

Jim crow laws

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Segregation and disfranchisement laws were often supported, moreover, by brutal acts of ceremonial and ritualized mob violence (lynchings) against southern blacks. Indeed, from 1889 to 1930, over 3,700 men and women were reported lynched in the United States--most of whom were southern blacks. Hundreds of other lynchings and acts of mob terror aimed at brutalizing blacks occurred throughout the era but went unreported in the press.

Numerous race riots erupted in the Jim Crow era, usually in towns and cities and almost always in defense of segregation and white supremacy. These riots engulfed the nation from Wilmington, South Carolina, to Houston, Texas; from East St. Louis and Chicago to Tulsa, Oklahoma, in the years from 1865 to 1955. The riots usually erupted in urban areas to which southern, rural blacks had recently migrated. In the single year of 1919, at least twenty-five incidents were recorded, with numerous deaths and hundreds of people injured.

So bloody was this summer of that year that it is known as the Red Summer of 1919. The so-called Jim Crow segregation laws gained significant impetus from U. S. Supreme Court rulings in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. In 1883, the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the Civil Rights Act of 1875. The 1875 law stipulated: "That all persons ... shall be entitled to full and equal enjoyment of the ac Some historians believe that a Mr. Crow owned the slave who inspired Rice's act--thus the reason for the Jim Crow term in the lyrics.

In any case, Rice incorporated the skit into his minstrel act, and by the 1850s the "Jim Crow" character had become a standard part of the minstrel show scene in America. On the eve of the Civil War, the Jim Crow idea was one of many stereotypical images of black inferiority in the popular culture of the day--along with Sambos, Coons, and Zip Dandies. The word Jim Crow became a racial slur synonymous with black, colored, or Negro in the vocabulary of many whites; and by the end of the century acts of racial discrimination toward blacks were often referred to as Jim Crow laws and practices.