



After Slavery: Race, Labor, and Citizenship in the Reconstruction South (New Perspectives on the History of the South)

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“Is there really anything new to say about Reconstruction? The excellent contributions to this volume make it clear that the answer is a resounding yes. Collectively these essays allow us to rethink the meanings of state and citizenship in the Reconstruction South, a deeply necessary task and a laudable advance on the existing historiography.”—Alex Lichtenstein, Indiana University

In the popular imagination, freedom for African Americans is often assumed to have been granted and fully realized when Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation or, at the very least, at the conclusion of the Civil War. In reality, the anxiety felt by newly freed slaves and their allies in the wake of the conflict illustrates a more complicated dynamic: the meaning of freedom was vigorously, often lethally, contested in the aftermath of the war.

After Slavery moves beyond broad generalizations concerning black life during Reconstruction in order to address the varied experiences of freed slaves across the South. Urban unrest in New Orleans and Wilmington, North Carolina, loyalty among former slave owners and slaves in Mississippi, armed insurrection along the Georgia coast, and racial violence throughout the region are just some of the topics examined.

The essays included here are selected from the best work created for the After Slavery Project, a transatlantic research collaboration. Combined, they offer a diversity of viewpoints on the key issues in Reconstruction historiography and a well-rounded portrait of the era.

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