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Reconstruction Cartoons

by Joe Escobar - Friday, February 24, 2017, 10:13 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Reconstruction Cartoons 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, especially the cartoon number you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Reconstruction Cartoons

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Time Works Wonders



by Eric Brackett - Saturday, February 25, 2017, 1:37 PM

This cartoon really stuck out in my mind, and possibly not for the obvious reason one might assume. It portrays Jefferson Davis, former President of the Confederated States, dressed in atypical 19th century stage wear, reciting a famous line from William Shakespear's "Othello".

In the play, Iago (who is quoted in the cartoon) undermines Othello constantly. He plots and conspires against him to the point of his own ruin. For those in the 19th century, who would be familiar with these lines, it would stand out that Davis is very much this country's Iago.

However what strikes me most is that this may be a back handed stab as well at the conspirators of Lincoln's death. Edwin Booth, brother to John Wilkes Booth, was very well known for his portrayal of Iago. Even though Edwin had been a Unionist, once your brother murders a World Leader, your political affiliations matter less than your blood born relationships.

In all I find the cartoon very telling of the time. That here we have a black man, more likely than not a former slave, sitting in a seat once reserved for white men only. As he looks on, even in defeat, Davis plots and curses his perceived enemy. And much like in Othello, it is the "Moor" who is the shining example of elegance and sophistication, and the Iago (ie the Southerner) who is the true villain.



"TIME WORKS WONDERS."

IAGO. (JEFF DAVIS.) "FOR THAT I DO SUSPECT THE LUSTY MOOR
HATH LEAP'D INTO MY SEAT: THE THOUGHT WHEREOF
DOETH LIKE A POISONOUS MINERAL GNAW MY INWARDS?" — OTHELLO.

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Cartoon #1, Am I not a man and a brother...and a politician too?

by Caleb Pruitt - Monday, February 27, 2017, 12:01 PM

Firstly, noting that this cartoon was published in 1870 helps to understand what is being communicated. With that in mind, I think it is trivial to note that this is targeted towards the growing number of blacks in political offices. As the textbook has it, "blacks held 15 to 20 percent of public offices...in the early 1870's" (pg. 579).

However, the difficult part for me is determining whose side Thomas Nast is on. Firstly, he draws Davis in the infamous dress that he was supposedly captured in. This to me seems like a northern slam on him. Additionally, he draws the black senator in what seems a positive light, as an honest, fair workman. Nonetheless, I wasn't sure if racial equality would be something that Nast would be bold enough to pen, illustrious cartoonist though he was. If I had to guess, he seems to be appealing against the racial segregation of the day and appealing for racial equality, by drawing Davis in such a disgraceful, shameful manner.

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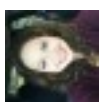
Re: Cartoon #1, Am I not a man and a brother...and a politician too?

by Caleb Pruitt - Monday, February 27, 2017, 12:09 PM

The quote at the bottom confused me at first, but I think I may have figured it out. Nast uses a quote from Shakespeare's *Othello* in which Iago, the antagonist, is suspecting that Othello has slept with his wife and is wishing to get even. However, Nast's twists this quote which actually uses the word "seat" to mean a seat in the Senate, a seat that Davis held in Mississippi for a number of years. Both Iago and Jeff Davis feel displaced by Africans (Moors): Iago in his sexual life and Davis in his political life. Additionally, seeing as how Iago is the "bad guy" in Shakespeare's play, I think it is apropos that Nast utilized this quote to immortalize Davis as the "bad guy".

The further you delve into the connections between *Othello* and this picture the more meaning is revealed! I continue to be blown away by Nast's artistic and literary genius!

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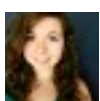


Re: Cartoon #1, Am I not a man and a brother...and a politician too?

by Megan Spencer - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 6:43 PM

I would agree with you, that Nast would be against racial segregation. I think since Nast was comparing Davis to Iago, he would be making a statement in favor of racial equality. Iago was the antagonist in *Othello*, and so it would be fitting for Nast to paint Davis in that role, since the cartoon is aimed at supporting racial equality.

