Introduction

A New Kind of Nation – Amputation, Reconstruction, and the Promise of Black Citizenship

> And now that the war is over, and the four-years' struggle ended, we cannot but inquire whether in that fearful conflict anything has been *gained* for which we should also give thanks; whether any good has come out of the struggle which will go into our future history, and which will make us a greater and a better people; whether the results are *worth* the sacrifices made.
>
> —Rev. Albert Barnes, "Peace and Honor: A Thanksgiving Sermon"

> Oh, how you have suffered! If retribution could ever teach men to revere justice, it would seem that the late Rebellion could have taught you that.
>
> —Frederick Douglass, "Govern with Magnanimity and Courage"

> Loss is inseparable from what remains, for what is lost is known only by what remains of it, by how these remains are produced, read, and sustained.
>
> —David L. Eng and David Kazanjian, *Loss*

Of all the damage wrought by the US Civil War, the most visible was borne by soldiers who had fought and lost arms, legs, hands, feet, fingers, or toes. While the dead evoked the most grief, they were materially invisible, interred away from sight, if not from memory. But amputees carried with them reminders of the conflict's cost.

This is hardly surprising. Tens of thousands of men North and South underwent some kind of amputation as a result of injury and/or infection. The critical literature around this phenomenon has stressed the discourses of loss, destruction, emasculation, immiseration, and impoverishment that resulted from amputation, especially for former Confederate soldiers.[1] And while that isn't wrong, it isn't the whole story either, most notably in the North. Many white Union veterans as well as Northern civilians imagined amputation as part of an economy of reparation and redemption – the lost body part payment for the sins of slavery, and a reminder of what had to be excised from the nation in the wake of the Confederate surrender at

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Appomattox. In this imaginary, amputation served as a catalyst for Reconstruction.

This narrative of amputation as both a reminder of the losses occasioned by slavery and a kind of promissory note for Black emancipation was produced by a specific kind of writer, politician, minister, and/or philosopher: white former radical abolitionists who were on their way to becoming radical Reconstructionists.[2] They held the veteran amputee up as an avatar of a nation from whom the disease of slavery had been cut away, and who faced a new way of living in and understanding his altered body. Along with this physical change came an ethical understanding of the necessity for a rethinking of the racial hierarchies on which the United States had been founded.

Such a reimagining required a firmness of purpose and a refusal to conform to the simultaneous emergent desire for reconciliation, a desire that strengthened over the course of the late 1860s and into the 1870s, until, by the 1880s it was dominant within white American culture. For example, on November 30, 1869, former abolitionist and antiracist activist Wendell Phillips was the featured speaker in the Parker Fraternity series of talks (endowed by and named after Transcendentalist, antislavery agitator, and supporter of John Brown, Theodore Parker). The title of Phillips's speech was "What I Ask of Congress," and his list of requests was short. Primary among them was that the nation's elected officials rethink their policy of reconciliation and forgiveness toward the erstwhile Confederacy. "We have the idea," he opined, "that forgiveness of everybody, in all circumstances ... is a virtue." Rather than forgiveness, Phillips argued for the "stern, rigid, indomitable, unmixed idea of justice" that at that moment seemed "intolerable to the American people" (2).

Phillips was joined in his sense of justice by a small, mostly tight-knit group of white radicals who were unusual in several ways. First, they worked closely with Black activists and political leaders before, during, and after the war. Their primary political commitment was to racial equality and, in the years after the war, a variety of stances including reparations, gender equality, and Black citizenship. This book, then, is about those few white radicals who resisted the ongoing rescripting of the meanings of the Civil War and Reconstruction. Like Phillips they argued against the growing desire to forgive and forget not just the war but also the history of slavery itself. Rather than reunite the body politic as though its violent division had never happened, they insisted that the national corpus should not be remade in its prewar image – that the country should

remember its sins, the price it had paid for them, and the new shape it had to take in the postwar years.

This tripartite mandate for the body politic found its visual representation in corporeal form in amputee veterans of the Union Army. For this politically committed group of white radicals, amputation was the ideal metaphor for the obligations of loss and the reimagination of the national body, its necessary new instantiation. Lost limbs were partial payment for the sins of slavery as well as permanent reminders of what the country owed the newly freed. And stumps left behind told a story of the irrecoverability of the status quo ante, the willed impossibility of going back to the way things were when the Slave Power controlled the country.

In this book I trace a trajectory from the battlefields and hospitals of the Civil War, where arms and legs were separated from bodies to become undifferentiated piles of limbs, to the photographic images of amputee veterans, to novels in which amputees stand in for the radical hopes of what Reconstruction might bring, and to the post-Reconstruction demonization of the veteran amputee and his symbolic disappearance from the national scene. In many ways, this book is about a struggle over definitions of the postwar Union and the meanings of whiteness, as well as what white people owed the millions of newly emancipated Americans, soon to become citizens, after centuries of enslavement. As I hope to show, for these white radicals, this struggle was at the heart of their vision of Reconstruction. They followed the lead of Black activists in adopting what David W. Blight has called "the emancipationist vision" that embraced "the politics of radical Reconstruction . . . the conception of the war as the reinvention of the republic and the liberation of blacks to citizenship and Constitutional equality" (2). Forging a discourse that melded a declaration of debt to the formerly enslaved and a vision for a racially just nation, white radicals – whether officially affiliated with the Republican party or operating within a political culture that had its roots in prewar abolitionism – looked around them at the trauma of the war and attempted to construct narratives about what had happened, why it had happened, and what should happen next.[3]

Few of the figures I discuss in these pages are part of the US literary canon as it now stands, although one – especially Albion Tourgée, the subject of Chapter 4 – was a best-selling novelist and major legal figure during his own lifetime (and is now enjoying something of a renaissance). Some, like Anna Dickinson, a well-known fixture on the lyceum circuit in the prewar period who often shared a stage with Frederick Douglass and other famous abolitionists, were already committed political radicals by the

time the war ended. Others, like Oliver O. Howard, the director of the Freedmen's Bureau, and Tourgée himself, came to radical politics through the crucible of the Civil War. Better known are Thaddeus Stevens, the radical Republican congressman from Pennsylvania, and the clergyman Horace Bushnell, whose words were often material for national news stories. And a focus of Chapter 5 who also appears in this introduction, Thomas Nast, may have picked up on many of the themes of radical Reconstruction, but he was hardly a reliable ally to Black Americans before or after the war.

Together, I would argue, they constitute what Raymond Williams called a "formation." For Williams, formations were "conscious movements or tendencies (literary, artistic, philosophical or scientific) which can usually be readily discerned after their formative productions" (119). This characterization seems especially apposite for this group of people: while some knew each other, not all did; most of them were part of cross-racial networks of political activists and intellectuals that reached from New England to the Midwest and into the upper South; and they all found their way to the body of the veteran amputee as a trope through which to think the lessons of the Civil War and the necessity for a full and antiracist Reconstruction.

