

EIGHTH EDITION

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Creating a Nation and a Society

CONCISE EDITION | VOLUME 2



Gary B. Nash | Julie Roy Jeffrey | John R. Howe | Peter J. Frederick
Allen F. Davis | Allan M. Winkler | Charlene Mires | Carla Gardina Pestana

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Creating a Nation and a Society

Volume 2

Since 1865

EIGHTH EDITION

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Preface

The Yoruba people of West Africa have an old saying: “However far the stream flows, it never forgets its source.” Why, we wonder, do ancient societies such as the Yoruba find history so important, while modern American students question its relevance? This book aims to end such skepticism about the usefulness of history, and to help us grasp what the Yoruba have long understood.

As the twenty-first century progresses, history is of central importance in preparing us to exercise our rights and responsibilities as a free people within an ethnically and culturally diverse society caught up in an interdependent global system. Studying history cannot make good citizens, but without knowledge of history, we cannot understand the choices before us and assess the alternatives we face. Lacking a collective memory of the past, we lapse into a kind of amnesia, unaware of the human condition and the long struggles of men and women everywhere to deal with the problems of their day as they seek to create a better society. Without historical knowledge, we deprive ourselves of awareness about the wide range of approaches people have taken to political, economic, and social life, to solving problems, and to surmounting the obstacles in their way.

History has a deeper, even more fundamental importance: the cultivation of the private person whose self-knowledge and self-respect provide the foundation for a life of dignity and fulfillment. Historical memory is the key to self-identity: to seeing one’s place in the long stream of time, in the story of humankind.

When we study our own history, we see a rich and extraordinarily complex human story. This country United States, whose written history began with a convergence of Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans, has always been a nation of diverse peoples—a magnificent mosaic of cultures, religions, and skin shades. This book explores how American society over the past several centuries assumed its present shape and developed its present forms of government; how as a nation we have conducted our foreign affairs and managed our economy; how science, technology, religion, and reform have changed our lives; how as individuals and in groups we have lived, worked, loved, married, raised families, voted, argued, protested, and struggled to fulfill our dreams and the noble ideals of the American experiment.

Several ways of making the past understandable distinguish this book from traditional textbooks. The coverage of public events such as presidential elections, diplomatic treaties, and economic legislation is integrated with the

private human stories that pervade them. Above all, this is the story of the American people. Within a chronological framework, we have woven together our history as a nation, with all its political, social, and human elements. When, for example, we consider national political events, we analyze their impact on life at the state and local levels. We describe wars not only as they unfolded on the battlefield and in diplomatic conference rooms, but also on the home front where they have been history’s greatest motor of social change. The interaction of ordinary and extraordinary Americans runs as a theme throughout this book.

In *The American People*, we have tried to show the “humanness” of our history as it unfolded in people’s everyday lives. Throughout these pages, we have often used the words of unnoticed Americans to capture the authentic human voices of those who participated in and responded to epic issues such as war, slavery, industrialization, and reform in the framework of their own lives.

This Edition

This Edition revises the Concise Seventh Edition of *The American People* in light of recent scholarship and retains important features from the Sixth Edition. Its organization is structured to facilitate student learning and accommodate itself more easily to the usual length of the college semester. The book is divided into four parts and contains seven chapters in each section. In Volume One, part one covers the period to 1815, while part two carries the narrative through Reconstruction for a total of fourteen chapters. Since many surveys begin with Reconstruction, part three of the in Volume Two repeats that Chapter 14 and contains seven additional chapters, ending with an analysis of the 1920s. The final part of the book spans the period from the Great Depression and New Deal to the recent past. Volume Two contains fifteen chapters.

We have retained the balance of political, social, and economic history, as well as the emphasis on the interpretive connections and the “humanness” of history—the presentation of history as revealed through the lives of ordinary as well as extraordinary Americans and the interplay of social and political factors. Each chapter has a clear structure, beginning with a chapter outline and then a personal story feature, called *American Stories*, recalling the experience of an ordinary or lesser-known American. Chapter 3, for example, is introduced with an account of the life of Anthony Johnson, who came to Virginia as a slave and along with his wife, Mary, managed to gain his

freedom. This brief anecdote introduces the overarching themes and major concepts of the chapter, in this case the triracial character of American society, the gradual tightening of racial slavery, and the instability of late seventeenth century colonial life. In addition, *American Stories* launches the chapter by engaging the student with a human account, suggesting that history was shaped by ordinary as well as extraordinary people. Following the personal story—and easily identifiable by its visual separation from the anecdote and the body of the chapter—is a brief chapter overview that links the American story and its themes to the text.

This edition contains one of the most popular features of *The American People*: the two-page feature entitled *Recovering the Past*. Every chapter includes this feature. The “RTPs,” as the authors affectionately call them, introduce students to the fascinating variety of evidence—ranging from novels, political cartoons, and diaries, to houses and popular music—that historians have learned to employ in reconstructing the past. Each RTP gives basic information about the source and its use by historians and then raises questions—called *Reflecting on the Past*—for students to consider as they study the example reproduced for their inspection.

