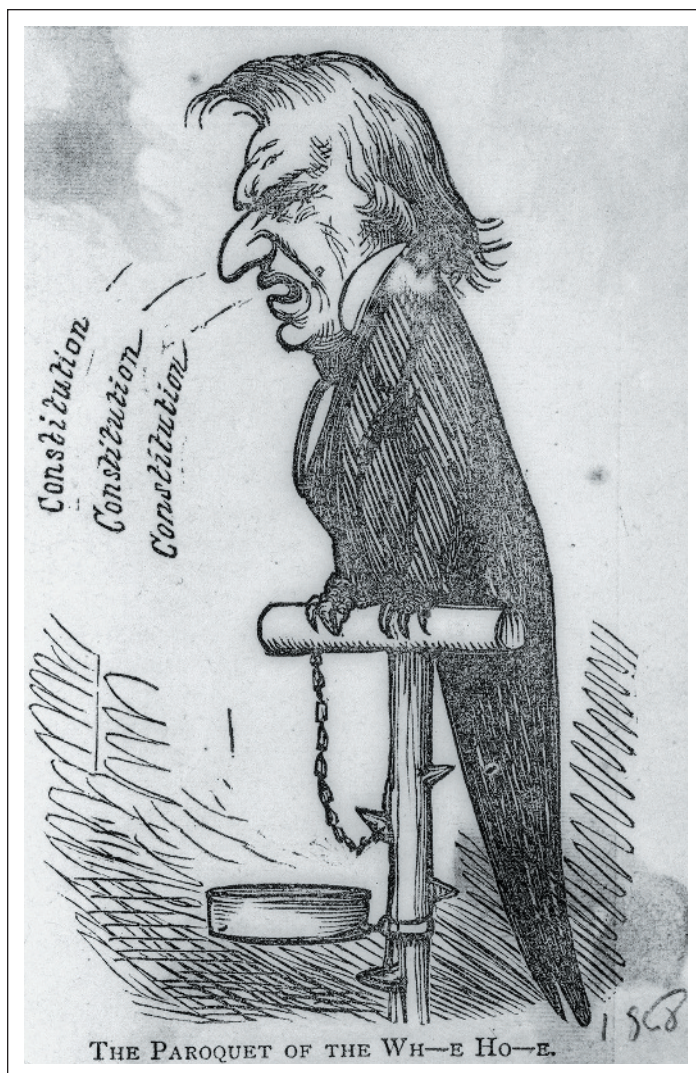
in 1867, but when Johnson tried to discharge Secretary of War Edwin Stanton—the only Radical in the cabinet—and persisted in his efforts despite the disapproval of the Senate, the pro-impeachment forces gained in strength.

In January 1868, Johnson ordered General Grant, who already commanded the army, to replace Stanton as head of the War Department. But Grant had his eye on the Republican presidential nomination and refused to defy Congress. General Lorenzo Thomas then agreed to serve. Faced with this violation of the Tenure of Office Act, the House impeached the president on February 24, and he went on trial before the Senate.

Because seven Republican senators broke with the party leadership and voted for acquittal, the effort to convict Johnson and remove him from office fell one vote short of the necessary two-thirds. This outcome resulted in part from a skillful defense. Attorneys for the president argued that the constitutional provision that a president could be impeached only for "high crimes and misdemeanors" referred only to indictable offenses, and that the Tenure of Office Act did not apply to Stanton because Lincoln, not Johnson, had appointed him.

The core of the prosecution's case was that Johnson had abused the powers of his office to sabotage congressional Reconstruction. Obstructing the will of the legislative branch, they claimed, was grounds for conviction even if no crime had been committed. The Republicans voting for acquittal could not endorse such a broad view of the impeachment power. They feared that removing a president for essentially political reasons would threaten the constitutional balance of powers and allow legislative supremacy over the executive.

IMPEACHED Andrew Johnson's successful defense against conviction in his impeachment case centered on his invocation of the Constitution to defend his presidential rights and powers. Impeached in 1868, Johnson escaped conviction by a single vote.



Failure to remove Johnson from office embarrassed Republicans, but the episode did ensure that Reconstruction in the South would proceed as the majority in Congress intended. Johnson influenced the verdict by pledging to enforce the Reconstruction Acts, and he held to this promise during his remaining months in office. Unable to depose the president, the Radicals had at least neutralized his opposition to their program.

Quick Check

What prompted Congress to initiate impeachment against Johnson, and what was the outcome of that action?

16.2 Reconstructing Southern Society

What problems did southern society face during Reconstruction?

The Civil War left the South devastated, demoralized, and destitute. Slavery was dead, but what this meant for future relationships between whites and blacks was unclear. Most southern whites wanted to keep blacks adrift between slavery and freedom—without rights, like the “free Negroes” of the Old South. Blacks sought to be independent of their former masters and viewed acquiring land, education, and the vote as the best means of achieving this goal. Thousands of northerners who went south after the war for materialistic or humanitarian reasons hoped to extend Yankee “civilization” to what they considered an unenlightened and barbarous region. For most of them, this meant aiding the freed slaves.

The struggle between these groups bred chaos, violence, and instability. This was scarcely an ideal setting for an experiment in interracial democracy, but one was attempted nonetheless. Its success depended on massive and sustained federal support. To the extent that this was forthcoming, progressive reform could be achieved. When it faltered, the forces of reaction and white supremacy were unleashed.

16.2.1 Reorganizing Land and Labor

The Civil War scarred the southern landscape and wrecked its economy. One devastated area—central South Carolina—looked to an 1865 observer “like a broad black streak of ruin and desolation.” Atlanta, Columbia, and Richmond were gutted by fire. Factories were dismantled or destroyed. Railroads were torn up.



