

Reconstruction Revisited

Author(s): Eric Foner

Source: *Reviews in American History*, Dec., 1982, Vol. 10, No. 4, The Promise of American History: Progress and Prospects (Dec., 1982), pp. 82-100

Published by: The Johns Hopkins University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2701820>

REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

https://www.jstor.org/stable/2701820?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



The Johns Hopkins University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Reviews in American History*

JSTOR

RECONSTRUCTION REVISITED

Eric Foner

In the past twenty years, few periods of American history have been the subject of so thoroughgoing a reevaluation as Reconstruction. Inspired in large measure by the rise and fall of the "Second Reconstruction"—the revolution in race relations of the 1960s—historians have produced a flood of works reexamining the political, social, and economic experiences of black and white Americans in the aftermath of the Civil War. Yet one prominent historian recently declared that the study of Reconstruction today confronts a "crisis of the most serious proportions,"¹ for historians have failed to produce a coherent modern portrait of Reconstruction either as a specific time period or as the effort of American society to come to terms with the results of the Civil War and the consequences of emancipation.

For much of this century, Reconstruction historiography was dominated by a "traditional" interpretation that portrayed the years following the Civil War as ones of unrelieved sordidness in political and social life.² In this view, vindictive Radical Republicans fastened black supremacy upon the defeated South, unleashing an orgy of corruption presided over by unscrupulous carpetbaggers, traitorous scalawags, and ignorant freedmen. Eventually, the white community of the South overthrew this misgovernment and restored Home Rule (a euphemism for white supremacy). The heroes of the story were President Andrew Jackson, whose lenient Reconstruction plans were foiled by the Radicals, and the self-styled "Redeemers," who restored honest government. Originating in anti-Reconstruction propaganda of southern Democrats during the 1870s, this viewpoint achieved scholarly legitimacy in the work of the Dunning school early in this century and reached a mass public through Claude Bowers's best-selling work of fiction masquerading as history, *The Tragic Era*.

Except for the criticisms of a handful of surviving Reconstruction participants, this traditional interpretation received its first sustained critique in the 1920s and 1930s. Howard K. Beale, influenced by the Beardian contention that the Civil War era witnessed the consolidation of national economic and political power in the hands of northeastern capitalists, shunned the previously dominant race issue in favor of an economic interpretation of the politics of the Johnson administration. Beale did not challenge the tradi-

0048-7511/82/0104-0082 \$01.00

Copyright © 1982 by The Johns Hopkins University Press

tionists' characterization of radical Reconstruction as a tragic era; simultaneously, however, a more sympathetic appraisal appeared in the works of the black historians A. A. Taylor and W.E.B. DuBois, and white scholars Francis Simkins and Robert Woody.³ But not until the 1960s, under the impact of the Second Reconstruction, was the full force of this Reconstruction "revisionism" felt. Modern revisionism radically reinterpreted national Reconstruction politics, and placed the activities and aspirations of blacks at the center stage of the drama in the South. President Johnson was now portrayed as a stubborn, racist politician, whereas his abolitionist and Radical opponents, acquitted of vindictive motives, emerged as idealists in the best nineteenth-century reform tradition. As for the freedmen, the pioneering work of Joel Williamson depicted Reconstruction in South Carolina as a time of extraordinary progress for blacks in political, economic, and social life. Revisionism also directed attention to the positive accomplishments of Reconstruction—the establishment of public school systems in the South and the expansion of national citizenship to include the freedmen, for example—while tending to understate the more unsavory aspects of the period, such as pervasive corruption.

By the end of the 1960s, the old interpretation had been completely reversed. Southern freedmen were the heroes, Redeemers the villains, and if the era was "tragic," it was because change did not go far enough. Reconstruction appeared as both a time of real progress, and a golden opportunity lost for the South and the nation.⁴ Yet, as is so often the case with historical revisionism, the end result was essentially a series of negative judgments.⁵ The Reconstruction governments were not as bad as they had been portrayed; "black supremacy" was a myth; the Radicals were neither cynical manipulators of the freedmen nor agents of northern capitalism. If it was no longer possible to characterize Reconstruction as "the blackout of honest government," no alternative version of the quality of political and social life in these years emerged to replace the now discredited traditional view.

Even in the mid-1960s, moreover, the more optimistic assumptions of many revisionist writers were challenged by those who took a skeptical view of the entire Reconstruction enterprise. C. Vann Woodward contended that, from the outset, racial prejudice severely compromised northern efforts to assist the freedmen. August Meier argued that, in contrast to the Second Reconstruction, the first was fundamentally "superficial."⁶ During the 1970s, this mode of thought was extended to virtually every aspect of the period by what may be called a "postrevisionist" generation of historians. Instead of seeing the Civil War and its aftermath as a second American Revolution (as Charles Beard and his disciples did), a regression into barbarism (Bowers and

the traditionalists), or a revolutionary impulse thwarted (the revisionists), postrevisionist writers questioned whether much of importance had happened at all. Recent studies of politics, social structure, and ideology have been united by a single theme—continuity between the Old and New South. Summing up the past decade's writing, Woodward observed that historians now understood "how essentially nonrevolutionary and conservative Reconstruction really was."⁷

Building upon the findings of the revisionists, recent writers have reached conclusions rather different in emphasis. Eric McKittrick, John and LaWanda Cox, and other revisionists had challenged the traditional notion that Radicals dominated the post-Civil War Congresses, emphasizing instead the guiding hand of moderate Republicans in drafting Reconstruction legislation. They did not doubt, however, that these laws marked a major departure in American politics and race relations. In the 1970s, Michael Les Benedict used the prominence of moderate Republicans to challenge the idea of Radical Reconstruction itself, emphasizing instead how federal policy was guided by the goal of "preserving the Constitution" and minimizing changes in federal-state relations. Similarly, Michael Perman argued that northern Reconstruction strategy eschewed radical departures in favor of seeking the cooperation of southern whites, and was therefore extremely vulnerable to southern obstructionism. A similar emphasis informed the massive study of the Grant administration's Reconstruction policy by William Gillette, which suggested that the North's commitment to the freedmen had never been particularly strong. The final collapse of Reconstruction in 1877, Gillette demonstrated, merely formalized a steady retreat throughout the 1870s.⁸