This analytical structure brings with it some important and urgent ethical questions. First of all, as a scholar with deep investments in Disability Studies, I'm alert to the problematics of the deployment of these disabled men as symbols or, as David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder formulate this operation, "narrative prostheses," a "crutch upon which literary narratives lean for their representational power, disruptive potentiality, and analytical insight" (49). Mitchell and Snyder warn us that too often literature "serves up disability as a repressed deviation from cultural imperatives of normativity," characterized by isolation, degendering, and impotence (8). As Sari Edelstein glosses this concept, as narrative prostheses, people with disabilities are "narratively exploited, used as signposts and markers, rather than represented as multifaceted subjects" (108). I would argue, though, that the amputee occupies a complex and position in the cultural imaginary of the 1860s and 1870s. Neither pitiable victim, figure of emasculation, nor paragon of overcoming, the Civil War amputee represented in the texts I discuss in the book is, rather, a potent representative of the ethos of human interconnectedness that informed the hopeful – if naïvely optimistic – imaginings of white radicals. We might, following contemporary disability theorists, see the amputee as "cripping" the vision of a reunited, reconciled nation, disrupting the white nationalist

(and implicitly ableist) focus on the perfectly intact white male body as the paradigm of national belonging.[4]

Moreover, like all embodied metaphors, the image of the amputee proved to be disturbingly labile. Mitchell and Snyder observe that "disability provides an important barometer by which to assess shifting values and norms imposed upon the body," which is especially true here (51). The barometer that appraised the figure of the amputee soldier gauged the nation's short-lived commitment to Black emancipation and citizenship. Indeed, as I show in Chapter 5, the trope of the disabled soldier as the sign of Union victory and the defeat of slavery was resignified as Reconstruction was dismantled, and the manly injured veteran became in turn the grasping pensioner, the alibi for white national consolidation, and, ultimately, simply superannuated and rendered redundant.

Still, there is a risk in writing about white actors in the drama of Reconstruction, a period in which Black Americans were briefly empowered to achieve the political power on national, state, and local levels that had so long been denied them. Black formulations of a racially just society represented one of the most progressive plans for education, labor, and social relations that the United States has ever seen. African Americans demanded not only "that they be included in the existing category of citizenship – that they deserved the right to vote, for instance – but also that citizenship ought to be expanded to include social equality, access to education, and economic opportunity" for all Americans (Quigley 2). Moreover, as the accomplished Black abolitionist Charles Lenox Remond argued, for white Reconstructionists, however allied with their Black colleagues as they might have felt, it was "utterly impossible for our white friends . . . fully to understand the Black man's case in this nation" (qtd. in Levine xvi).

My purpose here is not to push whiteness to the center of the narrative of Reconstruction – not only would that be historically inaccurate, but it would also run counter to the ethos of the narrative that unfolds in this book. The story I'm telling here is comparatively small but important: it's a story of an ongoing partnership between Black and white activists, and how a network of white radicals refused to allow the realities of slavery and white supremacy to be minimized, palliated, or forgotten, even as the majority of white Americans worked to do just that. They used the figure of the amputee as an emblem of their radical hopes for the postwar nation, for the ambitions of Reconstruction, and as a signifier of protest against the active and passive dismantling of Black civil and human rights.

Crucially, most of these figures looked to and learned from their Black counterparts. The model of citizenship they imagined, their view of a nation not divided unequally by race or – for many – by class or gender, and a society that provided unprecedented services for its most marginalized, was powerfully informed by the Black women and men with whom they had worked during the prewar years and strategized during and after the war. They fully acknowledged the terrible toll that slavery had taken, theorized ways by which they could at least in part atone for that profound national wrongdoing, and attempted to both pay back the debt owed the formerly enslaved and keep the promise made to newly inaugurated citizens at the front of the country's mind.

Barely any time had passed after the end of the Civil War before conflict emerged over how – and whether – the country would be restructured. The following decade was consumed by debates over what this restructuring would look like. As Edward Blum observes, "[f]rom 1865 to 1875, a religious, social, and political battle engulfed northern society, as advocates of sectional punishment and racial justice squared off against proponents of sectional harmony and racial oppression" (88). These lines had been drawn well before the war, by abolitionists, on the one hand, and those who valued the wholeness of the Union and/or the institution of slavery, on the other. In the antebellum years, political dominance had lain firmly in the camp of the second group.

The mitigation of the promise of Reconstruction began almost immediately after the surrender of Confederate troops. As David Blight has comprehensively shown, soon after the end of the Civil War, an increasing number of Americans – including their elected officials – edged away from a commitment to Black civil and human rights and toward an "inexorable drive for reunion" (2). Even as notable an antislavery activist as Henry Ward Beecher, who had shipped cases of Sharps rifles to Kansas to ensure that it was established as a free state, started preaching national reconciliation. Indeed, droves of northern clergy "created a counter morality, one that prized national solidarity among whites at the expense of equal inclusion of people of color" (Blum 89).

In Reconstruction, the balance of power shifted several times, each radical change producing reactionary backlash: the initial correlative consolidation of anti-Black violence, as in the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1860s, sparking efforts at containment by government and activists; and legal action against the Klan, leading to a rededication to white supremacy. In the words of Cody Marrs, Reconstruction was "a historical formation, grounded in violence, through which progress and regress

became dialectically intertwined" (409). For African Americans in the South, the gap between the goals of Republican policymakers in Washington and their own experiences of extra-judicial racist violence was painfully wide.[5]

This bitter irony was not lost on the former radical abolitionists who had the highest hopes for Reconstruction. Unlike their more moderate counterparts, they did not see the war as "a triumphal endpoint and moral cleansing of the republic" (Marrs 414). Rather, the Civil War was the necessary preparation for the real work of racial equity, land redistribution, and full enfranchisement. In the early years of Reconstruction, white radicals could not imagine any recursion to the past – the war had put the nation on a forward-looking path toward permanent change. Oliver P. Morton, the radical senator from Indiana, sounded this note in his speech at the dedication of a monument at Gettysburg National Cemetery in 1869, announcing, "Liberty universal soon to be guaranteed and preserved by suffrage universal; the keeping of a nation's freedom to be entrusted to *all the people* and not to a part only" (19). He ended by thundering "HENCEFORTH DISUNION IS IMPOSSIBLE" (40). In milder terms, Horace Bushnell put this perspective simply: "the state-rights doctrine is bled away . . . we are not the same people that we were, and never can be again" ("Our Obligations" 328, 331).

Black radicals were, by necessity, more cautious about the irreversibility of the effects of the war and about claims to temporal inevitability more generally.[6] Frances E.W. Harper encapsulates this perspective in her 1871 poem "Words for the Hour," in which she apostrophizes white Northerners as soldiers in an ongoing battle:

> Men of the North! It is no time
> To quit the battle-field;
> When danger fronts your rear and van
> It is no time to yield.

More to the point, she argues, the South is well aware that the war is not yet over, and has regrouped and adapted their tactics for a new dispensation:

> The foe ye foiled upon the field
> Has only changed his base;
> New dangers crowd around you
> And stare you in the face. (185)

Even though, as Greg Laski has argued, the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, for the majority of white Americans, "encouraged the desire for closure, serving, as it were, as

signposts denoting the nation's progress toward the moment in which it could declare itself postslavery"(6), this call to arms was heeded by Harper's white radical peers, for whom national recidivism was a specter that haunted them throughout and beyond Congressional Reconstruction. "The whole fabric of southern society *must* be changed," declared Thaddeus Stevens, or "[h]ow can republican institutions, free schools, free churches, free social intercourse exist in a mingled community of nabobs and serfs?" (qtd. in Foner 236). Given the wholistic vision they had for the changes the nation had to undergo both North and South, even stasis represented backsliding. Moreover, as Harper makes clear in "Words for the Hour," the past of slavery and secession is being renewed and reenacted by "the foe," so the (white) men of the North must likewise push forward in order to secure for the future the political gains already achieved.

