

economy became the chief aim of the Medical Division. Though a laudable goal, it was undermined by a bureaucratic obsession with freed people's labor potential. In time, this became entwined with the fear that they would become permanent dependents of the federal government. The activities of the Medical Division were hampered by myopia, prejudice, and inadequate federal support.

Lacking detailed information, some bureaucrats underestimated the sheer scale of the health crisis afflicting freed people. Wanting to demonstrate the success of emancipation and Reconstruction, they emphasized the robust healthiness of the former slaves and repeated old myths about black immunity to malaria and yellow fever. Others, taking a cue from antebellum pro-slavery arguments, argued that blacks were doomed to extinction outside the protective cocoon of the plantation system. Some officials argued that blacks, despite contrary evidence, were uniquely susceptible to smallpox and other diseases due to moral failings. Contradictory as these views might be, they militated against committing sufficient federal resources to combat the medical crisis that war and emancipation produced. Nevertheless, the same developments resulted in an unprecedented expansion of federal power and a model that the government subsequently used to "civilize" Native Americans of the West, with similar bleak results.

Sick from Freedom is a welcome corrective to the prevailing triumphalist view of emancipation, providing a much-needed perspective on its tragic epidemiological impact. This book would have been strengthened by fuller discussion of the wretched state of contemporary American medical training and changing knowledge about the origins and treatment of disease. The name of John Snow is oddly absent from the discussion of cholera. A bit more detail on such things would have helped to contextualize the suffering Downs has chronicled so well.

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GREGORY P. DOWNS. *Declarations of Dependence: The Long Reconstruction of Popular Politics in the South, 1861–1908*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 2011. Pp. 346. \$39.95.

Gregory P. Downs offers a bold reappraisal of how Americans in the South attempted to navigate the various political and economic challenges they faced from the Civil War through the turn of the century. Focusing on North Carolina and drawing on Freedmen's Bureau records, newspapers, and correspondence with politicians, Downs argues that "In the decades following the attack on Fort Sumter, people spoke of politics not just through classic American languages of independence and autonomy but also through a vernacular vocabulary of dependence" (p. 1). He calls this "politics of dependence" an "American patronalism," explaining that

"patronalism describes a belief that services are distributed by big men on behalf of favored clients" (p. 5).

In Downs's interpretation of the standard nineteenth-century documents, the politically weak make personal appeals to those in power—wealthy businessmen, large landowners, and officeholders—not based on their rights as citizens but on "voluntary claims of dependence" (p. 2). By doing so North Carolinians returned to prerevolutionary language and appeals; and they did so, says Downs, precisely because of the weakness of the state during the Civil War and in the years thereafter. Dependents pled for everything from food and basic supplies to help from being conscripted into the Confederate army; after the war, pardons, jobs, and land were requested of the powerful, never demanded.

By shifting away from the ideal of "independence" toward claims of "dependence," Downs seemingly runs against the grain of American historical scholarship, which implicitly or explicitly posits citizenship, along with individual rights and efforts to be autonomous, as the ideal. He states that by falling into the dominant narrative—which he describes as rife with "teleological assumptions"—even the best historians, from Orlando Patterson (*Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* [1991]) to Eric Foner (*The Story of American Freedom* [1999]), "miss the importance of other types of claims that have been central to politics, including those rooted in a fantastic, temporary reconstruction of subjecthood" (p. 2).

In order to make his case, Downs shows how white North Carolinians, for instance, humbly asked President Andrew Johnson for "protection" against former slaves; meanwhile, a former black slave from North Carolina begged the same president for economic assistance, arguing that, although now emancipated, he was still "without a cent" (p. 84). The letters received by North Carolina Governor (and U.S. Senator) Zebulon Vance were similarly filled with declarations of dependence by ordinary North Carolinians. Across the state, from the 1860s through the 1880s, a range of people personally appealed to Vance based on their dependent status. Vance was public, unapologetic, and clear about the role he played as the dispenser of jobs and favors. In a speech to the U.S. Senate in 1886, he asserted, "If a man's friends take him up and enable him after a great struggle to arrive at the point coveted by his ambition he owes something to them" (p. 155).

Downs's argument is compelling: many people did use the language of dependence to try to advance their interests. He notes that although "historians have long examined dependence as an epithet or a structural condition in American politics [*viz.* the treatment of slaves, women, children, Native Americans, and apprentices] . . . few have asked whether, when, why, and how Americans treated dependence not as an insult but a *strategy, a tool to mediate politics for their own benefit*" [emphasis added] (p. 2). By blurring the lines between rights that are inherent to one's free status and special favors based on one's dependency, Downs provides insight

into the contradictory nature of what happened not only in Vance's time, but perhaps at other times as well.

