

HST 202: History of United States W19 (Escobar)

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Legacy of Reconstruction
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, February 22, 2019, 10:25 PM

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

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes the specific claim (1-4) you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Legacy of Reconstruction

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Birthright citizenship
by [Brayden Lane](#) - Monday, February 25, 2019, 4:47 PM

Birthright citizenship is an outgrowth of the civil war and did not exist before the civil war. Before the civil war negroes were not citizens regardless of being born here. After the civil war the question was what was going to be the status of these slaves after the abolishment of slavery. "Eventually everything led into the incorporation of laws and the constitution and 14th amendment." On the eve of the civil war the supreme court had ruled previously citizenship were for whites only regardless if the slaves were born or brought here, this was brought on by the Dred Scott decision. "That tells us citizenship was decided not by birth but by race." Before the civil war the idea of people of color being a citizen came up and was proposed only by abolitionists. The decision that came after the civil war relates today by there still seems to be a problem with it. People today believe there is a problem with immigration., However the impact is huge seeing we are only one of few country's that have birthright citizenship.

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Re: Birthright citizenship
by [Aaron Richards](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 10:15 PM

I agree that it was somewhat of a necessary move by the union to give citizenship to freed blacks, but in modern days it's outdated. It has created this mentality for foreigners to have children born in the U.S. to get a foot in the door for citizenship. This is a key factor for today's immigration issues. "The Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) estimates that in 2014, \$2.35 billion in taxpayer funding went to pay for more than 273,000 births to illegal immigrants." (<https://cis.org/Report/Birthright-Citizenship-Overview>, last bullet under summary.) Comparatively, freeing the slaves didn't seem to be the focus of taxpayer money. Instead funds were diverted more to the debt accumulated by both sides during the war.

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Passing laws or “having rights” is not the same as enforcing the laws or exercising rights.

by [Colt Karam](#) - Monday, February 25, 2019, 5:27 PM

Passing laws or “having rights” is not the same as enforcing the laws or exercising rights.

This point has been proven in our own class. Andrew Jackson defied the senate when evicting native american tribes. When laws aren't enforced they are meaningless, only mere suggestions of what should be done. The same goes for having rights. Many Americans, black and white, had the right to vote but when activist groups didn't allow these people to vote their rights meant nothing. During the reconstruction era the question was what would happen legally to the rights of freed slaves. Then how would that actually play out in the nation.

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

by [Aaron Richards](#) - Monday, February 25, 2019, 7:30 PM

In the period of Reconstruction, Lincolns goal was to bring the south back into the union and to not punish them for the war as the war itself was punishment. Then Lincoln was assassinated, backtracking the progress of uniting the union. Instead of continuing with healing the south was vilified by the north, keeping wounds fresh from the recent conflict. Even though blacks were freed, the south found new ways of subjugation for them. The ending of the civil war did not resolve many problems, but made them into new problems.

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

by [Colt Karam](#) - Friday, March 1, 2019, 11:32 PM

Lincoln's murder played a huge part in the final product. Since Lincoln's idea on reconstruction and freeing slaves was very different when he died and Andrew Johnson took charge the country took a large step back. Johnson had different views and was a southern sympathizer he favored the Confederate side. Lincoln's idea was lost and his vision gone. The abrupt change in leadership and ideas have shaped the country in many aspects.

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Birth right citizenship

by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Tuesday, February 26, 2019, 3:29 PM

I think its interesting that such a miscommunicated and misunderstood time in history houses some of the most important issues of today. Such as the birthright citizenship. In the reconstruction period there were all of a sudden freed slaves who now deserved to understand and know their rights as citizens. Because prior to the Civil War, according to the Dred Scott case black people were not considered citizens, like Foner says "citizenship is for white people only" (insert cringe here). As we understand by this point in the class definitions are very important, so in order to narrow down how to decide which rights people have and so forth the United States needed to define what it meant to be an American citizen in the first place. And then after that they can build on top of that definition. We know that they passed the 14th Amendment in 1866 and introduces the US to what is known as birthright citizenship. This was a huge step. Now people could not deny you as an "American" if you were born in the US which all of the slaves by this time had been. Foner says that the people who fought against slavery were also fighting to exclude race from citizenship.

"... all persons born in the United States, and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States"

This amendment made it clear that a person's citizenship was a federal right and could not be taken away by any state's power. Fast forward to today and this topic is still controversial. President Trump made a statement in 2018 about wanting to end birthright citizenship, people think that this law we have makes this country a "magnet" for illegal immigration.-- do we need to revise the constitution? Has America outgrown this amendment due to illegal immigration? Or does taking away this right ruin the very idea of the "American Dream" and how for centuries people have moved to America for a better life? It will be interesting to see how this plays out.

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction

by [Pablo Carrasco](#) - Thursday, February 28, 2019, 1:05 PM

Eric Foner does a great job on emphasising the importance on the reconstruction era of the civil war. The reconstruction era really shaped modern america in many ways. Immigration is ongoing issue in this country and has been for most of american history. Eric Foner brings up birthright citizenship and how most of the world simply doesn't have this. I assume most Americans want some type of immigration policy. The issue is some people in higher office perform these actions with a sense of ethnic nationalism. Some americans view these policies are more directed to people of color. Foner supports by stating blacks after slavery were not considered citizens, solely because of their race. Abolitionist wanted what a citizen to be defined without being based on race. I think it's really fascinating to have todays America to heavily be affected policies and agendas from more than a hundred years ago.

