

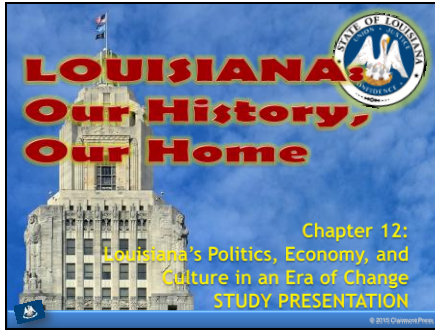
Louisiana: Our History, Our Home

Chapter 12: Louisiana's Politics, Economy, and Culture in an Era of Change

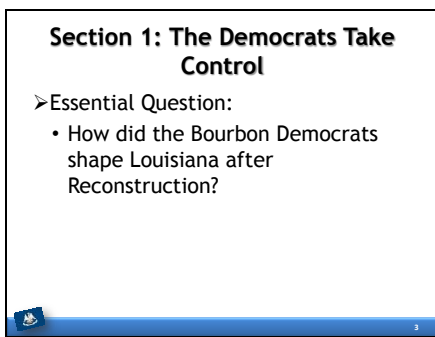


Quick Notes

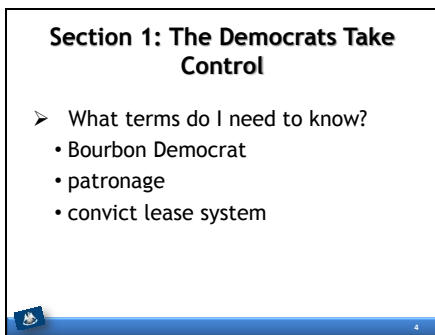
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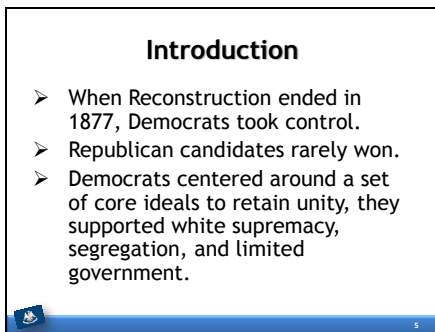
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Bourbon Democrats

- "Bourbon" refers to the backward-looking nature of Southern Democrats.
- The term was borrowed from the Bourbon kings of France who tried to reverse the rights many gained during the French Revolution.
- A **Bourbon Democrat** was a person who had not accepted changes made after the Civil War, specifically the abolition of slavery.
- They used the state constitution to limit any big government projects and retract small educational advancements.

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The Lottery Company and the New Orleans Ring

- The Louisiana State Lottery Company was very powerful.
- In 1868, it was granted a 25 year charter.
- It paid \$40,000 a year in exchange for official recognition. It made enormous profits and paid no additional taxes.
- The lottery sold tickets through the mail, and it made \$20-\$30 million in the 1880s.

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The Lottery Company and the New Orleans Ring (continued)

- The Lottery Company was very powerful in New Orleans, which was controlled by the New Orleans Ring at this time.
- The Ring gave people small amounts of money or **patronage** jobs in exchange for their votes.
- The cotton pickers in the northern half of the state liked the Lottery. Those in the southern half of the state disapproved of the gambling and corruption caused by these two institutions.

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Beneficiaries of Corruption

- E.A. Banks arrived in New Orleans after the Civil War and quickly rose in Democratic Party leadership because of his involvement in the White League.
- In 1878, he became the state's treasurer and stayed there for ten years.
- In the early 1880s, he formed the *Times-Democrat* from two pre-existing newspapers.
- He was named a commissioner of the 1884 Cotton Centennial Expedition but resigned before its financial losses and low attendance became public.
- Before he left the treasury office, an audit uncovered that he had stolen money from the state.
- He escaped to Honduras and the money was never recovered.

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The Convict Lease System

- S.L. James began the **convict lease system**, which leased prisoners as workers to private businesses in exchange for money, in 1870.
- Corruption was evident in this system, and prisoners suffered abuse, neglect, and death within six years.
- James paid-off politicians and the state to keep the system going because it was extremely profitable for him.
- By the time of his death in 1894, he was a multimillionaire.
- The state regained control of its prisoners in 1901.

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Section 2: The Rise of Jim Crow

- Essential Question:
 - How did Bourbon Democrats use Jim Crow laws and other methods to segregate races?

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Section 2: The Rise of Jim Crow

- What terms do I need to know?
 - Jim Crow laws
 - poll tax
 - grandfather clause
 - sharecropping
 - debt peonage
 - grinding season
 - Farmer's Alliances
 - populism

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Introduction

- Aside from limiting the size of the government, the Bourbons also wanted to maintain white supremacy.
- The legislature adopted **Jim Crow laws**, which restricted African American freedoms and required separate-but-equal facilities for whites and blacks.
- The name Jim Crow came from an actor named T.D. Rice, who wore blackface makeup and performed songs which mocked African American traditions.

