

# Reconstruction



Prof. Patrick Rael, Bowdoin College, Spring 2019

Meets: MW 1:15–2:40, [room]

Office (211C Hubbard) hours: T2–4, Th1–4, by apt (sign up for hours at <https://calendly.com/prael0Tc003>)

*conservative southern white victors used to effect Redem*



Foner, Eric. *A Short History of Reconstruction: 1863–1877*. Rev. ed. New York: Harper Trade, 2015.

*This is an abridged and updated version of Foner's magisterial Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution (1988), the greatest modern synthetic interpretation of Reconstruction.*

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2017.

*Rampolla is your main guide for acknowledging and citing sources. It is assigned solely as a reference for you.*

Simpson, Brooks, ed. *Reconstruction: Voices from America's First Great Struggle for Racial Equality*. New York: Library of America, 2018.

*This work will provide most of the primary documents we will encounter. We will not read them all, but in your papers you should make use of relevant documents that were not assigned.*

*For each document we read, I want you to think of a one sentence tagline, expressing its central significance. We will work on this together, because it's easy to do poorly, and hard to do well. This is "chunking," the process by which we learn complicated ideas and order voluminous pieces of information, and it is one of the most important academic skills we can develop.*

Other readings will be made available via the Blackboard website for this course, and through links on the syllabus below.

## Assignments

**Papers (70%):** You'll have four papers to complete during the semester, each longer, and worth more, than the previous. I will hold an early session to discuss what I'm looking for in your papers. The first three papers will rely solely on course materials; your final paper will extend a topic of your choice with some of your own secondary research.

Paper 1: 5 paragraph = 10%

Paper 3: 9 paragraph = 20%

Paper 2: 7 paragraph = 15%

Final paper: 12 paragraph = 25%

**Reading summaries (15%):** You'll sign up to submit five readings summaries for some of the weeks you don't have papers due. These are low stakes assignments of 250-500 words offering a "voiced summary" of one of the readings for that day. I won't offer detailed feedback, as these are worth only 1 to 3 points each. If you think it wise, we may share these on Blackboard for each others' use.

**Class participation (10%):** As a seminar, this course requires your active participation. This course will challenge you to think aloud, and help others do the same. Our job is to keep conversation going, we are not trying to resolve problems so they can be put behind us, we are trying to formulate new problems from what we read. Please ensure that you've read \_\_\_\_\_ you I'm \_\_\_\_\_

### First reference (long form):

<sup>6</sup>"Abraham Lincoln: Speech on Reconstruction, April 11, 1865 Washington, D.C., April 1865," in Brooks Simpson, ed., *Reconstruction: Voices from America's First Great Struggle for Racial Equality* (New York: Library of America, 2018), 16.

### Subsequent references (short form):

<sup>11</sup>"Andrew Johnson: Reply to a Delegation of Colored Ministers, May 11, 1865 – 'Liberty to work': Washington, D.C., May 1865," in Simpson, *Reconstruction*, 27.

### Some fine print

- x Students are responsible for any missed class material due to absences, including especially assignments due. If you must be absent, rely on friends in class for notes.
- x Please do not leave the room during the class session.
- x Please do not bring food to class.
- x Notepads and laptops are not permitted in regular class meetings. Mobile phones should be turned off and kept away.
- x Print out any electronically assigned readings and bring them to class. You should be highlighting your reading, writing notes in the margins, etc.
- x We will "knock" at the end of class, to acknowledge our mutual effort.

### Challenging content

Higher education sometimes requires us to encounter material we find offensive and objectionable. Views expressed in the material we will cover do not necessarily reflect my own personal opinions. By continuing with this course, you are agreeing to be held academically accountable for all required materials in the syllabus, regardless of your own personal reactions to it. The academic enterprise invites vibrant class discussion, which balances critical thinking with mutual respect. Students are expected to take responsibility for their experience in this course by examining their own reactions to material they consider offensive. At all times, our priority will be critical engagement with scholarly material. Students uncomfortable with this approach are encouraged to drop this course at their discretion.



## Class meetings schedule

- x This schedule is liable to change to suit class needs. The online syllabus always offers the most recent version of the syllabus.
- x Though you are responsible for all assigned materials, I try to arrange readings in order of importance for each day.
- x Readings are to be completed prior to class. Bring hard copies of assigned readings to class, and be prepared to discuss them.
- x Online readings are available via Blackboard, or links below. Print out all digital readings.

W 1/23

**FIRST DAY**

*I won't know how much*

W

- x Simpson, *Reconstruction*, "Presidential Reconstruction, 1865 1866," 1 4.  
*This is the first citation to a document from the Simpson collection; references to other documents will look like this. When there are multiple secondary readings, I'll list them in declining priority.*
- x Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, ch. 2, pp. 28 34.
- x Frederick Douglass: What the Black Man Wants, January 26, 1865 – 'Do nothing with us!': Massachusetts, January 1865, in Simpson, *Reconstruction*, p. 5.
- x "Abraham Lincoln: Speech on Reconstruction, April 11, 1865 Washington, D.C., April 1865," p. 14.
- x Springfield Republican: Restoration of the Union, April 20, 1865 Forgiving rebels: Massachusetts, April 1865, p. 19
- x Andrew Johnson: Interview with Pennsylvania Delegation, May 3, 1865 "Treason is a crime": Washington, D.C., May 1865, p. 21
- x Charles Sumner to Gideon Welles, July 4, 1865 'Shame & disaster': Massachusetts, July 1865, p. 56
- x Wendell Phillips to the National Anti Slavery Standard, July 8, 1865 The Danger of Rebels in Congress: Massachusetts, July 1865, p. 59

