

CHAPTER FIFTEEN RECONSTRUCTION AND THE NEW SOUTH

Objectives

A thorough study of Chapter Fifteen should enable the student to understand:

1. The conditions in the former Confederacy after Appomattox that would have made most difficult any attempt at genuine reconstruction.
2. The differences between the Conservative and Radical views on the reconstruction process, and the reasons for the eventual Radical domination.
3. The functioning of the impeachment process in the case of President Andrew Johnson, and the significance of his acquittal for the future of Reconstruction.
4. Radical Reconstruction in practice, and Southern (black and white) reaction to it.
5. The debate among historians concerning the nature of Reconstruction, its accomplishments, and its harmful effects on the South.
6. The national problems faced by President Ulysses S. Grant, and the reasons for his lack of success as chief executive.
7. The diplomatic successes of the Johnson and Grant administrations, and the role of the presidents in achieving them.
8. The greenback question, and how it reflected the postwar financial problems of the nation.
9. The alternatives that were available during the election of 1876, and the effects of the so-called Compromise of 1877 on the South and on the nation.
10. The methods used in the South to regain control of its own affairs, and what course of action it chose thereafter.
11. The reasons for the failure of the South to develop a strong industrial economy after Reconstruction.
12. The ways in which Southerners decided to handle the race question, and the origin of the system identified with "Jim Crow."
13. The response of blacks to conditions in the South following Reconstruction.

Main Themes

1. That the defeat and devastation of the South presented the nation with severe social, economic, and political problems.
2. How Radical Reconstruction changed the South but fell short of the full transformation needed to secure equality for the freedmen.
3. That white society and the federal government lacked the will to enforce effectively most of the constitutional and legal guarantees acquired by blacks during Reconstruction.
4. How the policies of the Grant administration moved beyond Reconstruction matters to foreshadow issues of the late nineteenth century.
5. How white leaders reestablished economic and political control of the South and sought to modernize the region through industrialization.
6. How the race question continued to dominate Southern life.

Glossary

1. **Whigs:** A major political party between 1834 and the 1850s. The Whigs were unified by their opposition to Andrew Jackson and their support for federal policies to aid business. The party was strongest among the merchants and manufacturers of the Northeast, the wealthy planters of the South, and the farmers of the West most eager for internal improvements. Abraham Lincoln and many other Republicans had been Whigs before the issues of sectionalism destroyed the party.
2. **veto/pocket veto:** The president's refusal to sign a bill passed by Congress. He must send it back to Congress with his objections. Unless two-thirds of each house votes to override the president's action, the bill will not become law. A pocket veto occurs when Congress has adjourned and the president refuses to sign a bill within ten days. Because Congress is not in session, the president's action cannot be overridden. (See the Constitution, Article I, Section 7.)
3. **spoils system:** The political equivalent of the military axiom "To the victor belong the spoils." In the nineteenth century, the victorious political party in national, state, and local elections routinely dismissed most officeholders and replaced them with workers loyal to the incoming party. The "spoils" were the many patronage jobs available in the government. At the national level, this included thousands of post office and customs positions. Political organizations especially adept at manipulating spoils to remain in power were often called **machines**. Civil-service reformers demanded that nonpolicy-making jobs be filled on the basis of competitive examinations and that officeholders would continue in office as long as they performed satisfactorily.
4. **solid South:** Refers to the fact that the South became overwhelmingly Democratic as a reaction to Republican actions during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Democratic domination of Southern politics persisted for over a century despite occasional cracks, especially in presidential elections.
5. **Unionists:** Residents of the Confederate states who counseled against secession and who often remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War. Unionists were more common in upcountry coastal areas of the South, where the slave-based plantation economy was less influential than in the South during the Civil War, but many

Pertinent Questions

THE PROBLEMS OF PEACEMAKING (408-412)

1. What effects did the Civil War have on the economy and social system of the South?
 2. What special problems did the freedmen face immediately after the war? What efforts were made to help them?
 3. What were the competing notions of freedom that existed in the post-war South?
 4. What political implications did the readmission of the Southern states pose for the Republicans?
 5. What were the differences between the Conservative, Radical, and Moderate factions of the Republican Party during Reconstruction?
 6. What were the objectives and provisions of Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction? How did the Radical Republicans respond to it?
 7. Describe Andrew Johnson's approach to Reconstruction. How was it shaped by his political background and his personality?
- #### **RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION (412-415)**
8. What did the Southern state governments do during the "presidential Reconstruction" of 1865 and 1866?

