

# **They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group Study Guide**

**They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group by Susan Campbell Bartoletti**

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# Plot Summary

They Called Themselves the K.K.K. by Susan Campbell Bartoletti is a very thorough history of the beginning of the Ku Klux Klan in Pulaski, Tennessee. She explains the atmosphere in the South as the war ends and the destruction that awaits the returning soldier. The Confederates are not allowed to do business or have political positions for too long after their return. Many men who are accustomed to working and being leaders have too much time and too much resentment. It is suggested that the KKK started as a social club. The men who started it had once been in fraternities in the South. Other historians believe that it started to take over their old position of being in control of the black man. What first may have been horseplay and some fun of grown men in sheets riding through a picnic soon became a full-fledged hate group who committed horrible atrocities.

Bartoletti introduces the reader to President Johnson and his Reconstruction attempts. Since Johnson was a Southerner and understood the people of the South and how much things were changing for them, he was more lenient than the Congress believed he should have been. He allowed the South to pass some laws that protected them from the black freedmen but put the freedmen back into a slave role. Bartoletti goes into Johnson's near impeachment and the total loss of power for the president. The United States needed a strong leader and they decided that was U.S. Grant. The black man was supposed to be able to vote and many did. The old masters were astounded when the freedmen voted Republican. The Democrats of the South didn't forget that Lincoln had been a Republican.

The KKK grew more frightened of the changing South. They were afraid that the black freedman would get control entirely and enslave the white planters. After exploring the political scene, Bartoletti devotes a chapter to education of the Negro and then the spiritual aspect of the whole culture. In every chapter she tells the personal stories of some of the freedman and the Klan. She makes the reader shudder as she describes the horror of being threatened during the night. The black family never felt safe, not even in their own home. The whippings were described as well as hangings and other killings. The freedman found no help or any justice in the white man's court in the South.

Grant finally convinced others to pass the Ku Klux Klan Act which allowed the government to move federal troops into a state or states with internal problems. If the people of the state were not living free and equal under the law, the federal government could move in and set things right for the oppressed citizens. Grant did move federal judges and U.S. marshalls in with the army and rounded up KKK members in mass. There were courts and the freedmen came with their claims. The Klan was scattered and not allowed to call itself the Klan for some years afterwards. As Grant left office, the KKK was supposedly punished and disbanded. Hays came into office with a promise to leave the South alone. Reconstruction was over.

In the Epilogue, Bartoletti gives the history as it continued through time. This epilogue is a summary rather like those the reader finds in a high school textbook. Bartoletti skims



over the Civil Rights Acts and the assassinations. There is a timeline at the end of the book which traces the history from beginning of Civil Rights to the present.



# Chapter One

## Chapter One Summary and Analysis

In Chapter One the readers learn about the Southern culture before the war. The North and South were like two different parts of one country. The North had their manufacturing centers and the South supplied the product. Picking cotton and curing tobacco was killing labor since everything had to be done by hand, a plant at a time. Not only did the Southerner use labor in the fields but the richer the person, the more help they needed. Some plantation owners took better care of the slaves than others but slaves were property and white people saw the black person as less than themselves. The South had codes for how the black person could act and since the blacks were property, the white person could punish them in any way for breaking the code.

The blacks in the South had wanted freedom for a long time but it had been a dream. The freedman didn't know what to do with his freedom. Blacks had been taken care of by the whites. Suddenly they had been pronounced free but the white people didn't take care of them. Most white people could no longer afford to take care of anyone, including their own family. The South went from prosperous to poor. The slaves who made the recordings of the happenings right after the Civil War paint a picture of lost, confused people. No one in the South knew what to do. The South was no longer home but an alien world.

The 'grapevine telegraph' sent all types of rumors throughout the South. Southerners were stirred and scared by the rumors that traveled across the states. One rumor claimed that the black slave who had been freed would be given 40 acres of his master's land as well as a mule. The slave was going to be given a start. The Southerner saw his slaves go, perhaps his house burned, and with this rumor he could expect to have his land, the only thing left, taken from him.

The beginnings of the Klan came with the atmosphere in the South after Lincoln was killed and Johnson took over to control the Reconstruction. Whites were absolutely convinced that the black was born to serve the white. There was no real way to legislate a person's mind and attitude. The North and South were still in a War but a different type. Lincoln was killed and the country was wounded almost mortally.

### Analysis Chapter One

Bartoletti presents the history that brings some men in the south to the club called the K.K.K. The South has been left devastated and the powerful men who should have been lauded as war heroes have lost all power. Bartoletti uses the slave history as well as many other historical documents to help the reader go back in time and imagine what it was like. The reader is reminded of the important documents as well as the historical figures of the day. Bartoletti introduces the reader to the pen and ink engravings of the day. She teaches us that the photograph couldn't yet be printed in books or a



newspaper. The printer had to have a master artist to turn the photo into an engraving so they generally used the engravings. The readers can see the devastation of the country as well as the homes. A photograph of Abraham Lincoln is included. Confederate money is pictured in the first chapter.

