Black Codes
Black codes were laws developed during President Andrew Johnson's presidency. These laws were established in the ex-Confederate states in the south during the Reconstruction Era in the 1860s. These laws were created by racist whites in the south in order to restrict the rights of blacks and also to ensure their availability as a labor force. The northern states were outraged by these laws and began to challenge Johnson's policies. Radical and moderate Republicans both began to see that President Johnson was not a good Republican leader due to his support of the codes. Black codes are important because they would eventually cause the need for the 14th and 15th Amendments, the Reconstruction Acts, and the Freedmen's Bureau. These codes would also lead to problems up until the middle of the twentieth century. They showed Republicans, through Johnson's handling (or lack thereof) of these codes, that Johnson did not have the Republicans' interests in mind.

The Freedman's Bureau
The U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands-more commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau, was established in the 1860s by Congress (particularly by General O.O. Howard) in order to help poor whites and former black slaves in the American South after the end of the Civil War transition into lives as free individuals. The emancipation of the slaves and the numerous battles fought in the South left entire communities in ruin and left the South's economy, heavily dependent on slave-run plantations, in a devastated state. The Freedmen's Bureau helped people by giving food, housing and medical aid, establishing schools, and offering legal assistance to those who needed it. It also tried to settle former slaves on Confederate lands that, for one reason or another, were no longer in use. Its main goal was to bring newly freed slaves and Southern whites from their old ways into a society where slavery was replaced by freedom for all men. The bureau had difficulty carrying out all of its goals due to lack of funding and personnel. This coupled with opposition from white Southerners, led to the demise of the Freedmen's Bureau. The Freedmen's Bureau is important because President Johnson's dislike (and veto) of the Freedmen's Bureau further showed his feelings toward southern whites and slavery and led Republicans to trust him less. The bureau itself is significant because it was the first instance in which an effort was made by Congress to get blacks actual equality in America, as it was used to combat southern black codes. It led to blacks becoming educated and also gave them more opportunities. Finally, it led to the Reconstruction Acts.

Reconstruction Acts of 1867
The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 (created after Sumner and Stevens believed other plans were too weak) laid down the process in which ex-Confederate states (except for Tennessee) would be re-admitted into the Union. A key feature of the Reconstruction Acts was the creation of five military districts in the American South, each commanded by a general from the Union army. Congress also demanded that each new state had to draw up a new state constitution and they had to ratify the 14th Amendment, which granted black men the right to vote and hold office. President Andrew Johnson had vetoed the Reconstruction Acts, but his veto was overridden by Congress due to the alliance of radical and moderate Republicans. The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 were important because they were a step in the right direction and helped (gradually) reconstruct America as a whole. It also sparked groups such as the Klu Klux Klan, who terrorized African-Americans and discouraged them from voting or using their new rights. It was a way for the Radicals to punish the South as well.

Civil War Amendments
The Civil War Amendments (13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments) were created in the late 1800s by Congress after the end of the Civil War. These amendments were proposed to restructure the United States into a nation in which liberty and equality would be granted to all men, including former slaves and their children. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in America. The Fourteenth Amendment overturned the Dred Scott case and required that states provide equal protection for everyone within their control. It also addressed citizenship rights of all Americans. The Fifteenth Amendment granted everyone the right to vote, no matter what their race was. The Civil War Amendments are important because they guaranteed freedom to former slaves and tried to prevent discrimination.

Carpetbaggers and Scalawags
"Carpetbaggers" and "Scalawags" are negative terms that were used by American Southerners during the Reconstruction era in the late 1800s. Carpetbaggers were Northerners who moved to the South after the Civil War. The term stemmed from remarks that many of these strangers carried their belongings in "carpet bags." Carpetbaggers usually went southward in order to gain influence politically or for their own personal advantage. Carpetbaggers, like Republicans, were viewed as manipulating former Confederate states for their own financial and political benefit. They were generally considered to be taking advantage of people living in the South. Marshall H. Twitchell was a well-known carpetbagger. On the other hand, scalawags were Southerners who supported Reconstruction after the Civil War or those who sided with black freedmen and carpetbaggers in support of Republican policies. Conservative Southerners used this term in a derogative manner towards individuals whom they viewed as betraying southern principles by supporting northern policies. Two of the most prominent scalawags were General James Longstreet and Joseph E. Brown. Carpetbaggers and scalawags are important because many believed in black rights. They gained influence in the South after the Reconstruction Laws of 1867 and were able to have some political power. They caused a rift in the South and led to the formation of the KKK and other groups.

