

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/wade-hamptons-last-parade-memory-of-reconstruction-in-the-1970-south-carolina-tricentennial/>

This video is a detailed discussion by a historian reflecting on their research and findings regarding the memory and interpretation of Reconstruction in South Carolina. The historian traces their scholarly work back to their PhD dissertation and first book, "What Reconstruction Meant," published in 2007. This video book focused on the historical memory of Reconstruction, particularly in South Carolina, highlighting how it differs from the predominant Civil War narratives.

The historian notes that while many scholars have extensively examined Civil War memories, Reconstruction has often been overlooked. They emphasize that Reconstruction was a critical period wherein formerly enslaved African Americans quickly gained political rights and even held office, a remarkable historical occurrence. However, this progress was met with significant resistance from white Southerners, leading to the eventual disenfranchisement of African Americans and the rise of white supremacist narratives, which portrayed Reconstruction as a disaster.

This video elaborates on two contrasting narratives emerging from this era: the white supremacist narrative that cast African American enfranchisement as misguided and harmful, and the African American perspective that celebrated the advancements made during Reconstruction as a golden era of rights and citizenship.

The historian describes the commemorative practices surrounding South Carolina's Tricentennial celebration in 1970, illustrating an evolving awareness around the state's complex history. The discussion extends to modern developments in recognizing and memorializing positive aspects of Reconstruction, including the establishment of historical markers and museums reflecting contemporary views.

Overall, the historian expresses hope for improved recognition of African American contributions and experiences during Reconstruction and emphasizes the importance of reexamining historical narratives to foster a more inclusive understanding of the past. This video serves as both a scholarly analysis of Reconstruction's legacy in South Carolina and a reflection on the evolving nature of collective memory and historical interpretation.