"The Debt of Justice": Radical Conceptions of Restitution

In the wake of the Civil War, Black and white radicals looked both backward and forward to assess the task ahead. Up until that moment, as Alyosha Goldstein has observed (riffing off Cheryl Harris's foundational analysis that "slavery as a system of property facilitated the merger of white identity and property [1721]), "[w]hiteness in the United States [had] been historically constructed not only as a form of property but also as the capacity to possess" (1077), that is, to possess land, animals, and people. In his address to Congress in 1865, Henry Highland Garnet articulated this argument, that "the Scribes and Pharisees of our times who rule the State" (70–1), by embracing slavery, ventured to "chattleize man; to hold property in human beings" (73).

Like his fellow abolitionists, Garnet identified slavery as a crime of property against the enslaved person, who by rights should hold property in themselves. In the rhetoric of abolition, enslavers were "man-stealers" and "every slave is a stolen man" (Garrison 14); slavery was "theft" and "robbery" (Garnet 77). When Frederick Douglass first spoke before the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, he turned this logic inside out, declaring that "I appear before the immense assembly this evening as a thief and a robber. I stole this head, these limbs, this body from my master and ran off with them" (qtd. in Quarles 63).[7]

Moreover, responsibility for this theft extended across the nation, incriminating the North in its complicity with the slave-owning South. In an 1854 speech, William Lloyd Garrison rejected the claim that slavery was a sectional issue rather than a national sin:

> Whatever may be the guilt of the South, the North is still more responsible for the existence, growth and extension of Slavery. In her hand has been the destiny of the Republic from the beginning. She could have emancipated every slave, long ere this, had she been upright in heart and free in spirit. She has given respectability, security, and the means of sustenance and attack to her deadliest foe.... [T]he sin of this nation is not geographical – is not specially Southern – but deep-seated and universal. (25–6)

If the sin was national, then so too was the mandate to repent and provide restitution. Part of this debt had been repaid by the death of soldiers in the Union Army: antislavery radicals and even some soldiers themselves (as we shall see shortly) maintained that blood shed and limbs lost during the Civil War were in payment for and in order to end slavery. This was not a new trope. Indeed, the rhetoric of blood compensation had been invoked in the years before the war, most notably by John Brown, for whom "the act of self-sacrifice doubled as an act of penance; to suffer in concert with slaves was also to pay a historical debt for the injuries whites had inflicted on slaves" (Nudelman 35). And Garrison declared, after serving seven weeks in prison in 1830 for his antislavery activity, that "[a] few white victims must be sacrificed to open the eyes of the nation, and to show the tyranny of the laws" qtd. in (H. Jackson, *American Radicals* 57).

But the years of the Civil War and its aftermath intensified this line of argument. As the war multiplied that sacrifice by the hundreds of thousands, white radicals saw the fulfilment of their understanding of the Union as decayed from the inside by slavery and the ransom that had to be paid to cut out the rot. Pennsylvania Congressman Thaddeus Stevens characterized the nation under the control of the Slave Power as "the rotten and defective portions of the old foundations" built at the inception of the Union that had to be "clear[ed] away" in order for justice to Black Americans to be done (qtd. in Blight 55). Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner invoked the massive losses of the war as a promissory note for the abolition of slavery, since "[t]he soil of the Rebellion is soaked with patriot blood, its turf bursting with patriot dead.... There can but one failure, and that is the failure to end slavery" ("Slavery and the Rebellion" 180–1). Horace Bushnell, pastor of the North Congregational Church in Hartford, Connecticut, sounded a similar theme in an 1865 commencement speech in New Haven commemorating the war dead, whom he characterized as the "spent ammunition of the war" ("Our Obligations" 322). The death of so many was necessary "to see that every vestige of slavery is swept clean . . . We are not to extirpate the form and leave the fact.... We are bound, if possible, to make the emancipation work well" (352–3).

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper got to the heart of her fellow radicals' vision of both their commitment to racial equality and their belief that such equality was to be earned by not just repentance but also punishment wreaked by the Civil War in her eulogy "Lines to Hon. Thaddeus Stevens," published in her *Poems* in 1871. The first five stanzas of the poem are structured as questions, exploring Stevens's desires for the nation, his "hope to see thy country / Wearing Justice as a crown," as well as his (and Harper's) belief that "the crater of God's judgment / Overflowed the nation's crime" (166).

Toward the end of the poem, Harper takes on the role of prophet, taking Stevens's hopes and extrapolating them with her own vision of what Reconstruction might bring:

> There is light beyond the darkness
> Joy beyond the present pain
> There is hope in God's great justice,
> And the negro's rising brain. (167)

In the final stanza, Harper links her own vision of the future with that of the divine, threading a trajectory from the "crater of God's judgment" to an image of God himself as a combatant in the war who shall protect the struggle in which she, Stevens, and the previously enslaved have toiled:

> Though before the timid counsels
> Truth and Right may seem to fail,
> God hath bathed his sword in judgment,
> And his arm shall yet prevail.[8] (167)

Here Harper mixes an acknowledgment of the wrongs of slavery with hope for a future shaped by divine guidance toward justice. The timidity of moderates must inevitably fall before God's sword "bathed ... in judgment" and the prophesy that "his arm shall yet prevail." Aligning the goals of Reconstruction with God's will, Harper invokes (the famously agnostic) Stevens, the divine plan, and Black liberation.

Nonetheless, according to the poem, slavery had profoundly challenged the divine order of things, to the extent that God was forced to intervene with the instrument of the Civil War. Many white radicals believed that even the losses of the war were not sufficient to pay the debt white Americans owed the newly inaugurated freedpeople, not least because so many Black soldiers had also been injured and died.[9] Instead, they believed that "the [white] nation owed former slaves for their years of involuntary labor" (Faulkner 3). Moreover, mere emancipation could not restore to the formerly enslaved, both present and past, the lifetimes of violence,

separation of families, and degradation. In a speech outlining the necessity for the Freedmen's Bureau, Sumner insisted that the nation owed freed-people anything required to bring them into the polity, since "the debt of justice will not be paid if we do not take [freedpeople] by the hand in their passage from the house of bondage to the house of freedom" ("Creation of the Freedmen's Bureau" 343). Horace Bushnell was even more explicit about what was needed – "negro suffrage appears to be indispensable," he maintained, but that was not enough. "The soil is to be distributed over again, villages are to be created, schools established, churches erected, preachers and teachers provided, and money for these purposes to be poured out" ("Our Obligations" 354).

Crucially, in reckoning this debt, radicals insisted that the nation had to be wholly remade, that, in Thaddeus Stevens's formulation, the decay and rot in the foundations of the Union had to be fully cleared away and a new foundation built. The house had almost been destroyed by the putrefaction of slavery, on the one hand, and the trauma of the Civil War, on the other, but now the process of reconstructing from the bottom up was paramount.[10] Concomitantly, the liberation of enslaved people could be a harbinger of a more comprehensive national emancipation: from white supremacy, from economic inequality, from injustice. As Stevens prophesied, this process "would have so remodeled all our institutions as to have freed them from every vestige of human oppression, of inequality of rights, of the recognized degradation of the poor, and the superior caste of the rich" (qtd. in Foner 254). The key to this liberation was a recognition that the war had caused a near-apocalyptic break from the past, and out of the smoke and chaos would emerge a nation governed by equality before the law.[11]

"The Union as it was – a heinous notion"

Unlike the radicals, moderate Republicans and the vast majority of Democrats were less invested in this characterization of the postwar period as opening up the possibility of a sharp and irreversible break with the past. David Blight points to this as he defines the struggle in the North over Reconstruction as being embodied by "the tangled relationship between two ideas – *healing* and *justice*" (3).[12] At first, many white Northerners focused on questions of justice, not least because "freedpeople seemed to Republicans to be model free Americans, working hard to rebuild the South as they climbed the ladder to economic success, in contrast to Democratic efforts to portray them as 'lazy ne'er do wells'"

(Richardson 32–3). This strategy by Democrats initially backfired, and "a new North emerged ... where a large group of influential political and religious leaders were seriously committed to extending citizenship to people of color" (Blum).[13] In fact, after a rash of anti-Black violence and the refusal of Southern legislatures to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, "formerly moderate Republicans began to shift over to the previously radical position in favor of government enforcement of black suffrage" (Richardson 43).

