



Reflections on Slavery and the Constitution

By George Anastaplo

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In this insightful book about constitutional law and slavery, George Anastaplo illuminates both how the history of race relations in the United States should be approached and how seemingly hopeless social and political challenges can be usefully considered through the lens of the U.S. Constitution. He examines the outbreak of the American Civil War, its prosecution, and its aftermath, tracing the concept of slavery and law from its earliest beginnings and slavery's fraught legal history within the United States. Anastaplo offers discussions that bring into focus discussions of slavery in Ancient Greece and within the Bible, showing their influence on the Constitution and the subsequent political struggles that led to the Civil War.

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Editorial Review

Review

Condemnation of slavery in the United States is a field well plowed. Non-the-less George Anastaplo's fourth volume in his 'constitutional Sonnets' series is a fresh and welcome addition. *Reflections on Slavery and the Constitution* demonstrates once again that he is one of the most sensitive scholarly interpreters of the Constitution. In the manner of his teacher Leo Strauss, Anastaplo lays bare the roots of the human and political tragedy that encompassed the introduction of slavery, the defense of slavery, and the defeat of slavery.

(John A. Murley)

Anastaplo (law, Loyola Univ. of Chicago), one of America's leading scholars on law and the Constitution, offers a profound study of the history of slavery and American constitutional law. In this fourth volume in his ambitious ten-part series of "constitutional sonnets," Anastaplo argues that a thorough analysis of the history and development of constitutional law and slavery can help readers better understand the state of race relations in the US today. He also maintains that a commitment to understanding fully the language and history of the Constitution can help US society overcome seemingly intractable political and social conflict. In the present volume, Anastaplo largely succeeds in achieving these goals. Although the history of slavery in America is a well-trodden subject, Anastaplo builds a compelling narrative by tightly binding the slavery issue to American constitutionalism, while drawing on a diverse range of supporting materials, including literature, sociology, philosophy, history, political science, and law. In the end, Anastaplo makes a compelling case that the Northern victory in the Civil War was not just a vindication of the strength of the Union, but also a vindication of the enduring strength of constitutional principles. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. (*CHOICE*)

George Anastaplo has lived a long life and made a noted career out of playing by his own rules, and that independent streak is on full display in this book. (*Review of Politics*)

About the Author

George Anastaplo is currently Lecturer in the Liberal Arts at the University of Chicago, Professor of Law at Loyola University of Chicago, and Professor Emeritus of Political Science and of Philosophy at Dominican University.

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