

The Journey of Reconciliation, 1947



Power Point to accompany “The Journey of Reconciliation, 1947” lesson plan, available in the Database of Civic Resources.

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DEMOCRACY



“Democracy is never finished. When we believe that it is, we have, in fact, killed it.”

~Patricia Hill Collins

“Democracy is a process,
not a static condition. It is
becoming rather than being. It
can easily be lost, but never is
fully won. Its essence is eternal
struggle.”

~ William H. Hastie

“Our democracy is not a product but a continual process. It is preserved not by monuments but deeds. Sometimes it needs refining; sometimes it needs amending; sometimes it needs defending. Always, it needs improving.”

~Lee H. Hamilton



Jim Crow

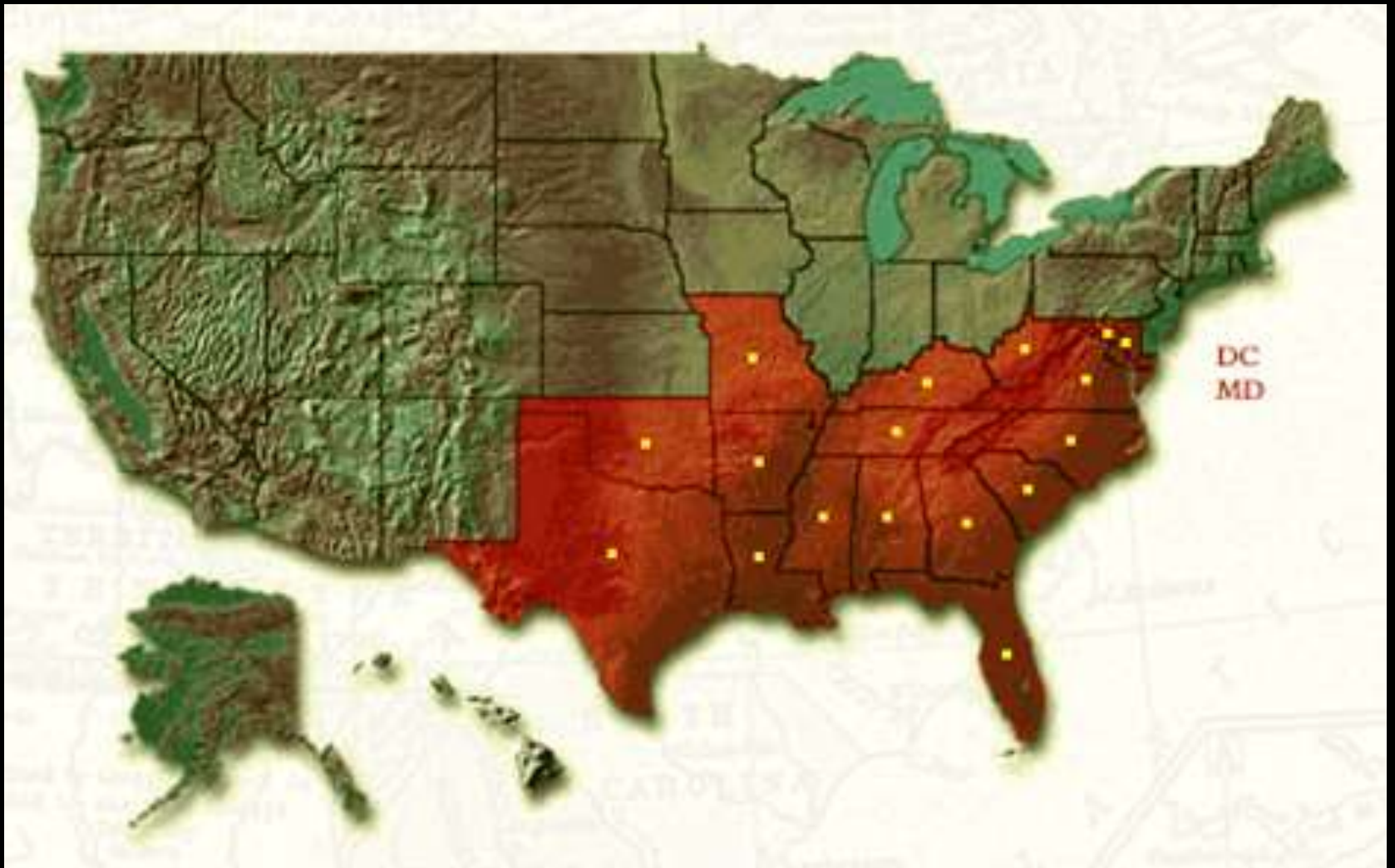
- The term “Jim Crow” originated in an 1830s song performed by a white minstrel show actor, “Daddy Rice.”
 - In a racist portrayal of African Americans, Rice covered his face with charcoal paste or burnt cork to resemble a black man, and then sang and danced a routine in a stereotypical caricature.
- By the 1900s, the name Jim Crow was used to identify **racist laws and actions** in the South that deprived African Americans of their civil rights.
- Between **1877 and the mid-1960s**, Jim Crow laws were in effect and represented a series of rigid, unjust laws with the purpose of keeping the races separated (**segregation.**)
 - Blacks, and other minority groups were forced to use separate restrooms, water fountains, restaurants, waiting rooms, parks and swimming pools, libraries, hospitals, bus seats, and even cemeteries.
- Beyond the unfair laws, there was equally oppressive etiquette/behavior expected of African Americans, based on the misconception that Blacks were intellectually and culturally inferior to Whites.

