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Legacy of Reconstruction

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Legacy of Reconstruction

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Friday, February 19, 2016, 9:46 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Legacy of Reconstruction topic.

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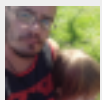
Reconstruction and the issue of Birthright

by [Titus Young](#) – Sunday, February 21, 2016, 7:09 PM

I think that the Reconstruction after the civil war has become key to what we call citizenship today. Dr. Foner calls the reconstruction one of the least known periods of time. I agree completely because this has been the first time I have heard about it. Reconstruction really set up that fact that we treat anybody who was born in America an American citizen. Blacks were treated as citizens that got equal protection by the law, because they were born in America. After several generations of blacks it makes sence to me that they should be treated as citizens.

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Re: Reconstruction and the issue of Birthright

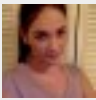
by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 3:36 PM

I found it interesting that you said that Reconstruction was key to what we call citizenship today. Paraphrasing of course. In the end of your post you say that after several generations of blacks....

As i agree with the fact that the black population needed and deserved to be citizens I dont see the correlation to today. You don't HAVE to fight for your country to be a citizen. You don't HAVE to have had several generations preceed you . You only need be born here. I think more stringent citizenship requirements are needed.

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Reconstruction passing vs enforcing
by [Dalannah Gheen](#) – Sunday, February 21, 2016, 8:05 PM

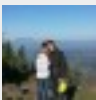
After the civil war ended there were many loose-ended questions that needed to be addressed. Our histories Reconstruction era attempted to redefine civil rights in America. It also gave us a view of their underlying significance and how vulnerable they can be in relation to the laws that should be in place to protect them. Today, perhaps more than ever it's important to know what these rights are, because without that awareness we are inadvertently leaving them up to be abused by our government.

These same rights that laid dormant during the Reconstruction period became the legal foundation for the civil rights movement of the 50's and 60's. These measures are powerful and should be looked at as such, and exercised with vigilance.

I feel that the way our constitution is set up makes it semi adaptable to changing times. Depending on the current state of our country rights can come to the forefront, and others will fall back until a later date when we will need them. This flexibility is important and makes our role in enforcing the laws that encompass these rights equally so.

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Reconstruction Growth and Regression
by [Dan Johnson](#) – Sunday, February 21, 2016, 11:31 PM

As it was, the era of during and immediately after the Emancipation Proclamation seemed to be a great burst through the legacy of the slavery and a re-conception of what "American Freedom" was meant to be. With the creation of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments and a political climate overwhelmingly controlled by Republican leadership, the "American Way" appeared to be in the process of being altered from Abraham Lincoln and an increasingly progressive agenda downwards into the rest of an America becoming more willing to accept the imposition of a more racially equal society. This momentum of sorts appeared to be strong and swift. Unfortunately, it in many ways, let off the gas. After an exhausting and brutal civil war, Abraham Lincoln was ready for peace and perhaps he didn't set a strong enough tone in determining the completion of his push for equality under the law. Anyhow, he didn't have much of a chance to implement his vision for Reconstruction as his death followed quickly after the end of the war. With his death and Andrew Johnson's inauguration, his effort for a strong Union was quickly made much more fragile. Andrew Johnson's own deep racism, as seen in his comments about Frederick Douglas, allowed much of the pre-civil war conditions to persist across America. The regression of black rights can be seen in his unwillingness to adequately protect their rights and foster them. In this transpiring of events, an equilibrium was made between the Americans willingness to follow the law and the governments willingness to enforce them. At it's core, this process took overt inequality and required it to be hid behind thinly disguised vales of legal fairness much in the same, at the very least symbolically, it required the KKK to where masks before they killed a black man. It isn't apparent as to make light of the era's legal achievements though. The fact the Constitution proclaimed to give equal rights even though they were not enforced would not make its promises empty. As Fomner said, it would show how the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments were "sleeping giants ready to be awaken in the years to come."

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction
by [Michaella Ensele](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 7:12 PM

The reconstruction era is a very interesting time in American history. In Foner's words "the two most important things in were the preservation of the Union and the destruction of slavery." During this time a big question was what the status was of the four million emancipated slaves. The South introduced restrictive "black codes" to control the labor and behavior of these former slaves. The North did not support these codes and allowed some blacks to have a say in government for the first time ever. Unfortunately these positive changes for blacks didn't last long because their were still people that believed black people weren't equal and began to hurt them such as the KKK. Also a big problem during that time that Foner mentioned was the fact that "rights on the books aren't

self enforcing" meaning just because it's a law doesn't mean all will follow it. Many laws regarding the black race weren't clearly enforced until another century after the reconstruction period. I like how at the end of the video Foner says "most Americans like to sometimes think that our history is a straight line of greater and greater freedom, we began perfect and been getting perfect ever sense." Then proceeds to talk about the facts how American history is much more complex and has gone through many ups and downs to get where we are today.