Bartoletti is very specific about the facts of the economics of the South. The reader is made to think about having bought a slave for \$1000 which would be \$13,000 today and having the slave freed. The Southerner has lost quite a few dollars. A big plantation with lots of cotton or tobacco might have hundreds of slaves. Just multiply 100 times \$13,000 or if the reader just used the \$1000 figure, the loss to the plantation was enormous. No one compensated him. According to Bartoletti, the average slaveholder owned between one and nine slaves but that is still quite a loss. The slaveholder is only left with his land that he can't fully work. He has no labor. He can't afford labor.

The reader can see that it is obviously wrong to have slaves in America, the home of the free, but the slaveholder has a dilemma also. Slaves were legal and had been for years and suddenly they are freed and the Southerner is left broken and helpless.

Fear for the future and their homes were the biggest thing the Southerner faced. The Reconstruction was almost as devastating to the Southerner as the War itself. Bartoletti has set the stage for the first American Terrorist group.



# Chapter Two

## Chapter Two Summary and Analysis

In Chapter Two the reader finds the beginnings of the K.K.K. Six Confederate officers came back to their hometown of Pulaski, Tennessee heartbroken and defiant. The men: John Lester, Calvin Jones, Richard Reed, James Crowe, Frank McCord, and John Kennedy were the original six to start the club. During the first years that the Confederates were home, many soldiers were not allowed to go back into business or professions. The normal society amusements were no longer happening in the depressed and gloomy Southern country. The six men came together out of boredom in the beginning. All six were educated and probably discussed politics as well as how the South would gain strength. The Northern soldiers swarmed all over the town and Southerners probably considered Reconstruction to be as horrible as the war. The South was made up of Democrats and the radical Republicans of the North wanted to make the South pay.

Andrew Johnson who had followed Lincoln into the office of President was from the South. While he had sided with the Union during the war, he understood the South better than others and tried to help the South in the Reconstruction. The Congress was not in session and Johnson began to pardon the Confederate soldiers immediately. If soldiers and other supporters of the South took an oath of loyalty, they became citizens again and regained their right to vote. The white Southerners who were 'somebody' had to go to Washington and seek an audience with Johnson to swear their loyalty. There were about 10,000 to 15,000 of these men. Any man who had taxable property which amounted to \$20,000 had to have the special pardon. It angered the once wealthy planters to have to jump through such hoops when the 'nobodies' could vote again.

With the freed slaves, who made up 40% of the South's population, there were too many people with no direction or jobs. Some slaves wandered about the South trying to find family that had been sold away from them. Some just wandered and didn't know what to do. Some wanted to be far away from cruel masters and went North.

The freed slaves were leaving their old homes and the plantation owners were losing the labor force. Johnson agreed to the South passing the Black Codes. Much of the code came from the old Slave Codes. The South did take some of the Northern laws. Vagrancy laws were the best way to send the slave back to the fields. If he had no home, he was sentenced to so much time as a laborer. The slave also was charged the court costs and he never was able to pay that off.

The United States Congress came back into session. They were furious that Johnson had done so much with the South. They felt that re-electing men who had been in power before the Confederacy was a mistake. They felt that the Black Codes made the emancipation proclamation worthless. Congress refused to seat any Southern senator or representative who was in power during the War. They ratified the Thirteenth



Amendment. In April of 1866, in spite of Johnson's veto, the Congress passed the first Civil Rights Act. Anyone born in America with the exception of American Indians had equal rights. This was a slap in the face to the Southerners. The first incident involving racial violence happened in Memphis, Tennessee. The white mob attacked the black community and killed 46 blacks and two whites. The rumors and retelling of the happening only added to the tension in the South.

With the violence and threat of violence, the South grew more and more nervous. Perhaps the six Confederate friends talked about the need of patrols to keep the South safe. We may never know what they discussed but one night in May of 1866 they decided to start a club or society. Calvin Jones and Richard Reed were to select a name while others were to create the rules.

The name Kuklos, a Greek word meaning circle, was suggested. There had been a Southern fraternity before the War called Kuklos Adelfphon. The men didn't find the one word mysterious enough. James Crowe suggested ku klus. Someone else suggested klan which also means circle. The Ku Klux Klan came into being.

After developing the rules, officers for the club were determined. Frank McCord became Grand Cyclops or president, John Kennedy became Grand Magi or vice president, James Crowe became Grand Turk or master of ceremonies, Calvin Jones and John Lester became Night Hawks or messengers, and Richard Reed became Lictor or sentinel.

The real birth came as the men raided the linen closet for sheets. They cut holes for the mouth and eyes. They all ran outside to their horses and swept through the town, hollering and yelling and moaning like ghosts.

## Analysis Chapter Two

Bartoletti packs the chapter with examples and word pictures of the South after the War Between the States. She is excellent as she describes the peoples' feelings and fears. She names historical figures and tells enough about each so that the reader understands exactly who and what they are. While the reader is glad that the United States was not torn apart, the reader can empathize with the people who were Americans, tried to win a war so they could have America their way, lost the war and then had to take oaths of loyalty to the land they didn't escape.