Some examples of Jim Crow

“Etiquette,” 1870s-1960s

- ◉ Jim Crow etiquette prescribed that Blacks were introduced to Whites, never Whites to Blacks. For example: "Mr. Peters (the White person), this is Charlie (the Black person), that I spoke to you about."
- ◉ Whites did not use courtesy titles of respect when referring to Blacks (i.e. Mr., Mrs., Miss., Sir, or Ma'am). Instead, Blacks were called by their first names. Blacks, however, had to use courtesy titles when referring to Whites and were not allowed to call them by their first names.
- ◉ People of different races were prohibited from sitting side by side when traveling (i.e. on buses and trains) and white motorists had the right-of-way at all intersections.
- ◉ Blacks were expected to never disagree with, challenge, curse at, or laugh at a white person.
- ◉ Blacks were to never show superior knowledge or intelligence to a white person.
- ◉ Blacks were not allowed to show public affection toward one another in public.

<http://jimcrowhistory.org/geography/geography.htm>



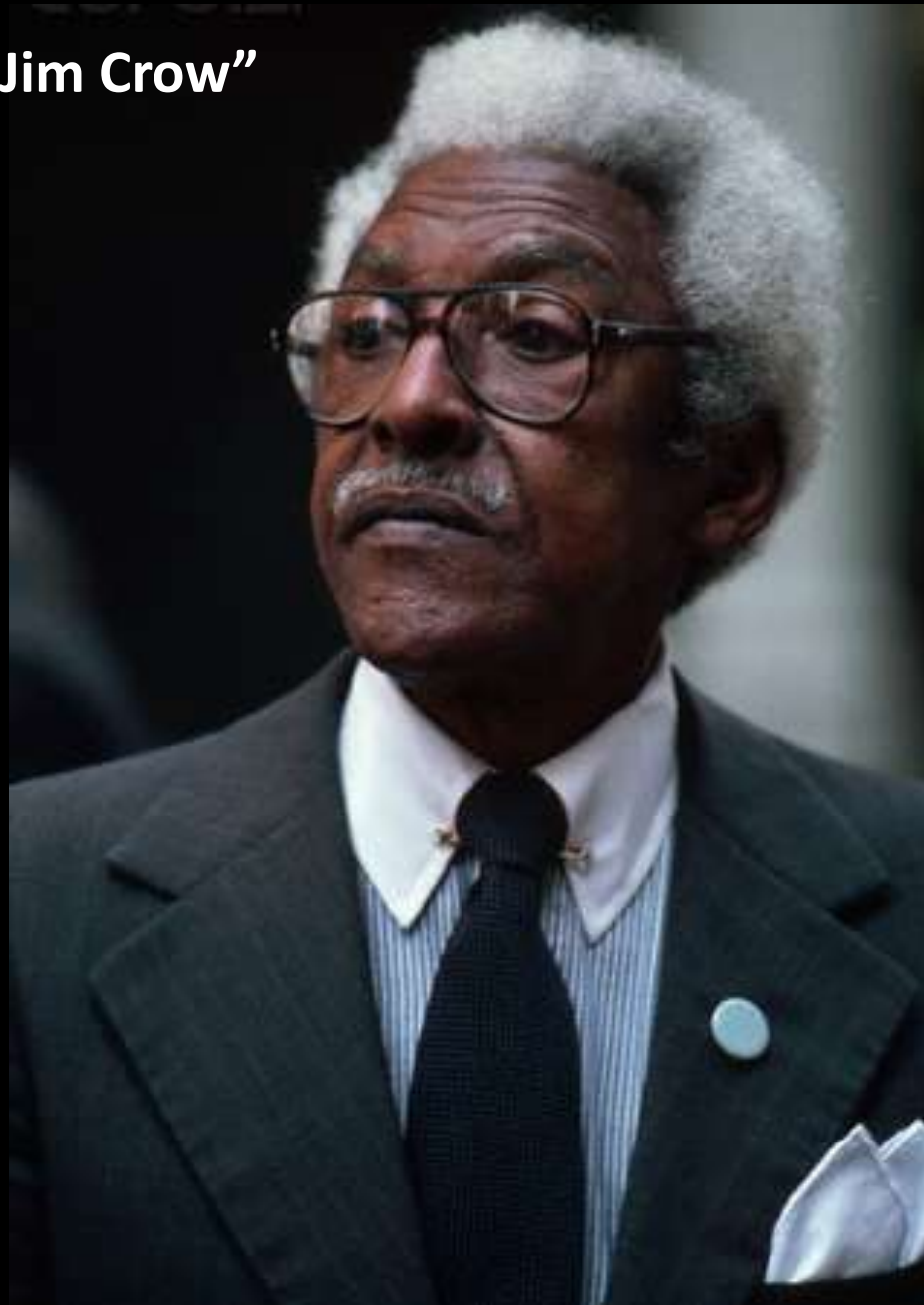
Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896