Thus, postrevisionist writers insisted the impact of the Civil War upon American life was less pervasive than had once been believed. Important studies of the postwar polity by Harold Hyman and Morton Keller argued that the initial broadening of the powers of postwar national and state governments proved extremely short-lived, as localism, individualism and racism—persistent themes of nineteenth-century American life—quickly reasserted themselves.⁹ Studies of the previously neglected northern Democrats have portrayed a group clinging to its traditional ideology even in the face of what its National Chairman, August Belmont, called "the most disastrous epoch in the annals of the party." As for northern Republicans, James Mohr did discern a parallel between Radical Reconstruction and the policies adopted by New York Republicans between 1865 and 1867 on such issues as state regulation of the police, fire, and health affairs of New York City and the enfranchisement of the state's blacks. But few studies of other northern states found much evidence of internal radicalism. In most, the pat-

tern seemed to follow that outlined by Felice Bonadio for Ohio: the emergence of a breed of party politician little affected by political radicalism (or any ideology, for that matter), and interested exclusively in the preservation and success of the party itself.¹⁰

A similar stress on continuity rather than change, and on the moderate character of Republican policies, has defined recent studies of the South during Reconstruction. Challenging the contention that the Civil War signaled the eclipse of the old planter class and the rise to power of a new entrepreneurial elite, social histories of localities scattered across the South demonstrated that planters survived the war with their landholdings and social prestige more or less intact. (The areas investigated, it should be noted, were ones which largely escaped wartime military action.)¹¹ Long-standing intrastate sectionalism—the tension, for example, between western and eastern North Carolina—was shown to have strongly influenced Reconstruction political alignments.¹² And the three major state studies which appeared during the 1970s on Reconstruction in Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi offered little reason to believe that Reconstruction had significantly improved the lot of the freedmen.¹³

Nor did historians of the 1970s find much to praise in federal policy toward the emancipated blacks. The Freedmen's Bureau, criticized in traditional accounts for excessive radicalism and regarded by revisionists as a sincere effort to ameliorate the legal, educational, and economic plight of the freedmen, emerged in William McFeely's influential study as a practitioner of racial paternalism, working hand in glove with the planters to force emancipated blacks back to work on the plantations. McFeely's findings were reinforced by Louis Gerteis's examination of wartime Army policies toward blacks. In the 1960s Willie Lee Rose, in a landmark of revisionist writing, had portrayed the Sea Island experiment (a typically American amalgam of humanitarianism and pursuit of economic profit) as a rehearsal for Reconstruction which, despite limitations, allowed blacks to achieve a real measure of control over their lives. Gerteis argued that the experience of blacks in Civil War Louisiana, where General Nathaniel P. Banks established a labor system that critics charged resembled slavery, shaped Reconstruction far more powerfully than events on the Sea Islands. More recent studies of the Bureau's efforts at medical care for blacks and its legal work conclude that federal policy failed to meet the pressing needs of the freedmen. Leon Litwack's *Been in the Storm So Long*, a culmination of two decades of writings on the black experience during and after the Civil War, fully reflects these postrevisionist conclusions. Utilizing a remarkable array of sources, Litwack eschewed generalization in favor of portraying a kaleidoscope of black

responses to emancipation. But regarding whites, one theme stood out: federal, Army, and state authorities were equally indifferent to the freedmen's aspirations.¹⁴

Even previously unchallenged achievements of the Reconstruction era were now subjected to searching criticism. The establishment of schools for blacks by federal authorities and northern missionary associations and the creation of state-supported common school systems in the South were once hailed as the finest legacy of Reconstruction. Now a series of studies indicted northern teachers for seeking to stabilize the plantation order and inculcate "middle-class" northern values like thrift, self-discipline, temperance, and respect for authority. If the critique struck a familiar note, it was because it represented an extension southward of the "social control" theory of education so prominent in recent discussions of northern educational reform. Like northern common schools, black education in the South was increasingly seen as a form of cultural imperialism, an effort to create a disciplined and docile labor force.¹⁵

If any assumption united traditionalists like Dunning and revisionists ranging from DuBois to Williamson, it was the essential radicalism of Reconstruction. Postrevisionism thus represents a fundamental departure from previous interpretations. The great advantage of its stress on continuity lies in emphasizing that Reconstruction was, in fact, an integral part of southern and national history, rather than some kind of bizarre aberration, as has often been portrayed. Yet, like their revisionist predecessors, the postrevisionist writers have failed to produce a modern synthesis. The denial of change does not in itself provide a compelling interpretation of a turbulent era.¹⁶

Whether a convincing overall portrait of Reconstruction based on postrevisionist premises can be constructed is, indeed, open to question. LaWanda Cox has chided recent writers for "presentism"—that is, using today's standards to judge the attitudes and accomplishments of the past. The reevaluation of freedmen's education, to take one example, seemed often to view the 1860s through the lens of the 1960s. One study criticized northern educators for lacking a commitment to "black power and pride"—rallying cries of the Second Reconstruction but not necessarily major concerns of the first.¹⁷

Central to postrevisionist literature is the failure of land reform which, it has been argued, both exemplified the absence of a genuine northern commitment to the freedmen, and ensured that the political gains achieved by blacks would be fragile and transitory. Without denigrating the importance of the land question, it may be suggested that the failure to provide blacks with "forty acres and a mule" has loomed so large in recent literature that politics and social life, and even the realm of labor, have been largely written off as arenas of conflict and accomplishment. Moreover, the precise relationship between the freedmen's subordinate economic status and the ultimate failure

of Reconstruction has not been fully worked out. Economic intimidation was, it is true, employed against black voters, but far more important in the overthrow of Reconstruction was violence, precisely because other pressures proved ineffective. The idea that political equality is meaningless without economic independence paradoxically leaves its advocates occupying much the same stance with regard to the black condition as Booker T. Washington.¹⁸

Ironically, the entire postrevisionist reevaluation of federal policy on labor, education, and other matters, which arose from the laudable desire to reinterpret history from the black point of view, ended up by returning blacks to their traditional status as passive victims of white manipulation. But if the Freedmen's Bureau served only the interests of the planters, why did blacks so vociferously demand that it remain in the South? If education served simply to promote social control, why did the black community thirst after literacy and esteem those who could read and write? Little consideration has been given to the uses the freedmen may have made of the education provided them, including the much maligned virtues of self-discipline, temperance, and thrift. Only when a better appreciation is achieved of how the desire for education was related to blacks' overall conception of the meaning of freedom and of how black beliefs affected Republican policy can the role of education in Reconstruction be fully understood. The point is that the postemancipation outcome was shaped by blacks as well as whites, in ways historians have only begun to investigate.

