

African Americans and Reconstruction: Hope and Struggle, 1865-1883

From the Library Company of Philadelphia's acclaimed Afro-Americana Collection



Quick Facts

Nearly 1,400 fully searchable printed works covering the crucial post-Civil War period in African-American history
The most significant works by and about African Americans from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of Jim Crow
Fresh insight into the evolution of African-American culture, rights and daily life in a time of hopeful struggle

Overview

African Americans and Reconstruction: Hope and Struggle provides nearly 1,400 fully searchable printed works essential for understanding the African-American struggle for identity from the end of the Civil War to the beginning of Jim Crow. In the period immediately following the 1865 ratification of the U.S. Constitution's 13th Amendment—which definitively ended slavery throughout the United States—African Americans, whether once slave or always free, faced new challenges as a free people often surrounded by hostile whites.

Over the next 18 years—perhaps the most formative in African-American history—newly freed blacks in the United States witnessed significant gains. Among them were full citizenship; assured voting rights (at least theoretically under the law); opportunities for the non-literate to learn to read and write; the right of former slaves to acquire the land of former owners; the right to participate in the political process; opportunities to find employment on their own; and the right to use public accommodations. These gains were protected by important legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1875, a federal law that, as written, guaranteed certain protections, but in practice was not universally enforced at local levels.

The raw material of African-American history across nearly 20 crucial years

This powerful digital resource brings together in a single place many of the most significant works by and about African Americans during a crucial period of hope and struggle. Capturing voices of, by, for, and about African Americans, this unique collection covers such critically important subjects as the development of African-American identity; descriptions of African-American life—both enslaved and free; slavery and race; eyewitness accounts of African-American life in the South, the North, and elsewhere; and official reports on the “progress” of African Americans. Also included are important works of African-American individuals and organizations and works of fiction, poetry and drama.

New opportunities for scholars, students and teachers

African Americans and Reconstruction: Hope and Struggle offers a comprehensive survey of the black experience during the crucial post-Civil War period. Using this multifaceted digital collection researchers can easily uncover patterns of thought among the works and compare differing points of view comprehensively. Students will find numerous new topics for term papers, group study, and oral presentations, and teachers and faculty will discover multiple paths for classroom study. And by using helpful features such as “Suggested Searches,” users at all levels may drill into the content by topic, time period, theme, or subject matter.

The Library Company of Philadelphia and its Afro-Americana collection

The Library Company of Philadelphia is an independent research library specializing in American history and culture from the 17th through the 19th centuries. Both *African Americans and Reconstruction* and its companion collection, *African Americans and Jim Crow*, were created from the Library Company's renowned collection of Afro-Americana, also available from Readex in digital form. The magisterial bibliography *Afro-Americana 1553-1906* provides the bibliographic control for these collections.



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