9. How did Congress respond to the Black Codes and other Southern state actions of 1865 and 1866?
 10. What did the congressional elections of 1866 reveal about the public attitude toward Reconstruction?
 11. Explain the basic provisions of the congressional plan of Reconstruction of 1867. On what principle was it based?
 12. What measures did the Radical Republicans take to keep President Johnson and the Supreme Court from interfering with their plans?
 13. Why did Radical Republicans want to impeach President Johnson and why did they fail?
- THE SOUTH IN RECONSTRUCTION (415-420)**
14. What three groups constituted the Republican Party in the South during Reconstruction?
 15. What role did blacks play in southern political life during Reconstruction?
 16. What was the balance between corruption and positive accomplishment by the Reconstruction-era state governments in the South?
 17. What patterns of Southern education began to emerge during Reconstruction?
 18. What changes in land distribution occurred in the South after the Civil War? How were the hopes of blacks mostly dashed?
 19. What economic advances did the freedmen make? How did the economic status of blacks compare with that of the average white Southerner?
 20. How did the crop-lien system overshadow the economic gains made by blacks and poor whites?
 21. How did freedom affect black family life?
- THE GRANT ADMINISTRATION (420-422)**
22. How did Ulysses S. Grant's political accomplishments compare with his military ability?
 23. What were the scandals that came to light during the Grant Administration? What role did Grant play in these?
 24. People in what financial condition were most likely to favor expansion of the currency supply with greenbacks? What was done about the greenback issue?
 25. What were the diplomatic accomplishments of the Grant administration?
- THE ABANDONMENT OF RECONSTRUCTION (422-427)**
26. What tactics did white Southern Democrats use to restrict or control black suffrage?
 27. Why did Northern Republicans begin to take less interest in Reconstruction and the cause of the freedmen after about 1870?
 28. Why was the presidential election of 1876 disputed? How was the controversy resolved by the "Compromise of 1877"?
 29. What was President Rutherford B. Hayes's objective in the South? Did he succeed?
 30. Compare white and black expectations for Reconstruction with the actual results.
- THE NEW SOUTH (427-437)**
31. What were the socioeconomic and political characteristics of the "Redeemers" (Bourbons)?
 32. How did the policies of the "Redeemer" governments compare with those of the Reconstruction-era administrations?

33. In what particular products was industrialization in the South most advanced? What factors attracted industrial capital to the region after the war?
 34. How did industrialization in the South compare with that in the North?
 35. Describe the composition of the industrial workforce in the South. What problems did the workers face?
 36. Describe the typical pattern of Southern agriculture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What problems confronted most farmers?
 37. Describe the rise of the black middle class. How widespread were economic gains by Southern blacks?
 38. What was Booker T. Washington's prescription for black advancement?
 39. How did the civil-rights cases of 1883 and *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) substantially negate the effect of the equal-protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment?
 40. What strategies and legal devices did the Southern states use to evade the spirit of the Fifteenth Amendment?
 41. Explain how Southern whites used lynching to control the black population. How did some whites, both Northern and Southern, respond?
- WHERE HISTORIANS DISAGREE (424-425, 434-435)**
42. How have historians differed over the nature of Reconstruction?
 43. What part has the public played in this debate and why is the era so controversial?
 44. How have historians attempted to explain the origins of segregation in America?
 45. How have social and political development in the United States influenced the debate over the origins of segregation?
- PATTERNS OF POPULAR CULTURE (428-429)**
46. How was the minstrel show both a testament to the high awareness of race and the high level of racism in American society before the Civil War?
- Identification**
- Identify each of the following, and explain why it is important within the context of the chapter.
1. Thirteenth Amendment
 2. O. O. Howard
 3. Thaddeus Stevens
 4. Charles Sumner
 5. Wade-Davis Bill
 6. John Wilkes Booth
 7. Alexander H. Stephens
 8. Joint Committee on Reconstruction
 9. Fourteenth Amendment
 10. Tenure of Office Act
 11. Edwin M. Stanton
 12. scalawag
 13. carpetbagger
 14. Blanche K. Bruce