Rather than simply emphasizing conservatism and continuity, a coherent portrait of Reconstruction must take into account the subtle dialectic of continuity and change in economic, social, and political relations as the nation adjusted to emancipation. For blacks, one might begin with an observation made over forty years ago by the historian Francis Simkins. While Reconstruction, Simkins wrote, was conventionally seen by white southerners as an attempt to "Africanize" the South, the exact opposite appeared to be true: "Reconstruction can be interpreted as a definite step . . . in the Americanization of the blacks." Recent work on the black experience makes it possible today to point to the crucial changes in black society wrought by emancipation, and in each instance the truth of Simkins's remark is apparent, if by "Americanization" we understand a narrowing of the chasm separating black life from that of the larger white society. Reconstruction witnessed the demise of the quasi-communal slave quarter and its replacement by small tenant farms, with individual families occupying distinct parcels of land. It was the time of the emergence of the black church—previously the "invisible institution"—along with a host of black fraternal, benevolent, and self-improvement organizations. Reconstruction saw the reconstitution of black

family life with the withdrawal (temporary, as it turned out) of black women from field labor, and the institutionalization, with the suffrage, of a distinction between the public world of men and the private sphere of women. In these and other ways, Reconstruction gave birth to the modern black community, whose roots lay deep in slavery, but whose structure reflected the consequences of emancipation.¹⁹

Nowhere, however, was the transformation in black life more profound and the "Americanization" of the black experience more striking than in politics.²⁰ The 1970s witnessed a broad reassessment of black political leadership during Reconstruction, largely undertaken by a new generation of black scholars. The signal contribution of this literature was to reject the idea that Reconstruction was simply a matter of black and white. Divisions among whites have long been known to have shaped the course of Reconstruction; attention, it is now clear, must also be directed to conflicts within the black community. The "representative colored men," as Nell Painter termed national black leaders, were upbraided for being cut off from the black masses and therefore failing to provide effective political leadership. Thomas Holt's *Black Over White*, the most influential recent study of Reconstruction black politics, reversed Williamson's pioneering conclusions about South Carolina. For Williamson, the fatal flaw of Reconstruction politics was that Republican leaders were concerned only with their own constituents and incapable of reaching out to hostile whites. For Holt, black leaders, largely deriving from the free mulatto class of Charleston, were concerned too little, not too much, with the needs of the black community. Primarily interested in civil rights legislation and "basically bourgeois in their origins and orientation . . . [they] failed to act in the interests of black peasants," especially on the all-important questions of land and labor. Holt's conclusion, paralleled in David Rankin's study of New Orleans black leadership, was, in a way, a culmination to the persistent demand that blacks be placed at the center of the Reconstruction story. If indeed they were active agents rather than passive victims, then blacks could not be absolved of blame for the failure of Reconstruction.²¹

In its emphasis on the persistence from slavery of divisions between free and slave, black and brown, this new literature reflected the increasing concern with continuity and conservatism in Reconstruction; and, like other postrevisionist works, it is vulnerable to charges of exaggerating the victimization of ordinary blacks, and ignoring historical changes that did occur. That the free colored elite was more fully integrated into the culture of Victorian America than the newly freed slaves is clear. Yet the political salience of this fact is not. The vast majority of blacks lived not in cities like Charleston and New Orleans but in the black belt, where there were few free blacks before the war. We now know a good deal about black congressmen

and state legislators, but the arduous task of analyzing the local leadership of black Reconstruction has barely begun. Twelve counties in Mississippi, for example, elected black sheriffs during Reconstruction but, except for Blanche K. Bruce and John R. Lynch, who went on to achieve national reputations, we know virtually nothing about these men, or how their presence affected the daily lives of blacks and whites in the Mississippi Delta. Those few studies which do exist, however, indicate that local leaders, even those who had been free before the Civil War, often championed the social and economic aspirations of their constituents and sometimes made a real difference in their day to day lives.²²

More importantly, the use of static categories like free and freed, black and brown, ignores the historical process by which new patterns of leadership emerged during Reconstruction. The remarkable political mobilization of the black community is one of the most striking features of the period, and so too is the emergence, with the right to vote and the creation of Union Leagues and the Republican party, of a new black political class. In early Reconstruction, blacks turned to ministers, ex-soldiers, free blacks, and men who had, for one reason or another, achieved prominence as slaves, to represent them politically. During Congressional Reconstruction, new men came to the fore, most prominently black artisans, who possessed the skill, independence, and often, literacy that marked them as leaders, but who were still deeply embedded in the life of the freedmen's community. Such individuals were uniquely suited to serve as a bridge between the black world and the public political sphere dominated by whites.²³

Even in South Carolina and Louisiana, the recent characterization of black leaders as "bourgeois" may be open to question. The black elite of Charleston and New Orleans lacked capital and economic autonomy. William Hine shows that Charleston's black leaders were unable to raise the funds to build a streetcar line after receiving a charter from the state legislature. The few really wealthy blacks, Hine contends, avoided politics—their economic standing was too dependent on close ties with wealthy whites to oppose them politically.²⁴

If the danger exists of exaggerating the dichotomy between black political leaders and their constituency, another set of false polar opposites dominates analysis of the content of black politics. Integration vs. segregation, civil rights vs. economic legislation, nationalism vs. assimilation: these dualisms have shaped writing on black thought. Only a few works, like Wilson Moses's *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism*, explore the common assumptions shared by nationalists and assimilationists, by moving from a consideration of specific issues to the language of politics itself, the underlying paradigms of political thought.²⁵ There is an interesting historiographical point here. The past fifteen years have demonstrated the value, indeed the

indispensability, of bringing to bear on the study of the American past the insights derived from black history. But by the same token, the insights of students of other aspects of American life can illuminate in new ways the black experience.