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Cartoon #5

by Amelia Salzman - Monday, February 27, 2017, 2:34 PM

I find the layers and amount of information of this cartoon really interesting. To me it seems clearly to be pro emancipation. The drawing shows the positive on society with emancipation and the cruelty of slavery. In the center he depicts a loving family like any other though I can't quite make out the name I believe there might be a photo of Lincoln hanging on the wall. This seems to me to be a very progressive view of the time, not only does it support the end of slavery but it seems to imply that black and white Americans were maybe even equal. Today it is obvious and accepted by most Americans that all people are equal but at the time even people who were against slavery didn't see African Americans as equal. On the center right of the cartoon we see black children going to school and having the right to an education. In the bottom background image, to the left, the cartoon shows a white man (probably slave owner) on his horse, whipping a slave in a field. The right side shows what I would assume is the same or similar man on his horse tipping his hat and waving at a free black man working in a field. The both of these scenes there is a scale on the front of the image on the left, the scale looks off balance and broken but on the right (free) side the scale looks equal. Professor Gallagher (video) talked about the post-war confederates trying to argue that the war was not about slavery but this cartoon keeps slavery as the main focus of the post-war south. Also I notice this is a Thomas Nast cartoon and I've noticed a pattern in his work of having a very anti-slavery stance. Although I agree with the ending of slavery and the equal treatment of all people, I do believe that Nast seems to give a romanticized view of what the effect of emancipation would be. After reading the chapter this cartoon completely ignores the issues of "South Defiance" (pg. 566) It stands out to me that even with today's standard of universal acceptance that slavery is wrong, that a cartoon could be so biased and inaccurate toward how former slaves were really being treated in the south and how ex-confederates really felt and acted toward former slaves.

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Cartoon #1

by Amelia Salzman - Monday, February 27, 2017, 2:35 PM

I would not have appreciated, or totally understood this cartoon if I had not read and learned about Shakespeare's Othello in a previous class. The line on the bottom of the cartoon "For that I do suspect the lusty moor..." refers to when Othello suspects and thinks his "friend" (The Lusty Moor) has had an affair with his wife. The comparison of Jefferson Davis to Othello is pretty interesting. (As people who have read the play know, Othello wrongfully accused his wife and ends up killing himself and his wife in the end.) The old fashion clothes he wears not only ties into the Shakespeare reference but makes him feel out of date and passed his prime. Clearly his place has been taken by another person and another view point. The second part of the line "The thought whereof doth like poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards" the idea on not being able to move forward, come together with the other side fits Jefferson Davis's Post Civil war position. Out of context the line makes it clear that Davis has lost his seat and voice in government. There is also a question as the race

of Othello in the original Shakespeare Play. There is some belief the term “moor” referred to people of color. Whether Nast picked this line because that racial undertone or simply for the line reflecting Davis’s loss of power I find this cartoon to have much more depth and I imagine depending on the availability and understanding of Shakespeare’s work at the time this cartoon had a much smaller audience. My thing I’m curious about is after really thinking about this cartoon is how much of Othello’s character and Shakespeare’s play was Nast comparing to Jefferson Davis? Was this just one isolated line that Nast felt fit? Or was this whole play and the history behind it a comparison in Nast’s mind. Either way I find this to be one of the more interesting cartoon of this forum.

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Re: Cartoon #1

by Caleb Pruitt - Monday, February 27, 2017, 4:55 PM

I'm not quite sure how you're comparing Davis to Othello. The quote is from Iago about Othello, an African man. Othello is that "lusty moor (person from northern Africa) that hath leap'd into [Iago's] seat". That is what I find so compelling about this picture is that Nast compares Davis to Iago and the similarity of them being displaced by men of African descent!

Therefore, to answer your questions, hopefully it seems more clear the comparison and how fitting and appropriate Iago's contemplative line is concerning the influx of black politicians holding public offices.

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Re: Cartoon #1

by Amelia Salzman - Monday, February 27, 2017, 8:01 PM

That's a good point, you're right!