15. Hiram R. Revels
16. sharecropping
17. crop lien system
18. Horatio Seymour
19. Hamilton Fish
20. "Grantism"
21. Liberal Republicans
22. Horace Greeley
23. Cr dit Mobilier
24. "whiskey ring"
25. Panic of 1873
26. "Seward's Folly"
27. "redeemed"
28. Ku Klux Klan
29. Samuel J. Tilden
30. Readjuster
31. Henry W. Grady
32. the "Lost Cause"
33. Joel Chandler Harris
34. James B. Duke
35. standard gauge
36. convict lease system
37. "fence laws"
38. The Atlanta Compromise
39. Jim Crow laws

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Read the portions of the chapter that discuss the Black Codes. Also read the section "Where Historians Disagree: Reconstruction." The following selection is taken from the writings of William A. Dunning. Consider the following questions: How does Dunning's account reveal his racist assumptions? How would accounts such as Dunning's lead white Southerners in the twentieth century to conclude that they had been gravely wronged by Reconstruction? Which of the following positions is more convincing? Were the Black Codes a necessary and realistic response to the situation, or were they a thinly disguised attempt to resubjugate the freedmen?

To a distrustful northern mind such legislation could very easily take the form of a systematic attempt to relegate the freedmen to a subjection only less complete than that from which the war had set them free. The radicals sounded a shrill note of alarm. "We tell the white men of Mississippi," said the *Chicago Tribune*, "that the men of the North will convert the state of Mississippi into a frog-pond before they will allow any such laws to disgrace one foot of soil over which the flag of freedom waves." In Congress, Wilson, Sumner, and other extremists took up the cry, and with superfluous ingenuity distorted the spirit and purpose of both the laws and the law-makers of the South. The "black codes" were represented to be the expression of a deliberate purpose by the southerners to nullify the result of the war and reestablish slavery, and this impression gained wide prevalence in the North.

slavery must end. The nation faced other issues with far-reaching implications. What would be the place of the freedmen in Southern society? How would the rebellious states be brought back into their "proper relationship" with the Union? The victorious North was in a position to dominate the South, but Northern politicians were not united in either resolve or purpose. For over two years after the fighting stopped, there was no coherent Reconstruction policy. Congress and the president struggled with each other, and various factions in Congress had differing views on politics, race, and union. Congress finally won control and dominated the Reconstruction process until Southern resistance and Northern ambivalence led to the end of Reconstruction in 1877. Enormous changes had taken place, but the era still left a legacy of continuing racism and sectionalism that was revealed when Southern whites established the Jim Crow system to evade the spirit of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Meanwhile the South continued its colonial relationship with the North, and Southern plain folk, black and white, found themselves trapped by crop liens in circumstances some felt were almost as bad as slavery.

Review Questions

These questions are to be answered with essays. This will allow you to explore relationships between individuals, events, and attitudes of the period under review.

1. Compare and contrast Lincoln's plan, the Wade-Davis Bill, Johnson's plan, and Radical Reconstruction. Consider provisions, motives, goals, and results.
2. Evaluate the successes and failures of Reconstruction. What decision could have been made to avoid the failures? What groundwork was laid for future changes?
3. What factors made the railroad the "central symbol of American progress" in the nineteenth century?
4. What was the ecological impact of the railroad on the American West?
5. Although many changes had occurred by 1900, the South remained an impoverished agricultural region, lagging well behind the rest of the nation. Describe the economic changes in the South, and assess why they were not adequate to bring the old Confederacy into the national mainstream, as some of the region's spokespersons had hoped.
6. Explain the ways in which the Southern white establishment was able to evade the spirit of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution.