Particularly relevant in this regard are the studies of political language and culture by J.G.A. Pocock and others, which have done so much to recover the history of republican thought.²⁶ Pocock's approach suggests that black politics in Reconstruction should be analyzed not as a set of discrete issues or demands, but as the attempt to forge from diverse elements in the black and American experiences a coherent political response to the unprecedented situation of emancipation. These elements included both values emanating from slavery and traditional American ideals, although often with a specifically black interpretation, such as the dignity of labor, messianic religion, and, especially, the quest for full incorporation as citizens of the republic. Perhaps black leaders can best be understood as those most capable of appropriating the available political language of American society and forging from it an expression of the aspirations of the freedmen.

The work of J. Mills Thornton, Michael Holt, and Harry Watson demonstrates the vitality of republicanism as one paradigm of antebellum southern political thought.²⁷ It should occasion no surprise that free blacks learned this language. The extent to which slaves absorbed it is difficult to assess but during Reconstruction, republican ideas about the nature of citizenship suffused black political culture. Like northern Radical Republicans, blacks found in the Constitution's guarantee clause, a provision, as William Wiecek writes, "almost Delphic" in its ambiguity, a reservoir of federal power over the states, imposing a duty upon Congress to eliminate caste and class legislation as incompatible with republican government.²⁸

An emphasis on republican citizenship as a key organizing theme of Reconstruction black politics underscores the pitfalls involved in treating civil rights and land reform as if they were somehow mutually exclusive. Republicanism was, after all, simultaneously a model of polity and society. The republican tradition, with its emphasis on ownership of productive property as the guarantor of personal and political independence, helped blacks legitimize both the demand for equality before the law and the pervasive desire for land. Attention to the quest for republican citizenship also reveals the limited utility of the integration-segregation dichotomy for understanding the black experience.²⁹ If black economic and social life was marked by a struggle for autonomy, reflected in the demand for land and the withdrawal from religious and social institutions controlled by whites (a process misinterpreted by some historians as "acceptance" of legalized segregation)—black politics was fully absorbed into the American republican heritage.³⁰

The Civil War transformed the black response to American nationality. Appeals to the ideals of American political culture had been commonplace in that strand of antebellum black protest dubbed "The Great Tradition" by Vincent Harding. But this affirmation of Americanism had always been tempered by an understandable alienation born of slavery and racial injustice. As the conflict reshaped the attitude of American intellectuals to their society, submerging, at least temporarily, an earlier alienation within a renewed commitment to the nation-state, so black spokesmen sacrificed an edge of criticism of American institutions in the quest for equal citizenship. Nathan Huggins has demonstrated this convincingly in the case of Frederick Douglass. The same Douglass who so brilliantly articulated the ambiguity of the black condition in his eloquent prewar address on the meaning of the Fourth of July to the slave could now support the Grant administration's scheme to swallow up Santo Domingo in the name of bringing the blessings of Anglo-Saxon civilization to the natives there.³¹

Republican citizenship, moreover, was what made the postemancipation experience of the United States unique. The history of other societies which underwent the transition from slavery to freedom casts serious doubt on the current idea that American Reconstruction was "conservative." In a comparative context, Reconstruction stands as a unique and dramatic experiment, the only instance when blacks, within a few years of emancipation, achieved universal manhood suffrage and exercised a real measure of political power. The comparative analysis of postemancipation societies, indeed, may provide ways of overcoming some of the problems which now afflict the study of Reconstruction. Certainly, contemporaries sensed that the examples of other societies shed light on the complex situation Americans confronted in the aftermath of their own Civil War. Thaddeus Stevens examined the emancipation of the Russian serfs; white southerners debated the lessons of Haitian and British Caribbean abolition. But few American historians have followed their example.³²

There are, of course, dangers inherent in the comparative method, most notably the temptation to slight the distinctiveness of particular historical experiences in the quest for overarching generalizations.³³ Nonetheless, a comparative analysis permits us to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the problem of emancipation and its aftermath. Everywhere, the end of slavery was succeeded by a struggle for the scarce resources of plantation economies, paramount among which was the labor of the former slaves themselves. The desire among freedmen to own their own land and in other ways establish their autonomy seems to have been all but universal, and so too was the effort of planters to force blacks back to work as a dependent plantation labor force.³⁴

From this perspective, the aftermath of emancipation emerges as a struggle over class formation and transformation, in which the rights, privileges, and social role of a new class, the freedmen, were defined. The degree of economic and social autonomy achieved by the former slaves depended upon an elaborate series of power relationships, including the connection of the former slave society to the larger world economy and to outside, usually colonial, political authorities, the relative scarcity of land, and the degree to which, despite abolition, the planter class retained its local political hegemony. The results ranged from the total collapse of the plantation regime in Haiti to the coexistence of "reconstituted peasantries" with surviving plantations employing immigrant indentured labor in Trinidad and British Guiana, to the virtually unchanged plantation system of Barbados. In every postemancipation society, politics and economics were thoroughly intertwined. What makes the United States unique is that, for a time, black suffrage made the polity itself a battleground between former master and former slave.

Viewing Reconstruction as a unique episode in a prolonged process of adjustment to emancipation may shed new light on a number of continuing debates about the period. A considerable literature was produced in the 1970s on the reasons for the economic retardation of the postbellum South, and the dire poverty of southerners, particularly blacks. One school of thought, applying neoclassical economic theory to southern development, solved the problem by concluding that there was no problem. In a competitive marketplace in which rational, calculating self-interest determined the behavior of blacks and whites alike, the market produced the optimal possible result, given the economic resources of the South. By assuming what ought to be the subject of investigation—how men and women did in fact respond to an expanding market—these writers portrayed sharecropping as a rational choice serving the interests of both tenants and landlords, freely entered into by individuals from both groups, rather than the outcome of changing relationships of class and social power.³⁵ A somewhat different approach was that of Roger Ransom and Richard Sutch, who also employed a neoclassical model but concluded that because of local merchants' monopoly of credit the market failed to function properly and the South became locked into a cycle of cotton overproduction and worsening impoverishment. All these works, however, assumed that the free market, when functioning properly, serves the interests of all social classes. The idea that, especially in a colonial economy, the market itself may produce poverty and inequality, was not considered.³⁶

