



The Reconstruction Era: Primary Documents on Events from 1865 to 1877 (Debating Historical Issues in the Media of the Time)

Donna L. Dickerson

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As the sole purveyors of news and opinion, Reconstruction-era newspapers bent and spindled American public opinion with little regard for independent journalism and great regard for party politics. In other words, the newspapers of the Reconstruction era served political rather than social needs. The issues facing the nation were momentous, and opinions on how to deal with the problems were vigorously presented and defended. Using editorials, letters, essays, and news reports that appeared throughout the country's print media, this book reveals how editors, politicians, and other Americans used the press to influence opinion from 1865 to 1877.

Issues such as civil rights, constitutional amendments, a presidential impeachment, Indian wars, immigration, and political corruption dominated the newspapers and gave journalists opportunities to advance their agendas. Each of the 30 chapters of this book introduces an event or issue and includes news articles representing opposing sides of the issue as it affected Americans. Readers can use the introductory essays and primary source documents to understand how newspapers and magazines presented vital events and issues to Americans of the day. This invaluable reference source presents hard-to-find opinions in the words of those who wrote them.

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