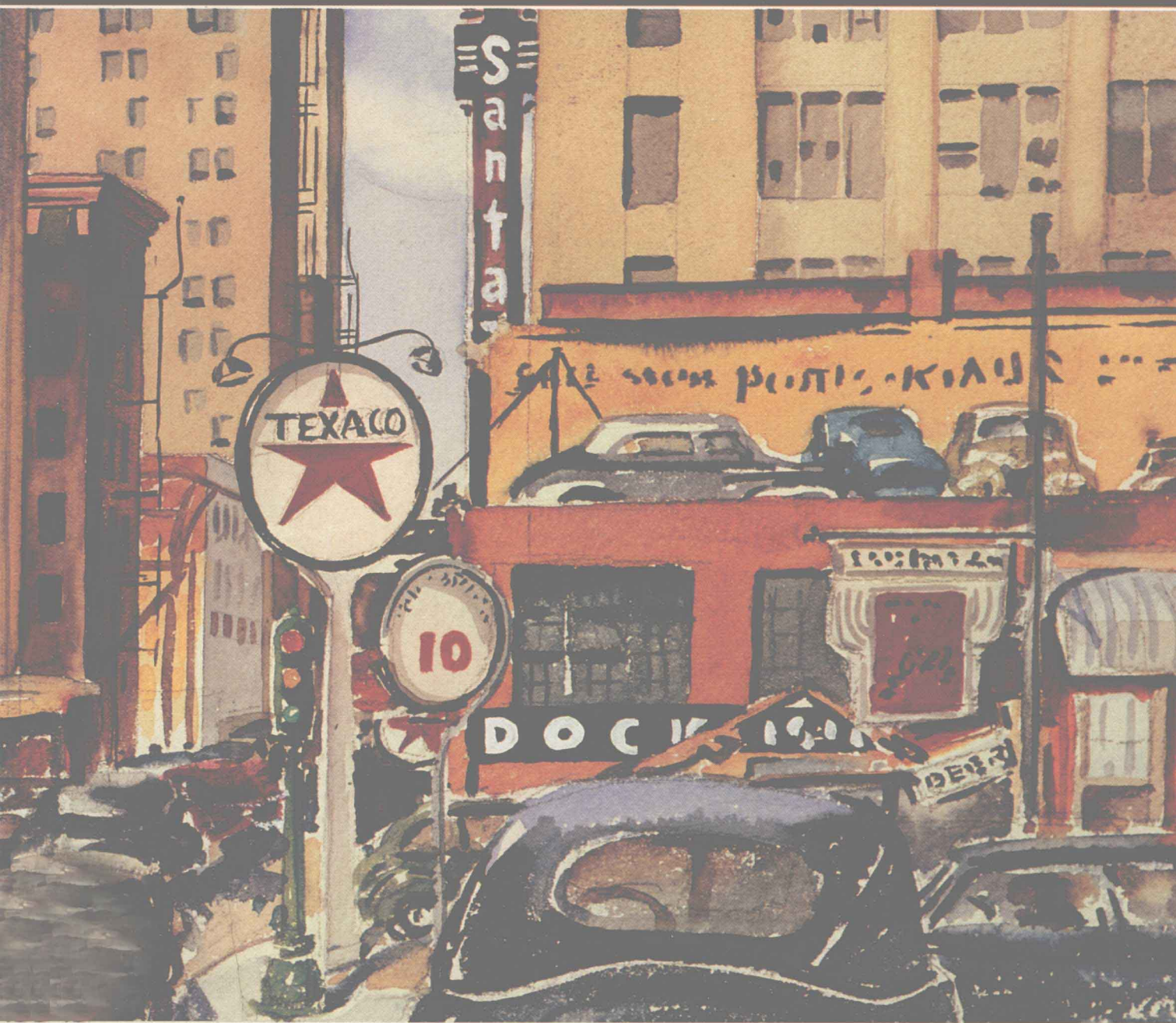


F O U R T H E D I T I O N

America's History

Student Guide

Volume 2: Since 1865



Albert I. Berger

FOURTH EDITION

STUDENT GUIDE

America's[★] History

VOLUME 2: SINCE 1865

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Preface

Many students still think of history as a jumbled, complicated catalog of names, dates, and places. *America's History*, Fourth Edition, along with this Student Guide, will help students to sort through and begin to understand what happened throughout the history of the United States. *America's History*, Volume 2, tells a fascinating story, using a rich variety of materials to describe the development of the United States since 1877. The Student Guide parallels the text chapter by chapter to help students understand the individual elements of the story, as well as the overall picture that emerges as all the pieces are put together. With this goal in mind, the Student Guide divides each chapter of the text into nine component parts:

- The **Learning Objectives** section introduces students to the major arguments of each chapter. These consist of several broad questions about cause and effect or the relationship among events in a given historical period. When students can give reasonable answers to these questions, they will have succeeded in understanding the main points in the chapter.
- The **Chapter Summary** states the broad outline of each chapter in brief, general language, following the chapter narrative section by section. These brief, general summaries highlight the underlying themes that drive the narrative.
- The **Expanded Timeline**, an annotated version of the timeline that appears at the end of each chapter, reinforces students' grasp of the cause-and-effect logic of historical change. These short descriptions of the significance of each major event or development give students the chronological building blocks to tie together material from a series of thematically organized text chapters.

