

Topic #14 Overview

Main Themes:

1. That the defeat and devastation of the South presented the nation with severe social, economic, and political problems.
2. How Radical Reconstruction changed the South but fell short of the full transformation needed to secure equality for the freedman.
3. That white society and the federal government lacked the will to enforce effectively most of the constitutional and legal guarantees acquired by blacks during Reconstruction.
4. How the policies of the Grant administration moved beyond Reconstruction matters to foreshadow issues of the late nineteenth century.
5. How white leaders reestablished economic and political control of the South and sought to modernize the region through industrialization.
6. How the race question continued to dominate Southern life.

Objectives: [You should be able to explain each of these in some detail]

1. The conditions in the former Confederacy after Appomattox that would have made any attempt at genuine Reconstruction most difficult.
2. The differences between the Conservative and Radical views on the Reconstruction process, and the reasons for the eventual Radical domination.
3. The functioning of the impeachment process in the case of President Andrew Johnson and the significance of his acquittal for the future of Reconstruction.
4. Radical Reconstruction in practice and Southern (black and white) reaction to it.
5. The debate among historians concerning the nature of Reconstruction, its accomplishments, and its harmful effects on the South.
6. The national problems faced by President Ulysses S. Grant and the reasons for his lack of success as chief executive.
7. The diplomatic successes of the Johnson and Grant administrations and the role of the presidents in achieving them.
8. The greenback question and how it reflected postwar financial problems of the nation.
9. The alternatives that were available during the election of 1876, and the effects of the so-called Compromise of 1877 on the South and on the nation.
10. The response of African Americans to conditions in the South following Reconstruction.
11. The reasons for the failure of the South to develop a strong industrial economy after Reconstruction.
12. The methods used in the South to regain control of its own affairs and the course of action it chose thereafter.

13. The ways in which Southerners decided to handle the race question and the origin of the system identified with "Jim Crow."
14. The typical pattern of Southern agriculture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the impact this had on the region and its people.
15. The debate among historians over the origins of segregation after the Civil War.