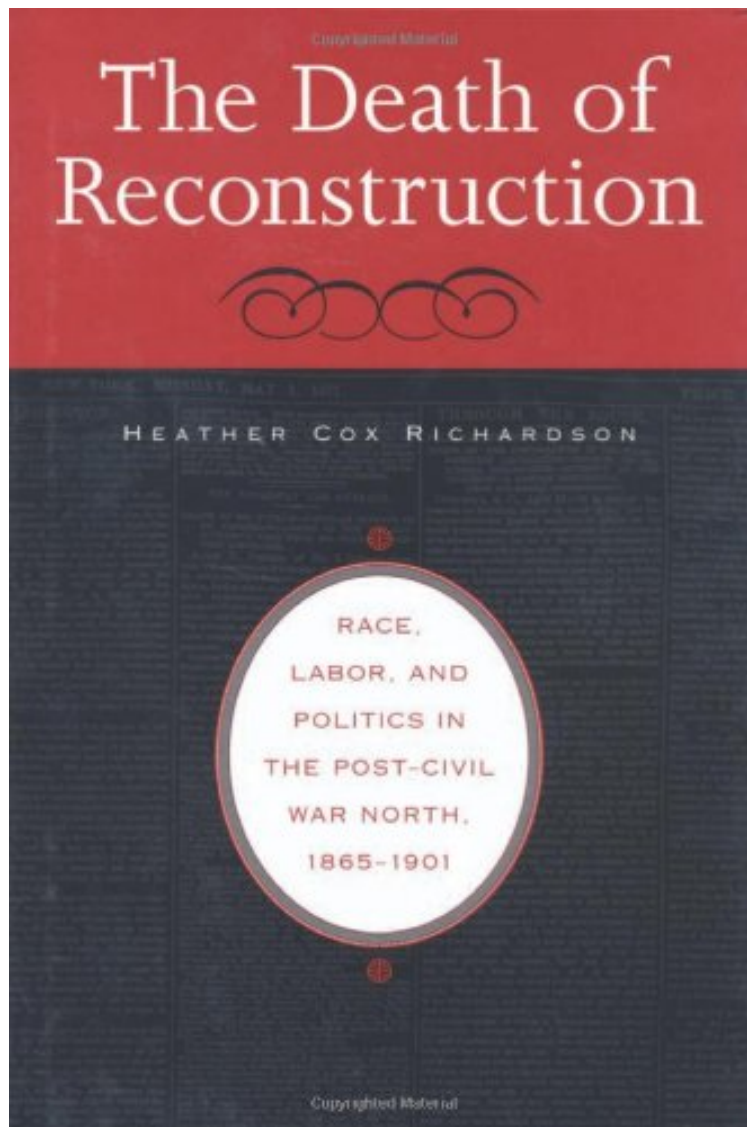


(Mobile library) The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901

The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901

Heather Cox Richardson

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1874201 in Books Harvard University Press 2001-09-28 Original language: English PDF # 1 1.26 x 6.56 x 9.56l, 1.49 #File Name: 0674006372336 pages | File size: 79.Mb

Heather Cox Richardson : The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901:

2 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Too long, too descriptive, too repetitive By DanaeOkay, so I've

almost finished the first chapter, and all I get is an extremely biased Utopian view of the North's ideals on Southern prosperity and circular reasoning. Richardson repeats herself several times with different evidence, but it's always the same idea. Chapter 1 could be much shorter if she just got down to the point.

Historians overwhelmingly have blamed the demise of Reconstruction on Southerners' persistent racism. Heather Cox Richardson argues instead that class, along with race, was critical to Reconstruction's end. Northern support for freed blacks and Reconstruction weakened in the wake of growing critiques of the economy and calls for a redistribution of wealth. Using newspapers, public speeches, popular tracts, Congressional reports, and private correspondence, Richardson traces the changing Northern attitudes toward African-Americans from the Republicans' idealized image of black workers in 1861 through the 1901 publication of Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*. She examines such issues as black suffrage, disenfranchisement, taxation, westward migration, lynching, and civil rights to detect the trajectory of Northern disenchantment with Reconstruction. She reveals a growing backlash from Northerners against those who believed that inequalities should be addressed through working-class action, and the emergence of an American middle class that championed individual productivity and saw African-Americans as a threat to their prosperity. *The Death of Reconstruction* offers a new perspective on American race and labor and demonstrates the importance of class in the post-Civil War struggle to integrate African-Americans into a progressive and prospering nation.

From *Library Journal* Richardson (history, MIT) continues the work she started in her first book, *The Greatest Nation of the Earth*, which focused on how the Republican ideal of "free labor" shaped Union legislation during the Civil War. This ideal held that through hard work and persistence any man could advance in American society and that laissez-faire government was the best way to promote economic growth. Her new book focuses on the inadequacies and na vet of this agrarian ideal for a complex, war-torn nation with four million disenfranchised former slaves, a huge wartime federal government, and a bitter and demoralized Southern white population. Richardson argues that the Republican Party failed to change its ideology as the nation moved from essentially a rural nation of small farms to an industrialized, urban nation. She makes extensive use of contemporary newspaper articles, periodicals, speeches, and personal accounts to capture this tumultuous era in American history. Highly recommended for academic libraries. Robert Flatley, *Frostburg State Univ., MD* Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. [Richardson] makes extensive use of contemporary newspaper articles, periodicals, speeches, and personal accounts to capture this tumultuous era in American history. Highly recommended for academic libraries. (Robert Flatley *Library Journal* 2001-08-01) In *The Death of Reconstruction* the author's main concern is with attitudes in the North, not in the states of the former Confederacy. She notes that most Northerners had little direct contact with blacks, because only 10 percent of them lived in the North. In the years immediately after the war, the Republican press in the North took a benign view of blacks as a group, portraying them as poor but eager to work their way to prosperity as free labor...The most interesting aspect of this book is the reminder it affords that the debate over "affirmative action" is not a modern phenomenon but can be traced back to the 19th century...[Richardson's] focus on class conflict is a useful addition to other writings on the Gilded Age. (John M. Taylor *Washington Times* 2001-09-30) At last readers have an explanation of why the Republican Party, founded in antislavery, dedicated to emancipation, and the political inspiration for the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution, abandoned those causes in favor of an ideology which acquiesced in the disenfranchisement of blacks and in the triumph of Jim Crow. Arguing that Republicans came to see the majority of African Americans as potential labor radicals in the tradition of the Paris Commune and the labor agitation of the US strikes of the late 19th century, [Richardson]...documents that this led to political abandonment...This is an important contribution for all historians who want a better understanding of the South or the African American experience, and anyone who wants good political history. (T. F. Armstrong *Choice* 2002-04-01) *The Death of Reconstruction* offers a provocative explanation of why Northerners after the Civil War gradually and often reluctantly abandoned their efforts on behalf of the Southern freedmen. Not ignoring virulent racism directed at African Americans, Richardson shows that it was less race than class that brought about the end of Reconstruction. An important, impressively documented book, *The Death of Reconstruction* is a work comparable to David Montgomery's *Beyond Equality* as a major reinterpretation of the post-Civil War period. (David Herbert Donald, author of *Lincoln*)