

THE WAITE COURT AND THE LEGACIES OF RECONSTRUCTION

February 2, 2009

4 pm – 6 pm

**American University Washington College of Law
4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Room 603, Washington, DC**

Traditional narratives of American history view the Reconstruction period (and its sweeping legal reforms) as ending with the disputed presidential election of 1876 and the inauguration of President Hayes in 1877. But by the time of the election, the Supreme Court under the leadership of Chief Justice Morrison Waite (and Chief Justice Salmon Chase before him) had already acted in a series of cases to decisively limit the scope of the post-Civil War amendments and to scale back the federal government's power to enact meaningful civil rights legislation. Some of these decisions have been obscured to modern eyes; others have been overtaken by subsequent events and judicial decisions; still others remain the law of the land today. In this panel, we bring together three leading experts on the period to discuss how and why the Court played such an obstructionist role, and how its impact during this period is still felt in American constitutional law—and the American political system more generally—today.

Panelists:

Pamela Brandwein, Associate Professor, University of Michigan, Department of Political Science

Lynda Dodd, Associate Professor, WCL

Charles Lane, Journalist and Author of *The Day Freedom Died: The Colfax Massacre, the Supreme Court, and the Betrayal of Reconstruction*

Moderator:

Stephen I. Vladeck, Associate Professor, WCL

General Registration – no charge. CLE Accreditation (2 credits) will be applied for – CLE Registration - \$35

To register, please go to www.wcl.american.edu/secle/cle_form.cfm

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