"That [the Separate Car Act] does not conflict with the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery...is too clear for argument...A statute which implies merely a legal distinction between the white and colored races - - a distinction which is founded in the color of the two races, and which must always exist so long as white men are distinguished from the other race by color -- has no tendency to destroy the legal equality of the two races...

“We consider the underlying *fallacy* of the plaintiff's argument to consist in the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it.”

Justice Henry Brown

**“Nonviolence verses Jim Crow”
by Bayard Rustin**





IF NEGRO MEN
CAN CARRY GUNS FOR
UNCLE SAM

SURELY

THEY CAN DRIVE MILK
WAGONS FOR
BOWMAN DAIRY

Negro Labor Relations League

World War II – The Turning Point

"Help us get some of the blessings of democracy here at home before you jump on the 'free other peoples' band wagon and tell us to go forth and die in a foreign land."

~ P. B. Young (editor of the Norfolk Journal and Guide, an African American newspaper)

"The nation cannot expect the colored people to feel that the U.S. is worth defending if they continue to be treated as they are treated now."

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

World War II – The Turning Point

"We loyal Negro-American citizens demand the right to work & fight for our country."

- ◉ In spite of these injustices they faced at home, numerous African Americans were eager to join the armed forces and serve their country.
 - At first the military proved reluctant to enlist them or else assigned them to menial roles. But in time the army and navy increased opportunities for black men and women.
- ◉ In 1940, 19 percent of black men were unemployed, and most black families lived in poverty. The huge defense buildup that began with the fall of France in June 1940 ended the Great Depression and brought back prosperity. But blacks were denied an equal share.
- ◉ Using the slogan "We loyal Negro-American citizens demand the right to work and fight for our country," African Americans threatened to march on Washington to demand these rights. They forced president Franklin Roosevelt to issue **Executive Order #8802** in 1948, which opened government jobs and defense contract work to African Americans on the basis of equal pay for equal work. It was the first presidential action against discrimination since Reconstruction.

World War II – The Turning Point

- The war years were tumultuous, but blacks sensed that out of this ferment change might come. After the bleak racism of the 1920s and the economic disaster of the 1930s, there was hope.
 - African American newspapers conceived the "**Double V**" campaign—victory over both America's enemies abroad and over Jim Crow segregation at home.
 - In this hopeful atmosphere the **NAACP** increased the percentage of registered black voters in the South from 2 to 12 percent. Membership in the NAACP itself increased from 18,000 before the war to nearly 500,000 at its close.
- As the Cold War began, America could not claim to be the defender of freedom and democracy when it practiced segregation and discrimination at home.
 - President Harry Truman fully desegregated the armed forces in 1948, and a government report of 1947 called *To Secure These Rights* called for "the elimination of segregation from . . . American life."
 - The stage was set for the civil rights movement.





Commemorative Marker



“I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws, and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me, these are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it . . .”

~Judge Learned Hand