Radical Republicans' greatest concern was establishing and then maintaining the massive changes that they believed the nation needed, both North and South, to atone for slavery and push forward toward an equitable society. They achieved this fitfully during Congressional Reconstruction. For them the call for "healing" was a cynical expression of the desire to return to a state of affairs as close as possible to Black enslavement. As Saidiya Hartman has observed, Black attempts to live as free people were regarded by white Southerners as a form of insubordination. Indeed, "[t]he striking similarities between antebellum regulations regarding black conduct and postbellum codes of conduct leave us hardpressed to discern even those intangible or inchoate expressions of black freedom" (Hartman 148). In his tour of the postwar South, Carl Schurz found a kind of zero-sum equation among white people that "the elevation of the blacks will be the degradation of the whites" (*Report on the Condition* 25).

In reaction to Southern recidivism and Northern calls for reconciliation, white radicals amplified their own refusal to return to any kind of status quo ante. During the early years of the war, moderate Republicans argued for saving the Union without radical change, and "Copperhead" Democrats, who opposed the conflict, adopted the slogan "The Union as it was, the Constitution as it is." Radicals appropriated and inverted that sentiment, deploring the desire to reinstate any vestige of the past. As early as 1863, Albion W. Tourgée (whom I discuss in Chapter 4), condemned the "oft repeated maxim of the Administration – 'We are fighting but for the Union as it was'" as a "sublime hoax" (qtd. in Curtis 189).

Over the next decade, contestation over the form the reconstituted nation should take intensified. In an 1865 speech on Reconstruction delivered in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Thaddeus Stevens articulated this stance: "'Restoration,' therefore, will leave the 'Union as it was' – a heinous notion" (Stevens, 6). Nearly a decade later, Thomas Nast (whose work I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5) published a cartoon in *Harper's Weekly* entitled "The Union as It Was" that illustrates how Stevens's
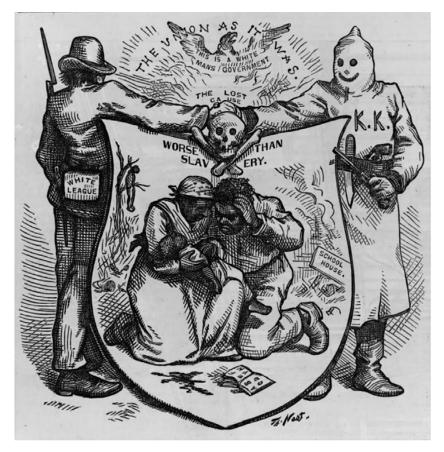
Figure I.1   Thomas Nast, "The Union as It Was"
Harper's Weekly, October 24, 1874.

apprehension about "Restoration" was realized by white terrorism and violence (Figure I.1).

Nast's cartoon shows figures representing the Ku Klux Klan and the White League, another white supremacist terrorist organization, joining hands over skull and crossbones, under which is the legend "worse than slavery." A Black man and woman huddle underneath, holding a baby – possibly dead – and a school primer lies in front of them, next to what appears to be a bloodstain. In the background, a Black person hangs from a tree and a schoolhouse burns. And above it all floats an eagle surrounded by the words "the union as it was" and "this is a white man's government."

It's striking that Nast conjoins the efforts by Black people to gain literacy, represented by the primer and the burning schoolhouse, with the regime of white terror. As I show in Chapter 4, education was a hallmark project of the Freedmen's Bureau and philanthropic and religious organizations. Black literacy posed an existential threat to white supremacy in the South – once freedpeople could read, they had meaningful access to the mechanisms of citizenship: the franchise, informed entry into contracts, the ownership of property. As Nast suggests here, the schoolhouse is the portal to social and political legitimacy – something the Klan and its ilk used violence to counteract.

In this context, "healing" was a hollow promise. How could the country heal while it was infected with anti-Black violence and the violation of freedpeople's recently awarded civil rights? Moreover, public opinion was capricious in regard to those rights, and support soon waned as white Southerners clawed back the measures that Reconstruction had imposed. As Travis M. Foster shrewdly observes, "[w]hite nationalism and sectional reconciliation required Northern whites' inaction even more than their action, their passive consent more than their energetic selection" (78).

In the minds of these white radicals, the body politic was not whole, nor should it be, if wholeness meant reversion to "the Union as it was." If, as Joan Burbick argues in relation to what she calls the language of health and the culture of nationalism in nineteenth-century America, "only the body's health can index how well the republic is functioning," the converse was also true for these radical Republicans – the unhealthy nation is borne out in diseased bodies. Indeed, the nation needed to excise the extremities (in both meanings of the word) through which pulsed the poison of enslavement and white supremacy. What better sign, then, of both the necessary sacrifice of the white body to defeat slavery and the obligation to lop off the diseased remnants of slavery than the amputated veteran?[14]

The amputee was a corporeal reminder that the Civil War had imposed (and should impose) permanent change – there was no recuperating of the lost limb and the amputee had to recreate himself and fashion new ways of being in the world (the Left Armed Corps I discuss later is the epitome of this concept). As Brian Matthew Jordan notes, amputees' "disabled bodies plainly illustrated the unresolved nature of the conflict" and the work that still had to be done ("Living Monuments'" 125). Amputation was the degree zero representation of radical loss and change, and white radical writers and thinkers took it up to articulate their commitment to a transformed, racially and socially just Union. More to the point, the

amputee was a figure that Americans recognized from their towns, their families, and their homes.

"Something more is necessary": Military Discourses of Amputation and Emancipation

Amputation was the most visible signifier of the afterlife of the Civil War embodied in those who had fought. Much like the riven nation, the amputated body represented, in Megan Kate Nelson's words, the "interplay between the whole past and fragmented present" (2). Articulating the sense that the war brought of the uncanny merging of the human, the natural, and the mechanical that Nelson has noted in her analysis of the destruction the Civil War wrought, Oliver Wendell Holmes called "the limbs of our friends and countrymen . . . part of the melancholy harvest which war is sweeping down with Dahlgren's mowing machine and the patent reapers of Springfield and Hartford" (567–8). Here, human limbs are reaped by the ship-board Dahlgren gun, designed by Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren, that spewed shells both onto enemy craft and onto land, as well as by the Sharps rifles that were manufactured in Hartford and the weapons produced by the Springfield Armory.

Of course, amputation was more than a metaphor in the years after the war. Not only were amputated bodies visible, they were omnipresent. The United States had become an amputation nation, one in which amputees were an unavoidable sight. Holmes observed in 1863 that "[i]t is not two years since the sight of a person who had lost one of his lower limbs was an infrequent occurrence. Now, alas! there are few among us who have not a cripple among our friends, if not in our own families" (574). Over 20,000 Union soldiers survived amputation (Clarke 368).[15] Despite the developments in prosthetic technology spurred by the war and heavily subsidized by the federal government, developments that Holmes described at length and with wonderment in his *Atlantic* essay "The Human Wheel: Its Spokes and Felloes," most amputees did not even apply for government-issued prosthetics, and those who did sometimes abandoned them, never able to comfortably wear them (Clarke 364).