Recognizing that each narrative is an argument based on an interpretation of the available evidence, the next four sections of the Student Guide focus on enhancing students' reading of the evidence.

- The **Glossary** defines both specific terms and more general concepts presented in *America's History*. This edition includes new definitions of foreign-language terms, the derivation of jargon and slang expressions, and different definitions of some terms as their meaning changed over time or when used by different groups—for example, the different meanings of the words *capitalism*, *conservation*, *feminism*, and *liberalism*. Once students understand historically specific definitions, they will have an easier time recognizing both the key players who move through the story and the important forces that are at work.
- The **Identification** section helps students master the names of the significant individuals, concepts, and places in each chapter. Learning the who, what, where, and when of history enables students to support the arguments they make in class discussion, in writing assignments, and on tests with evidence. The more students can explain and discuss historical events that took place in the past, as a time and place that are different from the present, the more effective their historical writing and thinking will be, and the stronger will be the understanding they take away from the classroom.
- The **Features Exercises** are tools to help students evaluate the *American Lives* and *New Technology* essays, as well as the primary documents found in *American Voices* and *Voices from Abroad*. The questions provided in the Student Guide help students shape their thinking about these essays and documents, showing them how to incorporate what they can

learn from these features into their understanding of the chapter material. Instead of asking students to look for “right” or “wrong” answers, the Features Exercises encourage them to think analytically, examining specific, illustrative examples in their historical context.

- The **Maps and Figures Exercises** help students analyze evidence provided in visual form, in the maps, charts, and tables in the text. Making an effort to “read” the visual evidence helps students realize that some stories are best told visually, others numerically, and that geography makes important contributions to history.
- The **Self-Test**, which includes **Multiple Choice** and **Short Essays**, allows students to determine how well they have mastered the material after working through the chapter. The Multiple Choice questions go beyond who and what to explore issues of how and why. The Short Essays ask the main questions that each chapter seeks to answer. Writing responses to these exercises will give students good preparation for written assignments and essay tests. Students can evaluate their essays against the suggested answers provided at the end of each chapter of the Guide.

There is no recommended way to use the Student Guide. Each student should tailor use of the Guide to his or her own style of studying and learning. However students use the Guide in conjunction with the text, their use of the two resources should develop symbiotically, deepening both their reading skills and their understanding of the text’s narrative of United States history. In this way, a successful student will come away with not only more knowledge about the past but also with a better appreciation of the distinctive nature of historical thought. These are the goals of a college-level history course.

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Albert I. Berger

STUDENT GUIDE

America's History

VOLUME 2: SINCE 1865

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What Is History?

History is the story of the human past. Like all stories, whether told orally or written down, history is full of characters acting their parts within story lines in a wide range of settings. Given the vast diversity and range of human life over thousands of years since people have been recording their experiences, the varieties of history are almost infinite. Generally, however, histories vary according to four characteristics: time frame, setting, subjects, and themes.

The present is considered contemporary time. People record contemporary time by living through it. We mark the passing of time by our physical and mental development and our living each day as part of a story line of experiences. We create a meaningful story line by placing each experience in the context of our memories of past experiences. Historians consider past time from a broader perspective than we have on contemporary time. Some historians do examine the past over very short periods, telling the story of human activity over the course of a few months, days, even hours or minutes. But the pastness of that time fixes it in place, allowing a perspective that no one has on the present. Most historians take advantage of historical perspective to examine events or processes that occurred over longer periods, ranging from years to decades or generations. Still other histories follow patterns of human activity across centuries or millennia. By creating stories that encompass long passages of time, historians place human activity in a new perspective, giving it meaning that couldn't be appreciated as people lived through it.

Historians do more, however, than understand events within the context of the passage of time. They also examine and understand past events within a specific setting. Indeed, understanding events and developments within their specific time and place is what fundamentally defines the study of history. But the scope of the places historians study is as varied as the time frames they tackle. Some histories examine the activities of people in very precise places—a town or city, a village, a section of a town, a neighborhood, a house, or, in the most specific cases, a single room. But most analyze regions, nations, continents, and even the world, placing the events of specific places, including our own, in a broader perspective. Similarly, the number of subjects historians consider can be as diverse as the places they inhabit. Traditionally, historians have studied the people who make up a state, a region, a nation, groups of nations, a civilization, a culture, or even mankind as a whole in the world. But historians also study people as individuals, as well as families, small groups, and large groups based on occupational, social, ethnic, racial, or gender identity.