We have maintained and strengthened the international framework so students will think across international boundaries and understand the ways in which our history intersects with the world. Rather than developing a separate discussion of global events, we have woven an international narrative into our analysis of the American past. Many maps underscore the international dimension of the text.

New to This Edition

Our changes to the Eighth Edition include:

Volume I

- Chapter 1 incorporates the most recent research into language, genetics, and archeology to illuminate the arrival of peoples into the Americas and expands the discussions of native peoples and their societies.
- Chapter 2 amplifies the discussion of Spain and its conquests in the Americas. It expands the treatment of religious issues during the Reformation and connects expansion to European religious politics. It also updates slave trade numbers in keeping with recent research.
- Chapter 3 updates, clarifies, and expands the analysis of the early colonies and provides further information on the role of religion in early settlement. It reorganizes the presentation of materials across sections. It contrasts French and English settlement patterns and includes a new table showing types of colonies and change over time.
- Chapter 4 expands the discussion of gendered division of labor and incorporates the latest research on slave imports in both the narrative and supporting visual materials. It

extends the treatment of slave rebellions, including the Stono rebellion, and the analysis of slave religion. Further, it explains the roots of the multiple Anglo—French wars in the Glorious Revolution and enhances the discussion of diversity and the religious context of the Great Awakening.

- Chapter 5 connects an enlarged discussion of trade policy to mercantilism and the Navigation Acts. It uses recent research to update the discussion of Washington’s altercation with the French in the backcountry.
- Chapter 6 reorders material for better flow and clarity. It explains British war strategy more fully. Included is a new discussion showing how the Congress accrued a war debt that would eventually pose a problem for the government and for the men who were paid in vouchers. It provides more coverage of the postwar economic situation and of the political developments after the war. It discusses the historiographical debate over the Constitution’s ratification.
- Chapter 7 gives biographical information on Alexander Hamilton and John Adams. It clarifies two different approaches to the Indian question in the early Republic and links native resistance to the assimilation policy. The War of 1812 appears in as a struggle between red, white, and black and the Haitian revolution is shown in its Atlantic world context. The chapter explains the social context of early republic political crises and the significance of the revolution of 1800. A new travel journal appears in the “Recovering the Past” section.
- Chapter 8 highlights the importance of new means of communication to economic growth and contrasts American and European industrial development. New material appears on the link between industrial practices and illness.
- Chapter 9 emphasizes regional differences within the South and includes material reflecting new scholarship on the significance of the Missouri Compromise, its relationship to the coming of Civil War, and its contribution to growing differences between the North and South. The narrative identifies the unhealthy conditions of slave life and shows that masked the desire for profit. There is added material has been added on the southern response to the Nat Turner Rebellion revolt.
- Chapter 10 clarifies the differences between southern revivalism and that inspired by Charles Finney. It reveals the linkage between notions of woman’s cultural sphere and responsibility and female commitment to reform (especially abolitionism).
- Chapter 11 includes new material on the Mexican War and a discussion of the simple technology used by early miners on the mining frontier.
- Chapter 12 emphasizes how the crises of the 1850s made slavery an issue that northerners could not ignore while the profitability of slavery during the 1850s made slavery

an institution southerners were determined to retain. The chapter provides more details on Bleeding Kansas to show that its importance was not due to the number of casualties but to its value as propaganda. New scholarship is woven into the discussion of Lincoln.

- Chapter 13 updates casualty figures and the role of suffering and disease during the Civil War. It suggests how Europeans thought about the conflict and the ways in which immigrants participated in the war.
- Chapter 14 has small additions to the narrative to make it clearer and more complete.

Volume II: Chapter 14 (above) is also repeated in Volume II. Chapter 15 . . .

- Chapter 15 strengthens the global context to draw stronger comparison between westward expansion and global imperialism. It adds to the discussion of Wounded Knee. In a variety of ways, the chapter enriches the analysis of African American life and racism, both north and south. The section on the formation of the People's Party now appears in Chapter 16.
- Chapter 16 includes new material on Coxe's Army.
- Chapter 17 adds an introduction to progressivism to the section on Reforming the City section.
- Chapter 18 provides material on the ideology of global imperialism and expands the explanation of the "white man's burden."
- Chapter 19 improves the discussion of the progressive movement to acknowledge introduction of urban reform in the previous chapter.
- Chapter 21 adds material about the automobile in Europe and installment credit.
- Chapter 22 reveals the human dimension of the Great Depression more fully and extends its coverage of women. It includes new material on Herbert Hoover and FDR and amplifies coverage of the Second New Deal.
- Chapter 23 introduces new material on the coming of Pearl Harbor and extends the description of the World War II itself, in both Europe and the Pacific. It adds material on the dawn of the atomic age.
- Chapter 24 provides new material on the background of the Korean War.
- Chapter 25 extends the discussion of our consumer culture.
- Chapter 26 supplements the treatment of civil rights, LBJ and the Great Society, Vietnam, student activism, and the counterculture with added material and expands the discussion of women.
- Chapter 28 introduces material on George W. Bush and humanitarianism in Africa. It shows the various dimensions of conservatism and the difference between

political and social conservatism. It contrasts the reverential view of Ronald Reagan today with his actual record. Finally the chapter is updated, with a final section, on titled *The Recent Past*, dealing that deals with the economy, health care, cultural and political conflict, and foreign issues during Barack Obama's presidency.

