

U.S. Regents - Unit 4

The Post-Civil War Era, 1865 - 1900

Following the US Civil War, the United States entered a period of Reconstruction. Federal Policies revolving around economic and political reform resulted in the expansion of the economy, as well as an expansion of constitutional rights. However, those rights were undermined and issues of inequality continued for African Americans, women, Native Americans, Mexican Americans and Chinese immigrants.

Key Questions

- What was the social, political, and economic impact of reconstruction?
- What were the social, political, and economic impacts of manifest destiny?

Key People

Andrew Johnson
Booker T. Washington
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Ulysses S. Grant
W.E.B. DuBois
Susan B. Anthony

Rutherford B. Hayes
Leland Stanford
Frederick Douglass

Key Vocabulary / Events

13th, 14, 15th amendments
Reconstruction
Radical Republicans
scalawags
carpetbaggers
Freedmen's Bureau
Ku Klux Klan

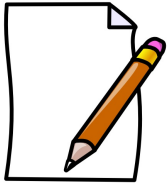
Black Codes
Jim Crow Laws
literacy tests
poll taxes
grandfather clauses
segregation
sharecropping

Homestead Act (1862)
Pacific Railway Act (1862)
Transcontinental Railroad
Dawes Act (1887)
Carlisle Indian School
Chinese Exclusion Act
(1882)

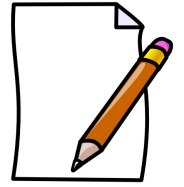
Court Cases

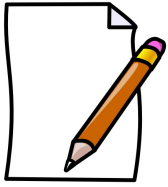
Civil Rights Cases (1883)

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)

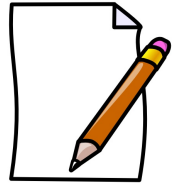


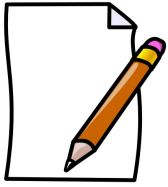
Class Notes / Vocabulary



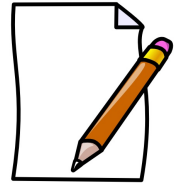


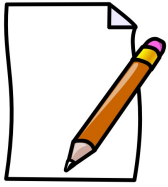
Class Notes / Vocabulary



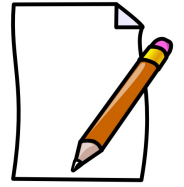


Class Notes / Vocabulary





Class Notes / Vocabulary



Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861 - 1877 (Excerpts)

by Eric Foner, Columbia University

In 1877, soon after retiring as president of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant, embarked with his wife on a two-year tour of the world. At almost every location, he was greeted as a hero. . . .As the reaction to Grant's tour demonstrates, contemporaries recognized the Civil War as an event of international significance. The various meanings imparted to it offer a useful way of outlining why the Civil War was so pivotal in our own history. The war changed the nature of warfare, gave rise to today's American nation-state, and destroyed a slave society unprecedented in the modern world. In its aftermath, during the era of Reconstruction, Americans struggled to come to terms with these dramatic changes and, temporarily, established biracial democratic government on the ashes of slavery.

In the physical destruction it brought to the South, the economic changes it produced throughout the nation, and the new ideas it spawned, the Civil War altered the lives of several generations of Americans. The war produced a loss of life unprecedented in the American experience. The 620,000 combatants who perished nearly outnumber those who died in all other American wars combined. For those who lived through it, the Civil War would always remain the defining experience of their lives. . . .

Central to the war's meaning was the abolition of slavery. Slavery lay at the root of the political crisis that produced the Civil War, and the war became, although it did not begin as, a struggle for emancipation. Union victory eradicated slavery from American life. Yet the war left it to future generations to confront the numerous legacies of slavery and to embark on the unfinished quest for racial justice.

The destruction of slavery—by presidential proclamation, legislation, and constitutional amendment—was a key act in the nation-building process. A war begun to preserve the old Union without threatening slavery produced one of the greatest social revolutions of the nineteenth century. . . . Lincoln concluded that his initial policy of fighting a war solely to preserve the Union had to change. The Emancipation Proclamation, issued on January 1, 1863, profoundly altered the nature of the war and the future course of American history. . . . Although it freed few slaves on the day it was issued, as it applied almost exclusively to areas under Confederate control, the Emancipation Proclamation ensured that Union victory would produce a social revolution within the South and a redefinition of the place of blacks in American life. There could now be no going back to the prewar Union. A new system of labor, politics, and race relations would have to replace the shattered institution of slavery. . . .