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Birthright citezenship

by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 7:44 PM

The definition of american citizenship is also a question of reconstruction. Professor Foner made some very great and valid points, but what really sticks out to me about this is the birthright citizenship. I agree with the fact that in today's day many people don't know a lot about this past history and why we may be here today. A lot of which is taken out of context. I feel this birthright citizenship marks the beginning of us as a whole to really start figuring out who we are as a nation, and understanding this better would help people better understand why we may be struggling with today. This is something that is embedded deep within our roots, and was part of a huge revolutionary reconstruction. Where we as a nation were trying to reconnect as a whole, instead of a divided union.

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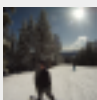
Re: Birthright citezenship

by [Michaella Ensele](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 6:24 PM

I agree with your post about the birthright citizenship but I can also see why some people in the United States might not want this certain law in play anymore. Back in the civil war time this law was a necessary but is it now?

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Re: Birthright citezenship

by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 9:05 PM

I feel for some it could go either way. Considering how birthright citizenship came into play during this time I think it would be safe to say we could re-evaluate these laws to better fit how things are today, but at what expense? These undocumented workers are said to work in lot of positions throughout the united states, and if they no longer are able to occupy these positions this in turn could harm our economy in more ways than one. So would it would be worth it at this point to consider re-evaluating?

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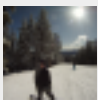
Re: Birthright citezenship

by [Michaella Ensele](#) – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 2:58 PM

I think that there is reason to re-evaluate but no matter what there are so many different opinions out there about this issue that who knows what the actual outcome would be. I understand your point about the people that play a role in the working environment but what about the ones that don't? This issue can be argued in many different ways but in the long run I think it would be an interesting law to re-evaluate.

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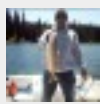
Re: Birthright citezenship

by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 3:45 PM

I believe this argument is put into place to show that the majority of these people that are out here undocumented are largely a part of this statistic, which in turn out weighs the ones that aren't. This showing us that the impact would be a lot larger if we were to deport such individuals. I do

agree with you though. I do believe there is a reason to re-evaluate these laws, and who knows what the actual outcome would be if we did decide to take this path. At the same time I feel like there's still a lot of information i don't know surrounding this issue, but with what information i do have I feel a path taken to directly deport all these individuals wouldn't be the best option.

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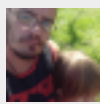
A positive and upward trajectory.
by [Andrew Kilmer](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 9:27 PM

I found Professor [Eric Foner](#)'s pod cast to be a great help in regards to my post in this forum.

1. Progress and freedom in U.S. History does not move forward in a positive and upward trajectory.

Even though the war was won by the north, the progression towards the motives behind the war remained passive. Foner described the two main issues present at the time being the preservation of the Union and the destruction of slavery. As I've read in our text book and heard from the pod cast, it seems that the first issue, by far, outweighed the second. The preservation of the Union was paramount and clearly more successful than the destruction of slavery and enactment civil rights. That is not to say that the Civil rights act and the 14th amendment were not progressive legislation, only that they remained benign, with no real passion, for a great amount of time. As Charles Sumner named this legislation in Foner's speech, "the sleeping Giant". So to the point that progress and freedom in our history does not move forward in a positive and upward trajectory, I would disagree. It just takes more than a hundred years (and still counting) to reach the positive results intended in the 1860s

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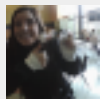
No such things as "Rights"
by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 10:37 PM

Constitution or no Constitution, we as people have no such thing as "rights". Let me start by giving my version of the "Miranda Rights". You have the right to remain silent. However if you do so you may be charged with obstruction or hindering law enforcement or even felony aiding and abetting. You have the right to have to talk to a lawyer and have your lawyer present during questioning. But we will avoid this hassle by simply detaining you and not arresting you so that we can ask you whatever we want and add it to our report as evidence. If you cannot afford to hire a lawyer, one will be appointed to represent you before any questioning if you wish. Unfortunately for you that lawyer will be over-worked and under-paid and have limited resources and funding available to him. You can exercise these rights at any time and not answer any questions.

During the era of reconstruction it was the exact same for a black person. The 14th amendment granted citizenship but many of the former slaves were still treated the exact same way as before. As lesser beings. So let's go ahead and add a 15th amendment granting black people the right to vote. All we have to do is buy a bunch of other peoples vote and we negate the black people.