It is not surprising, then, that amputation did not just bear the weight of medical discourse (as we'll see in Chapter 2), but was freighted with meaning for the amputees, who saw themselves as both individual combatants and part of a larger plurality. Moreover, the experience of amputation found its way into military and civilian culture from the beginning of the war into the immense changes of the postwar era. As Colleen Glenney

Boggs has written, "the Civil War scaled up disability to a prevailing social condition [and] marks a historical and cultural moment when disability was made central to the construction of national identity and interpersonal subjectivity" (41).

Megan Kate Nelson devotes a significant part of her masterful book *Ruin Nation* arguing this very point. Nelson maintains that "the Empty Sleeve comes not only to symbolize [the] characteristics [of chivalry, courage, and patriotism] but also to represent all the other wounds a soldier could have sustained in battle . . . [T]he transformed, ruined bodies of veteran amputees also became sites for apprehension about many of these same virtues. Soldiers and civilians created a competing narrative – that of the Incomplete Man – as a way to express concern about the masculinity of veterans" (186). Indeed, for Nelson, "amputation emasculated soldiers, bringing them under the healing power and domination of women" (196). There are certainly elements of this fear of emasculation by and about amputated veterans – expressed, for example, in Winslow Homer's 1865 engraving "Our Watering Places: The Empty Sleeve at Newport" and its accompanying story in *Harper's Weekly*. Wounded soldiers themselves worried about being reduced to indigence by their disability – one poem in a hospital newspaper entreated its readers "Let a grateful hand relieve him / Who for us hath lost his leg, / Ever give him home and living / Never seem forced to beg" (*The Cripple* 1.1, 1). And Brian Matthews Jordan observes that once home and in poverty, veterans were not well received: "Most civilians wanted the 'piteous' sight of the one-armed soldier begging in the streets, like the memory of the war, to just go away" (*Marching Home* 59).

Nonetheless, I would argue that amputation signified much more than a loss of masculinity. Several scholars have argued that "[r]ather than negating their identities as men, injury for some amputees constituted the evidence of manhood" (Clarke 366), or at least that there was not an inevitable relationship between amputation and emasculation.[16] As David Serlin observes, "for many of these disabled veterans of the Civil War, the amputation stump, the artificial limb, and other physical markings that proved sustained injury were visual shorthand for military service . . . their permanent uniform" (*Replaceable You* 33).

In large part this was due, as Holmes suggested, to the normalization of amputation as a result of the war. For men in the fight, amputation was part of the lingua franca of the wartime experience. Newspapers produced by injured servicemen in federal hospitals bore titles like *The Crutch* and *The Cripple*, transforming the widespread loss of limb into a

commonplace. *The Cripple*, printed "every Saturday at Head-Quarters Third Division General Hospital S. General Hospital, Alexa, VA," as its masthead read, was "published by and for sick and wounded soldiers" at the hospital (2). In the "Salutory" in the first issue on October 8, 1864, the editors even twitted their counterparts in Annapolis about the title of their newspaper: "The General Hospital at Annapolis issues a neat little sheet classed 'THE CRUTCH,' but as there is no use for a Crutch without a Cripple, we have decided to call our paper by the latter title" (2).

Amputation also entered popular culture via cartoons, poetry, and song sheets. As Devin Burke has shown, there were dozens of popular songs that were written in the voice of or represented amputee soldiers and veterans. Songs with titles like "The Wounded Soldier," "I'm Blind!" "Old Arm, Good Bye," "The Empty Sleeve," and "Good-By Old Arm!" found their way into bourgeois parlors, telling stories of military courage and loss (Figure I.2). Several songs covered the same story, in which "a wounded hero" who "awoke from his stupor and missed his arm," asked for it to be brought to him so he could say farewell to it – an indication that this was a popular enough theme to be set to song more than once.[17]

Echoing the debates animating Northern civilian life in the second half of the war, these songs ventriloquized the growing belief among soldiers (as we'll see in Chapter 3) that this was a war to emancipate the enslaved. Although these songs often placed the sacredness of the Union at the core of their message, many explicitly invoked the loss of limb as a sacrifice to end slavery. In Henry Badger's 1864 song, "The Empty Sleeve," the narrator explains the meaning of the eponym: it "points to a time when our flag shall wave / O'er a land where there breathes no cowering slave. / Up to the skies let us all then heave / One proud hurrah for the empty sleeve" (5). In another "Empty Sleeve" song, this time by J. W. Dadmun and P. A. Hanaford, the song prophesies that "In days to come, that sleeve shall be / The good son's joy and pride, / As he shall tell how bravely fought / His sire on Freedom's side" (n.p.). And in "Old Arm Good Bye," published a year after the end of the war, a soldier exclaims, "Oh proud am I to give my mite, / For freedom pure and good!" (Coe and Cooper 4).

As they returned home, amputee veterans themselves made this connection explicit, and "in searching for the meaning of their injuries [they] became especially committed to the cause of emancipation and racial equality" (Jordan, *Marching Home* 3). A significant archive of veteran writings survives in the records of William Oland Bourne, who organized two left-handed penmanship competitions – both with significant cash prizes – for men who had lost their right hands or arms in the war.[18]
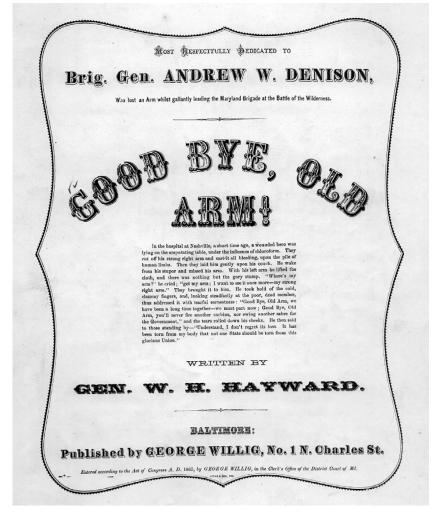
Figure I.2   Brig. Gen. Andrew W. Denison, "Good Bye, Old Arm!"
Library of Congress, M1640.H.

Although the contestants, the vast majority of whom were white, were not told what to write about, many of them described their experiences in the war, especially the circumstances under which they lost their arms. Both Black and white veterans often narrated their losses as necessary, even salutary, sacrifices to the cause of emancipation and expanded democracy.

As one wrote, his ordeal "is sacred to those who have been actively engaged in the late war ... because it was between democracy and aristocracy, freedom and slavery, the freedom of the white as well as the black" (qtd. in Jordan, *Marching Home* 117). Similarly, Rufus L. Robinson argued in his competition entry that "[i]t is not sufficient that we have free Institutions, free Speech and freedom of the press, we must have freedom at the Ballot Box ... Not until Universal suffrage becomes a law will our country stand forth in all her greatness and grandeur United, Disenthralled, and Redeemed" (qtd. in Johnson, *Left-Armed Corps* 264–5). In another entry to the left-handed penmanship competition, the writer reproduced the entire Emancipation Proclamation, implicitly forging a connection between his own loss and Black liberation. And several submissions linked their losses to the debt they owed their Black fellow soldiers, "the strong arm and the steady hand of the Negro at a time when his help was sorely needed," and insisted that "the ballot of the loyal black man balance that of the disloyal white" (qtd. in Johnson, *Left-Armed Corps*, 276–7).[19]

Thomas Sanborn, who lost his arm at the battle of Poplar Grove Church in September 1864, sounded a theme that would be repeated by white radicals like Sumner, Stevens, and Bushnell: "In passing from the narrow gauge of slavery to the broad gauge of freedom something more is necessary than to throw away the old rules ... the whole dimensions and proportions are to be remodeled" (qtd. in Johnson, *Left-Armed Corps* 267).