Goals and Themes of the Book

Our primary goal is to provide students with a rich, balanced, and thought-provoking treatment of the American past. By this, we mean a history that treats the lives and experiences of Americans of all national origins and cultural backgrounds, at all class levels of society, and in all regions of the country. It also means a history that seeks connections between the many factors—political, economic, technological, social, religious, intellectual, and biological—that have molded and remolded American society over four centuries. And, finally, it means a history that encourages students to think about how they share an inherited and complex past filled with both notable achievements and thorny problems.

The only history befitting a democratic nation is one that inspires students to initiate a frank and informed dialogue with their past. Historians continually revise their understanding of what happened in the past. Historians reinterpret history because they find new evidence on old topics, add new voices, and respond with new sensibilities to ask questions about the past that did not interest earlier historians. Therefore, we hope to promote class discussions and conversations organized around four recurring themes we see as basic to the American historical experience:

1. **The Peopling of America** What diverse peoples have come together to form this nation? How have their experiences shaped our larger national history? What tensions did they face in America? What contributions have they made?
2. **Democratic Dreams** How has our political system—and how have the principles that sustain it—developed over time? What changes and continuities have helped shape American values? How has the nation coped with the needs and demands of diverse groups in the quest for a better society?
3. **Economic, Religious, and Cultural Change** In what ways have economic, technological, and environmental developments affected America? How have religious shifts altered the nation? How have reform movements shaped the character of American life?
4. **America and the World** How have global events and trends shaped the United States? How has America's relationship with other nations and people evolved? What impact has America had on the rest of the world?

In writing a history that revolves around these themes, we have tried to convey two dynamics that operate in all societies. First, as we observe people continuously adjusting to new developments, such as industrialization, urbanization, and internationalism, over which they seemingly have little control, we realize that people are not paralyzed by history but rather are the fundamental creators of it. People retain the ability, individually and collectively, to shape the world in which they live and thus in considerable degree to control their own lives.

Second, we emphasize the connections that always exist among social, political, economic, and cultural events. Just as our individual lives are never neatly parceled into separate spheres of activity, the life of a society is made up of a complicated and often messy mixture of forces, events, and accidental occurrences. In this text, political, economic, technological, and cultural factors are intertwined like strands in a rope as ordinary and extraordinary American people seek to fulfill their dreams.

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Chapter 14

The Union Reconstructed



Learning Objectives

- 14.1** Outline how the end of the American civil war affected the lives of its different stakeholders
- 14.2** Report how the national Reconstruction politics after the American Civil War mirrored extension of the civil rights struggles
- 14.3** Recount the goals, dreams, resources, and conflict of the different groups in the postwar period between 1865 and 1877
- 14.4** Recognize the diverse coalitions that made up the new state governments elected under congressional Reconstruction
- 14.5** Summarize the struggles, Reconstruction Efforts, and the educational, social, and economic changes that paved the way for equal citizenship and political participation

American Stories

Blacks and Whites Redefine Their Dreams and Relationships

In April 1864, a year before Lincoln's assassination, Robert Allston died, leaving his wife Adele and his daughter Elizabeth to manage their many rice plantations. With Union troops moving through coastal South Carolina in the winter of 1864–1865, Elizabeth's sorrow turned to "terror" as Union soldiers arrived and searched for liquor, firearms, and valuables. The women fled. Later, Yankee troops encouraged the Allston slaves to take furniture, food, and other goods from the Big House. Before they left, the Union soldiers gave the keys to the crop barns to the semifree blacks.

After the war, Adele Allston swore allegiance to the United States and secured a written order for the newly freed African Americans to relinquish those keys. She and Elizabeth returned in the summer of 1865 to reclaim the plantations and reassert white authority. She was assured that although the blacks had guns, "no outrage has been committed against the Whites except in the matter of property." But property was the issue. Possession of the keys to the barns, Elizabeth wrote, would be the "test case" of whether former masters or former slaves would control land, labor, and its fruits, as well as the subtle aspects of interpersonal relations.

Nervously, Adele and Elizabeth Allston confronted their ex-slaves at their old home. To their surprise, a pleasant reunion took place as the Allston women greeted the blacks by name and caught up on their lives. A trusted black foreman handed over the keys to the barns. This harmonious scene was repeated elsewhere.

But at one plantation, the Allston women met defiant and armed African Americans, who ominously lined both sides of the road as the carriage arrived. An old black driver, Uncle Jacob, was unsure whether to yield the keys to the barns full of rice and corn, put there by slave labor. Mrs. Allston insisted. As Uncle Jacob hesitated, an angry young man shouted: "If you give up the key, blood'll flow." Uncle Jacob slowly slipped the keys back into his pocket.

