

Handout

Mississippi Miscegenation Laws¹

After the Civil War and Reconstruction, Southern governments began passing laws designed to segregate Blacks and whites. Between 1865 and 1956, Mississippi passed 22 such “Jim Crow” laws, including six anti-miscegenation laws that banned marriages between whites and individuals of “other races.”

Glossary

Freedman: A formerly enslaved person who has been released from slavery.

Free Negro: A free African American person who was not enslaved.

Mulatto: An obsolete racial classification for people of mixed African and European ancestry. Today, its use is considered offensive and politically incorrect.

Mongolian: An obsolete racial grouping of various peoples of Asia, the Americas, and some regions in Europe. Today, its use is considered offensive and politically incorrect.

1865: Miscegenation [Statute]

Declared a felony for any freedman, free Negro, or mulatto to intermarry with any white person. Penalty: Imprisonment in state penitentiary for life.

1890: Miscegenation [Constitution]

Prohibited marriage of a white person with a Negro or mulatto or person who has one-eighth or more of Negro blood.

1906: Miscegenation [Statute]

Prohibited marriage between a white person with a Negro or mulatto or a person with one-eighth or more Negro blood, or with an Asian or person with one-eighth or more “Mongolian” blood.

1920: Miscegenation [Statute]

Persons or corporations who printed, published or circulated written material promoting the acceptance of intermarriage between whites and Negroes would be guilty of a misdemeanor. Penalty: Fine up to \$500 or imprisonment up to six months, or both.

¹ “Map of Jim Crow America,” Florida Atlantic University, accessed February 17, 2023, <https://www.fau.edu/artsandletters/pjhr/chhre/pdf/sjc-map-jim-crow-america.pdf>.

1930: Miscegenation [State Code]

Miscegenation declared a felony. Nullified interracial marriages if parties went to another jurisdiction where such marriages were legal. Also prohibited marriages between persons of the Caucasian race and those persons who had one eighth of more Asian blood.

1942: Miscegenation [State Code]

Marriage between white and Negro or Asian void. Penalty: \$500 and/or up to ten years imprisonment. Anyone advocating intermarriage subject [t]o fin[e] of \$500 and/or six months.