Appeals based on dependence appear to run throughout the course of American history—carried out by people across the socioeconomic spectrum. Enslaved southern African Americans appealed to their owners to purchase their own or family members' freedom. But so did free and highly privileged young white men in the South, such as the future Confederate General "Jeb" Stuart, seek special favors—including admittance into West Point through the assistance of local politicians. Throughout much of the antebellum period, individuals were granted special favors through "Private Acts" (or private laws). Surely a significant portion of those who received exceptions both before and after the period of Downs's study made appeals that were based on personal dependence rather than their rights as independent citizens. In this sense, it is not entirely clear what is new about Downs's central thesis other than the provision of greater detail about how people used the language of dependence to gain material goods or special dispensations—which, arguably, moved them toward greater "freedom" or "independence," broadly defined.

Downs does draw special attention to the extent to which the language of dependence was used during the latter part of the nineteenth century. His interpretations can help historians better appreciate the nuanced, paradoxical ways in which individuals attempted to advance their interests using the language of dependence. Of course, the inclusion of letters written before the outbreak of the Civil War demonstrating prior forms of patronalism would have made Downs's claim less spectacular. Interestingly, he uses President Franklin D. Roosevelt—the "last good king"—stretching beyond the stated period of his study to argue his case (p. 5). It really does seem like the language of dependence has been part of the toolkit used by Americans since and despite the American Revolution. The "politics of dependence" as articulated in *Declarations of Dependence* may be best understood as a tactic by Americans in the South during a particular moment when the state was particularly weak—but it was limited neither to that time nor to that place. For shining a bright light on this tactic in the South during the late nineteenth century Downs should be greatly applauded.

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JOHN B. JENTZ and RICHARD SCHNEIROV. *Chicago in the Age of Capital: Class, Politics, and Democracy during the Civil War and Reconstruction*. (The Working Class in American History.) Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 2012. Pp. xii, 310. \$55.00

John B. Jentz and Richard Schneirov's new book details early industrialization and class formation in Chicago from the city's founding to the Great Railroad Strike of 1877. The authors place these developments against the

backdrop of the Civil War and national party politics through Reconstruction and show how Chicago's class divisions and class conflict took a shape all their own even as they fit a pattern seen in other cities undergoing industrialization at the same time.

The book begins with the development of Chicago's commerce and industry from the 1830s through the mid-1860s. As commercial agriculture spread throughout the region, the city became not only a transportation hub but a manufacturing center, with new capital flowing into the city's growing production enterprises. In this "booster" phase of industrial growth, the city's elites consisted mostly of merchants and manufacturers seeking to attract investment through real estate, infrastructure, and commercial development. At the same time the ballooning workforce became increasingly immigrant, drawing especially on German radicals fleeing Europe at mid-century.

The material demands of the Civil War transformed Chicago into a manufacturing center, with machine shops and meat packing taking center stage. Jentz and Schneirov argue that by the end of the war a new "Gilded Age upper class" (p. 48) had emerged in the city, their wealth and power derived not from speculation—as with the boosters—but from control over manufacturing. So, too, emerged a middle class engaged in all the new office and supervisory work, and a self-conscious working class rooted in transnational republicanism and comprised largely of workers from Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany.

A chief contribution of the book is its exploration of how the Civil War, and national politics during and after the war, both enabled and constrained local class-based organizing efforts. Jentz and Schneirov detail the ways in which the eventual emancipation aims of the Union war effort brought German and Irish workers together in support for the Republican Party. They also show how labor shortages in 1863—caused by worker enlistment and wartime production demands—fostered a wave of strikes and union organizing that culminated in the formation of a General Trades Assembly in 1864. National politics quickly undid this effort, however, as leaders of the Assembly allied themselves with the soon-to-be discredited peace faction of the Democratic Party. The postwar push for an eight-hour workday would once again help rally Chicago's wage workers to a common cause, with eight-hour drives winning the support of city officials while enabling labor leaders to stay out of divisive national party politics.

Among the most important development in Chicago's labor history following the collapse of the eight-hour drive in 1867 was the fire in 1871 that destroyed much of the city. By then Chicago's established German and Irish workers were joined by a substantial transient workforce that included women working in the burgeoning apparel industry. Further complicating the labor scene were partisan divisions among the city's labor leaders that mirrored national politics and that left the workers movement without clear direction. This situation changed in the aftermath of the fire as diverse