The African Americans sang freedom songs and brandished hoes, pitchforks, and guns to discourage anyone from going to town for help. Two blacks, however, slipped away to find some Union officers. The Allstons spent the night safely, if restlessly, in their house. Early the next morning, they were awakened by a knock at the unlocked front door. There stood Uncle Jacob. Silently, he gave back the keys.

The story of the keys reveals most of the essential human ingredients of the Reconstruction era. Defeated southern whites were determined to resume control of both land and labor. The law and federal enforcement generally supported property owners. The Allston women were friendly to the blacks in a maternal way and insisted on restoring prewar deference in black–white relations. Adele and Elizabeth, in short, both feared and cared about their former slaves.

The African American freedpeople likewise revealed mixed feelings toward their former owners: anger, loyalty, love, resentment, and pride. They paid respect to the Allstons but not to their property and crops. They wanted not revenge, but economic independence and freedom.

Northerners played a most revealing role. Union soldiers, literally and symbolically, gave the keys of freedom to the freed men and women but did not stay around long enough to guarantee that freedom. Despite initially encouraging blacks to plunder the master’s house and seize the crops, in the crucial encounter after the war, northern officials had disappeared. Understanding the limits of northern help, Uncle Jacob ended up handing the keys to land and liberty back to his former owner. Before long, however, blacks realized that if they wanted to ensure their freedom, they had to do it themselves.

This chapter describes what happened to the conflicting goals and dreams of three groups as they sought to redefine new social, economic, and political relationships during the postwar Reconstruction era. Amid vast devastation and bitter race and class divisions, Civil War survivors sought to put their lives back together. But how could victorious but variously motivated northern officials, defeated but defiant southern planters, and impoverished but hopeful African Americans each fulfill their conflicting goals? The Reconstruction era would be divisive, leaving a mixed legacy of human gains and losses.

14.1: The Bittersweet Aftermath of War

14.1 Outline how the end of the American civil war affected the lives of its different stakeholders

“There are sad changes in store for both races,” the daughter of a Georgia planter wrote in the summer of 1865. To understand the bittersweet nature of Reconstruction, we must look at the state of the nation after the assassination of President Lincoln.

14.1.1: The United States in April 1865

Constitutionally, the “Union” faced a crisis in April 1865. What was the status of the 11 former Confederate states? The North had denied the South’s constitutional right to secede but needed four years of war and about 750,000 deaths to win the point. Lincoln’s official position had been that the southern states had never left the Union and were only “out of their proper relation” with the United States. The president, therefore, as commander in chief, had the authority to decide how to set relations right again. Lincoln’s congressional opponents retorted that the ex-Confederate states were now “conquered provinces” and that Congress should resolve the constitutional issues and direct Reconstruction.

The United States in 1865: Crises at the End of the Civil War

Given the enormous casualties, costs, and crises of the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, what attitudes, goals, dreams, and behaviors would you predict for white southerners, white northerners, and black freedpeople?

Casualties

750,000 soldiers dead
 375,000 seriously wounded and maimed
 Casualties nationwide of white men of military age, 1 in 10
 50,000 civilian war-related casualties
 200,000 white women widowed

Physical and Economic Crises

The South devastated; its railroads, industry, and some major cities in ruins; its fields and livestock wasted 2,000,000 trees cut down for war uses

Constitutional Crisis

Eleven former Confederate states not a part of the Union, their status unclear and future states uncertain

Political Crisis

Republican Party (entirely of the North) dominant in Congress; a former Democratic slaveholder from Tennessee, Andrew Johnson, in the presidency

Social Crisis

Nearly 4 million freedpeople throughout the South facing challenges of survival and freedom, along with thousands of hungry demobilized white southern soldiers and displaced white families

Psychological Crisis

Incalculable stores of resentment, bitterness, anger, and despair throughout North and South

Politically, differences between Congress and the White House over Reconstruction mirrored a wider struggle between the two branches of the national government. During war, as has usually been the case, the executive branch assumed broad powers. Many believed, however, that Lincoln had far exceeded his constitutional authority, and his successor, Andrew Johnson, was worse. Would Congress reassert its authority?

In April 1865, the Republican Party ruled nearly unchecked. Republicans had made immense achievements in the eyes of the northern public: winning the war, preserving the Union, and freeing the slaves. They had enacted sweeping economic programs on behalf of free labor and free enterprise. But the party remained an uneasy grouping of former Whigs, Know-Nothings, Unionist Democrats, and antislavery idealists.

The Democrats were in shambles. Republicans depicted southern Democrats as rebels, murderers, and traitors, and they blasted northern Democrats as weak willed, disloyal, and opposed to economic growth and progress. Nevertheless, in the election of 1864, needing to show that the war was a bipartisan effort, the Republicans nominated a Tennessee Unionist Democrat, Andrew Johnson, as Lincoln's vice president. Now the tactless Johnson headed the government.

Economically, the United States in the spring of 1865 presented stark contrasts. Northern cities and railroads hummed with productive activity; southern cities and railroads lay in ruins. Northern banks were flourishing; southern financial institutions were bankrupt. Mechanizing northern farms were more productive than ever; southern farms and plantations, especially those along Sherman's march, resembled a "howling waste." The widespread devastation in the South affected southern attitudes. As a later southern writer explained, "If this war had smashed the Southern world, it had left the essential Southern mind and will . . . entirely unshaken." Many white southerners braced to resist Reconstruction and restore their former life and institutions; others, the minority who had remained quietly loyal to the Union, sought reconciliation.

