

Aim: How were African Americans denied equality in the South after Reconstruction?

I. Reconstruction Collapses

- a. Corruption marred Grant's Presidency (1869-1877)
- b. *Slaughterhouse* cases - Supreme Court ruled that 14th Amendment only protected rights stemming from federal gov't (i.e. interstate travel, etc.)
- c. Civil Rights Act of 1875 outlawed racial discrimination in public places, but is was declared unconstitutional by Supreme Court's *Civil Rights Cases* (1883)
- d. Election of 1876 - Contested election b/w Samuel J. Tilden (Dem) and Rutherford B. Hayes (Rep)
 - i. **Compromise of 1877**
 1. Hayes wins presidency
 2. Hayes agrees to withdraw remaining troops from South
- e. Southern Democrats ("Redeemers") institute "home rule" to replace what they termed "bayonet rule" and "negro rule" that existed during Reconstruction
- f. Solid South - entire South votes Democrat

II. Economic Inequality

- a. **Sharecropping**
- b. **Tenant Farming**
- c. **Debt Peonage**

III. The Triumph of White Supremacy

- a. **Ku Klux Klan -**
 - i. Founded by ex-Confederates; led by Nathan Bedford Forrest (Grand Wizard)
 - ii. Believed in the inferiority of African Americans
 - iii. Declared loyalty to U.S. Constitution
 - iv. Used floggings, whippings, cross-burnings, shooting, **lynching**, and castration to intimidate African Americans
 1. also kept blacks from voting
- b. **Jim Crow Laws**
 - i. Segregation
 - ii. Limits of Voting Rights
 1. Poll taxes and literacy tests
 - a. Designed to prevent African Americans from voting
 - b. Exemptions--grandfather clauses
 - i. Allowed poor, illiterate whites to vote
 - iii. By the mid-1890s, many states were beginning to get serious about officially segregating the races

c. *Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)*

i. Background:

1. passage of the Separate Car Act (1890) by the Louisiana legislature-- required separate cars for different races on all trains carrying black and white passengers
2. Homer Plessy (1/8 black) challenged this law, refusing to move to "colored section"
3. Plessy's attorneys argued that the Fourteenth Amendment provided protection of all rights of citizens

ii. **Supreme Court rule that "separate by equal" facilities were permissible**

1. case long shadow of segregation, racism, discrimination, and inequality over sixty years of American history

(Justice John Marshall Harlan provided the only dissent, arguing that the Reconstruction Amendments categorically outlawed race distinctions.)

IV. **African-American Responses**

a. Booker T. Washington--late 1880s-1910s

- i. placed strong emphasis on gaining technical skills as way of *gradually* gaining power and status -- "cast down your buckets"
 1. Founded Tuskegee Institute for *vocational education*
- ii. Industrial education among blacks had a long history before Booker T. Washington emerged as a figure of national stature. A generation before he founded Tuskegee, blacks advocated industrial education as part of a program of self-help and racial solidarity

b. W.E.B. Du Bois, Ph.D. (*Souls of the Black Folk*, 1903)

- i. disputed ideas of Washington
- ii. argued African Americans should gain a liberal arts education and should fight for economic, political, and educational equality

c. Founding of the N.A.A.C.P.

- i. 1905, Du Bois and other black critics of Washington start the Niagra Movement
- ii. 1909, Oswald Garrison Villard and other white progressives join with members of the Niagra Movement in organizing the NAACP
 1. organization rejects accomodationist stance
 2. calls for full equality and end to racial discrimination
 3. mainly a northern-based movement at first
 4. seeks to change the laws