Bartoletti makes it easy to understand how the K.K.K. came into existence. Take men who were once plantation owners and businessmen who became officers in a long battle and sit them in a destroyed town and not allow them to do anything. These men were used to being leaders and keeping busy for some cause all day. They had to find something to do. Bartoletti tells the reader that there are no documents that were handed down about what they did before the Klan started. She suggests and is probably very correct in believing that they talked about Reconstruction and what to do with all the free black people who were wondering around in the South. The men had to be angry about the devastation Tennessee suffered. Bartoletti has pen and ink





illustrations of the land after armies had marched through it. Cannons and gunfire had destroyed it. Millions of men marching through it had taken a toll. The bloody fights had ruined fields and any hope of crops for some time. The men had to see the Union flag at the court house and Union troops moving through Pulaski. The men had to be lost, angry, frightened people. The United States were asking too much of them, and they couldn't get another army together and try to win again,

There are other writers who claim that the KKK formed as a private group in each town to save the delicate white women from black men. Also, the South saw any freed black man who didn't bow to the white person as an uppity nigger who needed a lesson that would put him in his place. (The 'n' word is used because it was the word of the time. Bartoletti writes with the language of the time throughout the book.) Bartoletti introduces the KKK as a social club. The guys need something to do. They form their own fraternity. They choose sheets as cover because the blacks are supposed to be afraid of ghosts. The white sheet makes things more intimidating. According to the Bartoletti, riding through town wearing sheets was supposed to be a fun thing for all concerned at first. As time passed, the Klan took on a police-like group.

Bartoletti, in this chapter, tells of the forced labor that was adopted in the South as part of Reconstruction. The slave who supposedly was not a slave continued to be forced labor until the First World War. Andrew Johnson, who replaced Lincoln, was from the South and while the Congress was not in session, Johnson supported some of the old South to take a position of leadership again. The lawmakers passed laws that were called Black Codes. These codes were no different from the Slave Codes. They did take one law from the North— a vagrancy law which made it possible for the law to arrest anyone who wasn't working as a vagrant and sentence him to work. If there was no one working in the family, the children could be taken away from the family. The freed man who was still a slave has never been discussed much in history books. (Theodore Roosevelt started a drive to stop the slave hood but soon discovered that the South needed the practice for their financial stability. Theodore withdrew the federal investigations. It wasn't until Franklin Roosevelt was pushed by Eleanor that there were laws passed that forced the old timers to stop the practice.) Bartoletti didn't include the Roosevelt story.

Bartoletti walks through the beginning of the KKK and moves chronologically.



# Chapter Three

## Chapter Three Summary and Analysis

Chapter Three takes the reader through the real beginnings of the Klan. The men dressed as ghosts and said, "I was killed at Chickamauga." The white people believed that the black men and women were afraid of ghosts, and they tried using the ghostly costumes to their advantage. The black men and women knew that the Klan was just dressed white people but they went along with it in the hopes that they would be left alone. Pulaski's den kept their den secret for a while but then they published notes of a meeting in the paper. They told where or who and the announcements were cryptic. The group broke up picnics in a fun way at first. The people of Pulaski wanted to join and eventually the Klan created an initiation and more and more men were allowed to become part of the Klan.

The Klan realized that they frightened the freed people and they decided to take advantage of it. The Klan would dress up and ride to the freed man's house and shoot at the walls, at the windows, and the roof tops. They became bolder and bolder. They would come into the houses and scare the freed people with tricks built into their clothing. Sometimes men came in on stilts or carried bones to show as part of their dead bodies. The violence eventually included lynchings.

During this time the Freedmen's Bureau was organized as a temporary government agency to help the freedmen and poor whites with homes, medicine, education, and food. The Bureau was supposed to negotiate for jobs and wages for the poor whites and freed blacks. The angered Southerners wanted it stopped because it was taking taxes from them. The Bureau was extended until it had continued for three years.

The Congress was raging in Washington about the reconstruction. The Congress wrenched control from the President and passed several reconstruction bills. The last one gave the freed man rights to vote in all areas of the South. The Southerners believed this to be real hypocrisy because only five states in the North gave the black man voting rights. The bill also refused statehood in the Union until each state ratified this voting rights bill.

Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest was very vocal about states' rights. He would become part of the Klan. All Confederates were vocal about the Blue uniforms that moved freely about the Southern cities. The Northern generals who visited the South saw the still defiant losers of the War Between the States.

In one year from the beginning of the KKK, dens had grown up all around Pulaski and other parts of Tennessee. The head of the KKK invited all the dens to a secret meeting in Nashville at the same time the Democratic delegates were meeting.

Analysis Chapter Three



Bartoletti continues with her chronological telling of this history. She describes the days after the war clearly and in such a way that the reader can feel what a horrible time it was for the nation. Even as she shows how dangerous and violent the Klan becomes, she shows the fear and desperateness of the Southerner after the war. While Bartoletti writes about one theory that the Klan started because six Confederate officers were bored with their inability to work in their hometown and started the club for fun, Bartoletti also mentions the other theory that the Klan started with the intention of keeping the white man in control of the freed black man. When one looks at the circumstances, either theory works. However, any theory coming from the North probably painted the Southerner as the devil.