Socially, nearly 4 million newly freed people faced the challenges of freedom. After initial joy and celebration in jubilee songs, freedmen and freedwomen quickly realized their continuing dependence on former owners. A Mississippi woman said:

I used to think if I could be free I should be the happiest of anybody in the world. But when my master come to me, and says, Lizzie, you is free! it seems like I was in a kind of daze. And when I would wake up in the morning I would think to myself, Is I free? Hasn't I got to get up before day light and go into the field of work?

For Lizzie, and 4 million other blacks, everything—and nothing—had changed.

14.1.2: Hopes Among the Freedpeople

Throughout the South in the summer of 1865, optimism surged through the old slave quarters. The slavery chain, however, broke slowly, link by link. After Union troops swept through an area, “we’d begin celebratin’,” one man said, but Confederate soldiers would follow, or master and overseer would return and “tell us to go back to work.” The freedmen and freedwomen learned, therefore, not to rejoice too quickly or openly.

Gradually, though, African Americans began to test the reality of freedom. Typically, their first step was to leave the plantation, if only for a few hours or days. “If I stay here I’ll never know I am free,” said a South Carolina woman who went to work as a cook in a nearby town. Some freedpeople cut their ties entirely—returning to an earlier master or, more often, going into towns and cities to find jobs, schools, churches, and association with other blacks, safe from whippings and retaliation.

Many blacks left the plantation in search of a spouse, parent, or child sold away years before. Advertisements detailing these sorrowful searches filled African American newspapers. For those who found a spouse or who had been living together in slave marriages, freedom meant getting married legally, sometimes in mass ceremonies common in the first months of emancipation. Legal marriage was important morally, but it also established the legitimacy of children and meant access to land titles and other economic opportunities. Marriage brought special burdens for black women, who assumed the double role of housekeeper and breadwinner. Their determination to create a traditional family life and care for their children resulted in the withdrawal of women from plantation field labor.



CONSEQUENCES OF WAR This 1867 engraving shows two southern women and their children soon after the Civil War. In what ways are they similar and in what ways different? Is there a basis for sisterhood bonds? What separates them, if anything? From *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, February 23, 1867.

Freedpeople also demonstrated their new status by choosing surnames. Names connoting independence, such as Washington, were common. Revealing their mixed feelings toward their former masters, some would adopt their master's name while others would pick “any big name ‘ceptin’ their master’s.” Emancipation changed black manners around whites as well. Masks fell, and expressions of deference—tipping a hat, stepping aside, calling whites “master” or “ma’am”—diminished. For African Americans, these changes were necessary expressions of selfhood, proving that race relations had changed; whites, however, saw such behaviors as “insolence” and “insubordination.”

The freedpeople made education a priority. A Mississippi farmer vowed to “give my children a chance to go to school, for I consider education next best thing to liberty.” One traveler through the South counted “at least five hundred” schools “taught by colored people.” Other than a persisting desire for education, the primary goal for most freedpeople was getting land. “All I want is to git to own fo’ or five acres ob land, dat I can build me a little house on and call my home,” a Mississippi black said. Through a combination of educational and economic independence, basic American means of controlling one's own life, labor, and land, freedpeople like Lizzie would make sure that emancipation was real.

During the war, some Union generals had put liberated slaves in charge of confiscated and abandoned lands. In the Sea Islands of South Carolina and Georgia,

blacks had been working 40-acre plots of land and harvesting their own crops for several years. Farther inland, freedmen who received land were the former slaves of the Cherokee and the Creek. Some blacks held title to these lands. Northern philanthropists had organized others to grow cotton for the Treasury Department to prove the superiority of free labor. In Mississippi, thousands of ex-slaves worked 40-acre tracts on leased lands that ironically had formerly been owned by Jefferson Davis. In this highly successful experiment, they made profits sufficient to repay the government for initial costs, then lost the land to Davis's brother.

Many freedmen and freedwomen expected a new economic order as fair payment for their years of involuntary work. "Give us our own land," said one, "and we take care ourselves; but widout land, de ole massas can hire us or starve us, as dey please." Freedmen had every expectation that "forty acres and a mule" had been promised. Once they obtained land, family unity, and education, some looked forward to civil rights and the vote—along with protection from vengeful defeated Confederates.

14.1.3: The White South's Fearful Response

White southerners had equally strong dreams and expectations. Middle-class (yeoman) farmers and poor whites stood beside rich planters in bread lines, all hoping to regain land and livelihood. White southerners responded with feelings of outrage, loss, and injustice. Said one man, "My pa paid his own money for our niggers; and that's not all they've robbed us of. They have taken our horses and cattle and sheep and everything."