Thematically, all histories focus on human activity within at least one of the four major themes or aspects of human life: economic, social, political, or cultural activity. Economic activity involves all human actions and behaviors directed toward or motivated by the human impulse to physically survive and maintain oneself. How people have done this, what returns or gains they made from it, and how they have employed those gains to alter their standard of living are all encompassed within economic activity. Social history focuses on the ways in which people have organized themselves in relation to one another in order to facilitate their chances of survival and maintenance. History written from a social perspective tells stories of how individuals, groups, or a mass of people in a past time and place went about the business of living their lives and influencing the lives of others. How people grew up, socially interacted with others, formed families, had and reared children, and assumed adult roles in families are central

concerns. How people formed small and large social groups based on family ties, occupational status, level of wealth, cultural values, or ethnic, racial, or gender identity and employed these points of reference to achieve the social goals of survival, protection, socialization, and reproduction are questions at the center of most social history.

Such social agendas usually involve some effort to influence or interact with political activity and government. Thus political history studies the negotiation, competition, and struggle among people of various families, clans, groups, classes, parties or sections, and countries for power and control. Traditionally, political history has examined how leaders, politicians, and government officials acquired power and formulated both domestic and foreign policies. It also studies the various ways in which leaders implemented policy, executed laws, and exerted control through leadership over their own people. From another perspective, political history studies how people interacted with government. Sometimes people were removed from government, had little say in its operations, and did not try to exert any influence over it. At other times, people affected government by gaining a voice in choosing leaders, organizing groups, parties, or institutions to influence or change the nature or focus of government policy, or exerting personal influence to affect government. How people and social groups acted politically to influence or respond to their own government's policies or the policies of another country is a central theme of political history. War is the broadest, most violent activity in the national or international realm of politics.

Finally, cultural histories tell stories of how people in past times and places, as they pursued and acted upon their various economic, social, and political goals, interpreted their activities in oral, artistic, material, spiritual, or intellectual ways to themselves and to others. Stories of people in the past formulating a theory of the cosmos, founding or reinvigorating or reforming a religious theology or practice, expressing themselves in a certain language, celebrating an event or entertaining themselves or others in a particular behavioral or material way, presenting the human body—male or female—in a specific way and clothed in a specific style, producing art or literature in a certain style with certain subjects and themes, or building, designing, or decorating homes, public buildings, and places of work in certain ways are all stories of people acting and behaving culturally. Indeed, the capacity to express culture seems to be what primarily defines people as human beings and distinguishes them from more advanced species of animal life.

History, therefore, is as varied and diverse as the endless range of possible varieties of time frames, settings, themes, and subjects about which one could write in studying people who lived in the past. One of the most powerful aspects of history is trying to discern some of the common patterns and themes in the infinite variety of stories within the human experience. By identifying patterns in history, we fit the many pieces into a comprehensive story or narrative that has relevance to us and thus gives meaning to our own lives. However various and diverse, all these stories are part of the broad canvas, or story of the human past, that is history.

Why Study History?

One can, and many people do, live without any exposure to formal history. The dictum that those who do not understand the past are doomed to repeat it is generally true; but at the same time many people live perfectly satisfying lives without giving much thought to or studying history. Nevertheless, all people, by the act of living in an economy, society, political system and culture in the world, interact with and derive meaning from systems that people in the past helped to establish or construct. All people are, therefore, implicitly historians.

People choose to study history formally, then, because it connects one's life to the lives of other human beings who lived in the past and thus enhances and gives it meaning. History is a fundamental human endeavor that defines one's humanity. In going about everyday activity, every person constructs a story line to plot his or her life. Asking someone who he is is the same as asking him where he has been, what he has done and experienced, where he is going, and what he wants to do. The basic questions we all face, "What do you want to be?" or "What do you do?," are inextricably bound up with "Who are you?" The answers to all of these questions lie in how well we have formulated the narrative of our lives. Happiness in life could be defined as successfully acting as the protagonist of the plot one has written and directed oneself. This general process of personal development is analogous to the practice of history. As individuals pursue their own lives, so, too, on a larger scale across time and space, do families, clans, groups, classes, and nations. While individuals create a meaningful personal narrative through action, experience, behavior, and memory, so, too, does history create for that group or nation a meaningful economic, social, political, and cultural narrative that gives meaning to the members of that group or nation living today.

The study of history has practical value, too. As written by historians, history sharpens one's intellectual and analytic skills. History is a distinctive discipline. It makes use of intellectual methods that are employed across a wide variety of disciplines and uses them in distinctive ways that are shaped by the particular nature of history. By understanding the differences between the methods, assumptions, subjects, and practice of history and those of other disciplines, one sharpens one's intellectual and analytic skills in important, even essential, ways. The subject and methods of history make an understanding of some history, therefore, a foundation for any education, whether its major focus is the liberal arts, the sciences, or professional, technical, or vocational training.