*Recommended:*

*Here's the first reference to recommended readings. I strongly urge you to explore these as well. If you're writing*

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| M 2/25 | <p><b>PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION</b></p> <p><i>Andrew Johnson is often portrayed as an ineffectual drunk, incapable of filling the shoes of the martyred Lincoln. Yet there was some kind of rational basis to Johnson's approach. What was his plan for political success? What challenges did it confront?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>x Foner, <i>A Short History of Reconstruction</i>, ch. 5 "The Failure of Presidential Reconstruction."</li> <li>x Colored People of Mobile to Andrew J. Smith, August 2, 1865 Defending "pure freedom": Alabama, August 1865, p. 71</li> <li>x Jourdon Anderson to, p. H. Anderson, August 7, 1865 "Send us our wages": Ohio, August 1865, p. 74</li> <li>x Christopher Memminger to Andrew Johnson, September 4, 1865 "Indentures of apprenticeship": North Carolina, September 1865, p. 87</li> <li>x Andrew Johnson: Speech to the 1st U.S. Colored Infantry, Washington, D.C., October 10, 1865 Washington, D.C., October 1865, p. 117</li> <li>x Sarah Whittlesey to Andrew Johnson, October 12, 1865 "A lying, lazy people": Virginia, October 1865, p. 122</li> <li>x "The Rebel Debts," Archives, <i>New York Times</i> (November 9, 1865). <a href="#">Online</a></li> </ul>  |
| W 2/27 | <p><b>SPECTERS OF VIOLENCE</b></p> <p><i>Whatever doubt remained about the place that southern whites believed the freedpeople should occupy in the postwar social order became clear in the wake of two race riots that struck the South in 1866. How did one illustrate social tensions and the other political?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>x Kevin R. Hardwick, "'Your Old Father Abe Lincoln Is Dead and Damned': Black Soldiers and the Memphis Race Riot of 1866," <i>Journal of Social History</i> 27, no. 1 (Autumn 1993): 109-28. (<a href="#">Jstor</a>)</li> <li>x Donald E. Reynolds, "The New Orleans Riot of 1866, Reconsidered," <i>Louisiana History</i> 5, no. 1 (Winter 1964): 5-27. (<a href="#">Jstor</a>)</li> <li>x George Stoneman to Ulysses S. Grant, May 12, 1866 The Memphis Riot: Tennessee, May 1866, p. 246</li> <li>x Elihu B. Washburne to Thaddeus Stevens, May 24, 1866 "Butcheries and Atrocities": Tennessee, May 1866, p. 252</li> <li>x Cynthia Townsend: Testimony to House Select Committee, May 30, 1866 "They all fired at her": Tennessee, May 1866, p. 253</li> <li>x Philip H. Sheridan to Ulysses S. Grant, August 1 and 2, 1866—The New Orleans Riot: Louisiana, August 1866, p. 270</li> <li>x Harper's Weekly : The Massacre in New Orleans—The President's Responsibility: New York, August 1866, p. 272</li> </ul> |

M 3/4

**CONGRESS RESPONDS**

*Lacking the tensions between White House and Congress, Radical Reconstruction would never have happened. What was the Radicals' solution? To what problem? Of the range of options available, which were taken, and why?*

x

x Harper's Weekly : Radicalism and Conservatism, April 21, 1866 Defining Radicalism:  
New York, April 1866, p. 231

x







- x Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony: Exchange on Suffrage, May 12, 1869 “The question of precedence”: New York, May 1869, p. 372
- x The New York Times : Reconstruction Nationalized, February 21, 1870 “It secures political equality”: New York, February 1870, p. 379
- x Ulysses S. Grant: Message to Congress on the Fifteenth Amendment, March 30, 1870 “The greatest civil change”: Washington, D.C., March 1870, p. 383
- x James A. Garfield: from Speech in Congress on the Civil Rights Bill, February 4, 1875 “This act of plain justice”: Washington, D.C., February 1875, p. 586

W 4/17

**SHARECROPPING**

*Sharecropping is often presented as a system of extreme labor exploitation. Under what conditions did it emerge? What role did the freedpeople themselves play in its development?*

- x Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*, ch. 3, pp. 45 48, 56 64; ch. 8, pp. 168 79.
- x Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, “Debt Peonage in the South,” *American Economic Review*, 1957, pp. 1163-1176.

- x Robert Brown Elliott: Speech in Congress on the Civil Rights Bill, January 6, 1874  
"Perfect equality before the law": Washington, D.C., January 1874, p. 456
- x Isaac Loveless to Ulysses S. Grant, November 9, 1874 A Black Veteran's Appeal:  
Tennessee, November 1874, p. 519
- x William Lloyd Garrison to the Boston Journal, September 3, 1874 "A reign of terror":  
Massachusetts, September 1874, p. 509
- x Eugene Lawrence to Harper's Weekly, October 31, 1874 "A war of intimidation":  
Louisiana, October 1874, p. 515
- x John R. Lynch: from Speech in Congress on the Civil Rights Bill, February 3, 1875 Social  
Rights and Public Rights: Washington, D.C., February 1875, p. 553

M 4/291

8

7

5

M 5/6

**COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES**

*What about the US instance of abolition was unique? What made it so?*