

# Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites: Race and Nationality in the Era of Reconstruction (Conflicting Worlds: New Dimensions of the American Civil War)

Mitchell Snay

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After the American Civil War, several movements for ethnic separatism and political self-determination significantly shaped the course of Reconstruction. The Union Leagues mobilized African Americans to fight for their political rights and economic security while the Ku Klux Klan used intimidation and violence to maintain the political and economic hegemony of southern whites. Founded in 1858 as the Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood, the Irish American Fenians sought to liberate Ireland from English rule. In Fenians, Freedmen, and Southern Whites, Mitchell Snay provides a compelling comparison of these seemingly disparate groups and illuminates the contours of nationalism during Reconstruction. By joining the Fenians with freedpeople and southern whites, Snay seeks to assert their central relevance to the dynamics of nationalism during Reconstruction and offers a highly original analysis of Reconstruction as an Age of Capital and an Age of Emancipation where categories of race, class, and gender -- as well as nationalism -- were fluid and contested.



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