Historians use such rational scientific methods as the study of statistics and data, but their ultimate goal is to tell stories that have a plot. The way they organize the information they gather into that plot is really an interpretation or a theory about how or why something happened the way it did. Many facts seem undisputed—Christopher Columbus landed on El Salvador and discovered America on October 12, 1492; John F. Kennedy was murdered by Lee Harvey Oswald on November 22, 1963—but the significance of those facts, or even the full story of what happened, is less evident than one might think. To understand and explain the past, the historian must develop a thesis, test that thesis, and then defend it, employing the evidence that he or she has gathered.

The type of evidence available to historians is what makes history distinctive. Historians have access only to the evidence that has physically survived over time. Historians of the recent past may have far more evidence than any one person could ever absorb, but even this is not a

complete picture. Sometimes new evidence becomes available when it is found by contemporary historians, as when a set of documents, letters, or papers previously believed to have been lost come to light. But in most cases historians find and use new evidence by developing new methods of analysis, asking new questions, or pursuing new story lines that give new relevance to evidence that was previously ignored. Often, historians have evidence, such as diaries, journals, personal letters, or secret documents, to support their thesis that contemporaries living through the events did not have or even know existed. Or they may have no more than fragments of evidence, such as a single statement or a partial list, that do more to obscure than to clarify an understanding of the event in question. Most of the time, historians have an intriguing mix of material that no contemporary would have had, combined with a loss of much material that contemporaries took for granted. Out of this surviving database, historians must develop a theory and try, as best they can, to demonstrate it. Add to these concerns the fact that most historical evidence is circumstantial, rather than the direct testimony of witnesses. Often, historians try to construct a story with little more than a scrap of evidence placing an individual or a group in a time and place but not addressing the specific questions the historian seeks to answer. Historians must be creative in searching the documents they have in ways that will help to answer their questions. Given the uniqueness of the database (which is, in some ways, analogous to memories about events in our past, on which we have broader perspective now but find hard to re-create in total), no historian will ever achieve the finality of the scientist. No historical thesis can be indisputably “proved” because in any human activity there is room for interpretation in telling the story. Many historical theses would fail to convince most trial juries beyond a reasonable doubt. Interpretations of a historical event can vary as widely as the range of views it is possible to have about current events or people living today. History thus uses the scientific method, but within a broader interpretive framework often supported by evidence that is not definitive. Every time one tries to understand the past, therefore, one acquires insight into the uncertainty, biases, and fluidity of any knowledge.

While the fluidity of history sometimes makes it more like a detective story or a fictional novel than an experiment in a laboratory, the practice of history as written adds to that fluidity. Historians generally try to present their theses in the colloquial, nontechnical language in which people speak and read in everyday life. As a rule, they present their stories in narrative form, though often with an analytic thematic framework running beneath the prose. The fact that history tries to fuse an understanding of different areas of activity into a general narrative adds to its intellectual power. History is the art of understanding social, economic, political, and cultural activity, then connecting these elements and trying to explain how they interacted to shape the general course of human events. The ability to articulate complicated ideas in a simple, straightforward way is a powerful skill that we can develop by studying history. Acquiring the skill to rationally examine much of the complex real world around us, develop a thesis about it, and argue the evidence to sustain a thesis is, indeed, one of the primary goals of a college education. History adds to that skill an ability to recognize human complexity within the context of its time and place. While putting a powerful intellectual tool in our hands, history also cultivates and satisfies our deepest human impulses.

Chapter 15



Reconstruction, 1865–1877

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The following thematic and conceptual questions will help you to grasp the underlying logic of the historical events explained in this chapter. Your objective is to learn how and why historical events happened the way they did, and what impact those events had on subsequent events. Asking broad questions that explore the logic of historical events enhances your ability to answer essay questions. History is, after all, an extended essay. Historians such as the authors interpret events or argue a thesis about how and why events occurred the way they did by presenting evidence. The more detailed information provided in the text is the evidence upon which their interpretations are based. Specific events, names, and dates simply add detail and depth to the evidence and enhance your more general, conceptual understanding of how and why events took place as they did. No individual can possibly remember all the details. You should, however, try to examine closely sections of the text to see how the authors present detailed evidence to enhance and support their general interpretation.

1. How was the Reconstruction of the political and social system of the South after the Civil War shaped by the struggle among different groups, each with their own goals and objectives?
2. In what ways did the quality of leadership, the use of force, the determination of participants, and the timing of a group or an individual's actions affect the course of Reconstruction?

3. How did the effort to implement a Reconstruction policy raise constitutional issues about the separation of powers in national government, the relationship between the federal government and the states, and the rights of all citizens?
4. What were some of the successes and failures of Reconstruction? Was Reconstruction, in the end, a success or a failure?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

With the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment and Lee's surrender at Appomattox, only three things about the postwar South were certain: the Confederate States of America was destroyed, the Union had been saved, and slavery was abolished. Within the scope of these three certainties, each group struggled to implement its policy for the postwar South based on the status it believed the South had held during the war, why it had fought the war, and what it had hoped to achieve.