The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow

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A Focus on Transportation

- As early as Reconstruction, African Americans protested segregation.
- In 1867, African Americans gathered in New Orleans to protest segregated streetcars. The streetcars for people of color were marked with a yellow star. Their protest was so effective, the mayor had to reverse the policy and streetcars remained integrated until the 1900s.
- Although the state's 1868 constitution prohibited segregation, it was quickly becoming common because most former slaves could not afford tickets on steamboats or trains.
- Wealthy African Americans continued to exercise their right to first class seating even though they were often challenged by whites.

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Segregation Statutes

- By the late 1880s, many southern legislatures began instituting Jim Crow laws.
- The 1890 Separate Car Act required different railroad cars for whites and blacks.
- After 1896, nearly every aspect of life was segregated: schools, train cars, entrances, bathrooms, and later the supply of donated blood.
- Although the laws required separate but equal facilities, that was rarely the case.

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Prejudice Against Italian Immigrants

- Louisiana's large population of Italian immigrants were treated like second-class citizens.
- Newspapers expressed concerns about clannishness and criminality of the immigrants. Most stories were focused on gangs known as the Mafia.
- When New Orleans' Police Chief David Hennessy was shot in 1890, nineteen Italian suspects were arrested.
- When the jury decided that they were either not guilty or they were deadlocked, a mob of enraged citizens stormed the parish prison and shot nine of them. Two more were hanged from lamp posts.

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The 1898 Constitution

- In 1898, a new state constitution was adopted. Several tactics were implemented to restrict African Americans and many poor whites from voting.
- At the time, the state had high rates of illiteracy, so they ruled that a citizen needed to be literate in order to vote.
- Some voters were required to own property while others had to pay a **poll tax**, which was a tax that had to be paid before a person could vote.
- In order to include more white voters, they adopted a **grandfather clause**, which gave a person the right to vote if they could prove their grandfather had voted before 1867. This ruled out all former slaves and their descendants.

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Anti-Lottery Bourbon Governors

- Almost all governors from the late nineteenth century were white supremacists, but some made small reforms.
- In 1888, Francis T. Nicholls was re-elected because he expressed his discontent with the Lottery.
- Nicholls and his successor, Murphy J. Foster, were successful in ending the Lottery's hold on state politics.
- Despite this political success, the majority of Louisianans were poor, landless, and faced ongoing economic challenges.

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Economic Challenge

- Some rich Louisianans were able to maintain their wealth through plantation agriculture.
- Without slave labor, it became more difficult for large planters to make a profit.
- Small farmers often struggled to make ends meet.

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Sharecropping and Debt Peonage

- Plantation owners began using a system called **sharecropping**. A farmer and his family would rent a portion of a plantation owners land and raise a cash crop in return for access to a small house on the land. They would pay the plantation owner back through crops that the family raised.
- Often, the sharecroppers would go into debt because they needed supplies throughout the year and couldn't pay for them.
- Plantation owners often put them further into debt by putting high prices on goods sold in their stores, which often had no competition.
- The cycle of poverty entered by so many sharecroppers was called **debt peonage**. If a farmer went into debt, it was very unlikely he would be able to get out as time went on.

From Slave to Sharecropper

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Sugar Workers Organize

- A sugar planter's need for labor varied throughout the year. The late autumn harvest, called **grinding season**, was the most demanding time of the year.
- In 1886, the sugar crop was poor and to make up for lost crops, planters reduced the pay of their workers.
- The workers tried to unionize in 1887 as grinding season began.
- Many planters hired gunmen to protect their lands.
- On November 22, 1887, the gunmen and the unionized workers fought in Thibodaux. At least 30 African Americans were killed and 100 were injured.
- This discouraged many farmers from trying to unionize until the twentieth century.

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Agricultural Innovation

- Most farmers continued to raise only one cash crop, either sugar or cotton.
- Some farmers tried to grow new crops, in hopes of better returns.
- Farmers who used a scientific approach to crop diversification were usually more successful.




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Expansion of Rice Cultivation

- The most successful form of crop diversification came in Southwestern Louisiana.
- In the 1800s, Seaman A. Knapp came to Louisiana and encouraged people to grow rice.
- He taught local farmers tips for rice cultivation and encouraged rice farmers from his home state, Iowa, to come to Louisiana.
- Many came from Iowa and established towns, like Vinton.
- Locals established towns like Crowley (1887), which became a railroad hub for shipping rice.