With Union victory, the status of the former slaves in the reunited nation became the focal point of the politics of postwar Reconstruction. In a society that had made political participation a core element of freedom, the right to vote inevitably became central to the former slaves' desire for empowerment and autonomy. As soon as the Civil War ended, and in some parts of the South even earlier, blacks who had been free before the war came together with emancipated slaves in conventions, parades, and petition

drives to demand suffrage. . . . Radical Republicans in the North supported black male suffrage both as an act of justice and as the only way to prevent former Confederates from dominating southern political life.

However, Andrew Johnson, who succeeded the martyred Lincoln as president in April 1865, inaugurated a program of Reconstruction that placed full power in the hands of white southerners. The new governments established during the summer and fall of 1865 enacted laws—the notorious Black Codes—that severely limited the rights of former slaves in an effort to force them to return to work as dependent plantation laborers. In response, the Republican majority in Congress in 1866 enacted its own plan of Reconstruction. In the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, they permanently altered the federal system and the nature of American citizenship.

For the first time, the national government assumed basic responsibility for defining and protecting Americans' civil rights. The Fourteenth Amendment enshrined in the Constitution the ideas of birthright citizenship and equal rights for all Americans. The Amendment prohibited states from abridging the "privileges and immunities of citizens" or denying them the "equal protection of the law." . . . [B]y the time Reconstruction legislation had run its course, the federal government had taken upon itself the responsibility for ensuring that states respected the equal civil and political rights of all American citizens. Reconstruction radicalism, however, had its limits. The right to vote . . . was still restricted to men, despite the demands of the era's woman suffrage movement. And no steps were taken to provide an economic underpinning for African Americans' new freedom—the "forty acres and a mule" former slaves insisted would guarantee them economic independence from their former owners.

Nonetheless, Reconstruction witnessed a remarkable political revolution in the South. In 1867, African American men in the defeated Confederacy were given the right to vote and hold office. . . . For the first time in American history, black men held positions of political power, ranging from the U.S. Congress to state legislatures, and local sheriffs, school board officials, and justices of the peace. The Reconstruction ideal of interracial democracy and color-blind citizenship eventually succumbed to a counterattack from violent organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and the progressive abandonment of the principle of equality in the North and the idea of federal intervention to protect the rights of the newly freed slaves. Not until the "Second Reconstruction"—the civil rights revolution of the 1960s—would the United States once again seek to come to terms with the political and social consequences of the destruction of slavery.

With the overthrow of biracial state governments in the South and the withdrawal of the last federal troops from the region by President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1877, the era of the Civil War and Reconstruction came to an end. . . . With northern acquiescence, the Solid South, now uniformly Democratic, effectively nullified the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments and imposed a new racial order based on disenfranchisement, segregation, and economic inequality. . . .

Overall, the era of the Civil War and Reconstruction raised questions that remain central to our understanding of ourselves as a nation. What should be the balance of power between local authority and the national government; who is entitled to American citizenship; what are the meanings of freedom and equality in the United States? These questions remain subjects of controversy today. In that sense, the Civil War is not yet over.

Source: The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History www.gilderlehrman.org

Questions

1. What did Foner mean when he wrote, “*With Union victory, the status of the former slaves in the reunited nation became the focal point of the politics of postwar Reconstruction*”?
2. What was the significance of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution?
3. What were the successes of Reconstruction? Failures?

Reconstruction Era Policies: Timeline

Directions: Annotate each event on the timeline: explain what the event was, its cause, and effect.

1865: Civil War Ends Reconstruction begins	
1865	13th Amendment
	Black Codes
	Ku Klux Klan
	Freedman's Bureau
1866	Civil Rights Act of 1866
	Radical Republicans gain control of Congress
1868	14th Amendment
1870	Civil Rights Act of 1870
	15th Amendment

1875	Civil Rights Act of 1875
1877	Jim Crow Laws
1877: Reconstruction Ends President Hayes is elected	

Land for the Freedman?