Radical Republicans wanted to reconstruct, even regenerate, southern society by raising free blacks to a position of social equality with ex-Confederates. More moderate Republicans sought less, desiring only to adjust the social order and provide civil rights and social and political opportunities for former slaves. Democrats believed the South should be left to sort out its postwar reconstruction itself. They offered lenient terms for reentry into the Union, allowed former rebels back into politics, and would leave it to the states to settle the questions of civil rights for freed-

men. In the South ex-Confederates wanted to return things as close as possible to the antebellum social conditions. They wanted to “redeem” the South by restoring their political power. Meanwhile, yeomen farmers wanted more political power, and freedmen wanted land, civil rights, education and the economic opportunity to establish themselves as yeomen farmers and craft workers.

The outcome of Reconstruction between 1867 and 1877 is a story of the struggle of each of these different groups to prevail in shaping the nature of life in the South after the war. In the end, neither Republican politicians establishing policy from the North, members of the Freedmen’s Bureau in the South, nor freedmen in the South were able to sustain long-term changes in the face of the fundamental fact that the ex-Confederates regained or maintained control of the land. In a region economically devastated by war, ex-Confederates still exerted political power, determined social relationships, and controlled economic activity; and they would use whatever means—negotiation or resistance, terror or force—to achieve their goals. Living in the South, they were able to outlast Republican ideological fervor, which eventually waned, returning the South by 1877 to a racist political and social regime not unlike that which had prevailed before the war. Nevertheless, the Reconstruction programs of the Radicals had established three fundamental constitutional amendments, provided free blacks with freedom, and instilled in them the belief that they could help themselves. Reconstruction may have ended and even failed in the eyes of some, but it left a lasting legacy.

Presidential Reconstruction

(pp. 478–485)

Taking advantage of an accident of timing that delayed the convening of Congress until late 1865, the new president, Andrew Johnson, implemented his own Reconstruction policy. Rooted in his belief that the Confederate states had never surrendered their constitutional status, he argued that the president, acting alone, could restore southern states and their citizens to the Union. Johnson offered southerners widespread amnesty, allowed ex-Confederates to exercise political power and entitled them to recover their confiscated lands, thwarted the efforts of the Freedmen’s Bureau to help free blacks, and attacked a civil rights bill proposed by the Republicans. Through his actions, Johnson enabled southern whites to gain the upper hand against the freedmen in shaping the postwar South, and energized the Republican Congress to launch a major effort to take over Reconstruction.

Johnson’s Initiative

The assassination of Abraham Lincoln gave the presidency to Andrew Johnson, a man who had none of the wisdom or political skill of his predecessor. While Congress was on recess, Johnson launched his own Reconstruction plan. Initially, his requirement that southern states ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to be readmitted to the Union and that ex-Confederates pledge oaths of allegiance to the Union drew support from Republicans. But when Johnson vetoed the Freedmen’s Bureau, and it became apparent that his leniency had allowed too many ex-Confederates to claim power and recover their lands, Republican opposition to his version of Reconstruction developed.

Acting on Freedom

Johnson’s leniency also worked against former slaves. While freedmen sought to reconstitute their families, move around, form institutions and organizations, and engage in politics, they sought land above all else. Initially, Union forces had confiscated planters’ land and given it to former slaves, but ex-Confederates, supported by Johnson and their own militia if necessary, now took back the confiscated land. Having to go back to work, many freedmen resisted gang labor or even wage labor as farm workers because both were a form of dependency not unlike slavery. In an agricultural society, to be one’s own master meant to run one’s own farm. Blacks negotiated for a system in which they could work as “freedmen” and become independent heads of their own households, with social and legal rights over their wives and control over their own affairs. In their tenacious struggle to negotiate a new kind of labor system, free blacks sought aid from the North.

Congress versus President

When Johnson vetoed the Freedmen’s Bureau in February 1866, Radical Republicans were galvanized into action. They overrode the presidential veto—a first for Congress—and pushed for the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed all citizens basic civil rights. Johnson established himself in opposition to the Fourteenth Amendment and suffered a crushing defeat before a Republican Party unified behind the Radical program.

Radical Reconstruction

(pp. 485–494)

By rejecting the Fourteenth Amendment, the states of the South brought radical Reconstruction upon themselves. A strong Republican Congress implemented

radical Reconstruction legislation. Republican Party organizations, many members of which were black, gained control of southern state governments. These governments gained readmission to the Union according to the new requirements, funded public education, established better state institutions, and rebuilt railroads. Meanwhile, freedmen formed their own churches to strengthen their communities and established a system of sharecropping that, at least initially, seemed better than laboring for their former masters and offered the prospect of a better life.