The illustrations Bartoletti gives the reader about the way the Klan threatens the freedman makes readers of history see the hopelessness of the Confederates. The North is trying to reconstruct a culture that they don't understand. The black man doesn't know what to do. The white Southerner is caught between one group who has no idea how to be free and the other group who feels as if the Southerner should pay for the war he caused. Home is no longer home. Nothing is as it was. Almost everything is lost to the white Southerner. Instead of the man in control, he now has no control.

Bartoletti tells how the North really tightens the reins on the South. They force every Southern state to allow every man to vote and ratify an amendment before they can be in the Union. The North has only five states who allow votes to all. The South is struggling to breathe in this new world. The Klan is one attempt to find its way. Many dens of the Klan spring up in the year since it began. The Klan invites all the dens to a convention in Nashville at the same time the Democrats meet. No one knows who is in the Klan or who is a Democrat. They might be both but this trickery keeps that a secret.



# Chapter Four

## Chapter Four Summary and Analysis

In Chapter Four Bartoletti explains that historians believe that the Ku Klux Klan meeting in Nashville at the same time that the Southern Democratic convention met was part of the plan to form a powerful paramilitary organization. The Klan was hoping to be powerful enough to overthrow the Republicans and fight Reconstruction policies. They wrote a creed that sounded patriotic and religious but in reality needed the word white before every instance of the word man. Whites were the superior race and should be in charge of the whole earth. Especially America and the South. Loyalty and secrecy was imperative for the Klan to grow and conquer. It became known as the "Invisible Empire." The members of the group had titles. The Southern States were turned into names like realm and dominion. The Klan was so large it needed a strong leader. Nathan Bedford Forrest became the Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire.

While the Klan claimed that only upstanding gentlemen could join the Klan, in reality nearly everyone was forced to join. If a man didn't want to go on a raid, he had to pay a fine and take fifty lashes. The Klan also marched in parades and rallies to show how organized they were and how much they were growing. Many of the Southerners fooled themselves into believing that the Klan helped keep order and the South safe. The Klan used newspaper ads that looked nonsensical but were in code to announce meeting times and places as well as raids.

During the next years, Grand Wizard Forrest worked as an insurance agent and a railroad investor. It was noticed that everywhere he visited there was a growth to the Klan. While only the men belonged to the Klan, the women made meals and costumes and furnished alibis. Besides the secret words and handshakes, each den had its own Night Hawks. Night Hawks were messengers who gathered information about black people who taught school, registered to vote, or served as pastors. Any black man considered uppity was put on trial at a KKK meeting. Punishments were agreed upon and the culprit could be warned, then whipped, and finally killed. Whites usually got the warnings. The blacks were usually whipped or murdered at the first offense. Members of the Klan were expected to follow orders. If one was told to whip or kill someone, they were expected to do it. If they wanted out of the Klan because they didn't agree, they were threatened with death. Many people were asked to join and threatened with a whipping if they didn't. By 1868 the Klan had spread throughout all of the Southern states. The Klan had even moved into Kentucky which had sided with the Union in the War Between the States.

### Analysis Chapter Four

Bartoletti discusses the growth of the Klan by the years. She is very graphic about the violence and hatred that took hold of the men in the Klan. As the Klan grew in strength,

it became more and more greedy for more and more power. It saw its strength in numbers so it began to force all white men to join the Klan.

The Klan copied some of the characteristics from fraternities and the Masons. The Klan had handshakes and hand signals and secret codes. As long as no one could prove who the men were who rode at night and committed the violence, the Klan could masquerade as a social club. It took the people of the North some time to catch on that the Klan was a powerful group of lawbreakers.

Bartoletti gives specific examples of many of the intimidating measures that the Klan used to try to stop witnesses from testifying if one of the Klan was arrested. One witness stayed with the judge for protection and the Klan came into his bedroom. Fortunately the judge came into the room and put the Klan out of the house. The Klan tried to stop any criticism of their group and the things they did.

Psychologists today would explain the Klan's attraction for the white Southerner as power against the fear and powerlessness. The Klan helped protect them against the changes of the South and the possibility of losing jobs and being left homeless and with nothing to eat. It helped to protect their children from the coming loss of their lives. The Klan was the only way for the white man to stay on top.



# Chapter Five

## Chapter Five Summary and Analysis

From 1866 to 1868, the Ku Klux Klan grew by leaps and bounds. President Andrew Johnson was fighting the Congress about Reconstruction. Johnson would weaken the Reconstruction side of the question every time he could. In 1868, Johnson fired Edwin Stanton and overstepped the Tenure of Office Act of 1867. The Congress decided to impeach Johnson. The impeachment proceedings lasted more than three months. Johnson was acquitted by one vote. Johnson lost all strength in the Congress. Johnson became a lame duck president—a man with no power for the next eleven months. By the summer of 1868, seven of the Southern states had been readmitted to the Union. The Fourteenth Amendment was ratified which made it mandatory for the Supreme Court to honor an amendment. The Court could overturn a law.