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1 (1)

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction

by [Brayden Lane](#) - Friday, March 1, 2019, 10:32 PM

I initially wrote about this topic and found it interesting as well. I agree with you in the thought how fascinating it is that America is still being affected by policies and agendas that haven't been reformed more than a hundred years ago. Also the thought of the reconstruction era after the civil war shaping America what it is today and the importance of it and how it even compares to the rest of the world which simply doesn't have birth right citizenship. I'm curious if you think that people in higher office that have a sense of ethnic nationalism is something that connects todays times to over to similar people in office over a hundred years ago?

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction

by [Pablo Carrasco](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 12:33 PM

Absolutely, obviously we live in a different era, and you can't openly be a white nationalist without being persecuted. I believe there is politicians that have similar agendas, but they just have to find "loopholes". I'm terrible at explaining this but look at the "black codes" during reconstruction these laws and regulation was to have slavery as close as possible. Today we see some actions targeting people due to race. It's a sensitive subject but there is strong correlation.

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Re: Legacy of Reconstruction

by [Colt Karam](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 8:47 PM

I connect with your interest in how events that happened over a hundred years ago clearly still affect the country today. The South seems to still be in reconstruction and behind the rest of the country. The west is vastly different from the East coast and seems to silently do its own thing. The stereotypes have to have some sort of reason and I think it dates back to the Civil War era, and how reconstruction failed to heal the wounds from the war.

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1 (1)

1

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Civic v.s ethnic nationalism

by [Brayden Lane](#) - Saturday, March 2, 2019, 6:56 PM

In the video Foner defines ethnic nationalism by folk or language or cultural or ancestry. He says how today we have a civic nationalism but that wasn't the same back then as back then we had a ethnic nationalism. He talks about the change that the civil war and reconstructionism brought after the war compared to before. The only people who brought up the idea of civic nationalism during and before the war were abolitionist who were a small minority. The idea of civic v.s ethnic nationalism. is a thought of before the war and reconstructionism we were an ethnic

nationalism while after we were a civic. Abolitionists' were fighting to not define citizens by race or cultural according to professor Foner and that what came about after the result of the civil war. I believe that is the overall summary of the civil war and the change it brought about, how we were before and what we were fighting for and what came about after.

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 **having rights is not the same as enforcing them**
by [Levi Savage](#) - Sunday, March 3, 2019, 5:44 PM

Just because laws regarding rights are passed that does not mean they are enforced. When we look at 13th-15th amendment which ended slavery and made black people US citizens and ended voting discrimination based on race. Foner would go on to say as "Charles Sumner called these rights sleeping giants in the constitution". Especially the 14th amendment which was passed during reconstruction but would not be enforced till nearly 100 years later and would be the groundwork for the civil rights movement. Where the tights given to blacks would finally be enforced in a country that gave up on equality for almost 100 years.

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 **Birthright Citizenship**
by [Jesse Carr](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 7:28 PM

Birthright citizenship is a result of the civil war. What Professor Foner said in the video "citizenship was for white people only decided in the Supreme court in 1857 the famous Red Scott decision. America is a country for white people black people are aliens here." Back then before emancipation everyone felt that America was for white people only, and after emancipation that thought process changed drastically. They didn't know what to do with all the free slaves after the war ended. they where free but non of them where citizens in America, so they came up with the idea of birthright citizenship. That anyone in born in America is a citizen. The parents of the child born in America do not have to be a citizens of the U.S. This is apart of the 14th amendment and has now been around for many years and is still around today and could be seen as a problem. Many immigrants use the U.S. law of birthright citizenship to start a new life in the U.S. because one they're child is born in the U.S. they are around to stay in America to take care of their child even if they are here illegally. Or if they are forced to leave the country but their new born child is aloud to stay because it is now a citizen. It increases the rate of orphans in America. America is on of the only country that has birthright citizenship and a lot of illegal immigrants are using that as an way to "cheat the system" to be able to stay in America if they have a child here.

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 **Passing laws and "Having Rights" vs. Enforcing laws and exercising rights**
by [Benjamin Planck](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 8:38 PM

When I listened to Foner speak about the 14th Amendment, I did not realize that the laws enacted by that amendment did little to nothing to help African American citizens. It seems obvious now, but I never really sat and thought about how it took decades upon decades in order for the laws in the 14th Amendment to actually be enforced. Why does this happen? It seems just as prevalent nowadays as it was back then, the importance of knowing your rights and the willingness to fight for those rights. You hear all the time growing up here in the States "I have rights!" That argument is used on so many platforms to put down masses of people who are standing up for issues, "You know you already have those rights? So why are you complaining?" Because all too often the rights we are born with are not even enforced and used to help us. Segregation comes to the forefront of my mind when I think of such an issue, and that "hilarious" quote by that South Carolina farmer after the war "I never did a day's work in my life, and I don't know how to begin."(Text, Page 567).

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