Bourne himself echoed this theme in the banners displayed in the hall where Left Armed Corps handwriting samples were exhibited, one of which read "See the Conquering Heroes Come. The Left Hand. The Empty Sleeve. All Americans Together Not a Fetter in the Clime" (Clarke 389). And the equation of bodily loss and national remaking through emancipation was still in circulation, albeit vestigially, a couple of decades later: the radical novelist and lawyer Albion Tourgée ventriloquized this sentiment in his popular serialized set of sketches written over the course of 1885 from the perspective of a disabled veteran at middle age, later collected as *A Veteran and His Pipe*: "I was ... proud of the folded sleeve, because I had given the limb that filled it for the cause of human freedom" (11).

While the majority of images of amputees (and indeed the number of amputees themselves) were of white men, Black veteran amputees were also enlisted in the discourse of the necessity for Black citizenship, although in subtly different ways. As we'll see in Chapter 1, popular representations of white amputees were primarily photographic, while

those of Black amputated veterans were allegorical engravings that drew on the discourses of Black self-sacrifice for the good of the race. I discuss this mechanism more fully in Chapter 3, in Anna Dickinson's deployment of Black affliction via sentimental narrative tropes. The logic of Black martyrdom and loss that has its apogee in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* reemerges in these representations of Black veteran amputees: a liberal discourse that requires Black suffering to legitimate Black empowerment.

However politically dodgy this suturing of Black injury to the expansion of the franchise and citizenship more generally, it contributes to the correlation – and occasional causation – narrated not just by veterans but also by popular culture between the loss of a limb and the struggle to end slavery. And, as we've seen, white radicals maintained an ethos of corporeal sacrifice in the face of the debt owed to the formerly enslaved and were vigilant in the face of backsliding (however ineffective that vigilance might have been in retrospect). But the permanent wound of amputation was more than payment for past sin – it was also a reminder of what was at stake in the project of Reconstruction: full black citizenship. While emancipation was the immediate goal of abolition, passed by Congress before the end of the war, the postwar telos for Black and white radicals alike was citizenship and the vote that went along with it. In Lauren Berlant's words, they were intensely concerned with questions of who would have access to the deep powers of meaningful subjectivity within the postwar state, "whose citizenship – whose subjectivity, whose forms of intimacy and interest, whose bodies and identifications, whose heroic narratives – [would] direct America's future" (6). The body politic from which slavery had been dismembered, embodied in the amputated veteran, was the condition of possibility for a capacious redefinition of citizenship.

"The rights of men and citizens": The Stakes of Black Citizenship

Black claims to and demands for formal citizenship predated the Fourteenth Amendment that formalized it. In 1843, at a Black antislavery meeting in Buffalo, Frederick Douglass's theme was Black people's "Moral and Political Condition as American Citizens" (Levine 33). James McCune Smith argued in 1859 that, contra *Dred Scott*, free Black Americans already enjoyed the benefits of citizenship and hence were citizens: "We must enforce a full acknowledgment of our rights in the free States, and thus obtain a stand point from which we can put in practice the glorious principles, which . . . point out in living light our path of duty" (149). Black citizenship was raised by both the readers and

editors of the *Weekly Anglo-African*. A September 1861 letter to the editor from "R.H.X." entitled "Formation of Colored Regiments" asked, "Have not two centuries of cruel and unrequited servitude in this country alone entitled the children of this generation to the rights of men and citizens?" (1). Robert Hamilton – cofounder and editor of the paper with his brother Thomas – wrote in support of Black recruitment in 1862, arguing that citizenship was already Black men's sinecure: "we have been pronounced citizens by the highest legal authority, why should not share in the perils of citizenship?" (qtd. in Reidy 221). And one of the products of the Colored Convention in October 1864 was the "Declarations of Wrongs and Rights" that averred that Black Americans should "remain in the full enjoyment of enfranchised manhood, and its dignities" to "claim the rights of . . . citizens" (*Proceedings* 42).

Recently, both Derrick Spires and Koritha Mitchell have argued that a self-conscious, affective Black American citizenship far preceded the Civil War. For Mitchell, Black people constituted a kind of "homemade citizenship" that was organized around individual and communal achievement and "focused more on creating possibility for themselves and each other than on responding to oppression" (3). Mitchell argues that homemade citizenship was and is not a static and constative phenomenon; rather, it is a performative process expressed within "the activities through which besieged communities cultivate success and belonging" (4).

For Spires, citizenship was fostered by connections to both a Black ethos and the larger political world. African Americans "theorized and practiced citizenship in the early United States through a robust print culture" that focused on active engagement with their community. Even as their formal citizenship rights in the North were curtailed over the course of the nineteenth century, Black writers, ministers, publishers, and everyday people imagined themselves as part of a polity defined by mutual responsibilities and rights. For both Mitchell and Spires, Black citizenship was the definitional opposite of the "necro citizenship" that Russ Castronovo has found in effect in the nineteenth century, which was characterized by "the mass of depoliticized persons and de-authorized memories that U.S. democracy creates" *(Necro Citizenship* xiii).

Even as Black citizenship rights were minimal, formal, white citizenship in the United States in the years between the ratification of the Constitution and the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment was fuzzy at best. Erik Mathisen has called the United States in the early nineteenth century a "government without citizens" (13), in large part because Americans did not imagine their subjectivity as primarily – or much at

all – forged within the frame of the nation. Citizenship suffered from both "terminological prolixity and under-conceptualization" that provided little objective guidance as to who a citizen was (Hyde 5): Were white women? Children? Free Black men or women? Moreover, definitions of citizenship were hardly reliable. As Carrie Hyde points out, at bottom "[US] citizenship was juridically unregulated, politically inconsistent, and indelibly shaped by the assumptions, fears, and aspirations of the individuals who presumed to merely describe it" (6).

In large part, the modes of power and powerlessness that limned the boundaries of citizenship were determined by local and regional structures and interpersonal relations. The rights and responsibilities that were invested in early Americans were defined by "personal legal status – office, property, household position, race, gender, infirmity, and age" (Novak 105). Certainly, it was hard in the early years of the republic to identify with a national government whose capital moved from New York to Philadelphia before settling in the swamps of what became Washington, DC. But well into the nineteenth century, "Americans lacked a clear, national definition of citizenship and, by extension, had an equally unclear notion of what connected them to the nation state" (Mathisen 4).

The Civil War inaugurated a new conception of national belonging for both North and South. For Northerners, the war was waged to save "the Union," a free-standing entity that enveloped them and afforded them a specific subject position. Likewise, as Sharon D. Kennedy-Nolle argues, the "South . . . was never a unified cultural entity" until the Confederacy was formed (15) (indeed, Kennedy-Nolle contends that Southern identity as such congealed only around the Confederacy's defeat). And after the war, the passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments codified the meanings of citizenship for all Americans.[20]

The Fourteenth Amendment – which I talk about in more detail in Chapter 3 – permanently reordered the meanings of citizenship. As legal historian Laura Edwards suggests, along with the right to vote, declaration that all people born or naturalized in the United States were citizens with specifically enumerated rights "theoretically altered the legal status of everyone in the Union and moved questions about the rights of citizens from the states to the federal government" (333). Paul Quigley is even more expansive in his analysis of these changes:

> The development of new concepts of citizenship involved Americans far from Washington, D.C.: Americans northern and southern, male and female, black and white, immigrant and native born. This was not simply the top-down imposition of new legal rules. Instead, it was a collaborative

and wide-ranging reassessment of the many meanings of citizenship in the United States. (2)

At the same time formal citizenship is a prickly issue. It is as often used to exclude, taxonomize, and hierarchize as it is to empower or liberate. While the citizen is awarded rights and privileges, defining what citizenship means is also "a hegemonic strategy [that] works to define ... groups or localities, to fix the power differentials between them, and then naturalize these operations" (Secor 354). Just as the state bestows rights, it also expects the citizen to conform to the restrictions citizenship entails. In Elizabeth Rogosin's analysis, although "citizenship offered the opportunity to demand what one was owed by the state ... at the same time, it compelled one to behave in particular ways according to what the state demanded" (39).

