**Lynching:** A practice under which whites, motivated by extreme racism, would attack black Americans in myriad brutal ways to control them. Between 1882 and 1901, more than 100 people were lynched each year in the United States, and the great majority of them were southern African Americans--numbering nearly 2,000 men and boys killed in those two decades. The wave of mob murder continued unabated in the first two decades of the 20th century, numbering nearly 4,000 people by 1932, before tapering off in the 1930s and 1940s. Two or three people were lynched every week in the nation for over 30 years. Whites used mob violence and lynching to control all kinds of black behavior, from voting to manners and attitudes. Most lynchings happened in rural area and small towns whereas mob violence took place in cities. People were brutally murdered by being hung, burned, beaten, mutilated, dragged behind wagons, and other acts of savage torture. In most cases, the local police allowed the lynchings to occur, and witnesses often included the entire white community. In many cases, the victim's body was cut up for souvenirs. Lynchings were usually justified as community responses to black assaults on white women. In fact, the vast majority of such attacks involved no alleged rape at all, and, typically, the black victims were men and some women who were politically active or economically successful. Many were innocent bystanders who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Blacks responded by launching a national movement to pressure Congress to pass Federal anti-lynching legislation, but these legislative attempts suffered defeat year after year due to the power of southern white senators.

**Civil Rights Act of 1875:** A law passed on March 1, 1875, that guaranteed equal rights for blacks in public places and made illegal the exclusion of African Americans from jury duty. However, the Supreme Court declared this act invalid in 1883 because it protected social rather than political rights. The Court also argued that the 14th Amendment prohibited the states from depriving individuals of their civil rights but did not protect the abuse of individuals' civil rights by other individuals. This ruling ended Federal protection of African Americans against discrimination by private persons.

**Fourteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution:** An amendment that, because of doubts about the constitutionality of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, defined national citizenship to include African Americans and provided for a proportionate reduction in representation when a state denied suffrage to its citizens. It passed Congress on June 13, 1866, was rejected by most southern states, and its ratification was made a condition of restoring the Union. Ultimately, the 14th Amendment was ratified and put in effect on July 28, 1868. A key provision prohibited states from depriving "any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." Most former Confederate officials were disqualified from holding public office and the Confederate War debt was repudiated. After 1877, most southern states ignored the civil rights guaranteed by the Amendment, and the Federal Government did not act to rigorously enforce these provisions until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

**Ku Klux Klan:** A secret society whose ultimate goal is to establish white supremacy. Founded in 1866 at Pulaski, Tennessee, the Ku Klux Klan violently attacked and intimidated African Americans and white Republicans (carpetbaggers and Union League members). Ex-Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest (1862-77), who had massacred black and white Union soldiers at Fort Pillow, was elected its first Grand Wizard. The organization's name is thought to have come from the Greek word for circle (kuklos) and the English word for clan, although some historians and folklorists speculate that it might have had its origins in the phantom Indian chieftain named Clocletz. This spiritual figure was believed, in slave times, to have roamed the Alabama woods hunting for escaped slaves. The Clocletz Indians were indeed an historic people used for that purpose--and many blacks identified the word with terror and capture.

**Color Line:** A barrier or non-physical wall, usually created by custom or economic differences, to separate nonwhite persons from white persons. In the 1890s, this customary barrier in the southern states of America became a legal line of separation with laws stating clearly where blacks could and could not go in public spaces. By the turn of the century, African Americans were confronted with "colored" signs on doors, water fountains, bathrooms, and waiting rooms in bus and train stations designating their places for standing, sitting, eating, and using the facilities. The "colored" sign was the most visible mark of inferiority imposed upon African Americans by the Jim Crow laws. The color line also existed in the mid-western and eastern states of the nation, but it was not so clearly marked, and was seldom enforced by law.

**Miscegenation:** A term referring to the interbreeding of persons of different races. Local and state laws often forbade interracial marriages in the antebellum South, and custom strongly frowned upon any sexual relationships between the races. Census enumerators usually listed light-skinned slaves and free blacks as mulattoes, meaning the offspring of white and black parents. The number of mulattoes in the South was very high on the eve of the Civil War, perhaps the majority of slaves in some regions. Many of these people were the children of light-skinned slaves and dark-skinned slaves; many were the offspring of mulatto parents; and many were the products of interracial relations. After the Civil War, the term miscegenation started being used as a derogatory word covering the whole range of mixed racial offspring, and the word mulatto was dropped from the vocabulary and from the census. Instead, census takers listed any and all light-skinned African Americans as simply "Negro." The Reconstruction governments removed the bans on interracial marriages, but many southern states reinstated these laws after 1876, and some states even wrote anti-miscegenation provisions into their state constitutions. Most importantly, whites commonly believed that no white women would willingly become involved with a black man of her own free will--and that children born of such relationships resulted because the black man had assaulted the white woman. Such "beasts" deserved a fate worse than death--a rationale that lay behind many of the horrible lynchings that occurred throughout the South after 1880.

**Jim Crow:** A term describing the American racist culture against blacks, it originated as a derogatory way of depicting black people in the minstrel shows of early 19th century America. Thomas Dartmouth "Daddy" Rice popularized the term by marking his face with burned cork or a charcoal paste (known as black face), dressing in sloppy clothes, and dancing a silly jig while grinning broadly. Historian Charles Reagan Wilson, director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi, claims that Rice was inspired by the performance he had seen in Louisville, Kentucky, by an elderly slave owned by a Mr. Crow. By 1860, the term was a common part of the nation's vocabulary. Abolitionist speakers used the term in the 1840s to describe segregated railroad car for blacks and whites: the northern black cars were Jim Crow cars. On the eve of the Civil War, the universal image of the silly Jim Crow minstrel character provided southern whites with one of many stereotypical images of black inferiority that were a fundamental component of white popular culture. By the 1890s, the term had come to mean the separation of blacks from whites and the general customs and laws that subordinated blacks as an inferior people. Historians have used the term in reference to the process of segregation or setting the races apart--sometimes meaning customary or informal segregation and sometimes meaning legal or codified segregation.