

Book Review: Lessons from Reconstruction for Libertarians: Betrayal and Illusion in the Struggle for Real Equality *No Easy Walk to Freedom: Reconstruction and the Ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment* by James E. Bond

[Henry W. McGee, Jr.](#)

Abstract

With regard to the struggles of the newly freed slaves, Dean Bond's study of the Reconstruction legislatures endorses the views of contemporary historians. These historians do not blame the freedman for failure to forge lasting instruments of liberation, instruments that might have transformed the formal equality promised by emancipation into a social order free of the stigmatizing racial oppression upon which American slavery, segregation, and racial oppression has been premised. Diligently researched and written, the book is of significant interest because of the coincidence of the author's empathy with Afro-Americans and his unwavering and unequivocal affirmation of racial equality, principles which comfortably coexist with his political conservatism. Regrettably, however, his principled conservatism overlaps and sometimes embraces the very arguments that have traditionally and persistently been mounted to maintain the "out-caste" status of Americans of African descent.

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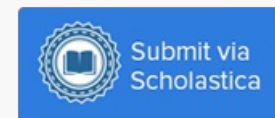
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Book Description: This collection of essays, organized around the theme of the struggle for equality in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, also serves to honor the renowned Civil War historian James McPherson. Complete with a brief interview with the celebrated scholar, this volume reflects the best aspects of McPherson's work, while casting new light on the struggle that has served as the animating force of his lifetime of scholarship. The essays in this volume seek to tell the story of the struggle for equality in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—to define it, achieve it, and defend it. They do not, of course, offer a complete accounting of that struggle. From the First Reconstruction through the Second, white Southerners Radical Reconstruction attempted to give African Americans full equality. Why was the Reconstruction era important? During a brief period in the Reconstruction era, African Americans voted in large numbers and held public office at almost every level, including in both houses of Congress. However, this provoked a violent backlash from whites who did not want to relinquish supremacy. The backlash succeeded, and the promises of Reconstruction were mostly unfulfilled. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were unenforced but remained on the books, forming the basis of the mid-20th-century civil rights movement. Origins of Reconstruction. The national debate over Reconstruction began during the Civil War. Henry W. McGee, Jr., Book Review: Lessons from Reconstruction for Libertarians: Betrayal and Illusion in the Struggle for Real Equality No Easy Walk to Freedom: Reconstruction and the Ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment by James E. Bond, 21 SEATTLE U. L. REV. 1053 (1998). Download. DOWNLOADS. Since July 23, 2010. Included in. Civil Rights and Discrimination Commons, Human Rights Law Commons. Share. COinS. Derrick Bell 1003 1039 BOOK REVIEW Lessons from Reconstruction for Libertarians: Betrayal and Illusion in the Struggle for Real Equality No EASY WALK TO FREEDOM: RECONSTRUCTION AND THE RATIFICATION OF THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT. By James E. Bond. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1997. Pp. 1, 295 . Henry W. McGee, Jr. 1053 ARTICLES E-LAW4: Computer Information Systems Law and System Operator Liability . David J. Loundy Which Constitution?