

# Final Freedom: The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment (Cambridge Historical Studies in American Law and Society)

Michael Vorenberg

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This book examines emancipation after the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. Focusing on the making and meaning of the Thirteenth Amendment, Final Freedom looks at the struggle among legal thinkers, politicians, and ordinary Americans in the North and the border states to find a way to abolish slavery that would overcome the inadequacies of the Emancipation Proclamation. The book tells the dramatic story of the creation of a constitutional amendment and reveals an unprecedented transformation in American race relations, politics, and constitutional thought. Using a wide array of archival and published sources, Professor Vorenberg argues that the crucial consideration of emancipation occurred after, not before, the Emancipation Proclamation; that the debate over final freedom was shaped by a level of volatility in party politics underestimated by prior historians; and that the abolition of slavery by constitutional amendment represented a novel method of reform that transformed attitudes toward the Constitution.



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