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“This Is A White Mans Government” #2

by Patrick Rugel - Monday, February 27, 2017, 3:45 PM

The “This Is a White Mans Government” cartoon is interesting. Based on how the three men are dressed you can tell that the cartoon hinges around four primary individuals; the Irish, former Confederates, the politician, and free slaves. Each individual displays key features that make them distinct, the stereotypical ape depiction of the Irish, C.S.A on the belt buckle of the confederate, and the over all

theme of votes and beating of the black man (lecture, textbook.) The dead give away for this cartoon is the words “unconstitutional, revolutionary and void,” the words of the Democratic platform in the 1868 election (textbook pg.575.) Further evidence that supports that this was a election cartoon, is the idea that the new freed blacks would now be competing in the same labor force as the Irish immigrants, combining their voting power with former confederates would help out number the new black vote (lecture.) The former confederate depicted, I believe could be the artists representing radical groups that wanted to sway the black vote in their favor, based on the dagger of “lost hope” and the fact that ex-confederates took part in such groups as the Ku Klux Klan (textbook pg.382.) I believe that the artist is trying to convey two primary messages in the cartoon; 1) This cartoon being political propaganda for the election of 1868, 2)Ex-Confederates and the Irish did not want free blacks voting not in their favor.

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Re: “This Is A White Mans Government” #2

by Morganne Roy - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 8:02 PM

I don’t think this cartoon is so much about your summaries at the end, particularly “Ex-Confederates and the Irish did not want free blacks voting not in their favor”. The way I see it, this cartoon is a condemnation of the Democrat Party. The “politician” at the end is holding a thing of money that says “capital” and “vote” indicating that he’ll buy votes. Clearly former Confederates would be a solid voting block for “The Party of Racism”, and if you’ll recall, the Irish were too. Although, I think that had less to do with them being a particularly racist group (as they clearly experienced racism as well) than them supporting states rights and freedom to go to parochial schools due to their Catholicism. Regardless of their reasons, the Irish were still a big constituency of the Democrats and thus lent support to the oppression of freemen in this time period. This cartoon is showing three big groups involved in obstructing freemen’s right to vote and condemning them.

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Cartoon #4

by Morganne Roy - Monday, February 27, 2017, 4:52 PM

In the fourth cartoon, the caption reads, “The Modern Samson” in reference to the Biblical Old Testament story about a Nazarene who was given superhuman strength by God, but was commanded among other things never to cut his hair. Later in the story his hair was cut by Delilah-- who had tricked him-- while he was sleeping, his strength was lost, and he was then captured by his enemies who gouged out his eyes and put him in chains.

In this cartoon, the black man is waking up from sleep to discover “Delilah”, named “Southern Democracy”, has taken his suffrage. An angry mob enters the room with flags saying “Slavery Regained”. One man in the front’s breastplate reads “KKK”.

This is saying that the black man’s power is the right to vote, and that the Southerner’s are surreptitiously attempting to destroy that power before storming in to reinstitute slavery.

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Re: Cartoon #4

by Brandon Gericke - Friday, March 3, 2017, 10:08 AM

i completely agree with your statement that southern whites are trying to destroy the power of the black mans vote. I think its crazy how they had no qualms about openly killing, beating and intimidating both whites and blacks in the south. They couldnt reinstitute slavery, but they did their best implement forced servitude and anything else to keep the free blacks from gaining any kind of power.

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Re: Cartoon #4

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 12:34 PM

I find the use of Samson interesting in this cartoon, mainly because in my readings I came across the Samson theme over and over again in Southern political cartoons. Usually they depict the strong South (pre-war and concurrent with the war) having its strength cut away by the Delilahic North, or they depict Samson (post-war) toppling the pillars of the Union in a last ditch effort. But I also always find the biblical reference in political cartons of this age that directly deal with slavery to be a bit ironic, considering the bible was one of the many tools used to justify slavery. It highlights the mentality of "If God be for us, who can be against us?" is really all about perspective.



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Re: Cartoon #4 Ideals and Comparisons

by Alec Ebert - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 7:37 PM

Eric, I thought that Sampson is portrayed as the victim in the Old Testament story? Why would Sampson be the one to tople the pillars of the union in this scenario? I see what you mean about it all relating to perspective and I really agree with your view of irony when it comes to these biblical reconstruction cartoons. I will say however that its intersting that religon rears its ugly head in the wake of a brutal conflict such as this. My knowledge if the KKK is limited but I know that they burned crosses as a symbol of illuminating their faith in christ. In cartoon number four however some of the men looking to attack the slave are holding torches that appear to be setting fire to a pile of books and a globe in the bottom left hand corner of the cartoon, one of which is the bible. I think the bible burning is used as a symbol here to illustrate the same thing as the cross burning. Since cartoon number 4 was created by a northeren cartoonist its likely he's picking on the ideals of the KKK buring crosses as wrong, they might as well burn the holy book instead.