Congress Takes Command

In the Reconstruction Act of 1867, the Radical Republicans placed the South under military rule, restrained the power of ex-Confederates, and required southern states to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment and grant freedmen the right to vote. Meanwhile, Congress waged a constitutional struggle against President Johnson by trying to force him to keep the only supporter of radical Reconstruction in his cabinet. The Tenure of Office Act required the president to gain Senate approval to remove from office any official whose appointment had required Senate approval. When Johnson dismissed his secretary of war, Congress impeached him and nearly removed him from office. By weakening the presidency, Congress reconstructed the office and ended a period of strong executive leadership. In the wake of a sweeping victory in 1868, resulting in the election of Ulysses S. Grant as president, the Republicans passed the Fifteenth Amendment, guaranteeing voting rights to all male citizens. By slighting women, the Fifteenth Amendment reinvigorated the feminist movement, which now focused its energy on gaining suffrage.

Republican Rule in the South

Protected by federal troops and supported by northern leaders and the Freedmen's Bureau, Republicans gained control of southern governments. Among those who acquired positions in the South were African Americans, some of whom were former slaves. These new governments implemented new constitutions and provided public support for schools, hospitals, institutions, roads, and public works. Though underfunded and corrupt, the governments made real progress in modernizing parts of the South. Within this framework, blacks established new institutions, particularly churches, which formed the bonds of new communities.

Sharecropping

Former slaves were also an active force in establishing the predominant production and labor system of the

postwar South. Although the ex-Confederates had regained control of the land, they faced an intransigent class of freedmen who refused to work in gangs, for wages, or with any supervision over their private lives. Moreover, landlords lacked the money to pay wages, even when the freedmen did not resist. In response to the freedmen's desire to work independently and the landlords' need to pay workers in some form other than cash, the system of sharecropping developed. Sharecroppers would rent the land from the landlords and pay their rent with a share of the crop. Though the relationship remained unequal, and blacks who had no capital quickly fell into debt peonage, many black families did gain control over their lives and learned to work for themselves. Hence, for blacks, sharecropping, while it became a kind of trap and did contribute to the economic decline of the South, was also a framework in which they could live free lives.

The Undoing of Reconstruction (pp. 494–501)

Unwilling to accept radical Reconstruction, ex-Confederates launched a counterrevolution to regain control of southern politics. Though their resistance was formidable, they could have succeeded only if the North acquiesced to their agenda. The undoing of Reconstruction, then, resulted from a combination of southern counterrevolution and northern complicity.

Counterrevolution

As northern support for Reconstruction waned, the forces of reaction reasserted themselves. By 1870, racist whites in the Ku Klux Klan had launched a campaign of terror to destroy black institutions, deny blacks their voting rights, maintain blacks in debt peonage, and seize political power from the Republicans. Though Congress sought to counteract this counterrevolution, neither the military, the Justice Department, the Supreme Court, nor the Grant administration had the resources, the will, or the interest to sustain the effort and repulse the white backlash in the South.

The Acquiescent North

The continuing Republican commitment to the American System—an activist state that supported education, charities, health care, transportation, and public-works construction, as well as civil rights—seemed to bode well for Reconstruction. Economic boom enabled the federal government to continue to pay for Reconstruction policy. Yet discontent with in-

vestment returns in the South, corruption, political cynicism, and reemergent racism combined to undermine support. While the Grant administration became mired in corruption, dividing the Republican Party into supporters of Grant and liberal reformers, the country plunged into a recession in 1873. In the midst of growing anxiety about the corrupt new industrial state, concerns over Reconstruction waned.

The Political Crisis of 1877

When Republican outsider Rutherford B. Hayes and Democratic New York governor Samuel J. Tilden appeared tied in the electoral college in the 1876 election for president because of confusion over the submission of votes, an air of crisis gripped the nation. After a series of complex negotiations in Congress that may have included an inside deal, Hayes was inaugurated. Whether or not Hayes was involved in a deal, he quickly removed troops from South Carolina and Louisiana, the last Republican governments in the South, allowing those regimes to fall. Reconstruction was over. Democratic governments were back in power, ex-Confederates had pushed blacks out of offices, the Ku Klux Klan terrorized blacks to prevent them from voting, and more freedmen were falling into debt peonage as a result of sharecropping. Though it appeared to be a failure, Reconstruction did see three constitutional amendments passed and blacks emerge as a social force in the South.

EXPANDED TIMELINE

1863 Lincoln announces his Ten Percent Plan

Lincoln indicated his views on postwar policy by offering secessionist states a chance to return to the Union if 10 percent of the voters who accepted amnesty took an oath of allegiance. Many Republicans thought the plan was too lenient.

1864 Wade-Davis bill passed by Congress

Lincoln gives Wade-Davis bill a “pocket” veto

When the radical wing of the Republican Party passed a strict plan outlining the conditions under which the southern states could return to the Union, Lincoln, wanting to steer a more flexible and moderate course, pocket-vetoed the measure. In so doing, he again demonstrated his strong political judgment in not committing himself to a plan of action until he felt it was necessary.