A dominant emotion was fear. The entire structure of southern society was shaken, and the semblance of racial peace and order that slavery had provided was shattered. Many white southerners could hardly imagine a society without blacks in bondage. It was the basis not only of social order but of a lifestyle the larger slaveholders, at least, had long regarded as the perfect model of gentility and civilization. Having lost control of all that was familiar, whites feared everything—from losing their cheap labor to having blacks sit next to them on trains. Ironically, given the rape of black women during slavery, southern whites' worst fears were of rape and revenge. African American "impudence," some thought, would lead to legal intermarriage and "Africanization," the destruction of the purity of the white race. African American Union soldiers seemed especially ominous. These fears were greatly exaggerated, as demobilization of black soldiers came quickly, and rape and violence by blacks against whites was extremely rare.



THE END OF SLAVERY? The Black Codes, widespread violence against freedpeople, and President Johnson's veto of the civil rights bill gave rise to the sardonic title "Slavery Is Dead?" in this Thomas Nast cartoon. What do you see in the two scenes? Describe the two images of justice. What is Nast saying?

Believing their world turned upside down, the former planter aristocracy tried to set it right again. To reestablish white dominance, southern legislatures passed “Black Codes” in the first year after the war. Many of the codes granted freedmen the right to marry, sue and be sued, testify in court, and hold property. But these rights were qualified. Complicated passages explained under exactly what circumstances blacks could testify against whites, own property (mostly they could not), or exercise other rights of free people. Forbidden rights were racial intermarriage, bearing arms, possessing alcoholic beverages, sitting on trains (except in baggage compartments), being on city streets at night, or congregating in large groups. Many of the qualified rights guaranteed by the Black Codes were only passed to induce the federal government to withdraw its remaining troops from the South. This was a crucial issue, for in many places marauding whites were terrorizing virtually defenseless African Americans.

Key provisions of the Black Codes regulated freedpeople’s economic status. “Vagrancy” laws provided that any blacks not “lawfully employed” (by a white employer) could be arrested, jailed, fined, or hired out to a man who would assume responsibility for their debts and behavior. The codes regulated black laborers’ work contracts with white landowners, including severe penalties for leaving before the yearly contract was fulfilled. A Kentucky newspaper was mean and blunt: “The tune . . . will not be ‘forty acres and a mule,’ but . . . ‘work nigger or starve.’”

14.2: National Reconstruction Politics

14.2 Report how the national Reconstruction politics after the American Civil War mirrored extension of the civil rights struggles

The Black Codes directly challenged the national government in 1865. Would it use its power in the South to uphold the codes, white property rights, and racial intimidation, or to defend the liberties of freedpeople? Although the primary drama of Reconstruction pitted white landowners against African American freedmen over land and labor in the South, in the background of these local struggles lurked the debate over Reconstruction policy among politicians in Washington. This dual drama would extend to the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and beyond.

14.2.1: Presidential Reconstruction by Proclamation

After initially demanding that the defeated Confederates be punished for treason, President Johnson adopted a more lenient policy. On May 29, 1865, he issued two proclamations setting forth his Reconstruction program. Like Lincoln’s, it rested on the claim that the southern states had never left the Union.

Johnson’s first proclamation continued Lincoln’s policies by offering “**amnesty** and pardon, with restoration of all rights of property” to most former Confederates who would swear allegiance to the Constitution and the Union. Johnson revealed his Jacksonian hostility to “aristocratic” planters by exempting ex-Confederate government leaders and rebels with taxable property valued over \$20,000. They could, however, apply for individual pardons, which Johnson granted to nearly all applicants.

In his second proclamation, Johnson accepted the reconstructed government of North Carolina and prescribed the steps by which other southern states could reestablish state governments. First, the president would appoint a provisional governor, who would call a state convention representing those “who are loyal to the United States,” including individuals who took the oath of allegiance or were otherwise pardoned. The convention must ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery; void secession; repudiate Confederate debts; and elect new state officials and members of Congress.

Under Johnson's plan, all southern states completed Reconstruction and sent representatives to Congress, which convened in December 1865. Defiant southern voters elected dozens of former officers and legislators of the Confederacy, including a few not yet pardoned. Some state conventions hedged on ratifying the Thirteenth Amendment, and some asserted former owners' right to compensation for lost slave property. No state convention provided for black suffrage, and most did nothing to guarantee civil rights, schooling, or economic protection for the freedmen. Eight months after Appomattox, the southern states were back in the Union, freedpeople were working for former masters, and the new president was firmly in charge. Reconstruction seemed to be over.

14.2.2: Congressional Reconstruction by Amendment

Late in 1865, northern leaders painfully saw that almost none of their moral or political postwar goals were being fulfilled and that the Republicans were likely to lose their political power. Would Democrats and the South gain by postwar elections what they had lost by civil war?

Some congressional Republicans, led by Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, advocated policies aimed at providing full civil, political, and economic rights for blacks. Labeled "radicals," their efforts were frustrated by the more moderate majority of Republicans, who were less committed to freedmen's rights.

At first, rejecting Johnson's position that the South had already been reconstructed, Congress exercised its constitutional authority to decide on its own membership. It refused to seat the new senators and representatives from the old Confederate states. It also established the Joint Committee on Reconstruction to investigate conditions in the South. Its report documented white resistance, disorder, and the appalling treatment and conditions of freedpeople.

