

The Civil War and the Transformation of American Citizenship

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Review

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Quigley, Paul, ed. *The Civil War and the Transformation of American Citizenship*. Louisiana State University Press, \$47.50 ISBN 9780807168639

This collection of 11 essays on the transformation of citizenship seems especially timely as we face calls for repeal of the 14th Amendment because of birthright citizenship and constant attacks on the status of persons because of their skin color and national origin, and increased efforts to restrict the right to vote of African Americans and other persons of color. As one of the contributors noted Frederick Douglass stated “we are still in a transition state and the future is shrouded in doubt and danger.”

This volume arose from a conference in 2015 which inspired editor Paul Quigley to assemble this collection. Having served as an editor of volumes arising from conferences, I speak with some authority that such endeavors are not always successful and require great patience to accomplish. Without question, Paul Quigley has succeeded admirably. In addition, his introduction sets a context in pointing out that citizenship had yet to be defined before the Civil War. He also provides an excellent preview of the essays while setting a context for the subject. His authors also succeed in their essays in finding and addressing a variety of settings which the Civil War not only transformed the definition of citizenship but how those different communities grappled with and adjusted to a new world.

The first three essays address race and the definition of citizenship. In a fascinating piece, Elizabeth Regosin presents the story of ex-slave Huldah Gordon and her long struggle to obtain a pension deriving from her son’s service in the Union Army. Tamika Nunley explores the struggle of black women in the District of Columbia navigated the changing definition of citizenship and struggled against not only former slave masters as well as the federal government to achieve emancipation and citizenship. Earl Maltz in an excellent essay addresses the racial limitation of

citizenship after the Civil War as it applied to Native Americans and Chinese. Maltz provides further context for understanding today's continuing disputes over citizenship.

In two essays Jonathan Berkey and Angela Zombek explore the resistance of white Southerners to taking oaths of allegiance to the United States. Whether these whites were citizens of "occupied" territories such as Winchester, Virginia or were prisoners of war, their story lay a foundation for the ever-contending struggle in the South today over loyalty to the Confederacy. Lucius Wedge explores the struggle between Andrew Johnson and a minister in "occupied" Nashville. Future President Johnson serving as Governor of Tennessee insisted upon a loyalty oath while the Reverend William Wharton refused asserting his loyalty lay only with heaven. In the end we see that President Johnson was more forgiving than Governor Johnson.

In the final three essays the authors explore new forms of citizenship after the Civil War. Caitlin Verboon describes the activities of black firemen primarily in Columbia, South Carolina. She posits that these firemen's presence at fires and on the streets forced whites to grapple with the citizenship of these black men and that these firemen legitimized their presence in public spaces and thereby could claim inclusion in civil society. David Willard's essay "Ideology Beyond Defeat" argues that for many white Southern men the loss of the war and resulting political world threatened to unravel their life's work. Consequently, they developed a new ethos of hard work which rewarded citizenship to whites and denied it to blacks. Claire Wolnisky explored the lives of Southern whites who emigrated to Brazil. Here she explores the types of emigrants, the attraction of Brazil, the qualities of the colonies, and the failures.

In an Afterword, as to be expected, Laura Edwards eloquently summarizes what the essayists have covered. She also reiterates the point that citizenship was molded by many different factors. Before the Civil War most Americans viewed citizenship at the local level even down to church and family. But the Civil War and the long struggle afterwards has clothed citizenship with individual rights. As Quigley concludes his introduction it is clear all Americans have had to rethink the meaning of citizenship and that we still live in a world that reverberates from slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights movement.

W. Lewis Burke is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of South Carolina School of Law. His latest work is All for Civil Rights: African American Lawyers in South Carolina 1868-1968 (UGA Press 2017).