Most strikingly, this literature, by examining economics but not political economy, overlooked the extent to which the plantation's survival and con-

tinued dominance had little to do with superior economic efficiency. Instead, in most postemancipation societies, it depended upon planters' monopoly of rural economic resources and political power. Only a few writers have treated the postemancipation outcome within the context of class relations and political economy, most notably Jonathan Wiener, who described the competition of freedmen, planters, and merchants in post-Civil War Alabama. Wiener showed how planters, after the overthrow of Reconstruction, were able to use the state to bolster their own interests at the expense of other groups. His study concluded that sharecropping emerged not simply as a matter of individual choice, but as a compromise resulting from the conflict between planters' need for a disciplined labor force and the freedmen's demand for autonomy. Ronald L. F. Davis went even further, contending that sharecropping was less a compromise than an unwilling concession forced upon reluctant planters by blacks' refusal to labor for wages under direct supervision.³⁷ In time sharecropping, in association with the crop lien, became a byword for semipeonage. But during Reconstruction it offered blacks a degree of control over their time, labor, and family arrangements inconceivable under slavery.³⁸

Changes in class relations in the aftermath of emancipation may also provide the key to unlocking the experience of that shadowy presence, the nonslaveholding yeomanry. No irony in the study of the South is more profound than the distortion caused by historians' disregard of this unstudied majority. And no synthesis is possible until the nineteenth-century South is understood as more than a story of the blacks and their masters. We now know that the Civil War unleashed forces which swept the previously subsistence-oriented white upcountry into the cotton kingdom, a transformation which, as Steven Hahn explains, involved profound changes in economic, social, and political institutions among white farmers.³⁹ The economic dislocations spawned by the spread of cotton production and agricultural tenancy among whites may in time add a new dimension to the traditional debate over southern white Republicanism as well as the largely neglected post-Reconstruction Independent movements in several southern states. It is now clear that scalawags, as their opponents called them, were predominantly small farmers, whose loyalty to the Republican party rested on a combination of prewar hostility to the planter regime, persistent intra-state sectionalism, and wartime Unionism. But the changing class relations in the white upcountry also underscore the importance of such political concerns of Reconstruction as homestead exemptions and debtor relief, which, for a time, attracted many whites to the Republican party in states like North Carolina and Georgia.⁴⁰

Like black suffrage, the size and political significance of the white

yeomanry sets the American postemancipation experience apart from that of other countries. But Hahn's work also reemphasizes how, as in other societies, the law was employed in an attempt to redefine class relations in the aftermath of slavery. In recent years, there has been an increase of interest in the law's relationship to economic change and the impact of the judicial system on property rights and class relations. Morton Horwitz, for example, demonstrated how legal changes in the antebellum North redefined private property in the interests of corporations while restricting the traditional property rights of small-scale owners. Some work along these lines has already been done for the postwar South, particularly studies of the coercive labor legislation enacted during Presidential Reconstruction, repealed during Republican rule, and then reenacted, with modifications, upon Redemption. Laws punishing vagrancy, barring the "enticement" of laborers, regulating agricultural liens, and making breaches of contract punishable under the criminal law, all reflected an effort to use the power of the state to solidify the plantation's control over its labor force. Attention to these and less studied issues such as the changing incidence of taxation, the use of convict labor, and the regulation of hunting and fishing rights, reveals a vastly different picture of Republican Reconstruction than the conservative interlude portrayed in much recent literature. Reconstruction stands as a unique moment between two periods when the law was molded with one idea in mind—to maintain the plantation economy. If Reconstruction did not destroy the planter class, it did prevent the putting into place of a comprehensive legal code meant to shape the political economy of emancipation in the planters' interests. Even the refusal of Republican governments to enact labor control measures was itself a significant departure from the pattern in other postemancipation societies.⁴¹

To take full account of issues like these it will be necessary to reopen that strangely neglected question, the role of economic motives and influences in shaping Reconstruction politics. In reaction to inherited Beardian views of Reconstruction political alignments as little more than a conflict between industry and agriculture, revisionist writers like Irwin Unger, Robert Sharkey, and Stanley Coben insisted that there was no simple economic explanation for Reconstruction politics and no unified Radical economic policy or interest. But, as Lawrence Powell points out, these scholars "proved only that there were many economic interests during the period, not that there were none." Yet recent writings continue to avoid discussion of economic interests within both the national and southern Republican party, and the impact of profound changes in American economic enterprise—including the completion of the national railroad network, the rapid expansion of factory production, and the opening of the mining frontier—on the

evolution of the party's southern policy.⁴² The best recent work on the South, however, reminds us that the shape of the southern economy and the future role of blacks within it, were central points of political conflict during Reconstruction. What Mark Summers calls the "gospel of prosperity"—the idea of a New South developing along lines marked out by the urbanizing, industrializing North—animated southern Republican politics, inspiring both the extensive railroad schemes whose details have so often baffled historians, and the vision of a society freed from the dominance of the plantation, in which social advancement would be open to all on the basis of individual merit, not inherited caste distinctions.⁴³

Here, of course, was a vision which was not to be. Yet it arose from a society in which all forms of social relations were in turmoil, in which the foundations of the social and political order were, for a time, open for discussion, in which seemingly trivial encounters between black and white became tests of racial and class power. Petty incidents—the failure of a freedman to yield the sidewalk or to address a former employer with the proper deference—sparked seemingly irrational acts of violence. Indeed, the very pervasiveness of violence in the post-Civil War South may be considered an indication of how high were the stakes being fought over.⁴⁴ Reconstruction's promise certainly exceeded its accomplishments. Yet so long as Reconstruction survived, so too did the possibility of further change, a prospect only foreclosed with Redemption and, later, the final implementation of segregation and disfranchisement. If, in retrospect, the outcome of the postemancipation struggle appears all but inevitable, it is equally certain that Reconstruction transformed the lives of southern blacks in ways unmeasurable by statistics and in areas unreachable by law. It raised blacks' expectations and aspirations, redefined their status in relation to the larger society, and allowed space for the creation of institutions that enabled them to survive the repression that followed. Its legacy deserves to survive as an inspiration to those Americans, black and white alike, who insist that the nation live up to the professed ideals of its political culture.