The presidential election was going to have more black men voting in 1868. Grant was the Republican candidate and Horatio Seymour was the Democrat. The blacks were nearly all in the Republican party because Lincoln had been a Republican. The freed men made up leagues and groups to keep themselves protected from the Klan. Reverend Charles H. Pearce, a black minister and Republican said that the laws in Florida were good if the people enforced them. There were all types of tricks going on to keep the Republicans from voting in the South. As things got more problematic, the white man realized that he needed the freedman's vote. The white Democrat believed that the freedman would vote for his old master who had fed him and clothed him. The Democrat didn't realize the true feeling of the old slave. The freedman voted for the Republican. A black Democrat became known as a traitor.

The Ku Klux Klan went on a rampage against the Republicans. Southern-born people who had disagreed with secession were called scalawags and seen as scoundrels. The freedmen's votes came by their grouping together to protect one another. The freedman was determined to vote even if he was killed. When Grant won the presidency, it was as if the South lost the war again. To have the Union General in the White House was too much.

The fear that the Negro would take over the South was raging after the election. The South incorporated rules about voting. A man had to be able to read and write and hold so much property to vote. Many such rules already were on the North's book but their addition was prominent in the South with the fear of Negro rule.

The Klan came together and wrote more rules and questions to decide if a man could belong to the Klan. More men joined. Finally as things got even more violent, Forrest claimed that he had suggested that the Klan disband. Forrest didn't want a place in history of fostering so much violence. The fear and hate still spread throughout the South.



## Analysis Chapter Five

Bartoletti graphically illustrates the atmosphere and the happenings of the South for approximately two years in this chapter. Every word causes the country to come alive.

These years brought an impeachment as well as an election for the presidency. The war was being fought in the hearts of the South. This was a secret war in the aftermath of the full scale war. The men didn't go out to fight in uniforms. Many of the most brutal soldiers hid in sheets. There was no strong leader on the scene to help draw the North and South together. A large majority of the North wanted to teach the Southerners a lesson and make them pay. The Southerners were hardly surviving in their crippled land. There were almost no workers, and the land was destroyed. Food was scarce. The black men were free and didn't know what to do next. The white people didn't know what to do with black free people. The whites, by law, were no longer in control. They were now afraid. Resentment ran rampant all over the United States.

Bartoletti made Johnson's position clear. The Congress was out of session. Johnson took advantage of that to allow the South to pass some laws that almost put the Southerner back in control of the Southern states. Many of the same men who had voted to leave the Union were back in office. The Congress fought the president and finally impeached him.

Bartoletti makes the student of history see the real state of the Union. Generally a history text has a few sentences about the aftermath of the War Between the States. There might be a short sentence that makes the Emancipation Proclamation something that changed the States in a blink of the eye. There could be a whole course on these Reconstruction times. Once a person reads Bartoletti, the War Between the States and Reconstruction demonstrate the reality of that time period and its incredible importance.

The Klan's strength grew during this time. Violence grew and no one stopped the Klan from whipping and killing. The black freedmen kept coming at the whites for their rights to vote and to work for an employer who treated them as freedmen. The violence included everyone. Any member of the Klan could be ordered to kill or whip another man. The responsibility of committing the crime begat loyalty of one Klan member to another. Forrest, the man who aided in the growth of the killing Klan, backed down and asked for the Klan to be retired. Bartoletti makes the reader think that Forrest didn't want his name to go down in history as the man who generated all the killing done by the Klan.





# Chapter Six

## Chapter Six Summary and Analysis

Chapter Six is a whole chapter about sharecropping. When the white planters realized that there was not enough labor for them to bring in a crop, they offered land to the freedmen with seed and other needs of the sharecropper. The sharecropper was supposed to receive about a third of the crop he brought in. The two-thirds of the crop went to the planter to pay for the land and the other things that the planter furnished.

This might have helped to rebuild the South if the KKK hadn't decided that a black man couldn't own any land. The resentment from the white men ended any chance of the planters prospering again.

At first the planters allowed the sharecroppers to bring in a harvest. Very quickly, the planter decided that he could find a reason to break the contract without paying the black man. Many times the black families had worked hard and gathered food for the winter as well as other things they needed. The Ku Klux Klan began their nightly raids and would whip and threaten to hang the freedmen. Most of the land owners (sharecroppers) were run off the land and ordered never to return.

The freedmen, who had been working hard in the fields all day in order to own land, stopped working. There was no longer any hope of owning the land. The ones who still had land were tired of working hard all day and staying awake all night. They were frightened that they would have the next night visit. So many had waited until the harvest was ready to run the freedmen off, the freedman had lost his rights.

There is a real story of Samuel and Hannah and their children. Hannah was determined to never leave her land. She even said she would die on it. This is like a self-fulfilling prophesy. Hannah said she had lived through the "red time" of slavery and now she would live through this. Samuel had been doing well and then the Klan showed up. The Klan nearly beat both Samuel and Hannah to death. The Klansmen scattered their home and all their things. The children hid after the Klansman had injured them. Hannah said she walked twelve miles that night looking for the children. She tried to press charges and was found guilty of pressing false charges. The black family had wars of their own.

### Analysis Chapter Six

In Chapter Six Bartoletti covers the freedman trying to find ways of taking care of himself and his family. Previously, Bartoletti has discussed politics and the beginnings of the Klan. The point of view has been from the white Southerner's situation. This chapter is filled with stories of individual freedmen and their families. The beatings and the killing are the emphasized topic. The supreme violence of the Klan is pointed out with words as well as the artwork that she has chosen throughout the book.