Chapter Self Test

After you have read the chapter in the text and done the exercises in the Study Guide, take the following self test to see if you understand the material you have covered. Answers appear at the end of the Study Guide.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Circle the letter of the response which best answers the question or completes the statement.

1. The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:
 - a. declared that the right to vote could not be denied on account of race.
 - b. officially ended slavery.
 - c. granted "citizenship" to the freedmen.
 - d. provided that states could only count three-fifths (60%) of their black population when determining how many members they would be given in the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - e. opened up the West to homesteading by African Americans.

2. The Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:
 - a. declared that the right to vote could not be denied on account of race.
 - b. officially ended slavery.
 - c. granted "citizenship" to the freedmen.
 - d. provided that states could only count three-fifths (60%) of their black population when determining how many members they could be given in the U.S. House of Representatives.
 - e. opened up the West to homesteading by African Americans.
3. The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution:
 - a. declared that the right to vote could not be denied on account of race.
 - b. officially ended slavery.
 - c. granted "citizenship" to the freedmen.
 - d. provided that states could only count three-fifths (60%) of their black population when determining how many members they would be given in the U.S. House of Representatives.
4. Which faction of the Republican Party wanted Reconstruction to punish the former Confederates, disenfranchise large numbers of Southern whites, and confiscate the property of leading Confederates?
 - a. Moderates.
 - b. Conservatives.
 - c. Redeemers.
 - d. Scalpbaggers.
 - e. Radicals.
5. Which best describes Congressional reaction to the former Confederate states that had set up new governments under Andrew Johnson's "presidential Reconstruction"?
 - a. They fully accepted all of the states except Georgia and South Carolina, which had elected no blacks to office.
 - b. They conditionally accepted all of the states pending the results of local and state elections.
 - c. They refused to seat the senators and representatives from the states and set up a committee to investigate and advise on Reconstruction.
 - d. They fully accepted all of the states west of the Mississippi River, but required new constitutions in the others.
6. The "Black Codes" were a set of regulations established by:
 - a. the Congress to protect the rights of the former slaves to own property and to find employment.
 - b. the U.S. Supreme Court to enforce the provisions of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.
 - c. the northern states to prevent a massive influx of former slaves from entering their states and seeking homes and jobs.
 - d. the southern states to promote white supremacy and to control the economic and social activities of the freedmen.

7. Which of the following, if any, was not a provision of the Congressional plan of Reconstruction enacted in early 1867?
 - a. Dividing the South into military districts administered by military commanders.
 - b. Requiring former Confederate states, as a condition of readmission to the Union, to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
 - c. Mandating former Confederate states, as a condition of readmission to the Union, to hold a constitutional convention and prepare a constitution providing for black male suffrage.
 - d. Declaring that each state must present a plan for distributing farm land to, or providing jobs for, the former slaves.
 - e. All of the above were provisions of the Congressional plan of Reconstruction.
8. Critics of native Southern whites who joined the Republican Party called them:
 - a. carpetbaggers.
 - b. whippensnappers.
 - c. scalawags.
 - d. white camellias.
 - e. fibusters.
9. Which best describes the extent of "Negro rule" in the Southern states during Reconstruction?
 - a. African Americans played a significant political role in several states but never elected a governor or controlled a state legislature.
 - b. Some African Americans held local elective offices and a very few were elected to state legislatures but the numbers were politically inconsequential in every state.
 - c. In the deep South states where African Americans constituted a majority of the voters due to white disenfranchisement, blacks dominated both houses of the state legislatures and controlled state politics as long as federal troops remained in the South.
 - d. African Americans did not actually hold many offices in any state, but they effectively dominated local offices in all but Tennessee and Arkansas through alliances with white Republicans.
10. What institution was the key point of contact in the agricultural credit system for most Southern farmers, black and white, in the late nineteenth century?
 - a. Small town banks owned by Northerners.
 - b. Large diversified planters.
 - c. Finance companies in the larger cities such as Atlanta and Memphis.
 - d. Local country-store merchants.
 - e. Mail order mortgage companies operating out of New York.
11. In the late nineteenth century, the agricultural credit system in the South encouraged farmers to:
 - a. rely heavily on cash crops—especially cotton.
 - b. diversify away from cotton toward food grains and livestock.
 - c. adopt the use of mechanization on increasingly larger farms.
 - d. abandon farming and invest in capital-intensive manufacturing enterprises.