1. August Meier, "An Epitaph for the Writing of Reconstruction History?" *Reviews in American History* 9 (March 1981): 87.

2. Surveys of the Reconstruction literature include Bernard A. Weisberger, "The Dark and Bloody Ground of Reconstruction Historiography," *Journal of Southern History* 25 (November 1959): 427–47; and Richard O. Curry, "The Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861–1877: A Critical Overview of Recent Trends and Interpretations," *Civil War History* 20 (September 1974): 215–28.

3. John R. Lynch, "Some Historical Errors of James Ford Rhodes," *Journal of Negro History* 2 (October 1917): 345–68; Howard K. Beale, *The Critical Year?* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1930); Alruthus A. Taylor, *The Negro in South Carolina During the Reconstruction* (Washington: The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1924); W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: S. A. Russell, 1935); Francis B. Simkins and

Robert H. Woody, *South Carolina During Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1932).

4. Major works of revisionism include Eric L. McKittrick, *Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); LaWanda Cox and John H. Cox, *Politics, Principle, and Prejudice 1865-1866* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1963); W. R. Brock, *An American Crisis* (London: St. Martin's, 1963); James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964); Joel Williamson, *After Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965); Hans L. Trefousse, *The Radical Republicans* (New York: Knopf, 1969). Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction* (New York: Knopf, 1965) summarized revisionism at its high point of influence.

5. This point is made effectively in Willie Lee Rose, *Slavery and Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 100-01.

6. C. Vann Woodward, "Seeds of Failure in Radical Race Policy," *American Philosophical Society Proceedings* 110 (1966): 1-9; August Meier, "Negroes in the First and Second Reconstructions of the South," *Civil War History* 13 (June 1967): 114-30.

7. C. Vann Woodward, review of *The Confederate Nation*, *New Republic*, March 17, 1979, p. 26.

8. Michael Les Benedict, *A Compromise of Principle* (New York: Norton, 1974), "Preserving the Constitution: The Conservative Basis of Radical Reconstruction," *Journal of American History* 61 (June 1974): 65-90, and "Preserving Federalism: Reconstruction and the Waite Court," *Supreme Court Review* (1978): 39-79; Michael Perman, *Reunion Without Compromise* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1973); William Gillette, *Retreat from Reconstruction 1869-1879* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

9. Harold M. Hyman, *A More Perfect Union* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1975); Morton Keller, *Affairs of State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977). A similar argument was made in Philip S. Paludan, *A Covenant With Death* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975).

10. Joel H. Silbey, *A Respectable Minority* (New York: Norton, 1977); Edward L. Gambill, *Conservative Ordeal* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1981); Jerome Mushkat, *The Reconstruction of the New York Democracy, 1861-1874* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981). Lawrence Grossman did discern (and perhaps exaggerated) a new departure in Democratic racial attitudes during the 1870s in *The Democratic Party and the Negro* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976). On the North, see James C. Mohr, *The Radical Republicans and Reform in New York During Reconstruction* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1973); Mohr, ed., *Radical Republicans in the North* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976); Eugene H. Berwanger, *The West and Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981); Felice A. Bonadio, *North of Reconstruction* (New York: New York University Press, 1970). Two indispensable works that shed light on the general decline of radicalism are David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality* (New York: Knopf, 1967); and Ellen DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978).

11. C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951). Critics of Woodward include Jonathan Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South 1860-1885* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Dwight B. Billings, Jr., *Planters and the Making of a 'New South'* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); and James T. Moore, "Redeemers Reconsidered: Change and Continuity in the Democratic South, 1870-1900," *Journal of Southern History* 44 (August 1978): 357-78. Among studies of "planter persistence" are Lee W. Formwalt, "Antebellum Planter Persistence: Southwest Georgia—A Case Study," *Plantation Society in the Americas* 1 (October 1981): 410-29; and A. Jane Townes, "The Effect of Emancipation in Large Landholdings, Nelson and Goochland Counties, Virginia," *Journal of Southern History* 45 (August 1979): 403-12. James Roark's *Masters without Slaves* (New York: Norton, 1977) argues that the planter class declined in power and prestige after the Civil War.

12. William T. Auman and David D. Scarboro, "The Heroes of America in Civil War North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review* 58 (Autumn 1981): 327-63.

13. Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863–1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974); Jerrell H. Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1974); William C. Harris, *The Day of the Carpetbagger* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979). Harris sympathized more fully with Mississippi's conservative Republican Governor James L. Alcorn than with his radical successor Adelbert Ames. This was partly because he inexplicably failed to consult the Ames Papers at Smith College, in which numerous letters from local black officials detail the devastating impact of Alcorn's conciliatory policy toward Mississippi Democrats on the Republican party and its black constituency. There are still no modern and comprehensive histories of Reconstruction in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas, and, most strikingly, South Carolina.

14. William S. McFeely, *Yankee Stepfather* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968); Louis S. Gerteis, *From Contraband to Freedom* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973); Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964); Donald G. Nieman, *To Set the Law in Motion* (Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus International, 1979); Todd L. Savitt, "Politics in Medicine: The Georgia Freedmen's Bureau and the Organization of Health Care," *Civil War History*, 28 (March 1982): 45–64; Leon F. Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long* (New York: Knopf, 1979). More favorable views of the Banks labor system appeared in Peyton McCrary, *Abraham Lincoln and Reconstruction* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978); and LaWanda Cox, *Lincoln and Black Freedom* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981).

15. Important recent works on black education in Reconstruction include Robert C. Morris, *Reading, 'Riting, and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Jacqueline Jones, *Soldiers of Light and Love* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Ronald E. Butchart, *Northern Schools, Southern Blacks and Reconstruction* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980); Kenneth B. White, "The Alabama Freedmen's Bureau and Black Education: The Myth of Opportunity," *Alabama Review* 34 (April 1981): 107–24. For a critique of northern education, see Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968); Stanley K. Schultz, Samuel Bowles, and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

16. The recent collection of essays edited by Otto H. Olsen, *Reconstruction and Redemption in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), does not even attempt to sum up the conclusions of the individual case studies or draw out common themes or patterns. The essays all, however, reflect an emphasis on the timidity of southern Republicans and the moderation of Reconstruction as a whole.