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Re: Cartoon #4

by Morganne Roy - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 8:21 PM

The part of the story where Samson topples the pillars is after his eyes were gouged out and he had lost all of his strength. He's chained up in front of his enemies and prays to God one last time to give him strength to push down the pillars he's chained to and destroy the building so he'll die and take his enemies with him. In this light, you could consider that perhaps this was a Southern mentality saying, "Well, we've lost. But let's take down as many yankees as possible before we die." As far as the Bible goes, both those who were pro-slavery and die-hard abolitionists used the scriptures as justification. It could be a matter of perspective, but I tend to believe that the correct idea will eventually win out and the abolitionists have clearly won the debate.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Cartoon #4

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 8:39 PM

This is actually what I was alluding to. That The Southern mentality of Samson bringing down the pillars around him is that last ditch effort to destroy it all. Also one can take the Samson analogy a step further by suggesting that like Samson, the South is now in chains, their eyes gorged out and their strength escaping them. Again it all comes down to perspective, I highly doubt any Southerner saw themselves as the barbarous villain after the war, just as I am sure no Notherner saw themselves that way as the North oppressed the South during Reconstruction.

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Cartoons #5

by Mat Forcum - Monday, February 27, 2017, 9:24 PM

This cartoon is clearly a positive outlook on emancipation. The banner across the top displays the word boldly and with bright clods behind it. From left to right it would appear tell the history of slavery. Starting in the top left and moving counter clockwise it start with what I assume is the capturing of slaves show by what appear to be people of color running away from white people who are shooting at them. Directly under this is an image of a slave auction in which a husband is being separated from his family. Following those image you can see two, what would look to be slave, being whipped. The lower right corner shows a black man getting pay;

this is likely for wages he earned. The top right section show black children attending public school. This all culminates in a picture centered on the cartoon of a black family that looks to be happy, health and free. They are well dressed and the young boy is holding a book. I think the overall point of this cartoon is that of this cartoon is to show that a black person can be a productive member of society and to show some of the brutal past of slavery.

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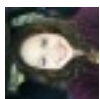


Re: Cartoons #5

by Alexander Salgado - Thursday, March 2, 2017, 6:16 PM

Your analyzation seems to be pretty accurate for the most part, but I feel the overall depiction is to show the happiness the now free black people felt and the choice they have in what they wear

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Cartoon #5

by Megan Spencer - Monday, February 27, 2017, 11:39 PM

In this cartoon, a story unfolds. It is shows how African Americans lived before Emancipation, and after Emancipation. At the very top, there is the word Emancipation. Starting from the left side, it appears that white men are capturing black men. Further down, the artist has drawn a slave auction, and below that, there looks to be a scene depicting slavery and whippings. The left side appears to show what slavery looked like in the United States. On the right side, it shows the aftermath of the Civil War, and Emancipation. At the very top, it looks as if the North has won the Civil War. Below that, there are African American children going to public school. Further down, it looks as if African Americans are paying for groceries. The very large picture in the middle shows how African American families are whole, and are not being broken apart by slavery. This scene is important, because the people drawn in this scene are not shown wearing slave or servant clothes. They are wearing nice, clean clothes, which shows that they are no longer slaves, but are free. The scene depicting the African American children going to school, represents how educated Northerners came down South to educate the black population. The scene showing African Americans buying groceries is significant because it represents how African Americans can now own property, provide for their own families, and are free from their slave owners. I would say that this cartoon was probably drawn by a Republican, who was an abolitionist, and in favor of African Americans having the right to vote, and citizenship.

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Cartoon #4

by Alexander Salgado - Tuesday, February 28, 2017, 8:06 PM

This cartoon is lady liberty protecting a now free black man from what looks like unhappy KKK members. She is holding a banner that says suffrage due to the passing of the 14th amendment which states, "... all native-born or naturalized person's, including blacks, as American citizens and prohibited the states from abridging the "privileges and immunities" of citizens , from depriving "any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law," and from denying to any person "the equal protection of the laws" (textbook 570).