12. Ulysses S. Grant's election as president was largely a result of his being:
- a governor of New York during the postwar economic boom.
 - a triumphant commanding general of the Union army.
 - the popular administrator of the Freedmen's Bureau.
 - a flamboyant cavalry officer in the western Indian wars.
13. Which of the following, if any, was not associated with the "Compromise of 1877"?
- Removal of the last federal troops from the South.
 - Increased federal aid for railroads and other internal improvements.
 - Appointment of a Southerner to the cabinet.
 - Making Rutherford B. Hayes president.
 - All of the above were associated with the "Compromise of 1877."
14. Which, of the following, if any, is not cited by the text as a reason that Reconstruction failed to accomplish more to promote racial equality in the United States?
- Fear that harsh action might lead to resumed military action by the southern states, even though they had been defeated.
 - Attachment to a states' rights view of the Constitution, even for the rebel states.
 - Deep respect for private property rights, even for leading Confederates.
 - Belief in black inferiority by many whites, even Northern liberals.
 - All of the above were cited as reasons that Reconstruction failed to accomplish more.
15. The "solid" South refers to the:
- work ethic values of Southern whites.
 - courage of Confederate soldiers during the war despite being outnumbered.
 - steady returns that Northern bankers could expect from investment in cotton.
 - the fact that the Democratic Party could count on the votes of the Southern states after Reconstruction.
 - In most states, the "Redeemers" or "Bourbons" were typically composed of:
 - a newly emerging class of merchants, industrialists, railroad developers, and financiers.
 - essentially the same old planter elite that had dominated antebellum politics.
 - a coalition of poor, working-class whites and blacks.
 - white farmers who owned small to medium farms.
16. Henry W. Grady was:
- the builder of the American Tobacco Company.
 - an Atlanta editor who became a leading spokesman for the "New South" idea.
 - the person principally responsible for Birmingham, Alabama, becoming an iron and steel production center.
 - the governor of South Carolina who was most vociferous in advocating that blacks should migrate from the South to take industrial jobs in the North.
17. The "convict-lease" system was an arrangement whereby:
- Southern states housed Northern prisoners as a way to fund prisons without raising taxes.
 - a white man convicted of a nonviolent crime could pay a poor person, usually black, to serve his time for him.
 - the state rented cells to the convicts who then had to pay rent based on pittance wages paid in prison industry.
 - private interests paid the state for the right to use groups of prisoners to work on railroad construction and other projects.
18. "Jim Crow" is a nickname for:
- white Southerners who used violence or intimidation to restrict black activities.
 - black people who carried favor with whites by acting excessively polite and deferential.
 - the whole system of laws and customs that kept the races separate in schools, public buildings, housing, jobs, theaters, and the like.
 - black people who pretended to be friendly toward whites but who secretly undermined white interests.
 - the African-American culture of dance, music, food, and religion that grew up after slavery.
19. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) the U.S. Supreme Court established the general principle that:
- states could not prevent blacks from voting just because their grandparents had been slaves.
 - states could require separate accommodations on trains, in schools, and the like, for blacks and whites as long as the accommodations were equal.
 - Congress could take away a state's seats in the U.S. House of Representatives if the state refused to allow blacks to vote in Congressional elections.
 - local governments could use zoning and building codes to enforce racial segregation by neighborhood.
20. Around the turn of the century, which of the following was most likely to attract Northern white support?
- Increased enforcement of the Fifteenth Amendment.
 - Statutes allowing whites and blacks to marry each other if they wished.
 - A federal anti-lynching law.
 - Congressional intervention to promote racial integration in Southern public schools.

TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

Read each statement carefully. Mark true statements "T" and false statements "F."