17. Cox, *Lincoln and Black Freedom*, pp. 142–84; Butchart, *Northern Schools*, p. 113.

18. On the land issue, see Claude F. Oubre, *Forty Acres and a Mule* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); and Eric Foner, *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 128–49. In a number of works, Herman L. Belz has stressed the importance of equality before the law for blacks, criticizing neorevisionist premises: see "The New Orthodoxy in Reconstruction Historiography," *Reviews in American History* 1 (March 1973): 106–13, *A New Birth of Freedom* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), and *Emancipation and Equal Rights* (New York: Norton, 1978). Problems of blacks who did obtain land are detailed in Elizabeth Bethel, *Promiseland* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).

19. Francis B. Simkins, "New Viewpoints of Southern Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 5 (February 1939): 49–61. Changes in black social and cultural life after emancipation are treated in Arnold H. Taylor, *Travail and Triumph* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976); and Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). On the black church, see Clarence G. Walker, *A Rock in a Weary Land* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); and for fraternal organizations, Armstead L. Robinson, "Plans dat Comed from God: Institution Building and the Emergence of Black Leadership in Reconstruction Memphis," in *Towards a New South?*, eds. Orville V. Burton and Robert C. McMath Jr. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), pp. 71–102. On family structure, Herbert G. Gutman's *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (New York: Pantheon, 1976) tends to stress continuity of family structure rather than the

impact of emancipation and the suffrage on the roles of men and women within the black family. Our understanding of the impact of emancipation on blacks will be greatly advanced by the forthcoming appearance of the outstanding multivolume collection, *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation*, edited by Ira Berlin, Joseph P. Reidy and Leslie S. Rowland.

20. For example, see these recent biographies of black political leaders: Okon E. Uya, *From Slavery to Public Service: Robert Smalls 1839-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); Victor Ullman, *Martin Delany* (Boston: 1971); Peggy Lamson, *The Glorious Failure: Black Congressman Robert Brown Elliott and Reconstruction in South Carolina* (New York: Norton, 1973); Peter D. Klingman, *Josiah Walls* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1976); Loren Schweninger, *James T. Rapier and Reconstruction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

21. Nell I. Painter, *Exodusters* (New York: Knopf, 1976); Thomas Holt, *Black Over White* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977). Among younger black scholars, conflicts among blacks were emphasized in Armstead L. Robinson, "Beyond the Realm of Social Consensus: New Meanings for Reconstruction for American History," *Journal of American History* 68 (September 1981): 276-97; whereas Charles Vincent, in *Black Legislators in Louisiana During Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), took a rather more positive view of black legislators. On New Orleans, see David C. Rankin, "The Origins of Black Leadership in New Orleans During Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 40 (August 1974): 417-40.

22. See Vernon Burton, "Race and Reconstruction: Edgefield County, South Carolina," *Journal of Social History* 11 (Fall 1978): 31-56; Edward Magdol, *A Right to the Land* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977); Barry A. Crouch, "Self-Determination and Local Black Leaders in Texas," *Phylon* 39 (December 1978): 344-55; Walter J. Fraser, Jr., "Black Reconstructionists in Tennessee," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 34 (Winter 1975): 362-82. James W. Leslie's "Ferd Harris: Jefferson County's Black Republican Leader," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 37 (Autumn 1978): 240-51, exemplifies what needs to be done in terms of local black leadership.

23. John T. O'Brien's "Reconstruction in Richmond: White Reconstruction and Black Protest, April-June 1865," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 89 (July 1981): 259-81, reveals the swift emergence of black political organization. Peter Kolchin, in *First Freedom* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972), stresses the changes in political leadership and the prominent role of artisans. Robinson, in "Plans dat Comed from God," finds artisans played a prominent part in black political leadership in Memphis, while taking little role in the religious/benevolent institutions of the black community.

24. William C. Hine, "Charleston and Reconstruction: Black Political Leadership and the Republican Party, 1865-1877" (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1978).

25. Wilson J. Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1924* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1978). Another work transcending traditional dichotomies is David A. Gerber's *Black Ohio and the Color Line 1860-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), probably the outstanding study of blacks in a single state published in the past decade.

26. See J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975); and Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), among numerous other works on republicanism.

27. J. Mills Thornton, III, *Politics and Power in a Slave Society* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York: Wiley, 1978); Harry L. Watson, *Jacksonian Politics and Community Conflict* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

28. Article IV, Section 4: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government." See William M. Wiecek, *The Guarantee Clause of the U.S. Constitution* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972).

29. Howard N. Rabinowitz's *Race Relations in the Urban South 1865-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978) added a third element, "exclusion," arguing that segregation was perceived by blacks as a step forward from being excluded altogether from public facilities.

30. This combination of social separation and political inclusion parallels the experience of many immigrant groups, suggesting that that old chestnut, the black-immigrant comparison, still possesses some vitality, so long as it is not employed simply to identify the "cultural failings" which supposedly account for blacks' slower rate of advancement, as in Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America* (New York: 1981).

31. Vincent Harding, *There Is a River* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1981); George M. Fredrickson, *The Inner Civil War* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965); Nathan I. Huggins, *Slave and Citizen* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980).

32. For an assessment of recent work in "comparative history" and various definitions of the genre, see George M. Fredrickson, "Comparative History," in *The Past Before Us*, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 457-73. Fredrickson's *White Supremacy* (New York: 1981) is an exemplary comparative study of the evolution of systems of racial domination in the United States and South Africa. Cf. C. Vann Woodward, "The Price of Freedom," in *What Was Freedom's Price?*, ed. David L. Sansing (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1978), pp. 93-113; Stanley L. Engerman, "Economic Aspects of the Adjustments to Emancipation in the United States and the British West Indies," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (forthcoming); Stanley Greenberg, *Race and State in Capitalist Development: Comparative Perspectives* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980); Eric Foner, "Nothing But Freedom": *The Aftermath of Emancipation* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983), ch. 1.