1865 Freedmen’s Bureau established

As part of their radical program, Republicans established a government bureau that would provide emergency aid to former slaves during the transition to

freedom. The Bureau offered freedmen food and clothing, legal assistance in acquiring land or signing labor contracts, and even some schooling and help in relocating family members.

Lincoln assassinated; Andrew Johnson succeeds as president

Soon after the creation of the Freedmen’s Bureau, on April 14, Lincoln was shot and mortally wounded at Ford’s Theater in Washington, D.C. He died the next morning, leaving the question of what he might have done to implement Reconstruction unanswered. Lincoln’s vice-president, Andrew Johnson, a former Democrat and southerner with limited judgment, became president.

Johnson implements his restoration plan

While Congress was out of session for most of 1865, Johnson implemented a moderate program to allow southern states back into the Union. But support for the program among Republicans eroded when Johnson allowed too many ex-Confederates to regain power.

Joint Committee on Reconstruction formed

In late 1865, as Republicans became aware that Johnson’s program was too lenient, they refused to allow southern delegations to take their seats in Congress and formed a committee to begin public hearings on conditions in the South. Republicans hoped that they could still cooperate with Johnson to formulate a strategy for readmittance of southern states.

1866 Civil Rights Act passes over Johnson’s veto

When Johnson vetoed a new Freedmen’s Bureau Act in early 1866, Radical Republicans put together the Civil Rights Act and passed it over his veto. This was the first time Congress had ever overridden a presidential veto. On the strength of their action, Radical Republicans passed and sent out for ratification the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, guaranteeing all citizens civil rights and due process.

Memphis riots

The urgency to act to protect the rights and lives of southern blacks intensified as southern whites violently struck out to control freedmen. Massive riots in Memphis against blacks, resulting in forty-seven deaths, convinced Congress that it had to do more.

Johnson makes disastrous “swing around the circle”

Johnson defeated in congressional elections

Johnson, sensing the rising radical tide, opposed the Fourteenth Amendment and, by campaigning in the congressional elections on that issue, essentially stood as a Democrat against the Republicans. When he made the unprecedented move of actively campaigning on a railroad tour from Washington to Chicago

and St. Louis, he was openly heckled and engaged in shouting matches with his listeners. Johnson was humiliated in the congressional elections of 1866, when the Republicans won a three-to-one majority in Congress, which enabled them to proceed with a more radical Reconstruction without him.

1867 **Reconstruction Acts Tenure of Office Act**

Buoyed by a major Republican victory, the Radicals launched radical Reconstruction with the Reconstruction Act of 1867. The act divided the South into five military districts and established stricter requirements for readmission. The Radical Republicans also sought to control the president by limiting his ability to hire and fire officials in the cabinet, through the Tenure of Office Act.

1868 **Impeachment crisis**

When Johnson violated the new law (which was later declared unconstitutional), the Radical Republican Congress impeached him and the Senate trial came within a single vote of removing him from office in May 1868.

Fourteenth Amendment ratified

This amendment, which guarantees every citizen's civil rights and due process, would become the foundation for the civil rights movement in the mid-twentieth century.

Ulysses S. Grant elected president

On the strength of his opposition to Johnson and the rising tide of support for Reconstruction, Grant was elected by a strong margin and the Republicans maintained control of both houses of Congress. The Republicans now had a mandate to implement Reconstruction in the South.

1870 **Ku Klux Klan at peak of power**

Radical Reconstruction enabled Republicans, including many African Americans, to gain power in southern government. With support from the North, these new governments instituted significant political, economic, and social reform. In response, white racists in Tennessee formed a social club called the Ku Klux Klan, which spread across the South. The KKK was a paramilitary force whose members served the interests of the Democratic Party by launching a terrorist counterrevolution to push back gains made by blacks.

Fifteenth Amendment ratified

The Fifteenth Amendment, guaranteeing all male citizens the right to vote regardless of race, gained the required ratification of three-fourths of the states when the unreconstructed states of Virginia, Mississippi, Texas, and Georgia were required to ratify it before they were readmitted to the Union.

1871 **Ku Klux Klan Act passed by Congress**

Congress tried to halt the rising power and impact of the Ku Klux Klan, but there was decreasing support in the North for Reconstruction and the act was poorly enforced.

1872 **Grant's reelection as president**

In spite of a continuing activist government, cynicism, corruption, and growing interest in other issues weakened support for Reconstruction. The reform liberal wing of the Republican Party formed a separate faction and advocated civil-service reform, smaller government, and limited suffrage, and opposed, therefore, continuing radical Reconstruction. In response, Grant ran for reelection and won on promises of reconciliation with the South. For most Republicans, the terms of political debate had shifted away from Reconstruction.