In the closing days of the Civil War, Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton held a conference with a number of African American leaders. Stanton asked, "How could the former slave best be helped?" The black spokesmen had a quick reply, "Give us land. That way we can take care of ourselves." . . .

Forty Acres and a Mule

The Freedman's most dedicated friend in Congress was Thaddeus Stevens from Pennsylvania. As an abolitionist before the War, Stevens often defended fugitive slaves without a fee. After the War, Stevens led Congress in demands for black political rights. Stevens was also convinced that black people would never really be free until they owned their own land:

In my judgment, justice demands that we give every adult freedman a farm on the land that he was born, toiled and suffered. Forty acres and a mule would be more valuable to him than the right to vote. Unless we give this land, we shall receive the curse of heaven.

Lincoln's successor, President Andrew Johnson disagreed vehemently [passionately]:

Congress never has had the power to buy homes for the millions of the white race that work from day to day without land. The authors of the Constitution never intended that Congress should support the people. There is no reason for supporting black people, when the government has never supported whites.

The argument over distributing lands did not end with these two speeches. Stevens informed the President that the ruler of Russia had freed 22 million serfs much as Lincoln had freed the slaves. But, the Russians had required the serfs' owners to give them farms on the soil that they had plowed and planted for years. Why then could not the President of the United States do the same for American slaves? The President replied that this would not be fair to the people who owned the land. Not only were they losing their slaves, but they were also losing the land that their families had owned for generations.

To these arguments, Stevens would have responded by asking what value is the gift of freedom, if a man has no way of earning a living? He believed that to deny the freedman the plot of ground he has already worked enough to own ten times over, will force him to work for the white man and end up no better than a slave. . . .

Thaddeus Stevens made a very specific proposal. He suggested that one southern family out of twenty, about 70,000 families, surrender 394 million acres of land. This would be more than enough to give every slave family forty acres of land and leave some 350 million acres to be sold. By selling the rest of the land at public auction, the government would earn enough money to give each black family some tools and a mule. The rest of the money could be used to pay pensions to the North's Civil War veterans.

Source: [www.digital history.uh.edu](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu)

Statement by Frederick Douglass

. . . History does not furnish an example of emancipation under conditions less friendly to the emancipated class than this American example. Liberty came to the freedmen of the United States not in mercy, but in wrath [anger], not by moral choice but by military necessity, not by the generous action of the people among whom they were to live, and whose good-will was essential to the success of the measure, but by strangers, foreigners, invaders, trespassers, aliens, and enemies. The very manner of their emancipation invited to the heads of the freedmen the bitterest hostility of race and class. They were hated because they had been slaves, hated because they were not free, and hated because of those who had freed them. Nothing was to have been expected other than what has happened, and he is a poor student of the human heart who does not see that the old master class would naturally employ every power and means in their reach to make the great measure of emancipation unsuccessful and utterly odious.

It was born in the tempest and whirlwind of war, and has lived in a storm of violence and blood. When the Hebrews were emancipated they were told to take spoil [goods and property] from the Egyptians. When the serfs of Russia were emancipated [in 1861] they were given three acres of ground upon which they could live and make a living. But not so when our slaves were emancipated. They were sent away empty-handed, without money, without friends, and without a foot of land to stand upon. Old and young, sick and well, were turned loose to the open sky, naked to their enemies. The old slave quarter that had before sheltered them and the fields that had yielded them corn were now denied them. The old master class, in its wrath, said, "*Clear Out! The Yankees have freed you, now let them feed and shelter you! . . .*"

Source: Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, Park Publishing Co., 1881

Questions

1. According to Douglass, what was wrong with the way that the U.S. emancipated people who had been enslaved?
2. What examples does Douglass provide to show how the US should have treated those who had been enslaved?