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Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Brandon Gericke - Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 10:43 AM

I believe that the artist of this image was trying to convey how southern whites were responding to the Recontrsuction Acts and the time period immediately following the Civil War. I see three different people standing over and on a black man with an american flag next to him on the ground. The people standing on the black man have their hands on top of each other in the middle, as if in agreement to a plan of action. Also each person is holding high a tool used as a symbol to impede the progression of the black man in america. The man on the left is holding up a club that symbolizes the violence used to intimidate the black voter. The man in the middle is holding up a knife with the words "The Lost Cause". The Lost Cause was the Souths attempt to turn their defeat in the civil war into a type of martyrdom. The man on the right is holding up a package that has the words "capital" and "votes". This probably symbolizes the economic coercion that was used against black sharecoppers in order to keep them away from the polls

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Patrick Rugel - Wednesday, March 1, 2017, 2:43 PM

I agree with your analysis in that the big picture idea that the artist is trying to convey the big idea that southerners wanted to "intimidate the black voter." Each man depicted beating the Freedman defiantly had motives to keep Freedman from participating in society and politics, as a general idea, but I believe that the artist of this cartoon wanted this cartoon to have a deeper meaning; keep black votes from the election of 1868. The artist gives this impression when they wrote at the bottom of the cartoon the words "unconstitutional, revolutionary and void," the words of the Democratic platform in the 1868 election (textbook pg.575.)

Furthermore, this idea would help reinforce the motives of each of the characters drawn, for example; the Irish man depicted would have a tougher time competing for jobs.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Alexander Salgado - Thursday, March 2, 2017, 6:19 PM

Also the clear ballot box from the 19th century in the bottom right corner is a pretty clear depiction of how the confederates reacted to this

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Brandon Gericke - Friday, March 3, 2017, 10:11 AM

So you think the Irish joined with the white southerners in their attempts to destroy the blacks ability to progress in this country, because it would allow for them to get an upper hand? I hadnt really thought of it that way but it does make sense. the whole enemy of of enemy is my friend thing.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Patrick Rugel - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 10:36 AM

Yes, the "Scale" cartoon from last week kind of justifies this idea, one view of Irish immigrants was that they were almost equals to black slavery in the ranks of society. With the new Freeman, the Irish lost their a slight edge they had and now had more competition with jobs. However, I would probably say they still had a slight edge when it came to working conditions, you can see that later with the "Jim crow laws" of segregation (textbook,) So being white gave them the upper hand but the alliance with the southern Democrats would definitely work to their benefit.

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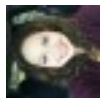


Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 1:01 PM

I agree with what you are saying in this, however I think we are really over looking something important about this cartoon. On the left we have a depiction of the Irish immigrant, drawn bestial as usual in this time. In his pocket is a whiskey flask, on his cap a crucifix and a button at reads "Five Points". The Irish were still seen as less than human during this time, they were those foreign hoard with their non American religion invading our shores. I have to wonder why Nast chose to do this, especially when you notice that it is the Southerners who are standing on the back of the Black Soldier, but it is the Irishman who is forcing his head down in submission. Also if you look to the date of the cartoon, this is only months after the 14th Amendment was passed, which grants citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States". I'm sure that Nast has to be drawing this to show how disgusting the idea of repressing these new citizens their right to vote is, but I have to think that he is really showing his own bigotry in basically stating that, even though the Irish are less than human, even they have more rights than a former slave.

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Megan Spencer - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 6:28 PM

I think it's because the Irishman have more rights than the Freedman because of the color of their skin. When it came down to it, it didn't matter if you were a Catholic Irishman, the whiteness of a person's skin was more important. I do find it interesting that while the black man has lost his ape-like appearance in racist cartoons, but the Irishman is still drawn to look a little beastly.

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Patrick Rugel - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 7:00 PM

Yes, I would agree, the Irish during the reconstruction era have had an edge over black just based on skin color you can kind of see this later with the "Jim Crow Laws" of segregation (textbook.) In terms of the depictions of the Freedman and the Irish, I believe that one possibility is that Nast wanted the setting of the cartoon to be in the south and want to show that although Irish were making alliances in the south, Southerners wanted to still have prejudice against them and their religion.

