

History 457 (557): **RECONSTRUCTION**

Fall Quarter, 2015 T & R, 10:00 to 11:20 189 PLC

Professor: James C. Mohr  
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Office Hours: T&R 11:30-12:30 and **by appointment**  
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Required Readings:

- Foner, Reconstruction, America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877
- Jones, Soldiers of Light and Love: Northern Teachers and Georgia Blacks, 1865-1873
- Benedict, "Southern Democrats in the Crisis of 1876-1877: A Reconsideration of Reunion and Reaction," Journal of Southern History, Vol XLVI, No. 4 (Nov 1980), 489-524
- Ross, "Justice Miller's Reconstruction: The Slaughter-House Cases, Health Codes, and Civil Rights in New Orleans, 1861-1873," Journal of Southern History, Vol LXIV, No. 4, (Nov 1998), 649-676.
- Bledstein, "The Culture of Professionalism," posted on Blackboard
- Carlson, "Technology and America as a Consumer Society," posted on Blackboard

(The books are paperback and available in the Bookstore; the first two articles are available through Knight Library electronic services; the final two will be posted on Blackboard)

This course allows you to take a close look at one of the most tumultuous, fascinating, and significant periods in our national history: the so-called Reconstruction, when Americans faced the daunting task of trying to rebuild their republic after the cataclysm of the Civil War. The decisions they made at that time laid the foundations upon which the modern United States evolved, and many of those decisions still reverberate clearly into our own times.

This will be primarily a lecture course, with some discussion interspersed along the way and one class session set aside specifically for discussion of the Jones book. During the course you will:

- \* gain experience analyzing and synthesizing complex materials at a detailed and sophisticated level
- \* gain experience in determining degrees of importance and levels of significance with regard to various sorts of evidence
- \* gain experience writing an original research paper from original sources (including conceptualization, structure, and writing skills)
- \* gain experience discussing and assessing arguments and interpretations made by others

Those are skills that will be useful to you for the rest of your lives.

All UO policies regarding academic misconduct will be in effect in this course, especially including those pertaining to all forms of cheating and plagiarism..

For undergraduates your final grade will be based on a mid-quarter exam (35%); an original research paper of approximately 5-7 pages (30%); and a final exam (35%). For graduate students, there will be a second paper and all four exercises will count 25% each toward your final grade.

Week I:

- Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 1-76.
- Lectures: Sep 29: Outline, introduction, and paper assignment  
Oct 01: Wartime roots of post-war policy

Week II:

- Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 77-280
- Lectures: Oct 06: Johnson's Failure, 1865-1867  
Oct 08: The Impeachment episode

Week III:

- Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 281-345; begin Jones, Soldiers
- Lectures: Oct 13: Congressional, or "Radical" Reconstruction  
Oct 15: Radical Reconstruction in Practice in the South

Week IV:

- Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 346-411; finish Jones, Soldiers
- Lectures: Oct 20: Reconstruction in the North  
Oct 22: The freed people and the Southern Economy

Week V:

- Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 412-459.

Lectures: Oct 27: **Readers only** discussion of Jones, Soldiers of Light and Love  
Oct 29: Grantism

Week VI:

Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 460-563.

Lectures: Nov 03: **MID-QUARTER EXAM**  
Nov 05: Counter-Reconstruction in the South

Week VII:

Reading: Foner, Reconstruction, 563-612; work on your Times paper.

Lectures: Nov 10: Counter-Reconstruction at the National Level  
Nov 12: The Election of 1876 and the Crisis of 1877

Week VIII:

Reading: Benedict, "Southern Democrats in the Crisis of 1876-1877"; and Ross, "Justice Miller's Reconstruction: The Slaughter-House Cases, Health Codes, and Civil Rights in New Orleans, 1861-1873"; work on your Times paper.

Lectures: Nov 17: The "Compromise" of 1877 and its aftermath  
Nov 19: Reconstruction legal history and its aftermath

Week IX:

Reading: No additional assignment; finish Times paper, which is due Tuesday.

Lectures: Nov 24: **PAPERS DUE** (at beginning of class)  
American Indian policy 1865-1887  
Nov 26: No class; Thanksgiving Holiday

Week X:

Reading: Bledstein, "The Culture of Professionalism," and  
Carlson, "Technology and America as a Consumer Society."

Lectures: Dec 01: The Consolidation of a New Era, Part I: Trends in the  
New Economy and Some of Their Implications  
Dec 03: The Consolidation of a New Era, Part II: The  
Foundations of Modern America

Week XI:

Dec 09: **FINAL EXAM** (Wednesday at 8:00 a.m. Please note  
the time and date, and make departure plans  
accordingly)

### **Paper Assignment:**

The Knight Library holds the New York Times newspaper for the entire period we will be looking at in this course. It is on microfilm, and also available electronically. You are to select any one week between July 1, 1865 and December 31, 1882 and read the Times **thoroughly** for that week; every page, editorials, ads and all. Then write a paper that reviews what you found and addresses one of the chief issues of that week or addresses an aspect of American everyday life revealed in the Times during that week. If you wish to do so, you may explore your subject beyond the week you chose, and you may explore your subject in sources other than the Times. But you are not required to do so, and the focus of your paper **must** remain on the original material from the week you chose (even if that material seemed to be at odds with what other sources led you to expect). **At the top of the first page, identify the week your paper is based upon.**