A Sharecropping Contract: 1882 (Modified)

To everyone renting land, the following conditions must be agreed to:

For every 30 acres of land (rented by sharecroppers), I will provide a mule team, plow, and farming tools. The sharecroppers can have half of the cotton, corn, peas, pumpkins, and potatoes they grow if the following conditions are followed, but—if not—they are to have only two-fifths

For every mule or horse furnished by me there must be 1000 good sized rails (logs) hauled [dragged], and the fence repaired if I so direct. All my sharecroppers must haul rails and work on the fence whenever I may order. The wood must be split and the fence repaired before corn is planted. No cotton must be planted by sharecroppers on their home patches of land. No sharecropper is to work off the plantation when there is any work for them to do for me.

Every sharecropper must be responsible for all farming gear placed in his hands, and if not returned must be paid for unless it is worn out by use.

Nothing can be sold from their (sharecroppers') crops until my rest is all paid, and all amounts they owe me are paid in full.

I am to gin & pack all of the cotton and charge every sharecropper an eighteenth of his part, the cropper to furnish his part of the bagging, ties, & twine.

The sale of every sharecropper's part of the cotton to be made by me when and where I choose to sell and after taking all they owe me.

Source: Stanford History Education Group [sheg.stanford.edu].

Questions

1. What did the sharecropper have to do in order to use the plantation owner's land, farming tools, and mules?
2. Do you think this is a fair contract? Why or Why not?
3. What parts of this contract do you think caused the sharecroppers to be in debt to plantation owners?

Primary Source Analysis - Jim Crow Laws & Black Codes:

Starting in the Reconstruction Era (late 1860's), and lasting until as late as the 1960's, many states across the nation passed and enforced a separate set of laws for African Americans. Known as **Jim Crow laws** or **Black Codes**, most of these laws applied to anyone with more than "1/8 negro blood". Below is an excerpt of such laws from various states across the nation. It is important to remember that these are just a sample of the laws that were in existence during this time period. *Using the sampling of Jim Crow laws & Black Codes below, please answer the analysis questions that follow.*

Alabama:

- No person or corporation shall require any white female nurse to nurse wards or rooms in hospitals, either public or private, in which negro men are placed.
- All passenger stations in this state operated by any motor transportation company shall have separate waiting rooms or space and separate ticket windows for the white and colored races.
- It shall be unlawful to conduct a restaurant or other place for the serving of food in the city, at which white and colored people are served in the same room, unless such white and colored persons are effectually separated by a solid partition extending from the floor upward to a distance of seven feet or higher, and unless a separate entrance from the street is provided for each compartment.
- It shall be unlawful for a negro and a white person to play together or in the company with each other in any game of cards or dice, dominoes, or checkers.

Nebraska:

- Marriages are void when one party is a white person and the other is possessed of one-eighth or more negro, Japanese, or Chinese blood.

Wyoming:

- When there are 15 or more colored children within any school district, the board of directors thereof, with the approval of the county superintendent of schools, may provide for a separate school for instruction of colored children.

North Carolina:

- Books shall not be interchangeable between the white and colored schools, but shall continue to be used by the race first using them.
- The state librarian is directed to fit up and maintain a separate place for the use of the colored people who may come to the library for the purpose of reading books or periodicals.

Georgia:

- It shall be unlawful for any amateur white baseball team to play baseball on any vacant lot or baseball diamond within two blocks of a playground devoted to the Negro race, and it shall be unlawful for any amateur colored baseball team to play baseball in any vacant lot or baseball diamond within two blocks of any playground devoted to the white race.
- No colored barber shall serve as a barber to white women or girls.

Analysis Questions:

- 1) What, if any, repeating themes or patterns do you see in these laws?

- 2) How do you think these laws impacted or shaped the interactions between newly freed blacks and whites in American society during the Reconstruction Era?

- 3) What long term impact do you think these laws would or did have on shaping American society?

- 4) How are these laws similar or different to the restrictions placed on African Americans when they were enslaved?

