

Module 6: A Nation Grows - 1877 to the 1900s
Topic 4 Content: Segregation of African Americans Notes

Introduction

Segregation of African Americans

- Voting Restrictions
- Public Restrictions
- Lynching
- Northern Discrimination

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EDUCATION

The Segregation of African Americans

Use the menu on the left to learn about how the segregation of African Americans occurred during the “Jim Crow” Era.

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Voting Restrictions

Voting Restrictions

- Discriminatory literacy tests were administered in an effort to reduce the number of African Americans who could vote.
- Poll taxes were established to keep poor African Americans from voting.
- Southern states used the grandfather clause to allow white voters who failed the literacy test or could not pay the poll tax the right to vote.

African Americans had to pass state administered literacy tests and pay a tax in order to vote. Although all potential voters were supposed to take these tests, they were used to discourage and prevent African Americans from voting. In fact, evidence exists that suggests African American voters were given harder literacy tests than white people, and requirements for passing them were subjective.

Each year before someone could vote, he or she had to pay a poll tax. The taxes were established to keep poor whites and African Americans from voting. Because leaders of Southern states wanted to reinstate all white voters, several added the grandfather clause to their respective state constitutions. The grandfather clause allowed poor and illiterate whites to vote if their fathers or grandfathers were eligible before January 1, 1867. Before this date, freed slaves had not gained the right to vote.

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Public Restrictions

The slide features a background image of a wooden building with a sign that reads "WHITE MEN". On the left side, there is a vertical blue bar with four grey boxes containing the following text: "Voting Restrictions", "Public Restrictions", "Lynching", and "Northern Discrimination". On the right side, there is a large blue box with the title "Public Restrictions" and three bullet points.

Public Restrictions

- Segregation laws were established that created "seperate but equal" public and private facilities.
- Segregation laws were known as the "Jim Crow" laws.
- The "Jim Crow" Era lasted until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

Racial inequality became so bad in the South that some Southern states passed segregation laws. These laws created "separate but equal" white and black public and private facilities. They were known as the Jim Crow Laws after a song that ended with the lyrics "Jump, Jim Crow." The year 1877 began the Jim Crow Era, and led to the enactment of the "Jim Crow" laws. The Jim Crow Era denied African Americans full rights of citizenship, and lasted until 1965.

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Lynching

The slide features a dark background with a faint image of a person's back. On the left, a vertical stack of four grey boxes is separated by dotted lines, with a blue vertical bar to its left. The boxes are labeled: 'Voting Restrictions', 'Public Restrictions', 'Lynching', and 'Northern Discrimination'. To the right, a blue box contains the title 'Lynching' and two bullet points.

Lynching

- African Americans were subjected to informal customs such as:
 - not shaking hands with whites,
 - yielding to whites on sidewalks, and
 - removing their hats while in the presence of whites.
- Violation of informal customs or formal laws resulted in lynching without a trial.

African Americans in the South faced a series of formal and informal laws and customs. For example, African Americans and whites did not shake hands, African Americans had to avoid getting in the way of whites while walking on sidewalks, and African American men had to remove their hats while in the presence of whites.

Those who did not follow the formal laws and informal customs received violent consequences. In many cases, an African American who violated a law would be lynched without a trial. Lynching reached its highest point in the 1880s and 1890s, and continued into the Twentieth Century.

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Northern Discrimination

The graphic features a dark background with a faint image of a person. On the left, a vertical blue bar is next to a list of four items, each in a grey box with a dotted line below it: 'Voting Restrictions', 'Public Restrictions', 'Lynching', and 'Northern Discrimination'. To the right, a large blue box contains the title 'Northern Discrimination' and a bulleted list of points.

Northern Discrimination

- To escape discrimination, many African Americans migrated to Northern cities.
- Discrimination in the North occurred in the following ways:
 - African Americans were forced into segregated neighborhoods,
 - African Americans were not allowed to join labor unions, and
 - African Americans faced various forms of discrimination in the workplace.

To escape discrimination in the South, many African Americans migrated to Northern cities. While discriminations and racism was not as violent in the North, it still existed. African Americans were forced into segregated neighborhoods, were not allowed to become members in labor unions, and were discriminated in various ways in the workforce.