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoon #2. The suppression of the Black Voter

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 8:56 PM

Except though, as we learned in class that isn't the case. Th Irish did not have an upper hand over Former slaves due to the color of their skin. As you may recall we talked in class about NINA or ' No Irish Need Apply". There was an extremely strong anti Irish sentiment in this country well into the mid 20th century. Americans were absolutely shocked in the 60's when John Kennedy won and became this countries first (and only) Catholic & Irish decended president I found an interesting wiki pages on the matter, I am adding it here for reference. Also interestingly enough it contains a Nast cartoon from 1871, basically showing the racial bias against the Irish had not dampened since the events of the civil war.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Irish_sentiment#No_Irish_need_apply

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cartoon #5

by Timberly Thomas - Thursday, March 2, 2017, 12:19 PM

I believe this carton represents the past, future and present of slavery and freeing the slaves. when you first look at the image, in the top right corner you see lady liberty and what I assume to be union solders. As you move to the right you see whites (assuming southern slave owners) with dogs looking back on lady liberty. then the more you move to the left you see blacks running away from the whites. It is a big chase, northerns running after southerners, and southerners running after slaves.

As you move down the left side of the image you see, what seems to be an action of slaves. you can see that a family of blacks are being split up. then in the bottom left corner you see a slave being wiped. Another being tortured. as you move to the bottom right you see that slave are free. The black man is able to purchase his own goods, with his own money that he earned. As you move up you see a black women sending here children off to school. In the middle is a black family living in there home, being happy as a family of the future.

The left side represents the past of slavery, the right represents present freedom, and the middle is the future where they can finally be happy.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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**Re: cartoon #5**

by Brandon Gericke - Friday, March 3, 2017, 10:02 AM

I definitely agree with your conclusion that this cartoon depicts the past, present and future of black slaves in america. we however leaned that the present and near future was not nearly as optimistic and amazing as the cartoon would suggest. The Black Codes would even make the case that things became worse for the black slaves.

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**Re: cartoon #5**

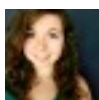
by Alexander Salgado - Friday, March 3, 2017, 3:02 PM

I agree. It created a place for the now free blacks to continue to work like slaves regardless of their freedom. All because they started with nothing and now are thrown into the nation as free to try and make a survival for their families.

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**Re: cartoon #5**

by Timberly Thomas - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 10:45 PM

Yes it is true about how freedom was worse than slavery, but as we have discussed before the author was a Northerner, he was atomistic about the future of slavery. He was not just drawing the past and present, he was drawing a future he hoped for. You have to think this cartoon was probably drawn before black codes really came into play. He probably did not know at the time how bad it would be for blacks. The future is not always how we image it, never has, never will.

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**Re: cartoon #5**

by Amelia Salzman - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 8:07 PM

My first reaction to this cartoon was to assume that it was intentionally bias picture of reconstruction to convince people of one view. After reading the comments on this post and thinking about it, I would be interesting to know the exact date on when this cartoon was published. Obviously we looking back knowing how freed slaves were treated after the war but I wonder what reasoning was behind the idealized view of emancipation. If this was soon after emancipation and early into the reconstruction period, this could simply be what

Nast hoped or thought reconstruction would be for slaves. It is clearly inaccurate but I wonder how aware Nast was of its inaccuracy. I wonder if this was his effort to cover-up and ignore a sad reality or if it shows what he really believed and hoped emancipation would bring.

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Re: Reconstruction Cartoons

by Alec Ebert - Thursday, March 2, 2017, 11:28 PM

In terms of the third cartoon, I think that the most obvious thing that points to the injustices that came with Johnson's reconstruction plans, is how Johnson is portrayed as a jester of some kind. There is an obvious radical republican bias with this cartoon, but no matter what side you're on the way the Freedmen were treated was not freedom as any sensible person would portray freedom. In the center piece of the cartoon Johnson looks as though he's attempting to reassure the black soldier that his freedom is granted. However as he is dressed up as a jester it's implied that Johnson's ideas of freedom would be considered a joke to any battle beaten black soldier, whose face speaks volumes on this. There are other examples of Johnson's corruption too, including the cards falling on the left side of the poster that say "pardon" as meant to represent the many pardons Johnson gave to Southern plantation owners who rebelled and fought against the Union in the Civil War. Johnson promised not to be lenient with these men in the beginning of reconstruction, however as time wore on he was pardoning so many extra clerks had to be hired to help with this process. The images of the New Orleans and Memphis riots help paint a picture of the chaos that took place during the reconstruction period as well.

