

13th Amendment: Politics

From Britannica Online

This amendment (1865) to the US Constitution formally abolished slavery. Although the words slavery and slave are never mentioned in the Constitution, **the Thirteenth Amendment nullified ("erased") those sections of the Constitution which had implied slavery:**

1. **Article I, Section 2, regarding the number of representatives for each state in the House of Representatives, which had been "determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, THREE FIFTHS of all other Persons provided for the appointment," with "all other persons" meaning slaves;**
2. Article I, Section 9, which had established 1807 as the end date for importing slaves from other countries, referred to in this case as "such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit";
3. Article IV, Section 2, which mandated the return to their owners of fugitive slaves, here defined as persons "held to Service or Labor in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another."

The Emancipation Proclamation, declared and promulgated by Pres. Lincoln in 1863 during the Civil War, freed only those slaves held in rebellious states. In depriving the South of its greatest economic resource—abundant free human labor—Lincoln's proclamation was intended primarily as an instrument of military strategy; only when emancipation was universally proposed through the Thirteenth Amendment did it become national policy. Moreover, the legality of abolition by presidential edict was questionable.

13th Amendment: Economics

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13th Amendment: Society

Write:

One class society.

14th Amendment: Politics

From Britannica Online

This amendment (1868) to the US Constitution **granted citizenship and equal civil and legal rights to African Americans and slaves who had been emancipated after the Civil War, including them under the umbrella phrase "all persons born or naturalized in the US."** In all, the amendment comprises five sections, four of which began in 1866 as separate proposals that stalled in legislative process and were combined into a single amendment.

This so-called Reconstruction Amendment prohibited the states from **depriving any person of "life, liberty, or property, without due process of law" and from denying anyone within a state's jurisdiction equal protection under the law.** Nullified by the 13th Amendment, the section of the

Constitution regarding the number of representatives for each state in the House of Representatives was based on a formula that counted each slave as three-fifths of a person was replaced by a clause in the 14th Amendment specifying that **representatives be “apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state.”** The amendment also prohibited former civil and military office holders who had supported the **Confederacy from again holding any state or federal office**—with the option that this prohibition could be removed from individuals by a two-thirds vote in both Houses of Congress. Moreover, the amendment upheld the national debt while exempting the federal government and state governments from any responsibility for the debts incurred by the rebellious southern states.

14th Amendment: Economics

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14th Amendment: Society

Write:
Equal society.

15th Amendment: Politics

From Britannica Online

This amendment (1870) to the US Constitution guaranteed that the right to vote could not be denied based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” The amendment complemented and followed in the wake of the passage of the 13th and 14th, which abolished slavery and guaranteed citizenship, respectively, to African Americans (and for all). The passage of the amendment and its subsequent ratification (Feb. 3, 1870) **effectively gave the right to vote to African American men**, while denying that right to women of all colors. Women would not receive that right until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

After the Civil War, during the period known as Reconstruction (1865–77), the amendment was **successful in encouraging African Americans to vote. Many African Americans were even elected to public office during the 1880s in the formerly rebellious states.** By the 1890s, however, efforts by several states to enact such measures as poll taxes, literacy tests, and grandfather clauses—in addition to widespread threats and violence—had completely reversed these trends. By the beginning of the 20th century, nearly all African Americans in the states of the former Confederacy were again without voting rights. Although the Supreme Court and Congress attempted to strike down such actions as unconstitutional, it was not until Pres. Lyndon Johnson introduced the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that Congress was able to put an end to this violence and discrimination. The act abolished voter requirements and also allowed for federal supervision of voter registration. With the passage of the Voting Rights Act, the Fifteenth Amendment was finally enforceable, and voter turnout among African

Americans improved markedly.

15th Amendment: Economics

Write:

Ability to protect economic rights.

15th Amendment: Society

Write:

Equal society.

Freedmen's Bureau: Politics

From Britannica Online

During the Reconstruction period after the Civil War (1865 – 1877), the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (1865 – 1872), was established by Congress to provide practical aid to 4,000,000 newly freed black Americans in their transition from slavery to freedom and generally to all people in the South. Headed by Major General Howard, the Freedmen's Bureau might be termed the first federal welfare agency. Despite handicaps of inadequate funds and poorly trained personnel, the bureau built hospitals for, and gave direct medical assistance to, more than 1,000,000 freedmen. More than 21,000,000 food rations were distributed to impoverished blacks as well as whites.

Its greatest accomplishments were in education: more than 1,000 black schools were built and over \$400,000 spent to establish teacher-training institutions. All major black colleges were either founded by, or received aid from, the bureau. **Less success was achieved in civil rights, for the bureau's own courts were poorly organized and short-lived, and only the barest forms of due process of law for freedmen could be sustained in the civil courts.** Its most notable failure concerned the land itself. Undermined by President Andrew Johnson's restoration of abandoned lands to pardoned Southerners and by the adamant refusal of Congress to consider any form of land redistribution to freedmen, the bureau was forced to oversee sharecropping arrangements that inevitably became oppressive. Congress, preoccupied with other national interests and responding to the continued hostility of white Southerners, terminated the bureau in July 1872.

Freedmen's Bureau: Economics

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Freedmen's Bureau: Social

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