Bartoletti illustrates one plan that might have helped the Southern planter. Sharecropping allowed the Negro to rent his land. The Negro could plant and harvest a crop and keep one-third of it while the planter would receive two-thirds of the profit. This could have made up for the missing labor force but the Klan moved in and whipped the freedmen off the land. The Klan wasn't going to allow a black man to have property. A black man could be killed and nothing would be done by the law during this time.

Bartoletti tells of one family in the last part of the chapter that was beaten and threatened with death. When the family didn't leave by the deadline, the Klan came after them. The woman was very determined and filed charges against some of the men she recognized despite the white sheets. She ended up getting charged with filing wrongful charges. The black man and woman were at the mercy of people who had no mercy.



# Chapter Seven

## Chapter Seven Summary and Analysis

Chapter Seven concentrates on the education of the freedman. The black slave had been in danger of whipping and possible death if he learned to read. Suddenly he could have the education that he had come to understand he needed. The freedman put education as a priority. Many of the abolitionists who came down South to aid the Freedmen's Bureau saw the need for teachers. The Freedmen's Bureau had missionaries and private charities working with them. The organizations contributed about \$5 million for schools. As poor as the black man was, the freedmen contributed \$1 million.

An Irish immigrant, Cornelius McBride, traveled to Sparta, Mississippi from Canada. At first the white neighbors seemed nice enough to McBride. A well-to-do planter let McBride board with him. McBride didn't have to worry about where he would eat or sleep. There were so many ex-slaves who wanted to learn to read and were still working all day, McBride set up an evening school for them. Many of the teachers who came South were just as selfless.

The question of public education had no central body who believed that it was a necessity. South and North alike didn't think the lower class needed an education. The South didn't like the Northerners teaching equality and other subjects. The South didn't like property taxes. As usual there was the "uppity" question. The fear of the equal man was prevalent.

There were questions about the funding. If it was public education, then the United States government should fund it instead of property taxes of a county or state. Everyone should contribute to the public school.

Many whites were afraid that education would lead to race mixing. The North as well as the South was afraid that an educated Negro would take a better job away from the white man.

The education question gave the Ku Klux Klan another target. The Klan made nightly raids and killed the educated, the teachers and pupils at will. The Klan burned schools and books. The Klan burned and killed everything in the South that it found disagreeable. A man named William Luke bought guns and the Klan had some competition for a little bit. The rebellion was put down quickly.

Cornelius McBride began to get warnings from his students. He had been accepted originally but after a few months, the South was fighting among itself about education. McBride announced an exam which anyone could take that would certify them to teach and get a higher salary. He received a night visit from the Klan. They dragged him out of his home and into a field. He was beaten and then threatened with hanging. He ran at



the leader and knocked him down. He surprised the group and got away. The next morning, toting his gun, he went to the school and administered the test. No one did anything else.

Booker T. Washington was born a slave and was so determined to gain an education, he walked nearly 500 miles to be admitted into a Negro boarding school. After graduating, he was hired to start a school for the Negro in Tuskegee, Alabama.

#### Analysis Chapter Seven

Bartoletti discusses the question of education. How does a whole race of people who have no education, learn to read? The South had called in private tutors for their children on the plantations. They didn't want to pay for schools and teachers. Of course, after the war, there wasn't much money in the South. They had been stripped of nearly everything and didn't need another tax to deplete their world.

Bartoletti describes the beatings and killings thoroughly in this chapter. The Klan had no limits. Most of the law enforcement officers and judges were members of the Klan. One white teacher bought a gross of guns to fight fire with fire. There was a gun fight and the next day four of the black gunmen and William Luke were caught and hanged.

Black schoolhouses were burned down. The Klan especially hurried to burn any of the schools or churches that allowed Republicans to speak in their buildings. The Lost Cause wasn't lost in the minds of the Klan. They were fighting the war again. Their states' rights and the old way was returning with a vengeance. The Klan was determined to bring the Old South back alive.



# Chapter Eight

## Chapter Eight Summary and Analysis

Chapter Eight discusses the church and the Negro. The ministers helped to pull the blacks together as a community. The pastors saw their role as people who helped the black community transform the mind and the spirit of the former slave into someone with a sense of racial pride. The pastors wanted to help the black man to achieve his full potential and understand politics. They saw the needs of the black Americans: work, land, schools, housing, and equality under the law.

The black American needed the vote. Many of the women understood the need to vote more than the men. They denied marital joys for a long while to someone who was lazy about getting to the voting booth.

As the Southerners saw the influence that the ministers had over the freedmen, they added more rules to be sure that the freedman didn't become stronger than the white Southerner. Some of the planters tried to oversee the churches and keep politics from being presented. The Black churches were different. Even the Northerners who came down to help saw what they called the lack of decorum. There were rumors that the freedmen were growing more excited during church services to ready themselves for the next battle. This battle was going to overcome the whites and exterminate them. The Klan continued to monitor the churches. According to history, a couple of Klan members dressed as women and went to the service to spy in Florida.