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Thoughts on Cartoon Number 5

by Alec Ebert - Friday, March 3, 2017, 12:14 AM

In cartoon number 5 the thing that stands out to me most is the portrayal of reality and fantasy. On the left side you have depictions of the reality black slaves were subjected to on plantations in the south and on the right side you get an image of a country of unity and equality for blacks. In the middle of the cartoon you have an image of home life for blacks post emancipation. I think this cartoon is meant to represent a more positive ideal of progression for the country after the Civil War. The images on the top on both sides of the cartoon show women holding things up to the gleaming figure at the top. On the left side the woman is holding a burning torch, most likely to represent fire or destruction, the burning of rights. On the right she's holding an olive branch as a symbol of peace and equality. She's also holding a scale, to serve as a symbol of justice in the courts. In reality the left and middle of the

cartoon are not what really happened during the reconstruction period. It is interesting however to have this perspective of hopefulness. A dream for a progressive perfectly united nation. This is very different from other cartoons from this time.

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Re: Thoughts on Cartoon Number 5

by Alexander Salgado - Friday, March 3, 2017, 2:59 PM

In my opinion I think this cartoon was trying to show the cycle of which the slaves went through. Starting with the left in the very beginning of slavery. Which goes counterclockwise and ending in the middle post emancipation showing a happy black family that seems to be well established .

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Re: Thoughts on Cartoon Number 5

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 1:10 PM

I have to agree with you. Consider that this is again a Nast cartoon, and in the Harpers Weekly. Both are from the North, both contributed a lot to the idea of the abolitionist movement. I think in a way this is basically a bit of propaganda to show that the struggle, for both slaves and those who fought to have them freed, was worth it. It depicts the horrors of what they had to endure, but in the end, it presents the entire family gathered around the warming hearth of the Union (if you notice the stove says Union on it).

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Cartoon 3 Anyone?

by Caleb Pruitt - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 11:36 AM

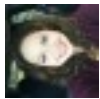
I feel like the third cartoon may be a little jealous at the attention and analysis the others are getting!

Cartoon 3, labelled "Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction and How it Works," is an incredibly complex and busy picture. Firstly, in the middle is Johnson dressed like a charlatan seemingly advising or conversing with a contemptuous black US officer who just received an honorable discharge. This reminded me of how the slaves had just been freed but Johnson and the south quickly resorted back to oppression and tyranny in the South. Additionally, the lower part of the cartoon presents Johnson presumably playing a snake-charming pipe of some sort while a black man wrestles

with a snake. On the pipe is engraved "Constitution," suggesting that instead of using the states' Constitutions to find peace with blacks (charm the snake) Johnson instigates race riots, like those in the top corners, and discrimination, especially in the northern states!

Finally, there are two more quotes from Shakespeare's *Othello*, one where Iago is asking his African opposite, "Are you a man? have you a soul or sense?" These quotes further the continuing inequality between the races. However, I feel like this cartoon focuses more on criticizing Johnson and his failure to solve any problems.

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Cartoon #2

by Megan Spencer - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 4:30 PM

In this cartoon there are three white men standing around a black man. Each man has a foot, placed on top of the black man, forcing him to the ground. I think the man on the very left is an Irishman, he is holding a bat with the words "A Vote", the man in the middle is a Southern Confederate, he is holding a knife with the words "The Lost Cause", and the man on the very right is a Northern Democrat, he is holding an envelope with the words "capital and votes". There is a ballot box on the floor, that the black man seem to be reaching for, and he is also holding on to the American flag. I think it symbolizes how whites sort of banded together during Reconstruction to keep blacks from voting, and from becoming full citizens. Also that they symbolize white supremacy, and that a white Irishman is better than a black person, simply because he is white. I think that the flag that the black man is holding symbolizes how black people held on to the belief that they could enjoy certain freedoms that they were given after the Civil War, and during Reconstruction. I would think that this cartoon was drawn by a Republican, and aimed at Republicans.

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Re: Cartoon #2

by Alexander Salgado - Saturday, March 4, 2017, 7:52 PM

I think the Irish man is shaking the hand of the white man to symbolize the future alliance between the two, but he is still drawn as a monkey to show their differences. I also believe the black man was a former Union soldier and reaching for his rights (the flag), but being held back because the people against the Union didn't believe the black man should be able to vote regardless of the 14th amendment.

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