The Ku Klux Klan
The Ku Klux Klan was a white supremacist group that spread across the American South in the late 1800s. Started by Nathan Bedford Forrest of Tennessee, this group was resistant to the Republican Party's Reconstruction policies, which were aimed at establishing equality for blacks. The KKK reacted most to the Civil War Amendments and towards Reconstruction as a whole. Members of the KKK directed violence and intimidation at white and black Republicans. The group did manage to undermine blacks and give whites more power in the South since Republicans were reluctant to vote and Democrats (white Southerners) gained more power. The Klan also terrorized people in the early and mid-1900s by burning crosses and staging rallies and marches that denounced minority groups and organized labor. The Ku Klux Klan is important because they intimidated and terrorized Republicans in the South and enabled racist white Democrats to take political control. Blacks began to leave the South for freer places like Kansas.

The Crédit Mobilier Scandal
The Crédit Mobilier Scandal was one of the most well-known scandals of the late 1800s. The Pacific Railroad Act was passed in 1862. Under this law, the Union Pacific Railroad was given land around the constructed railroad and an additional $1000 for every mile of railroad it constructed. This is around when the whole scandal started. The Union Pacific Railroad created their own company, Crédit Mobilier, and guys from the Union Pacific were part of Crédit Mobilier too. Union Pacific claimed that they needed a lot of money from the government in order to create the railroad; however, their estimates were quite high and this allowed men (from both Crédit Mobilier and the Union Pacific Railroad) to pocket the extra money that they didn't actually use on the railroad. These men were essentially paying themselves (using federal funds) to build their own railroad. This was the big part of the scandal. Crédit Mobilier stock, understandably, was doing quite well because of this. Senators in Washington, D.C. were given shares in the company and profited greatly. Senators kept voting to give Union Pacific more money (and thus helping their own finances strong through stocks). Nobody in Washington, D.C. really realized the scandal until during Grant's presidency. The Crédit Mobilier Scandal was important because it was a symbol of corruption and undermined Grant's presidency. Even though Grant was not directly involved he still looked bad.

William Tweed
William M. Tweed, also known as "Boss Tweed", was an American politician known for being the leader of Tammany Hall, a Democratic Party political machine that played a large role in New York politics in the late 1800s. Tweed's greatest influence came from his control in New York City through Tammany Hall, and his ability to keep Democratic voters loyal to him. He targeted immigrants, helped them out, and forced them to vote for Democrats in return. He had substantial control over who would be nominated as a Democratic candidate and enormous influence over who was appointed to office. He also began putting his associates on the city payroll for doing little to no work. With his financial gains (through bribes) from this, Tweed bought several companies and they were quickly awarded city contracts. Other members of Tammany Hall shared evidence of Tweed's corruption with the New York Times, and articles were run that exposed Tweed. He was arrested for stealing taxpayer money through political corruption and eventually died in prison. William M. Tweed is important because he was a symbol of corruption and machine politics. He encouraged the "cleaning up" of American politics.

Seward's Ice Box
Seward's Ice Box is a name for the Alaska Purchase, commonly used by those in opposition to the deal. The Alaska Territory was purchased from Russia in the late 1800s. The land was more of a liability so it was put up for sale. President Andrew Johnson's secretary of state, William Seward, negotiated its purchase for $7.2 million. The treaty was ratified by the U.S. Senate by a very narrow margin. Some people were very critical of this move, and some newspapers especially bashed the "wasteland." This changed after gold was found in Alaska. The Alaska Purchase is important because Alaska would one day prove to be worthy through the gold found there.

Thomas Nast

Thomas Nast was an influential political cartoonist thought of as the "Father of the American Cartoon" in the late 1800s. Nast was associated with the magazine Harper's Weekly during this time. He was an opponent of Boss Tweed and the Tammany Hall Democratic political machine. He also created a more modern version of Santa Claus and created the elephant symbol associated with the Republican Party. He also made symbols such as Uncle Sam, Columbia, and the Democratic donkey more popular and well-known. Thomas Nast is important because he created popular images in society. He also opposed Boss Tweed which was important because even those who were illiterate could understand his messages against Tweed.