As the violence escalated, South Carolina's Republican Governor, Robert K. Scott, chartered several black militia companies and armed them. They patrolled the roads at night and didn't allow whites to travel into black home territory. If the Klan stirred up mischief, something owned by a white was likely to burn. As the white property began to burn, the Klan and the black prominent men from one town came together and shook on a truce. That truce was broken by the Klan and night after night the property of each side was burned.

One night the Klan went after Elias Hill and dragged him out of his home. They whipped him to the bone and left him. They ordered him not to preach again and to renounce the Republicans. He was to promise never to vote.

Many ministers tried to ignore the Klan. Many piously claimed that they only preached the Bible and that one must have Jesus to be saved. They supposedly thought subjects like equality and voting had no place on the pulpit. It kept them safer to ignore the present day problem.

### Analysis Chapter Eight

In Chapter Eight, Bartoletti discusses the real root of the freedman's beginning as a community. As slaves they had never banded together to form a real community where



one man protected the other. The pastors became the leaders of the community. Many were more educated and could see needs and explain them. The minister in a community had a place to speak and had a group to listen to him.

The Klan couldn't leave a church alone. Bartoletti has found many journal entries and letters from the blacks that tell graphically what the Klan was doing. As usual the Klan was scaring the black families and pulling the man and sometimes the woman out of their home to strip them and whip them. Sometimes they hanged them and sometimes they shot them. The Klan never answered to anyone for the whippings or the murders. No one was safe from the Klan.

Bartoletti tells about the atrocities and adds pictures to some of the horrors of those days. The South was still at war but this was an internal war, a cold war. The actions were continuing but it was not declared war. This one had no honorable uniform or structure. This one had costumes to hide in and darkness to cover its attacks.



# Chapter Nine

## Chapter Nine Summary and Analysis

The Klan's violence was finally coming to the attention of the government. Bill Williams, a freed man who was the head of the York County militia, was taking his responsibility for protecting the Negro community very seriously. Williams had his troops guarding the roads as well as the Republican Meeting hall. The Klan was still raiding at night. The next night something in the white community would burn. The Klan was complaining about the blacks with guns. Calls went out to the other dens of the Klan throughout the South. So many of the Klan came that the governor asked recall of the black guns. Williams had known that the community was near a race war that could spread throughout the South. Williams had withdrawn the men guarding the Rose Hotel, Republican meeting place. Williams didn't want to give up his gun.

The Klan decided to gather the guns before the governor's order had come through. Every night the Klan went into homes and took any guns they could find. They planned a special night to go after Bill. There were thirty or forty guys on a raid. They dragged Bill from the cabin and took him into the woods. The next morning Rosy, Bill's wife, found Bill hanging from a tree.

The Klan put an announcement in the paper to tell the world that they were no longer going to have Negro rule, black bayonets, and thievish lawmakers. They were going to stop it if it took force.

Grant's office and Congress began getting correspondence about the atrocities going on. All manner of different whippings and murders filled the offices. There was no way to ignore all these cases. Grant saw that there was no way to bring the states together with the Klan causing such a state of fear and destruction in the South. They had to be stopped but the Constitution kept the government from going into a state and cleaning house. Grant got the Civil Rights Act of 1871, the Ku Klux Klan Act, signed into law. This law made the disguises illegal and covered all types of intimidation methods used on anyone wishing to vote. Anyone breaking this law would appear before a federal court, not the local judge and jury. In cases of extreme violence, the president could send in troops and suspend the writ of habeas corpus. In this case the government could make mass arrests.

### Analysis Chapter Nine

Bartoletti has taken the reader to the height of the Ku Klux Klan's power. This is the chapter that finally brings the horrible deeds of the Klan to the attention of the government of the United States. Most of the North hadn't taken the Klan seriously. They didn't realize how undermining of the government the Klan really was. Most didn't realize that the War had gone underground and the resentful Southerners were attempting to hold on to things the way they remembered them.

Bartoletti tells the story of Bill Williams in several pages. In the usual textbook, this would be told in a paragraph, if it were told at all. Once again Bartoletti has found the illustrations that go with the text. Her text paints a very complete picture of what she is telling the reader. The illustrations print it in the reader's memory so the reader will never forget it.

Bartoletti discusses Grant and his cabinet as they attempt to stop the violence of the Ku Klux Klan. The government learned about the Constitution and its short sightedness when it came to corruption in a state which needed federal officials to intervene. Grant became aware of how strong and extensive the Klan was. Bartoletti emphasizes that the War wasn't really over yet.



# Chapter Ten

## Chapter Ten Summary and Analysis

Chapter Ten begins with Grant's gathering information. Grant sent out all types of people to find out what was happening in the South. He had some detectives to infiltrate the dens of the Klan and learn all they could. In the gathering of information, the youngest member was found to be thirteen. For eight months the committees that Grant appointed took testimonies and saw witnesses. Even though many told the truth about their injuries from the Klan, all were afraid of what the Klan would do.

Elias Hill testified and afterwards joined a group of 167 other former slaves who were to board a ship for Liberia. The American Colonization Society had established the colony. Hill didn't believe a black man could ever be free in America.