Congress passed a civil rights bill in 1866 designed to protect the fragile new economic freedoms of African Americans and extended for two more years the **Freedmen's Bureau**, an agency providing emergency assistance at the end of the war. Johnson vetoed both bills and called his congressional opponents "traitors." His actions drove moderates into the radical camp, and Congress passed both bills over his veto—both, however, watered down by weakening the power of enforcement. Southern courts regularly disallowed black testimony against whites, acquitted whites of violence, and sentenced blacks to compulsory labor.

Reconstruction Amendments

What three basic rights were guaranteed in these three amendments? What patterns do you see? How well were the dreams of the freedpeople fulfilled? Was that fulfillment immediate or deferred? For how long?

Substance	Outcome of Ratification Process	Final Implementation and Enforcement
Thirteenth Amendment—Passed by Congress January 1865		
Prohibited slavery in the United States	Ratified by 27 states, including 8 southern states, by December 1865	Immediate, although economic freedom came by degrees
Fourteenth Amendment—Passed by Congress June 1866		
(1) Defined equal national citizenship; (2) reduced state representation in Congress proportional to number of disfranchised voters; (3) denied former Confederates the right to hold office	Rejected by 12 southern and border states by February 1867; Congress made readmission depend on ratification; ratified in July 1868	Civil Rights Act of 1964
Fifteenth Amendment—Passed by Congress February 1869		
Prohibited denial of vote because of race, color, or previous servitude	Ratification by Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia required for readmission; ratified in March 1870	Voting Rights Act of 1965

In such a climate, southern racial violence erupted. In a typical outbreak, in May 1866, white mobs in Memphis, encouraged by local police, rampaged for over 40 hours of terror, killing, beating, robbing, and raping virtually helpless African American residents and burning houses, schools, and churches. Forty-eight people, all but two of them black, died. The local Union army commander took his time restoring order, arguing that his troops had “hated Negroes too.” A congressional inquiry concluded that Memphis blacks had “no protection from the law whatever.”

A month later, Congress sent to the states for ratification the Fourteenth Amendment, the single most significant act of the Reconstruction era. The first section of the amendment promised permanent constitutional protection of the civil rights of blacks by defining them as citizens. States were prohibited from depriving “any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law,” and citizens were guaranteed the “equal protection of the laws.” Section 2 granted black male suffrage in the South, inserting the word “male” into the Constitution for the first time. Other sections of the amendment barred leaders of the Confederacy from national or state offices (except by act of Congress), repudiated the Confederate debt, and denied claims of compensation to former slave owners. Johnson urged the southern states to reject the Fourteenth Amendment, and 10 immediately did so.

The Fourteenth Amendment was the central issue of the 1866 midterm election. Johnson barnstormed the country asking voters to throw out the radical Republicans and trading insults with hecklers. Democrats north and south appealed openly to racial prejudice in attacking the Fourteenth Amendment. Republicans responded by attacking Johnson personally and freely “waved the bloody shirt,” reminding voters of the Democrats’ treason. Self-interest and local issues moved voters more than fiery speeches, and the Republicans won an overwhelming victory. The mandate was clear: **presidential Reconstruction** had not worked, and Congress could present its own.

Early in 1867, Congress passed three **Reconstruction acts**. The southern states were divided into five military districts, whose commanders had broad powers to maintain order and protect civil and property rights. Congress also defined a new process for readmitting a state. Qualified voters—including blacks but excluding unreconstructed rebels—would elect delegates to state constitutional conventions that would write new constitutions guaranteeing black suffrage. After the new voters of the states had ratified these constitutions, elections would be held to choose governors and state legislatures. When a state ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, its representatives to Congress would be accepted, completing its readmission to the Union.

14.2.3: The President Impeached

Congress also restricted presidential powers and established legislative dominance over the executive branch. The Tenure of Office Act, designed to prevent Johnson from firing the outspoken Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, limited the president’s appointment powers. Other measures trimmed his power as commander in chief.

Johnson responded exactly as congressional Republicans had anticipated. He vetoed the Reconstruction acts, hindered the work of Freedmen’s Bureau agents, limited the activities of military commanders in the South, and removed cabinet officers and other officials sympathetic to Congress. The House Judiciary Committee charged the president with “usurpations of power” and of acting in the “interests of the great criminals” who had led the rebellion. But moderate House Republicans defeated the impeachment resolutions.

In August 1867, Johnson dismissed Stanton and asked for Senate consent. When the Senate refused, the president ordered Stanton to surrender his office, which he refused, barricading himself inside. The House quickly approved impeachment resolutions, charging the president with “high crimes and misdemeanors.” The three-month trial in the Senate in 1868 featured impassioned oratory, similar to the trial of President Bill Clinton 130 years later. And, as with Clinton, evidence was skimpy that Johnson had committed any constitutional crime justifying his removal. With seven moderate Republicans joining Democrats

Recovering the Past

Novels

We usually read novels, short stories, and other forms of imaginative literature for pleasure, for the enjoyment of plot, style, symbolism, and character development. “Classic” novels such as *Moby Dick*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Great Gatsby*, *The Invisible Man*, and *Beloved*, for example, are not only written well, but also explore timeless questions of good and evil, of innocence and knowledge, of noble dreams fulfilled and shattered. We enjoy novels because we often find ourselves identifying with one of the major characters. Through that person’s problems, joys, relationships, and search for identity, we gain insights about our own.