- As bad as the economic and physical situation was for Southern blacks in the aftermath of the Civil War, conditions were even worse for the region's white population.
- The Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery throughout the South in 1863.
- Republicans were afraid that the quick return of the Southern states to Congress would lead to more Democratic votes, thereby increasing the likelihood that Congress would establish protective tariffs and subsidize railroads.
- President Lincoln believed that a lenient Reconstruction policy would encourage Southern Unionists and other Southern Whigs to become Republicans and build a stronger party in the South.
- John Wilkes Booth acted completely on his own in plotting to murder President Lincoln.

6. Characteristics of Andrew Johnson's personality that hampered him as president were that he was too polite and deferential to assume any leadership initiative.
7. The Tenure of Office Act and the Command of the Army Act were passed by Congress to prevent Southern states from sending former Confederates to Congress or from having them control the state militia companies.
8. Even though the House's impeachment charges were nominally based on specific "high crimes and misdemeanors," Andrew Johnson was actually convicted by the Senate and removed from the presidency for petty political reasons.
9. Despite the end of slavery, most black agricultural labor in the South in the late nineteenth century continued to emulate the gang-labor system in which slaves lived in concentrated quarters and worked in groups under the constant supervision of a white field boss suggestive of the prewar overseer.
10. During the period from just before the Civil War to just after Reconstruction, per capita income for African Americans rose significantly while per capita income for whites dropped.
11. In the 1870s, the expanded printing of greenback paper currency was advocated by those, especially debtors, who believed that inflation would help the economy.
12. In the context of Reconstruction, "redeemed" was used to refer to freedmen who had returned to their original slave plantations as workers after running away during or immediately following the war.
13. The Cr dit Mobilier was a railroad construction company involved in scandal during the Grant administration.
14. Hamilton Fish was Grant's secretary of state whose action worsened relations between the United States and Great Britain.
15. Alaska was called "Seward's folly" or "icebox" because of Seward's abortive attempt to sell the territory to the Russian czar as a method of financing the cost of maintaining troops in the South during Reconstruction.
16. In the period from the end of Reconstruction into the twentieth century, the Democratic Party was the political party of the vast majority of Southern whites.
17. In general, the "Redeemer," "Bourbon" political regimes were inclined to raise taxes to expand services, especially public education.
18. By 1900 the portion of the nation's manufacturing output produced in the South was about three times what it had been on the eve of the Civil War.
19. The portion of Southern farmers who were tenants, cash or sharecrop, increased markedly from Reconstruction to 1900.
20. In the period from Reconstruction to 1900, the crop-lien system helped many Southern back-country farmers in the piney woods and mountains move from cash-crop commercial farming into a ruggedly independent sort of subsistence farming.
21. By the late 1890s, a significantly smaller portion of Southern blacks were allowed to vote than in the late 1860s.

TERMS, CONCEPTS, NAMES

Freedom's Bureau	Panic of 1873	Plessy v. Ferguson 1896
Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth Amendments	"Greenbacks"	Poll Tax
Oliver O. Howard	"Seward's Folly"	"Literacy" test
Thaddeus Stevens	"Alabama claims"	Grandfather laws
Charles Sumner	"Redeemed"	Lynchings
Lincoln's Reconstruction Plan	Ku Klux Klan	Ida B. Wells
Wade-Davis Bill	Compromise of 1877	Fourteenth Amendment
John Wilkes Booth	"Redeemers"	Fifteenth Amendment
Andrew Johnson	"New South"	Working Women's Association
Presidential Reconstruction	Joel Chandler Harris	Tenure of Office Act
Black Codes	James B. Duke	Ex Parte Milligan
First Civil Rights Act	"Convict-lease system"	"Scalwags"
"Grantism"	Tenants and sharecroppers	"Carpetbaggers"
Civil service reform	Booker T. Washington	Civil Rights Act 1875
Horace Greeley	Tuskegee Institute	"40 acres and a mule"
Credit Mobilier	Atlanta Compromise	Crop lien system
"Whiskey Ring"	Jim Crow	Liberal Republicans
"Indian Ring"		