33. For example, Jay R. Mandel, *The Roots of Black Poverty* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1978), transposing the model of "plantation society" from the Caribbean to the American South, treats the period 1865-1919 as an undifferentiated unit, and derives economic structure, social relations, and black and white thought (including an "ideology of subservience" supposedly prevalent among the freedmen) from the overall model, rather than investigating them empirically.

34. Among the works on the aftermath of emancipation in other societies most valuable for students of the American South are Sidney W. Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974) and "Slavery and the Rise of Peasantries," *Historical Reflections* 6 (Summer 1979): 213-42; Thomas C. Holt, "'An Empire over the Mind': Emancipation, Race and Ideology in the British West Indies and the American South," in *Region, Race and Reconstruction*, eds., J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 283-313; William A. Green, *British Slave Emancipation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Alan H. Adamson, *Sugar Without Slaves* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1972); Rebecca J. Scott, "Postemancipation Adaptations in Cuba, 1880-1899" (American Historical Association annual meeting, Los Angeles, 1981); Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980).

35. Stephen J. DeCanio, *Agriculture in the Postbellum South* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974); Robert Higgs, *Competition and Coercion* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Joseph D. Reid, "Sharecropping as an Understandable Market Response—the Post-Bellum South," *Journal of Economic History* 33 (March 1973): 106-30; Harold D. Woodman, "Sequel to Slavery: The New History Views the Postbellum South," *Journal of Southern History* 44 (November 1977): 523-54.

36. Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977). For several articles relating to this work, see *Explorations in Economic History* 16 (January and April 1979), especially the introductory remarks to the January issue, by William N. Parker.

37. Wiener, *Social Origins of the New South*, and "Class Structure and Economic Development in the American South, 1865-1955," *American Historical Review* 84 (October 1979): 970-92; Ronald L. F. Davis, "Labor Dependency Among Freedmen, 1865-1880," in *From Old South to New: Essays on the Transitional South*, eds. Walter J. Fraser and Winfred B. Moore (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), pp. 155-65. Davis also cast doubt on the view that the Army's wartime wage labor experiment on Mississippi Valley plantations shaped Reconstruction policies, contending that the experience helped convince blacks to reject wage labor altogether.

38. Unfortunately, virtually the entire debate has thus far focused on the cotton South,

where sharecropping replaced slave labor. Little work has been done on rural class formation in sugar, where wage-labor plantations succeeded slavery, on rice, where a black peasantry not unlike that of the Caribbean came into existence, or on the Upper South, which experienced a complex process of economic diversification after the end of slavery. But see J. Carlyle Sitterson, *Sugar Country* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1953); and Joseph P. Reidy, "Sugar and Freedom: Emancipation in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes" (American Historical Association annual meeting, Washington, D.C., 1980); James M. Clifton, "Twilight Comes to the Rice Kingdom: Postbellum Rice Culture on the South Atlantic Coast," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 62 (Summer 1978): 146-52; and Thomas F. Armstrong, "From Task Labor to Free Labor: The Transition Along Georgia's Rice Coast, 1820-1880," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 64 (Winter 1980): 432-47; Foner, "Nothing But Freedom," ch. 3; Barbara J. Fields, "The Maryland Way from Slavery to Freedom" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1978); Crandall A. Shifflett, *Shadowed Thresholds* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982).

39. Steven H. Hahn, "The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of Georgia's Upper Piedmont, 1850-1890" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1979). Cf. Forrest McDonald and Grady McWhiney, "The South from Self-Sufficiency to Peonage: An Interpretation," *American Historical Review* 85 (December 1980): 1095-1118.

40. On the scalawags, the classic article by David Donald, "The Scalawag in Mississippi Reconstruction," *Journal of Southern History* 10 (November 1944): 447-60, stressed the role of the Whig planters among southern Republicans. Works stressing the role of upcountry small farmers include Gordon B. McKinney, *Southern Mountain Republicans 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978); Allen W. Trelease, "Who Were the Scalawags?" *Journal of Southern History* 29 (November 1963): 445-68. William T. Blain, "Banner Unionism in Mississippi, Choctaw County 1861-1869," *Mississippi Quarterly* 29 (September 1976): 207-20, is an outstanding study of the links between Unionism and white Republicanism in one Mississippi hill county.

41. Morton J. Horwitz, *The Transformation of American Law, 1780-1860* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977); Harry N. Scheiber, "Regulation, Property Rights, and Definition of 'The Market': Law and the American Economy," *Journal of Economic History* 41 (March 1981): 103-09. On coercive labor legislation, see Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1978); Pete Daniel, "The Metamorphosis of Slavery, 1865-1900," *Journal of American History* 66 (June 1979): 88-99; William Cohen, "Negro Involuntary Servitude in the South, 1865-1940: A Preliminary Analysis," *Journal of Southern History* 42 (February 1976): 31-60; and Harold D. Woodman, "Post-Civil War Southern Agriculture and the Law," *Agricultural History* 53 (January 1979): 319-37. Disputes over fencing and hunting rights are treated by Steven Hahn in "Common Rights and Commonwealth: The Stock-Law Struggle and the Roots of Southern Populism," in Kousser and McPherson, eds., *Region, Race and Reconstruction*, pp. 51-88, and "Hunting, Fishing, and Foraging: The Transformation of Property Rights in the Postbellum South," *Radical History Review* (forthcoming); and by J. Crawford King in "The Closing of the Southern Range: An Exploratory Study," *Journal of Southern History* 48 (February 1982): 53-70. These issues are also discussed in Foner, "Nothing But Freedom," ch. 2.

42. Irwin Unger, *The Greenback Era* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964); Robert P. Sharkey, *Money, Class, and Party* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959); Stanley Coben, "Northeastern Business and Radical Reconstruction: A Re-Examination," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 46 (June 1959): 67-90; Lawrence N. Powell, "The American Land Company and Agency: John A. Andrew and the Northernization of the South," *Civil War History* 21 (December 1975): 293-308. On economic change, see Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., *The Visible Hand* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977).

43. Mark W. Summers, "Radical Reconstruction and the Gospel of Prosperity" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1980).

44. Allen W. Trelease's *White Terror* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) remains the sole comprehensive study of the problem of Reconstruction violence, a subject whose profound impact on political, economic, and social relations remains to be fully explored.