DESTRUCTION The city of Richmond, VA devastated by the war.

Investment capital for rebuilding was inadequate. The wealth represented by Confederate currency and bonds had melted away, and emancipation had divested the propertied classes of their most valuable and productive assets—the slaves. According to some estimates, the South's per capita wealth in 1865 was only about half what it had been in 1860.

Recovery could not begin until a new labor system replaced slavery. Most northerners and southerners assumed that southern prosperity still depended on cotton and that the plantation was the most efficient unit for producing the crop. Hindering efforts to rebuild the plantation economy were lack of capital, the conviction of southern whites that blacks would work only under compulsion, and the freedmen's resistance to labor conditions that recalled slavery.

Blacks preferred to determine their own economic relationships, and for a time they had reason to hope the federal government would support their ambitions. The freed slaves were, in effect, fighting a two-front war. Although they were grateful for federal aid in ending slavery, freed slaves' ideas about freedom often contradicted the plans of their northern allies. Many ex-slaves wanted to hold on to the family-based communal work methods that they used during slavery. Freed slaves in South Carolina, for example, attempted to maintain the family task system rather than adopt the individual piecework system northern capitalists pushed. Many ex-slaves opposed plans to turn them into wage laborers who produced exclusively for a market. Finally, freed slaves often wanted to stay on the land their families had spent generations farming rather than move elsewhere to occupy land as individual farmers.

While not guaranteeing all of the freed slaves' hopes for economic self-determination, the northern military attempted to establish a new economic base for them. General Sherman, hampered by the many black fugitives that followed his army on its famous march, issued an order in January 1865 that set aside the islands and coastal areas of Georgia and South Carolina for exclusive black occupancy on 40-acre plots. Furthermore, the Freedmen's Bureau was given control of hundreds of thousands of acres of abandoned or confiscated land and was authorized to make 40-acre grants to black settlers for three-year periods, after which they could buy at low prices. By June 1865, 40,000 black farmers were working on 300,000 acres of what they thought would be their own land.

But for most of them, the dream of "40 acres and a mule," or some other arrangement that would give them control of their land and labor, was not to be realized. President Johnson pardoned the owners of most of the land Sherman and the Freedmen's Bureau consigned to the ex-slaves, and Congress rejected proposals for an effective program of land confiscation and redistribution. Among the considerations prompting congressional opposition to land reform were a tenderness for property rights, fear of sapping the freedmen's initiative by giving them something they allegedly had not earned, and the desire to restore cotton production as quickly as possible to increase agricultural exports and stabilize the economy. Consequently, most blacks in physical possession of small farms failed to acquire title, and the mass of freedmen did not become landowners. As an ex-slave later wrote, "they were set free without a dollar, without a foot of land, and without the wherewithal to get the next meal even."

Despite their poverty and landlessness, ex-slaves were reluctant to settle down and commit themselves to wage labor for their former masters. Many took to the road, hoping to find something better. Some were still expecting land, but others were simply trying to increase their bargaining power. One freedman recalled that an important part of being free was that "we could move around [and] change bosses." By the end of 1865, many freedmen had still not signed up for the coming season; anxious planters feared that blacks were plotting to seize land by force. Within weeks, however, most holdouts signed for the best terms they could get.

One common form of agricultural employment in 1866 was a contract-labor system. Under this system, workers committed themselves for a year in return for a fixed wage, much of which was withheld until after the harvest. Since many planters



SHARECROPPERS The Civil War brought emancipation to slaves, but the sharecropping system kept many of them economically bound to their employers. At the end of a year, the sharecropper tenants might owe most—or all—of what they had made to their landlord.

drove hard bargains, abused their workers, or cheated them at the end of the year, the Freedmen’s Bureau reviewed and enforced the contracts. But bureau officials had differing notions of what it meant to protect African Americans from exploitation. Some stood up for the rights of the freedmen; others served as allies of the planters.

An alternative capital–labor relationship—**sharecropping**—eventually replaced the contract system. First in small groups known as “squads,” and later as individual families, black sharecroppers worked a piece of land for a fixed share of the crop, usually one-half. Credit-starved landlords liked this arrangement because it did not require much expenditure before the harvest, and the tenant shared the risks of crop failure or a fall in cotton prices.

African Americans initially viewed sharecropping as a step toward landownership. But during the 1870s, it evolved into a new kind of servitude. Croppers had to live on credit until their cotton was sold, and planters or merchants “provisioned” them at high prices and exorbitant interest. Creditors deducted what was owed to them out of the tenant’s share of the crop. This left most sharecroppers with no net profit at the end of the year—and often with a debt they had to work off in subsequent years.

16.2.2 Slavery by Another Name?

While landless rural blacks were being reduced to economic dependence, those in towns and cities were living in an increasingly segregated society. The Black Codes of 1865 attempted to require separation of the races in public places and facilities; when federal authorities overturned most of the codes as violations of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, private initiative and community pressure often achieved the same end. In some cities, blacks resisted being consigned to separate streetcars by appealing to the

sharecropping

After the Civil War, the southern states adopted a sharecropping system as a compromise between former slaves who wanted land of their own and former slave owners who needed labor. The landowners provided land, tools, and seed to a farming family, who in turn provided labor. The resulting crop was divided between them, with the farmers receiving a “share” of one-third to one-half of the crop.

Quick Check

What were the conflicting visions of the planters, the Freedmen’s Bureau agents, and the freed slaves with regard to what a new labor system should look like?