Teacher Tool 137: Where is Jim Crow Now

Study Guide


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History in the First Person: Race and Civil Rights—Where is Jim Crow Now?

Original Date: February 25, 2016
Grade Levels: 7-12

Program Description:

What was it like to grow up in a segregated America? What was it like to have separate places to go to high school, separate places to sit at the movie theater, separate water fountains and bathrooms? What did it feel like to be rejected on a job application or denied service at a restaurant or hotel simply because of the color of your skin? What did it mean when words like “equality” and “justice” seemed to have a different meaning for different people in American society? What did it mean to participate in a movement that sought to change those conditions? And what did that movement do? Where did it succeed? How has life changed as a result of the civil rights movement? What struggles still exist? Where should our attention now and in the future be placed? How would you choose to be part of a civil rights movement today?

One hundred years ago Jim Crow laws were commonplace. Today America’s laws are different, but headlines still remind us of continuing struggles in the movement for equal legal treatment. View this archived program for a conversation on the status of the civil rights movement. Consider the questions above and more as you hear with individuals who lived under Jim Crow laws, historians, and civil rights advocates. Learn from individuals who experienced racial segregation and discrimination first hand. Meet documentarians and activists learning from the past and seeking change today. Consider your place in the conversation around civil rights.

Our focus in this program is not on exploring the details of America’s struggle for Civil Rights throughout its history, but is to provide students the rare and important opportunity to hear directly from individuals whose life exemplifies the struggles and triumphs of the movement. Denise Ward-Brown, director of the award-winning documentary, From Jim Crow to Barack Obama, will also join us. More information on her documentary can be found at http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/index.html.

Program Objectives:

1. The participant will gain a greater understanding of what it meant to live during and participate in the struggle for Civil Rights for black Americans.
2. The participant will interact with individuals providing primary source accounts of recent world events.
3. The participant will meet people and hear stories from diverse perspectives.
Program Format:
Time codes are provided in blue to help you find specific segments in the program.

I. Welcome and Introduction—Student groups and experts will be introduced and welcomed to the program. (00:00 to 05:46)

II. Interaction with Program Guests—Students interact with documentarian Denise Ward-Brown and Lois Jean Turner, who lived under Jim Crow Laws. Conversation with the guests focuses on the topics below.

A. Background on Jim Crow Laws (05:47 to 07:11)

B. Ms. Turner’s and Ms. Ward-Brown’s Experiences In Elementary and High School (07:12 to 17:38)
   1. Early life experiences such as going to school, interacting with friends, living in the neighborhood, riding the bus, going to church, etc.
   2. High School experiences
   3. Remembrances from family life, interactions in public, what each learned from adults, etc.

C. Civil Rights Issues of Their Lives—Then and Now—In this section, we discuss important civil rights-related topics that have been part of our national conversation for the entirety of our guests’ lives and continue to be part of our national conversation today. Topics are listed in alphabetical order below. (17:39 to 47:40)
   a. Education
   b. Employment
   c. Housing
   d. Interaction with Government/Authority
   e. Public Accommodations
   f. Voting

Videos in this segment include:
An excerpt from President Johnson’s speech while signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Newsreel footage of Bloody Sunday events in Selma, Alabama in March 1965
Newsreel footage of civil rights marches in the 1960’s
Footage of protest events in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014

III. Closing Segment—We include summary of topics discussed and final questions from students. (47:41 to 56:59)

A. Thinking About the Future
B. Closing Comments and Overview Thoughts
Featured National Standards (History):
Grades 5-12:
Historical Thinking Standards
2. Historical Comprehension
   B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.
   C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.
   F. Appreciate historical perspectives--(a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded--the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding “present-mindedness,” judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

4. Historical Research Capabilities
   A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.
   B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making
   A. Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.

Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

1. Journal About the Program—Have students compare their previous understanding of what they thought it would mean to be a black American in the 1940s, 50s and 60s with their view of that situation after participating in the program. What surprised them the most? What reinforced what they already believed? What new insights have they gained about how the struggle for Civil Rights has affected their life? How do they view the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement? How do they feel they can best carry on the goals and ideals of the movement? Have students share their thoughts in class discussion, journal entries, or written reports.

2. View the Documentary—Another excellent resource to provide students more information on living under Jim Crow Laws and the progress that has or hasn’t been made since they were repealed can be found in HEC-TV’s program, Liquid Light: Jim Crow to Barack Obama. The program includes an interview with documentarian Denise Ward-Brown as well as her documentary, “From Jim Crow to Barack Obama” which shares the stories and memories of many individuals who lived under Jim Crow Laws. The program can be viewed at http://www.hectv.org/video/12859/jim-crow-to-barack-obama/. More excerpts from the documentary and additional related resources can also be found at http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/.
3. **Share an Appreciation**—Have students write a letter to one of our guests detailing an insight the student gained from hearing his story, an appreciation for her participation, and/or another focus area of their choice. E-mail the letter to us at live@hectv.org or mail the letter to us at Live@HEC-TV 3221 McKelvey Rd #106, Bridgeton, MO 63044.