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Farmer's Alliance and Fusion Politics

- Farmer's Alliances worked to achieve better conditions for those who worked in the fields.
- In the early 1890s, they joined to challenge Bourbon officials in elections in both 1892 and 1896.
- Many of the planters who joined were Republicans, who favored a tariff on imported sugar and therefore disagreed with the Democrats.
- The inclusion of both whites and blacks in this challenge was called the fusion movement.
- The political movement farmers supported was **populism**, which is the belief in the rights and wisdom of the common man.
- In 1896, if the votes had been counted fairly, those opposing the Democrats would have won.




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Section 3: Louisiana Enters the Twentieth Century

- Essential Question:
 - How did the progressive movement bring change and improvements to Louisiana?



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Quick Notes

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Section 3: Louisiana Enters the Twentieth Century

- What terms do I need to know?
 - Progressive Movement
 - suffrage
 - scrip

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Introduction

- As the 20th century began, the people of Louisiana faced many challenges including lack of passable roads, poor drainage, and primitive water supplies.
- In New Orleans, these problems could be deadly.
- Progressives took on these challenges in the early twentieth century.

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Progressive Reformers

- Those following the **progressive movement** believed the government should be used to address illiteracy, poverty, and poor working conditions.
- Progressives opposed the New Orleans Ring and argued that those elected to office should have special qualifications like degrees in law, accounting, or engineering.

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Progressive Reformers (continued)

- Jean and Kate Gordon were two sisters who believed in the progressive movement.
- Jean was devoted to protecting child laborers and workers safety. In 1906, she helped to pass the first child labor law in the state.
- Kate spent her life campaigning for women's **suffrage** (right to vote).

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Progressive Governors

- Governors in the early twentieth century agreed with some progressive ideas.
- Many still believed in white supremacy, but they also sought to improve quality of life and the reputation of the state.
- Governor William Heard was trained as an accountant and worked to improve Louisiana's financial procedures as well as education.
- Newton Blanchard, who was trained as a lawyer, tried to improve conditions for state prisoners. He was the first to create a juvenile justice system, which separated children from adult prisoners.
- Jared Sanders was the first governor to place a tax on companies that profited from cutting down timber and extracting petroleum.

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Lumber and Oil

- Lumber became a chief resource within the state.
- Lumber mills in southern Louisiana processed cypress trees from the swamps.
- In forests near Shreveport, pine was the main kind of tree.
- Between 1880 and 1920, lumbering jobs were plentiful and they paid well, but they were very dangerous.
- Often, those who worked for lumber companies lived in business-run camps and had to buy goods from the company store. In fact, some companies paid their workers in scrip, which was a type of currency that was only good in the company's stores.

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Lumber and Oil (continued)

- When oil was discovered near Jennings in 1901, people had the opportunity to do something besides agriculture.
- Working in oil fields could sometimes be deadly, but the pay was worth it to some.
- Men set up camps around the oil wells, but they quickly became developed areas.
- Corporations, like Standard Oil built refineries and pipelines which produced 7,000 barrels of oil a day in 1911.
- When the value of natural gas was discovered, it was piped to different parts of the country.



Louisiana's first oil well, near Jennings, LA

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The Pursuit of Pleasure

- In the 1920s, people had more time for leisurely activities in the evenings and on weekends.
- This time was made available due to the efforts of the progressives, who fought for a shorter work day and weekends off from work.

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New Ways to Shop


- Shopping was a new form of entertainment.
- In rural communities, catalogs made it possible for consumers to purchase clothing, tools, and farm equipment.
- Canal Street became the location of many department stores in New Orleans and many traveled there by train to shop.
- Electric lights in businesses made it possible to continue shopping into the evening hours.



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The Rise of the Automobile


- Although the quality of roads in Louisiana were still terrible, cars were becoming more common.
- Louisiana began to regulate automobiles, and in 1915, it required those driving cars to have licenses.
- Henry Ford boosted automobile production using an assembly line, which took less time and reduced the cost of each car, making it much more affordable.
- Ford also established a credit plan, so his cars could be purchased more easily.



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Trains and Streetcars

- The majority of Louisianans still relied on trains for travel between cities.
- Although Louisiana built railroads a little later than other states, it had 5,000 miles of track by the early 1900s.
- In Shreveport and New Orleans, carriages and streetcars were being replaced by electric ones.



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The Birth of Jazz

- Jazz developed in Louisiana in the early 1900s.
- At first, it was only played in small, rough bars in New Orleans, but soon its popularity grew.
- By the 1920s, jazz was a part of the mainstream.
- Many African American jazz musicians left Louisiana to escape life under Jim Crow laws.
- One of the most famous jazz musicians is Louisiana-born Louis Armstrong.
- He learned to play cornet in a juvenile detention center and eventually helped to shape the development of jazz.