

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-316-51674-4 Never Together  
Peter Temin  
Excerpt  
[More Information](#)

---



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-316-51674-4 Never Together  
Peter Temin  
Excerpt  
[More Information](#)

---

**like “other persons” to refer to them as they set rules for politics and economics in the new country.**

## INTRODUCTION

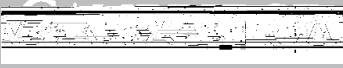
Nonetheless, the European immigrants were incapable of seeing their captives as individuals. Blacks were enslaved people who helped white Americans expand before the Civil War. Indeed, the 1858 *Dred Scott* decision explicitly noted that the founders never considered Blacks, free or enslaved, to be persons with any rights in the American republic. Slavery was outlawed soon after this court decision by the Civil War and Thirteenth Amendment. These rapid changes reveal the contradictions within white people.

Blacks began to participate in American politics en masse for the first time during Reconstruction. This process met with white resistance, and Black inclusion in the growing economy fell sharply as the Gilded Age followed and white political will for Black participation faded. The Supreme Court, still conservative, negated the force of the Fourteenth Amendment on the rights of freedmen.

Marx said, “History repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce (Marx, 1852).” The tragedy after the Civil War Reconstruction was followed by the fleeting memory of President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society. The measures in the second attempt to integrate Blacks into the majority status of the United States induced a reaction that echoes the failure of Reconstruction a century earlier. The Supreme Court encouraged the growth of commerce and industry while it aborted efforts to include Blacks into political and economic activities in both the 1880s and 2010s. The Court promoted white economic progress and impeded the integration of most Blacks into this prosperity.

Poor whites often appear in this story along with Blacks. They can be seen suffering under slavery just as they suffer now in mass incarceration. There are two ways to include these unfortunates in this story. One way is to regard them as collateral damage to the anger directed at Blacks. A more accurate view is that the dominant whites – landowners in the antebellum South, postbellum industrialists, and financial moguls and internet wizards today – engage in class as well as racial prejudice.

Each time there was a partial move toward integrating Blacks into the white economy and polity or helping poor people advance, there also was a reaction that returned Blacks and poor whites to widespread subservience. This was true in the Gilded Age of the late 1800s, and it is true again in the new Gilded Age of the last several decades. Blacks



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-316-51674-4 Never Together  
Peter Temin  
Excerpt  
[More Information](#)

---



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-316-51674-4 Never Together  
Peter Temin  
Excerpt  
[More Information](#)

---

**in the United States. She equated racism and casteism, arguing, “Through no fault of any individual born to it, a caste system centers the dominant caste as the sun around which all other castes revolve and defines it as the default-setting standard of normalcy, of intellect, of beauty, against which all others are measured, ranked in descending order by their physiological proximity to the dominant caste” (Wilkerson, 2020a). And she quoted Andrew Hacker saying, “White Americans of all classes have found it comforting to preserve Blacks as a subordinate caste: a presence that despite all its pain and problems still provides whites with some solace in a stressful world”**