Chapter 15
Reconstruction, 1865-1877
The Struggle for National Reconstruction

Presidential Approaches: From Lincoln to Johnson

• President Lincoln offers Ten Percent Plan. However, Wade Davis Bill Passes
• Andrew Johnson (Dem) assumes office after Lincoln’s assassination in 1865
  • Ex-Confederate friends; abolitionist enemies
  • Easy reentry for former Confederate states
  • Within months all former Confederate states met terms
• Black Codes-
• Congress overrules president but violence erupts
• Freedman’s Bureau
  • Aid former slaves, civil rights bill, investigate mistreatment of blacks
  • Johnson vetoes
  • Result:
Radical Republicans and the Fourteenth Amendment

- 14th Amendment passed-
- Majority Republican in Congress
- Charles Sumner (Senate) and Thaddeus Stevens (House)

Radical Reconstruction

- Reconstruction Act of 1867-
  - Johnson’s reaction

The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson

- Johnson responded by “suspending” Radical secretary of war.
- He appointed Ulysses S. Grant. However, Grant resigned so Stanton can resume place as secretary of war.
  - Effect:
The Election of 1868 and the Fifteenth Amendment

- Grant won election, gaining popularity during impeachment
- 15th Amendment -
  - Literacy tests
  - Poll taxes

Woman Suffrage Denied

- Women’s rights leaders hoped for suffrage like ________.
- Equal Rights Association 1869 hoped that women would relax desire for suffrage and let black male suffrage take priority.
- Women leaders abandoned trust in men and focused exclusively on women’s rights.
  - National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA)
- Minor vs. Happersett (1875)
- Wisconsin granted women suffrage in 1869
The Meaning of Freedom

The Quest for Land

Freed Slaves and Northerners: Conflicting Goals

• Republicans sought to restore cotton with former slaves as wage workers on confiscated slavers’ land.

• Few Republicans like Thaddeus Stevens argued that freeman had right to land because of years of slavery.

• Some states broke up large landholdings and resold it freeman at discounted rate.
Wage Labor and Sharecropping

• Few opportunities for freeman/freewomen
  • Effect:
• Conflict between employers/freemen and labor of women.
• Many freedmen adopted white culture’s ideal of **domesticity**.
  • “key to civilization and progress”
• Some were offered a share of the crop, they paid their rent in shares of the harvest; were given tools and land to farm in exchange for labor= **sharecroppers**
  • Started out in debt
  • Debt became a pretext to **peonage**
  • Mostly **cotton industry**
• Too dependent on cotton
Republican Governments in the South

- 1868-1871 all Confederate states rejoined the Union
- African American Republicans began to hold public office
  - Protection from federal troops
- Education reform, social services, commerce, and transportation
- Union League
  - Black and white republicans
  - Wing of Radical Republicans
  - Goals:
• Freedman’s Bureau
  • monitored unfair labor contracts
  • Financial aide
  • Established schools and universities
  • 3000 teachers in the South (more than half were black)
  • Resentment
    • Scalawags
    • Carpetbaggers

• Republican Party recruited ________, mostly preachers or artisans.
  • Most became officeholders across the South
  • African American majority in lower house of legislature
  • _____ state administrators; _____ state legislatures; _____ congressmen
• Reform
  • Abolish Black Codes, voting rights, married women, economy
• Republicans brought southern state and city governments up to date
  • Outlawed corporal punishment
  • Penitentiaries
  • Free public health services
  • Soup kitchens
  • Street lights
• Most impressive of all were achievements in public education
  • Who else benefited?
Building Black Communities

• Independent churches became central institutions
• The growth of southern black churches, schools, newspapers, and civic groups was one of the most enduring initiatives of the Reconstruction era.
• Desegregation was avoided. Why?
• Radical Republican, Charles Sumner fought for desegregation but failed.
• Civil Rights Act of 1875 (last until __________)
The Undoing of Reconstruction

• Conflict of interest between African Americans and Republicans.
  • Black autonomy vs. reincorporate ex-Confederates (economy)
  • Only full scale military intervention could force the ex-Confederacy to accept Reconstruction

The Republican Unraveling

• Severe economic depression began in 1873
• Initial panic was triggered by bankruptcy of North Pacific Railroad Co. Why?
• Grant rejected pleas to intervene and help economy
• Layoffs, unemployment, high crop prices
• Republicans discredited
• Corrupt politics in connection with corrupt businessmen
• Programs that helped African Americans in the south plummeted
The Disillusioned Liberals

• Liberal Republicans (very misleading name)
  • Small government, limited voting rights, reconciliation with the South, against Reconstruction

• Credit Mobilier scandal
  • Fake company established that gave shares to government

• Whisky Ring
  • Tax fraud
  • The leader was Grant’s private secretary
    • Grant’s reaction
Counterrevolution in the South

- Ex-Confederates used terrorism against Republicans
  - Black voters
  - Beaten, shot, hanged
- Ku Klux Klan (1866)
  - Nathan Bedford Forrest, ex-Confederate general
  - Violent acts against supporters of TN Republican governor
  - KKK was directly represented in TN Democratic party
  - Used violence to intimidate Republicans in the south
    - Burned schools, churches, beat teachers, murdered politicians
- Enforcement Acts
  - Democrat party dominated the House of Representatives by the mid 1870s. How?
  - Only three southern states had Republican governments by 1876
The Supreme Court Rejection of Equal Rights

• “Slaughterhouse Cases”
  • U.S. v. Cruikshank-
    • The 14th Amendment did not protect citizens from vigilante behavior

The Political Crisis of 1877

• Rutherford B. Hayes (R) was nominated for election of 1876. He ran against Samuel Tilden whom favored “home rule”.

• With a slim margin of electoral votes between the two candidates, both Democrats and Republicans submitted “electoral” votes to Congress from disputed southern states, claiming theirs to be the real number.

• An electoral commission was appointed to settle the issue.

• **Both parties agreed to elect Hayes (R) if he promised to end Reconstruction**
Lasting Legacies

• Slow decline of Radical Republican power from the 1870s through the mid 1880s
• Simultaneous rise of ex-Confederate power in the South and Democrats on the national stage
• 13th and 14th Amendments stayed intact. However...
• Constitutional framework that the civil rights movement of the twentieth century would be built was established
• New federal power established by Republicans was used in U.S. imperialism