

The Era of Jim Crow

Segregation & Discrimination at
the turn of the century



Segregation in the United States

- ◎ De Facto Segregation: Segregation by custom or practice
- ◎ De Jure Segregation: Segregation by law
- ◎ At the turn of the century, both are occurring throughout the United States
 - NOT JUST A SOUTHERN ISSUE

African Americans

NORTH

- Mostly lived in cities
- Some highly educated
- Many worked industrial jobs within the cities
- Denied admittance to many unions
- Lesser wages
- Job discrimination

SOUTH

- ◎ Large population
- ◎ Given rights to education and job opportunities
- ◎ Many were sharecroppers or tenant farmers
- ◎ Kept in a dependent and low place in society after the Civil War and Reconstruction ended

Reconstruction 1865-1877

● After the Civil War 1861-1865, the federal government made strides toward equality.

- Blacks voted, held many political offices.
- The Freedmen's Bureau helped Blacks find land, it also established schools and colleges.
- Constitutional Amendments provided legal freedoms

● Compromise of 1877

- Hayes wins election in exchange for the removal of federal troops in the South

Since Reconstruction

- African Americans in the South slowly had their freedoms and rights taken away by Southern governments.
 - Job Discrimination
 - Lesser Wages
 - Sharecropping/Tenant Farming
 - Intimated from voting
 - Racial Violence

Legalized Discrimination

● While violence and other intimidation methods were common to prevent African Americans from voting, southern government began passing laws to further prevent voting.

- **Poll taxes:** one would have to pay a set amount of money at the voting poll before they could vote
- **Literacy tests:** one had to pass a test that proved they could read and write before they could vote
- Why would this only impact Southern blacks?
 - Grandfather clauses- individuals were exempt if their grandfather had been able to vote before the Civil War...

Jim Crow Laws

- Name given to laws passed by Southern legislatures to create and enforce segregation in public places.
 - One of the first passed in 1881 in Tennessee required African Americans to ride in separate railway cars.



Jim Crow

◎ the Rise and Fall of Jim Crow - YouTube



REX THEATRE FOR COLORED PEOPLE





WHITE
WOMEN
COLORED
WOMEN

WHITE
MEN
COLORED
MEN

COLORED

MATINEE

WHEN YOU DRINK A

A BITE TO EAT

COLORED · ADM.
10¢

ALL-NITE
FRIDAY

\$4.00⁰⁰₀₀





COLORED WAITING ROOM

GATE
4

WE SERVE
WHITE'S *only*

NO
SPANISH *or* MEXICANS

Plessy v. Ferguson

- 1890- Louisiana legislature passed a law requiring African Americans to ride in separate railway cars from whites.
- Homer Plessy tried to test the law by sitting in a white-only train
- Plessy was arrested and his case eventually made it's way to the Supreme Court

http://www.streetlaw.org/en/Page/421/Background_Summary



NEGRO EXCLUSION FROM RAILWAY CAR, PHILADELPHIA.

Plessy v. Ferguson 1896

- The Supreme Court ruled that “separate, but equal” facilities did not violate the 14th amendment.
- This decision will uphold segregation and give it a legal basis for the next 60 years...
- http://www.streetlaw.org/en/Page/431/The_Impact_of_the_Case_Separate_But_Equal

Mob Violence

- An outcome of the extensive discrimination was **lynching**: murder of an individual by a group or mob.
 - <https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/Ku-Klux-Klan-A-History-of-Racism.pdf>
- Between 1882-1892, nearly 900 African Americans lost their lives to lynch mobs.
- African Americans could be lynched for any number of offenses
 - Attempting to vote or register to vote was a very common 'offense'

African American Reaction

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

- **Accept segregation at the moment**
- You can improve your situation best through **education and acquiring skills** → win the respect of white
- Founded the Tuskegee Institute- taught practical skills

W.E.B. DUBOIS

- **African Americans** should strive for **full rights immediately**
- **Political Action** and voting rights...do not accept your position
- Talented Tenth- **small group of educated** that will lead the masses
- Founded the Niagara Movement in 1905- will become the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)

- How did poll taxes and literacy tests prevent African Americans from voting?
- What is the difference between de jure and de facto segregation?
 - Example of each?
- Why was *Plessy v. Ferguson* significant?
- What were Jim Crow Laws?
 - Example?
- Aside from poll taxes and literacy tests, how were African Americans intimidated from voting?