

Reconstruction is probably the *least* understood period in our history. When one really begins to understand the *promise of what could have been*, this period becomes even more heartbreaking. We had a handful of idealistic men and women in this country who believed they were presented with an unprecedented opportunity to make this country a *true democracy* for the very first time in our history--a place where *all* people were created equal.

And for a time, they did.

And we must not diminish the efforts of these individuals simply because Jim Crow began to dismantle their creation almost as soon as they created it. If anything, once one knows the level of violence these people faced for their convictions, their story almost becomes that much more harrowing and poignant.

But it was racism and violence that ultimately caused the demise of Reconstruction. The Ku Klux Klan rose to a great state of prominence during this time period, and it was through their efforts that virtually all of the progressive legislation put in place during this time either came to an end or was reversed entirely. The Klan used violence and fear as their political tools, and lynchings became probably their most favored mode of torture and fear-mongering.

Ultimately, violence put an end to Reconstruction.

Please watch the film from the website, [Without Sanctuary](#), and take a look at the other photographs in the containing website.

(See the links - above right)

Please be aware this site and film contain graphic images.

1. Please post an initial response of at least 150 words
2. Reply (2 or 3 sentences) to *at least* 3 other students' initial postings.

If you are unsure how to use Discussion Board, click the "Tools" tab on your left to access the User Manual.

THE BIRTH OF A NATION

"THE SUPREME PICTURE OF ALL TIME"

NEW YORK MAIL
MAY 27 1921