For example, Katherine Franke argues that freedpeople were and were not able to translate their partnerships, formed under slavery and in the face of the inability to formally marry, to the bourgeois norms of marriage and only uncomfortably fit the lived experience of the formerly enslaved. On the one hand, in Franke's words,

> The struggles of abject groups to emerge from the obscurity of the legal margins into the mainstream of civil society often materialized through demands for legal recognition by the state, and inclusion in the dominant legal and political institutions of society. (254)

But since "[r]ights both shape political culture and produce political subjects," the various forms of relationships that people forged in the regime of slavery compromised the status of newly emancipated people as legitimate participants in the polis (308).

So, what kind of citizenship did radicals envision emerging from the passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments? Certainly, as Caitlin Verboon notes, Black citizenship connoted a kind of capaciousness of civic status: "narrowly-defined rights – voting, testifying, sitting on juries, holding elected office – mattered enormously, but so did ... equality and full participation within ... communities" (162). While Russ Castronovo – not incorrectly – avers that "the U.S. democratic state loves its citizens as passive subjects, unresponsive to political issues, unmoved by social stimuli, and unaroused by enduring injustices" (*Necro Citizenship* 4), the citizenship imagined by Reconstruction radicals was process-oriented and inspired by a shared commitment to justice. Rhetorician Robert Asen suggests a way of conceiving citizenship that accords with Verboon's characterization. He argues that if we theorize citizenship as "a mode of

public engagement," then this "perspective shifts our focus from *what* constitutes citizenship to *how* citizenship proceeds" (194).

   This brings us back to Derrick Spires's work on what he calls the "critical citizenship" woven together by free Black communities in the early republic and the antebellum period. For Black Americans before the Fourteenth Amendment was passed and ratified, citizenship rights were uneven and changing.[21] But, as Spires shows, free Black communities practiced Asen's definition of citizenship as public engagement, what Raymond Williams called a "structure of feeling": a congeries of practices, assumptions, social arrangements, and material culture that construct a way of being in the world, with its own protocols and beliefs. For Williams, structures of feeling "are concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt" in a specific place at a specific time by a specific group of people (132), defined by "a particular quality of social experience and relationship, historically distinct from other particular qualities" (131).

   As Spires shows, for free African Americans in the early United States – and, I would argue, beyond the Civil War and into Reconstruction – citizenship was imagined as a complex phenomenon: social, affective, and political. It drew on preexisting notions of American citizenship promulgated in the Constitution, but broadened and deepened them beyond the juridical and into the communal. In this context,

> "citizen" invokes a civic ethos and protocols of recognition and justice that call on audiences to think about their relation to citizens and others as one of mutual responsibility, responsiveness, and active engagement, a relation in which membership and individual rights come with moral obligations to a collective. (Spires 5)

   This is the kind of citizenship that white radicals drew on when they imagined a postslavery America: the inverse of how US citizenship had been constructed so far, as "a long political and economic process of selective inclusion and exclusion requiring constant institutional and cultural maintenance" (Spires 25). In the debate over the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, radical Nevadan Republican Senator William Stewart derogated this formulation of citizenship in the past, in which the revolutionary generation established "a declaration of rights for all men, but a Government of white men only. The theory was good, the practice in this respect fatally defective" (*Congressional Globe* 2799). Passage of the Amendment, however, would effect a new kind of nation, one that in its juridical structures ensured "the equality of every man in the

right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and the perfect equality of every man to strive to equal and strive to excel his neighbor in everything great, good, and useful" (*Congressional Globe* 302).

The amputated veteran was the avatar of this aspiration toward "perfect equality," a palimpsestic figure who, as I have shown, embodied multiple radical principles at once: the debt to be paid for enslavement, the excision of the gangrene of slavery, the vow never to return to the world before emancipation, and the promise of a full, equal, and engaged Black citizenship rooted in mutual respect and responsibility.

My goal in this book is not to argue #notallwhitepeople in relation to Reconstruction and its aftermath. Indeed, one thing that Reconstruction can show us is that, just as happens today, white public opinion about racial justice can shift enthusiastically toward and then just as precipitously away from a commitment to equity.[22] By 1874 white support for Reconstruction was already on the wane, and William Wells Brown observed that "there is a feeling all over this country that the Negro has got about as much as he ought to" (qtd. in Blight 131). By the end of the nineteenth century, one would have had to look very hard for a white supporter of Black political and social equality, let alone someone who paid close and respectful attention to Black political, philosophical, or social thought. Most Northern whites looked to their Southern counterparts to represent Black hopes, abilities, and culture to them.[23]

Moreover, despite their full-throated support for Black liberation in all spheres, white supporters of radical Reconstruction often resisted acknowledging the parallels between anti-Black racism and the coterminous violence against other racialized and minoritized peoples, parallels that their Black radical counterparts for the most part recognized. As Edlie Wong shows in *Racial Reconstruction: Black Inclusion, Chinese Exclusion, and the Fictions of Citizenship*, a commitment to Black citizenship did not necessarily translate into support for Chinese immigration, or for Chinese migrants in the United States, Indeed, James Blaine, who had been foundational in shaping and passing the Reconstruction Amendments, argued that Chinese immigrants competed with both Black and white workers, driving down wages (an ironic echo of Free Soil arguments against slavery in the 1850s), thereby "portray[ing] Chinese exclusion as consistent with abolitionism's egalitarian principles" (Wong 71). Similarly, while radical Republican Charles Sumner supported the possibility of citizenship for all inhabitants of the United States, veteran abolitionist Wendell Phillips militated against Chinese migration, citing the need for

the United States to remain a Christian nation (Wong 103–4). And while Black leaders shared some of these fears, as Wong shows, "black political sympathy for the Chinese continue[d] to flourish in the face of this perceived difference" (102).[24]

The record of supporters of congressional Reconstruction regarding Indigenous sovereignty is not much better.[25] Oliver O. Howard, the director of the Freedmen's Bureau, moved on to command troops in the West in the so-called Indian Wars, and in 1877 displaced the Nez Perce people from their ancestral lands in what are now Washington State and Oregon to Oklahoma (they were later displaced again to Idaho). General Philip Sheridan, who served as the military commander of the Fifth Military District, which comprised Louisiana and Texas, and feuded with Andrew Johnson over Black voting rights, commanded US troops in the Western plains and oversaw the defeat and displacement of the Kiowa, Cheyenne, and Comanche.[26]

Chapter Outlines

Although thematically focused on Reconstruction, this book ranges from the mid-1850s to the late 1880s. Each chapter forms a section of a chronological arc, beginning in the period just before the Civil War, and its photographic representations of child death, and then lingering in the years of the war itself through contemporaneous and retrospective literary texts. The heart of the book – Chapters 3 and 4 – addresses the historical and novelistic phenomenon of amputation as a trope adopted by white radicals to corporealize their understandings of the war and their hopes for Reconstruction. Chapter 5 and the Conclusion take stock of the initial (if uneven) struggle against and ultimate concession of white America to the revanchist and recidivist energies of white supremacy, which laid the foundation for ongoing denial of civil and human rights to Black Americans.