Civil War and Reconstruction in the American West (Excerpts)

by Elliott West, University of Arkansas

. . . . The conflicts behind the Civil War, simmering since the nation's birth, were brought sharply into focus when expansion to the Pacific raised an explosive issue: Would slavery be allowed in the new country, including the rich gold diggings of California? Another crucial western issue, the desperate need for better links of transportation to the East, sharpened still more the division between the North and the South. The soaring population in California quickly brought a call for a transcontinental railroad. Whichever city was on the eastern end of it—the prime candidates were New Orleans, St. Louis, and Chicago—would profit enormously. . . .

Paradoxically, the war's greatest impact on the West came after the fighting there was over. With Union forces firmly in control and with Southern opposition gone from the nation's capital, Congress passed and President Lincoln signed three measures of the greatest significance in the coming decades. On May 20, 1862, the Homestead Act became law. It granted 160 acres of unclaimed public land to any adult, including immigrants intending to become citizens, who worked the land for five years while making certain improvements, including building a dwelling. Roughly six weeks later, on July 1, Lincoln signed the Pacific Railway Act providing land and government loans to construct the first transcontinental rail line. The next day he signed the Morrill Act, which allotted public lands to states to finance colleges dedicated to agricultural education and research, an especially pressing need given the semi-arid West's great challenges to farmers of that day.

Although the Homestead Act proved ill suited to the more arid parts of the region, tens of millions of western acres . . . would be settled under its terms before it was phased out . . . in the 1930s. The Pacific Railway Act began a vigorous expansion of the federal effort, begun in the 1850s, to build an infrastructure of roads, wires, and rails. By 1883 several more transcontinentals had been built, among them the Southern Pacific [and the] Northern Pacific . . . all with federal support.

Meanwhile the West was being integrated politically into the nation. Between 1859 and 1876, Oregon, Kansas, Nevada, and Nebraska became states and the rest of the West was organized into territories. National laws and institutions were in place from one side of the continent to the other.

As with western gold and silver rushes, the Civil War and Reconstruction's effect on American Indians was catastrophic. . . . An uprising of Minnesota Sioux (Dakota) in 1862 left hundreds of white settlers dead before it was crushed. Thirty-eight of its leaders were hanged and nearly two thousand Sioux were removed to South Dakota. The next year in Arizona, a campaign led by the famed scout Christopher "Kit" Carson shattered the power of the Navajo, and conflict in Colorado, 1864–1868, broke that of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe. The latter fighting included the infamous Sand Creek massacre, an attack on a peaceful camp in November 1864 that left between 150 and 200 people dead. Massacres of Shoshone

in Idaho (1863) and Blackfeet in Montana (1870) took more than four hundred more lives. . . . After 1865 . . . the US Army snuffed out the remaining Native military resistance in the far West. The last true Indian wars were against the western Sioux (Lakota) in 1876 and the Nez Perce of the Pacific Northwest in 1877. . . .

The West proved a boon for newly freed slaves. Thousands took advantage of emancipation to flee the South as “exodusters” and settle on the Great Plains in towns like Nicodemus, Kansas. The Territorial Suffrage Act (1867), which extended the franchise to blacks in all federal territories a full three years before the Fifteenth Amendment, helped build momentum toward granting black suffrage generally.

Reconstruction’s impact on American Indians was at least as profound but far less positive. In the 1850s yet another federal political structure, the reservation system, had appeared, and after the war it spread across the West. Expansion to the Pacific left the government no place farther west to send them. Reservations provided a kind of internal removal, setting Native peoples apart in enclaves within country opened to white development. Through reservations, Washington also pledged to bring western tribes into the national community by methods strikingly similar to its programs for former slaves in the South—work by Christian missionaries and turning Indian hunters into independent farmers and training them in citizenship through common school education. But while freedpersons responded warmly to such efforts, many American Indians, fully content with traditional spiritual and economic lives, resisted. For them, the expansion of citizenship was not the opportunity welcomed by African Americans. It was conquest and coercion.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the United States faced a crisis of union, but that crisis was far wider than usually described. It was genuinely continental, a challenge both to hold North and South together and to bind West and East into a single nation. By 1877 the challenge had been largely met, and meeting it had been a matter of both liberation and conquest, both done by a federal government flexing an expanded power and authority from coast to coast.

Source: The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History www.gilderlehrman.org

In the space below, please write a short summary of the essay by Professor West