Even though they may be historically untrue, we can also read novels as historical sources, for they reveal much about the attitudes, dreams, fears, and everyday experiences of human beings in a particular period. In addition, they show how people responded to the major events of that era. The novelist, like the historian, is a product of time and place and has an interpretive point of view. Consider the two novels about Reconstruction quoted here. Neither is reputed for great literary merit, yet both reveal much about the various interpretations and impassioned attitudes of the post-Civil War era. *A Fool’s Errand* was written by Albion Tourgée, a northerner; *The Clansman*, by Thomas Dixon, Jr., a southerner.

Tourgée was a young northern teacher and lawyer who fought with the Union army and moved to North Carolina after the war to begin a legal career. He became a judge and was an active Republican, supporting black suffrage and helping to shape the new state constitution. Because he boldly criticized the Ku Klux Klan, his life was threatened many times. When he left North Carolina in 1879, he published an autobiographical novel about his experiences as a judge challenging the Klan’s campaign of violence and intimidation against the freedpeople.

The “fool’s errand” in the novel is that of the northern veteran, Comfort Servosse, who, like Tourgée, seeks to fulfill humane goals on behalf of both blacks and whites in post-Civil War North Carolina. His efforts are thwarted, however, by threats, intimidation, a campaign of violent “outrages” against Republican leaders in the county, and a lack of support from Congress. Historians have verified the accuracy of many of the events in Tourgée’s novel. While exposing the brutality of the Klan, Tourgée features loyal southern Unionists, respectable planters ashamed of Klan violence, and even guilt-ridden poor white Klansmen who try to protect or warn intended victims.

In the year of Tourgée’s death, 1905, another North Carolinian published a novel with a very different analysis of Reconstruction and its fate. Thomas Dixon, Jr., was a lawyer, state legislator, Baptist minister, pro-Klan lecturer, and novelist. *The Clansman*, subtitled *A Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, reflects turn-of-the-century attitudes most white southerners still had about Republican rule during Reconstruction. According to Dixon, a power-crazed, vindictive, radical Congress, led by scheming Austin Stoneman (Thaddeus Stevens), sought to impose corrupt carpetbagger and brutal black rule on a helpless South. Only through the inspired

leadership of the Ku Klux Klan was the South saved from the horrors of rape and revenge.

Dixon dedicated *The Clansman* to his uncle, a Grand Titan of the Klan in North Carolina during the time when two crucial counties were being transformed from Republican to Democratic through intimidation and terror. No such violence shows up in Dixon’s novel. When the novel was made the basis of D. W. Griffith’s film classic *Birth of a Nation* in 1915, its attitudes were firmly implanted in the twentieth-century American mind.

Both novels convey Reconstruction attitudes toward the freedpeople. Both create clearly defined heroes and villains. Both include exciting chase scenes, narrow escapes, daring rescues, and tragic deaths. Both include romantic subplots. Yet the two novels are strikingly different.

A Fool’s Errand

Albion Tourgée (1879)

When the second Christmas came, Metta wrote again to her sister:

“The feeling is terribly bitter against Comfort on account of his course towards the colored people. There is quite a village of them on the lower end of the plantation. They have a church, a sabbath school, and are to have next year a school. You can not imagine how kind they have been to us, and how much they are attached to Comfort. . . . I got Comfort to go with me to one of their prayer-meetings a few nights ago. I had heard a great deal about them, but had never attended one before. It was strangely weird. There were, perhaps, fifty present, mostly middle-aged men and women. They were singing in soft, low monotone, interspersed with prolonged exclamatory notes, a sort of rude hymn, which I was surprised to know was one of their old songs in slave times. How the chorus came to be endured in those days I can not imagine. It was—

‘Free! free! free, my Lord, free!

An’ we walks de hebben-ly way!

“A few looked around as we came in and seated ourselves; and Uncle Jerry, the saint of the settlement, came forward on his staves, and said, in his soft voice,

“Ev’nin’, Kunnel! Sarvant, Missuss! Will you walk up, an’ hev seats in front?”

“We told him we had just looked in, and might go in a short time; so we would stay in the back part of the audience.

“Uncle Jerry can not read nor write; but he is a man of strange intelligence and power. Unable to do work of any account, he is the faithful friend, monitor, and director of others. He has a house and piece of land, all paid for, a good horse and cow, and, with the aid of his wife and two boys, made a fine crop this season. He is one of the most promising colored men in the settlement: so Comfort says, at least. Everybody seems to have great respect for his character. I don’t know how many people I have heard speak of his religion. Mr. Savage used to say he had rather hear him pray than any other man on earth. He was much prized by his master, even after he was disabled, on account of his faithfulness and character.”