It is a joke to me that people in this day and age think that they have "certain inalienable rights". It sure does sound good but tell me this, what did you do to gain those rights? Better yet, do you really think that they cannot be taken away??

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Birth right
by [Jordan Hevern](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 11:47 PM

After watching the video, It got me thinking about how other countries don't have the birth law, and it made me start to think about why that is a law here and not other countries. I understand that America is suppose to be this great place, were people have opportunities and chances here, but why is it so hard to get into this country. My understanding of the Reconstruction period is still bleek, but I am beginning to understand how it is still a relevant topic now. After the war, men and women had to get back to being civilized, they had to restart, wether it was the South trying to reclaim their land, and reconstruct their states after their towns were destroyed or it be

men recovering from war injuries and getting the help they needed to rehabilitate. Abraham was on his way to freeing slaves, and make man equal. With that in mind, how could you not give people of color citizenship after fighting in an American battle that wasn't technically their war in the first place. Now we don't have rules that prevent certain races/ethnic/religion people from having rights, but we do not let people be here with rights if they weren't born here. Even if they do believe in the "American" way, even if they want to work and provide a better life for their family, that still isn't enough to be considered a citizen. We have come a long way, but we still have a ways to go.

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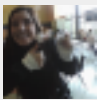
Re: Birth right

by [Michaella Ensele](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 6:41 PM

I believe the black men that fought in the civil war definitely deserved the right to become American citizens especially because around this time period as Mr. Escobar said in class, it's 1865 most black men in the U.S. at this time were born on American soil because they stopped bringing them from Africa in 1805. As for immigrants that come here and do believe in the American way I don't think that is enough to be considered a citizen. In my opinion they should have to go through the process of becoming one still because through that process they prove that they do love and want to live in America the right way. In class Thursday Mr. Escobar mentioned that come November we might not have to show any form of identification to vote what's your thought on that?

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Re: Birth right

by [Jordan Hevern](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 10:31 PM

I totally understand where you are coming from, and yes I think every country should have some regulation of how you are treated if you are a citizen, and how your rights are limited if you are not. Because most citizens pay taxes. But on the other hand, its hard to say who really believes in the American way. Just a while back we had people burning and stepping on the American flag, saying how much this country sucks. People rioting and destroying cities, where innocent people lost their jobs, and valuables because of it. Now I am suppose to okay with those people being "American" because they were born here so they deserve all the benefits that entails of being American? We have people hating this country and what it stands for, but yet have the audacity to use food stamps as they please. We have people in the country who kill and torture other innocent people, but yet they deserve the right to a fair trial, where they could potentially be let free? There are people in the country who use and abuse their freedom. what makes them better than a person who is trying to make a better life for them self, work and provide a better life for their children, and even help this economy by purchasing american goods. My father is from Switzerland, came here and married my mother, I was born on American soil, so now I am American. I didn't have to take a test, I didn't chose to be born in this country, what makes me so deserving to live here, when others, who just like me, didn't choose to be born in a certain place.

As for having ID for voting, I don't agree that people should just be able to vote without it. Firstly, we do not need young children who do not know much about politics voting. Secondly, I believe in the working class, every vote should go through some system where it does a background check on the voter. If he/she does not work, does not have a record of graduating high school, is not responsible for anything, than their vote should be held until the end. I do not see the need in voting as a private thing. People blast their views all over the internet as it is, so why when it comes down to making a decision it should be kept as a secret. We the people have to be held responsible for electing either a leader that will fight and stand up for this country or a leader who does not.

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Re: Birth right

by [Michaella Ensele](#) – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 3:06 PM

I agree with you that there should be a form of identification shown when you go and vote. I like your

point about how why should voting be such a private event when a lot of people blast there political views on social media, but as a person that does not do that I would never mind showing my I.D. in order to vote for our future leader but I don't think a lot of Americans would like to have a background check done in order to vote if that was the case I think a lot less people would vote even if they did work everyday and have a high school diploma.

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction, The profound differences between racial nationalism and civic nationalism.

by [Daniel Padilla](#) – Monday, February 22, 2016, 11:49 PM

During this video Foner talks about many interesting things, but one of the most important I believe is "The profound differences between racial nationalism and civic nationalism" according to Foner "During the eve of the civil war, no black person could be a citizen of the United States, as states by the 1857 Dread Scott Decision" The Union practiced Ethnic nationalism, where only white people could be citizens and enjoy most of the rights that come with being a citizen. After the Civil War, during the Reconstruction Era the United States began to practice Civic Nationalism which meant that anyone could be a citizen, if they met the criteria. Of course, this didn't exactly meant that every citizen (blacks) be treated equally by other citizens (whites). This was specially hard for Southerners that now had to live with the fact that blacks now (on paper) had the same rights as them. As we all know it took decades for blacks to finally fully be able to enjoy all of these benefits and rights that came with being a US Citizen.

