

CONVERSATIONS ON SC HISTORY with Dr. Walter Edgar

Lesson 16: Southern Rebirth

Focus Points:

- Violent period in SC History – 1890's
 - Governor Benjamin Tillman – elected 1890
 - One of the most influential politicians in SC History
 - Planter from Edgefield
 - Challenged Wade Hampton's Establishment
 - Created Farmers' Movement
 - Initiated Clemson College as agricultural school
 - The State Newspaper – created to oppose Tillman forces in SC
 - 1895 Constitution created present political framework
 - Pushed through by Tillman and Tillmanites
 - Sole purpose to eliminate African American voting rights
 - Fragmented state government
 - Eliminated effective Home Rule
 - Prohibition Movement became Dispensary System
 - Majority of population and General Assembly – Prohibitionists
 - Gov. Tillman insisted supporters move to a Dispensary System
 - State became major liquor merchant
 - Wealth and corruption ensued
 - Dispensary War – Darlington County railroad station
 - State Newspaper editor, Gonzales
 - Gunned down by James Tillman, nephew of Ben Tillman
 - Symbolic monument to violent era of state history
 - Lynching and violence prevalent

Discussion:

What impact does the Constitution of 1895 have today in South Carolina's government? How did Clemson College come into being during Gov. Ben Tillman's term? How did the Dispensary System evolve in South Carolina?

Readings:

Edgar, South Carolina, A History. pp. 453-482.

Paul Horne & Patricia Klien, South Carolina, The History of an American State. pp. 346-354.

South Carolina Social Studies Standards:

Standard 8-5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of major social, political, and economic developments that took place in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Indicator 8-5.1: Summarize the political, economic, and social conditions in South Carolina following the end of Reconstruction, including the leadership of Wade Hampton and the so-called Bourbons or Redeemers, agricultural depression and struggling industrial development, the impact of the temperance and suffrage movements, the development of the 1895 constitution, and the evolution of race relations and Jim Crow laws. (H, P, E)

Indicator 8-5.2: Compare key aspects of the Populist movement in South Carolina, including the economic and political roots of Populism, the leadership of Benjamin Tillman, conflicts between the Tillmanites and the Conservatives, the founding of land-grant colleges, and the increased racial conflicts and lynching. (H, G, P)

Literacy Elements:

- E. Explain change and continuity over time
- L. Challenge ad hominem and other illogical arguments (e.g., name calling, personal attacks, insinuation and innuendo, circular arguments)