4. **Contact a Guest Speaker**—Have students research the struggle for Civil Rights in their own area and see if they can locate a guest speaker to come to your class and share their story. Think in terms of individuals who participated in the struggle for black American rights as well as those who joined in other civil rights struggles for women and/or other minorities.

5. **Learn More About the Topic**—To extend their study of the Civil Rights movement even further have students explore any of the following HEC-TV programs and Educate.Today videos.

**Civil Rights 9: History in the First Person: Stories of the Civil Rights Movement—Sister Mary Antona Ebo**
For many years, Sister Mary Antona Ebo has been hailed for her contributions to the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The Franciscan Sister of Mary, who was among those who went to Selma, Ala., in March of 1965 to march for voting rights for African Americans, shares her story with students and viewers. View this program on Educate.Today.

**Civil Rights 11: History in the First Person: Stories of the Civil Rights Movement—Percy Green and Bernice Thompson**
Meet St. Louis individuals who changed history for their generation and all future generations and learn how they sacrificed, struggled, and ultimately triumphed while seeking Civil Rights for all. View this program on Educate.Today.

**Civil Rights 8: History in the First Person: Living Under Jim Crow Laws**
What was it like to grow up in a segregated America? What did it mean when words like “equality” and “justice” seemed to have a different meaning for different people in American society? How were all people affected when treatment under the law could be so different? Learn the answers to these questions and more from individuals who lived under Jim Crow Laws. View this program on Educate.Today.

**Civil Rights 6: Constitution Day 2014: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Its Current Implications**
In partnership with The Missouri Bar, we celebrated Constitution Day 2014 by taking an in depth look at what it took to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Constitutional concepts behind the Act, the Act’s major provisions, and its on-going impacts. Panelists for the program include: Rigel Oliveri—Associate Dean, University of Missouri School Of Law; Mark Updegrove—Executive Director, LBJ Presidential Library; Pam Meanes—President, National Bar Association; and Reuben Shelton—President, Missouri Bar Association. View this program on Educate.Today.
Civil Rights 5: Constitution Day 2015: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and Its Current Implications

In partnership with the Missouri Bar, we celebrated Constitution Day 2015 by taking an in depth look into what it took to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Act’s on-going impacts, and voting rights issues of today. Panelists for the program include: Honorable Catherine D. Perry—Chief Judge, U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri; Jason Kander—Secretary of State, Missouri; Mark Updegrove—Executive Director, LBJ Presidential Library; Stephen Davis—Attorney with Arent Fox LLP and adjunct professor of law at Saint Louis University; Denise Lieberman—Senior Attorney, Advancement Project. View this program on Educate.Today.

Language Arts 1: Jackie and Me: Issues and Themes

Dan Gutman’s novel Jackie and Me continues to be read and loved by thousands of young people each year. In this exciting program students had the unique opportunity to participate in a national videoconference book club discussion of issues and themes raised in the story, see a scene from Metro Theater Company stage production of Jackie and Me, talk with the actors and director of the play, learn about the history and legacy of Jackie Robinson’s life, and also interact with Dr. Ray Doswell, curator of the Negro Leagues Museum. View this program on Educate.Today.

Seeking Freedom

Court documents found in St. Louis tell the inspiring story of courage when slaves from around the area fought for their freedom by challenging their owners in court. View this program on HEC-TV’s website at http://www.hectv.org/watch/seeking-freedom/seeking-freedom/2095/

Josephine Baker: More than a Banana Skirt

Learn about the life, loves and civil rights causes that impacted Josephine Baker’s life from surviving family members and others who have been touched by this multi-faceted entertainer. View this program on HEC-TV’s website at http://www.hectv.org/watch/josephine-baker/more-than-a-banana-skirt/2079/

A Conversation with Andrew Young

This program offers an extensive conversation with the noted civil rights leader and former ambassador. View this program on HEC-TV’s website at http://www.hectv.org/watch/a-conversation-with/andrew-young/3042/

A Conversation with Dick Gregory

Join HEC-TV’s Cordell Whitlock as he chats with actor, comedian, activist, and Sumner High School graduate, Dick Gregory. View this program on HEC-TV’s website at http://www.hectv.org/watch/a-conversation-with/dick-gregory/1238/
Supplemental Resources:

http://www.civilrights.org/resources/civilrights101/desegregation.html
Learn a great deal about the development of Civil Rights in American history from its origins until today. The site includes a chronology, glossary, explanations of important events in Civil Rights history including the movement for Black American civil rights as well as additional movements for other minority groups and women.

http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/ Website of the National Civil Rights Museum. Teacher and student educational resources are included.

More information on the award-winning documentary, *From Jim Crow to Barack Obama* can be found at: http://www.jimcrowtobarackobama.com/index.html.