Chapter 1, "Giving Up the Ghost: The Dead Child versus the Amputated Limb," traces the antebellum faith in the non-finality of death and its antithesis in the irreparable change wrought by amputation. To make this argument I contrast antebellum postmortem photography and images of amputees and amputated limbs. Postmortem photography of children, in particular, reinforces the sense that the family has not *really* been ruptured, that death isn't *really* the end. Photographs of amputee Civil War soldiers do quite the opposite. Certainly, the comparison

between these two photographic genres is incomplete: many of these images of amputees played quite a different role, less commemorative and more documentary, especially those pictures taken for medical research. But rather than operating as postmortem photography does, as a mediator between the living child, its dead body, and the family left behind, the portrait of the amputee is insistently in the present, even as the lost limb is consigned to an irrecuperable past. While nineteenth-century pictures of dead children often encouraged the fiction that the photograph's subject was only sleeping and an ongoing member of the family, amputation photography – both medical and vernacular – insists on the permanence of bodily change.

In Chapter 2, "'Strewn promiscuously about': Limbs and What Happens to Them," I explore several accounts by Civil War nurses and surgeons – represented through first-person nonfiction, lightly fictionalized narrative, sensationalized memoir, and fiction. The central texts in this chapter are Walt Whitman's *Memoranda after the War* (based heavily on his wartime journals), Louisa May Alcott's *Hospital Sketches* (drawn primarily from her letters home), John Brinton's *Personal Memoirs* (a narrative of his experiences as a field surgeon and the founding director of the Army Medical Museum), Susie King Taylor's *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp*, and S. Weir Mitchell's short story "The Case of George Dedlow." I'm especially interested in how these narrators represent amputation in different ways, especially the scene of amputation itself, the image of a basket or trough of dismembered limbs, and amputee reflections on the relationship between their remaining bodies and their absent limbs, and the physical and metaphysical permanence of amputation. The chapter ends with a discussion of the Army Medical Museum, in which amputated limbs were catalogued, stored, and often displayed as examples of the anatomical damage done by gunshots and shells. This dovetails with a reading of "George Dedlow", in which the protagonist's legs, stored in alcohol at the Museum, return to him briefly during a séance, absurdly marrying hopes for bodily resurrection with spiritualism's belief in a humanized heaven.

Chapter 3, "1860 or 1865? Amending the National Body," focuses on a now little-read but in her time central abolitionist and antiracist activist, lecturer, and novelist, Anna E. Dickinson. My interest in this chapter is Dickinson's first novel, *What Answer?* (1868), which follows an interracial couple, William Surrey and Francesca Ercildoune, from their first meeting in 1861 to their deaths in 1863 at the hands of a New York Draft Riot

mob. It ends with a climactic scene in which Francesca's brother, the biracial Robert Ercildoune, accompanied by his friend William's cousin Tom Russell, attempts to vote in a local 1865 election and is barred by racist poll-goers. The chapter's title comes from Tom's assurance to Robert that it is 1865 not 1860 and, in the wake of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery and the Civil Rights Act Congress attempted to pass in 1865, he should not be concerned about the legitimacy of his vote in Pennsylvania. In *What Answer?* the body amputated and amended, either by the empty sleeve or by prosthetic leg, holds out hope for an amended Constitution and an amended nation. The novel ends on this very note. Dickinson ventriloquizes all those Civil War veterans disabled by the war: "Here we stand, shattered and maimed, that the body politic might be perfect!" (298). This perfection is not a reconstitution of the prewar nation, but, rather, the spiritual and ethical perfection represented by its amputee characters. Ultimately this novel, published during the process of the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, looks toward the possibility of an amended nation.

Chapter 4, "'I don't care a rag for the *Union as it was*': Amputation, the Past, and the Work of the Freedmen's Bureau," deals primarily with the period of Reconstruction and the importance of the Freedmen's Bureau. Using Albion Tourgée's 1883 novel *Bricks without Straw*, Oliver Otis Howard's first-person account of his time as director of the Freedmen's Bureau, and archival records of the Bureau itself, I read the novel as a fictional reenactment of the work of Reconstruction.

In *Bricks without Straw* Tourgée returns again and again to the amputated bodies of Union soldiers and sympathizers as the agents of reparation and justice for Black citizens. But this justice is not just the work of white radicals and sympathetic Northerners. It is struggled for by Black characters, who lay claim to the rights accorded them by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments. In the novel, amputation forces readers to focus on the present and move beyond the past, in recognition that the past of the intact body is irrecoverable. The past of a South organized around the enslavement and exploitation of black Americans is buried, just as white protagonist Hesden Lemoyne's lost arm is discarded, on a Civil War battlefield, or in a pile of other dismembered limbs, in favor of a future that puts Black self-determination at its core. This echoes Tourgée's own goals for Reconstruction: he rejected the goal simply of preserving the Union,

avowing, "I don't care a rag for '*the Union as it was*.' I want and fight for the *Union better* than '*it was*.'"

Chapter 5, "Shaking Hands: Manual Politics and the End of Reconstruction," traces representations of hands – disembodied, amputated, and multiplied – as Reconstruction was debilitated and eventually dismantled. Using the political cartoons of Thomas Nast that appeared in *Harper's Weekly* I track Nast's repeated deployment of hands to illustrate the changing fortunes of Reconstruction. Hands also figure in narratives of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. One of the most common tropes of the better-known fiftieth reunion, Union and Confederate veterans shaking hands, was already ubiquitous in 1888 at the twenty-fifth, and it's this iterative discourse that I explore. The chapter ends with a reading of William Dean Howells's 1889 novel, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, focusing especially on the German American veteran Berthold Lindau, who lost his hand during the Civil War. An 1848 refugee with radical racial and class politics, Lindau is portrayed as a holdover from the past who is incapable of adjusting to modernity in the form of massive wealth inequality, urban decay, and the calcification of white supremacy north and south. Lindau's death at the end of the novel is the literary nail in the coffin of radical Reconstruction, which Howells has already consigned to the dustbin of history.

Along with corporeality, I also engage with questions of temporality. The commitment to radical Reconstruction entailed a deep remembering of the past at the same time that it required a clear-eyed understanding of the present and an investment in an equitable future. White supremacy, by contrast, invoked a wholly reworked past, in which slavery was either forgotten or transformed into a benign institution. It looked forward to a future that as closely as possible reiterated the racial power relations of the prewar past and insisted on a present in which time could stand still. The conflict between anti-Reconstruction revanchists and white advocates for Black liberation was not just political per se – it was a struggle to remake the meanings of time itself: the relationships between past, present, and future. While the radicals I focus on here insisted on a total break with the past to fashion a new nation that would endure into the utopian antiracist future, increasingly, white Americans blurred the boundaries between pre- and postwar racialization, so that antebellum enslavement slid effortlessly into Jim Crow white supremacy.

In this book I try to invert the white supremacist claim that Black gain is white loss. My goal is to show that white loss in the Civil War could have

been a harbinger of white *and* Black gains, a comprehensive, generous definition of citizenship and the rights of citizens to land, education, and dignity. US constructions of whiteness brought with them genocide, enslavement, and brutal violence: the gangrene that is white supremacy. I would hope that we can imagine a world in which that necrotic limb is cut off for good.