1873 **Panic of 1873 ushers in depression of 1873–1877**

Support for Reconstruction was further undermined by economic depression, which deepened Americans' concerns about governmental corruption and increased tensions between the working class and the middle class and industrial leaders. The issue of Reconstruction was being pushed off center stage.

1874 **Democrats win majority in House of Representatives**

When Democrats took up the liberal Republican call for reform, limited government, and reconciliation with the South, the party shook off its treasonous connotations and reemerged as an active force in national politics. The Democrats essentially ended political debate about the South and the Republicans' ability to formulate any southern policy when they took a majority in Congress for the first time since the secession crisis.

1875 **Whiskey Ring scandal undermines Grant administration**

When Grant's secretary of the Treasury uncovered a tax-fraud scheme involving various government officials, scandal rocked the White House. Grant was left powerless and was soon abandoned by the Republican Party in the 1876 election.

1877 **Compromise of 1877**

By 1876, voters had lost interest in Reconstruction. When the presidential candidates tied in the electoral college, the election was thrown into Congress. A filibuster prevented any resolution from being reached in Congress, which appointed an electoral commission, resulting in a constitutional crisis that lasted for months.

Rutherford B. Hayes becomes president Reconstruction ends

Though it is unclear whether any deal was actually made, after meeting with Hayes, the Democrats ended

their filibuster and allowed Hayes to be inaugurated. Soon after becoming president, Hayes ended Reconstruction by ordering federal troops in Louisiana and South Carolina to withdraw.

GLOSSARY

pocket veto Rather than actually veto an act, the president has the right simply not to act on it before the end of the congressional term, thus effectively vetoing the legislation. He puts it in his pocket, hence the “pocket veto.” Lincoln exercised a pocket veto of the Wade-Davis bill, a moderate Republican act that established conditions for the readmission of southern states to the Union in 1864. (p. 478)

freedmen The name given to former slaves to distinguish them from blacks who had been free before or during the Civil War. (p. 479)

due process According to Enlightenment ideas, each individual possesses the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and property. In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment reasserted that an individual could not be deprived of these rights without due process—a clear, agreed-upon, non-arbitrary method. In the twentieth century, the right to due process guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment would become the foundation for efforts to secure the rights and liberties of all Americans. (p. 484)

“waving the bloody shirt” For a generation after the Civil War, Republicans, needing to make a point against the Democrats, would remind voters of who was on which side during the Civil War. By implying that Republicans were the patriots who stood for their country and Democrats were traitors, they were “waving the bloody shirt.” (p. 484)

scalawag A derisive term that ex-Confederates called southerners who joined the Republican Party to brand them as traitors. These southerners included many former Whigs and yeomen farmers who supported the economic development of the South with northern capital. (p. 489)

carpetbaggers A derisive name, referring to a cheap suitcase, that southerners gave northerners who came South to pursue their economic, political, and social goals. Among them were many veterans, reformers, and seekers of fortune. (p. 489)

sharecropping A system of farming in which a landlord rents a plot of land to a tenant farmer. That tenant has the freedom to plant his crop and organize his farm as he wishes. In return for the use of the land he pays rent, not in cash but with an agreed-upon share of the crop. (p. 492)

lien When one person is in debt to another, the creditor may demand collateral on the debt to assure himself of payment in case of default. By acquiring a claim to the property of the debtor, the creditor acquires a lien and thus effectively owns that share until the debtor repays the debt. (p. 493)

peonage When a debtor has fallen so deeply in debt that the debt becomes permanent, the creditor can require the debtor to work to pay off part of the debt. This is a kind of slavery called peonage. (p. 493)

cronyism Government in which a leader relies on, and provides benefits and appointments to, close old friends, or “cronies.” Given the personalized nature of politics in the 1860s, the legacy of military experience, and a political culture of patronage in which friends were relied on and rewarded for their loyalty, cronyism was rampant during the Grant administration. (p. 499)

civil service An appointment to any office within the government is service to the higher public good, or civil service. Many felt that the system had been overcome by patronage and cronyism and objected that those who were appointed to government positions should have the skills necessary to carry out the jobs to which they had been appointed. (p. 499)

classical liberal In the 1870s, this was someone who believed in free trade, open competition in the marketplace, and limited government intervention in the economy. Classical liberals of the 1870s were the political descendants of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson, both of whom, in contrast to the Federalists and Whigs, respectively, believed in lower tariffs or even free trade and a limited government with a laissez-faire policy in regard to the economy. (p. 499)

IDENTIFICATION

Identify by filling in the blanks.

1. Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, 1865, by _____. (p. 478)
2. The Radical Republican government organization, established in 1865 and extended in 1866 to help freedmen with emergency relief during the period of transition to freedom was the _____. (p. 479)
3. The moderate Republican senator from Illinois who pursued the extension of the Freedmen's Bureau and submitted a proposal for a civil rights bill in 1866 was _____. (pp. 479–483)