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Birthright and citizenship

by [Clayton LeaMaster](#) – Tuesday, February 23, 2016, 7:12 PM

Professor Foner made very good points about the citizenship issue. Prior to the Civil War, blacks were considered aliens and "would never be citizens of the United States." (For example, Dread Scott) And some thought that after the Civil War as well, Professor Foner stated "this tells us citizenship was defined not by birth but by race" which is true. That statement does not apply nowadays because of the Civic Nationalism system that the United States uses today. If illegal immigrants have children within our boundaries then their child is automatically a US citizen? That is not right to me. Many other countries use Ethnic Nationalism which is based on language, culture, and ancestry. That system makes more sense then Civic. However, as long as the parents are legally immigrated and actually live in one particular country I don't think race or culture should play a factor for when they have children.

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Re: Birthright and citizenship

by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 3:39 PM

Very well put and very true.

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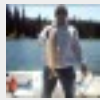
Civic vs. Ethnic nationalism

by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Thursday, February 25, 2016, 8:32 PM

Aside from birthright nationalism one of the main things discussed in today's day and age is immigration. We as the United states are among the few that run under Civic nationalism. Which for us in our current crisis, isn't helping us. As stated In Foner's file, there is about 12,000,000 undocumented immigrant or " illegal aliens," and among these are of course the many that can have children. Now under civic nationalism I feel like one of the greater problems is the fact that under our constitution if someone is born in the united states with a parent that is undocumented citizen, they themselves are still considered a citizen. This is crazy to look at because this is also one of the major things the civil war had effected directly, and has still carried on until today's day and age.

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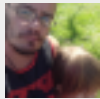
Paper rights

by [Andrew Kilmer](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 2:38 PM

The Civil war answered the question of emancipation and freedom for African Americans in America. Although slavery was ended, no one had any idea what rights that these freed people should have. This led to many debates that ultimately become our 13th-15th amendments to the constitution. The problem then comes that when the period of reconstruction ended in our country there was no power in place to preserve those rights and laws. As Mr. Foner said in his speech, “rights on the books are not sufficient.” The 14th amendment and civil rights were ignored for years. In fact, today the federal government is still violating Americans civil rights. Unless a power is in place to enforce rights and laws, they are just words on paper. Perseverance and checks and balance must be executed to ensure Americans liberties.

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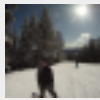
Re: Paper rights

by [Shawn Jenkins](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 3:21 PM

I agree with your explanation. Had the troops that had been sent down stayed there and enforced those laws I think we would, as a society in whole, have a different and much better future in store for the US post Civil War.

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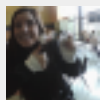
Re: Paper rights

by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Saturday, February 27, 2016, 2:41 PM

Very well put, and i agree. Looking back at how things were before the 5 military districts were taken out of place, compared to what happened after they were taken out paints this picture very cleary. I also agree that with this knowledge in mind we can directly relate it to how things are today, and without something similar to what we had in place back then this could lead our government to making the same mistakes.

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More birth right rant

by [Jordan Hevern](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 10:45 PM

Even though I think that every person should be held up to some expectation as to proving you believe in the country you living in, and that pays you, and you pay to live in. It is different times now. Back in 1860, African Americans had no chose to be in the United States, they had no choice where they ended up. Generations had been born here by the time the Civil War was in action. And yes after the emancipation Proclamation, I completely agree those men, women, and children deserved to be citizen, this is the country they grew up knowing. Sending them back to Africa or where ever they came from would be like shooting a dead horse. Even though they were held in captivity and were forced into the slave trade, United States is all they know. They do not know their native language, they weren't taught how to read or write, and to send them back to a country and a completely different language without those set of skill would of been disasterious for them. They were forced into something that did not want, the options is their. Either stay in America and become a citizen or go back to your home country and start their.

Now a days, people of all colors, ethnics, gender, religion, beliefs on life, have the option to be educated. Have the resources to learn new things, and fast too. People now a days chose not to educate themselves. I watched this documentary where college students were interviewed, asked basic questions about; our vice president, when did we gain our independence and who from, they were even asked who fought and won in the civil war; and only one person got that answer right.

It shocking that these people are considered Americans.

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