In nine South Carolina counties Grant sent U.S. Marshals and federal soldiers to end the Nightriders. The Klan was ordered to surrender all disguises and arms. Suspected Klansmen were rounded up and there was a mass arrest. Some of the other dens surrendered together. The Klan called the men pukers who testified against the Klan for a lighter sentence. It is suggested that 2000 Klansmen escaped to Canada.

Nathan Bedford Forrester was given immunity to testify. He evaded the questions or couldn't remember. When the lawyers reminded him about a newspaper interview he had had, he claimed he was only talking about what he had been told. He did tell the court that he had urged the Klan to disband. He walked away with his reputation.

Many of the young men who faced the court pleaded ignorance. Some were remorseful and many didn't see that they had done anything wrong. The sentences were not too stiff in jail time and the fines were minimal.

### Analysis Chapter Ten

This chapter shows Grant finally realizing what a problem there is in the South with the Klan running wild. He sends in people to see exactly what is happening. The Southern freedmen and women are writing letters and promising to testify against the Klansmen. The freedmen want their vote.

Bartoletti brings forward many of the atrocities that she has described previously and groups them all together in the beginning of the chapter. She tells of the Ku Klux Klan Act which makes it possible to round up groups of the Klansmen as they go on their night raids. The federal government's entrance into the Klan problem sent numbers of them running. Bartoletti gives the reader plenty of facts of the times.

Another illustration that will be hard for the reader to forget is that of Elias Hill and his group of former slaves who go to Liberia so they can be truly free. The American Colonization Society aids them in their leaving.





Bartoletti points out the light sentences for the Klan members who are taken to court. However, the Klan did discover that they weren't stronger than the United States. The Klan was also scattered. Perhaps people had a choice that they would think about before the Klan could organize again. They didn't allow the Klan to form with that name for some time. However, small clubs replaced the Klan.

# Epilogue

## Epilogue Summary and Analysis

The Epilogue wraps up some of the facts as time moved on. The Ku Klux Klan exists today but the last photograph in the book is Obama. Bartoletti is telling the reader that even a black man can live the American dream today.

Every time there was an election, there was violence in the South. New white supremacist groups chose different names and kept the black man's vote banned. Some of the groups called themselves Rifle Clubs, the Red Shirts, the White League, the White Liners, and the White Caps. By 1876 everyone was tired of Reconstruction and wanted things to go back to normal. White Northerners and White Southerners wanted to be friends again. The election in 1876 was too close to call. They put Rutherford B. Hayes in because he promised to leave the South alone.

After Reconstruction had ended, the South decided on the Jim Crow laws. These laws kept the black man and woman segregated and unequal. As time passed, the Old South was romanticized and history was adjusted to make it a perfect and happy place. The Lost Cause was explained and every Confederate a hero, the real gentlemen of the world.

In 1905, Thomas Dixon, a Baptist minister, portrayed the Klan as noble. In *The Clansman*, the Klansman was the noble white knight who burned crosses and saved the world from Negro violence and rule. In 1915, the producer D.W. Griffith made *The Clansman* into the silent movie, *The Birth of the Nation*.

The movie was such a hit at the box office, the Klan was born again. One group went to Stone Mountain, Georgia and burned a cross to tell the world that the Klan was a pro-Christian, pro-American brotherhood. They no longer had a short list of hates. They added Catholics, Jews, immigrants, liberals, welfare recipients, and labor unions. In the 1920's their group grew to more than five million men.

In 1954 the Supreme Court declared segregated schools were unconstitutional. This brought on trouble. There were assassinations and church bombings and burning crosses. The Civil Rights movement came along in the 1960's. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prevented discrimination concerning employment. Another Civil Rights Act in 1965 gave the black man the right to vote again. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 banned discrimination in the buying or renting a home. In 1969 we saw the first Hate Crime Laws.

As Bartoletti points out, there are still hate groups but not as many. People today are more intolerant of hate groups and wish for the education and social welfare of all people. There is a Civil Rights Time Line at the end of the book stretching from the beginning of the KKK to 2008. It ends with the picture of Obama,



# Characters

## Mittie Williams

Mittie was a house slave at the end of the Civil War. She stayed with Miss Eliza all the time because Miss Eliza was afraid of the Union soldiers. Mittie Williams told her story 72 years later. Her words were used to make this volume possible. Mittie was quoted at the beginning of the book. She talked about the fear of the South. At the end of the volume she was mentioned again. There wasn't much about Mittie. She represented a whole Southern nation. The white woman Mittie worked for wanted Mittie there to protect her. When the KKK began, Mittie would need the white woman's protection. All Negro people needed protection then.

## Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States who was killed in office after the South's surrender but before a Reconstruction Plan could be set in place. Since the Emancipation Proclamation is mentioned so much in this book, Lincoln is important to it. His life and death is entangled with any part of the War Between the States.

## Six Confederate Heroes

John Lester, Calvin Jones, Richard Reed, James Crowe, Frank McCord, and John Kennedy formed the KKK. The six men met in the evenings and talked about everything. They weren't allowed to work and they probably were bored. Since the men had been involved with fraternities before the war it would not be surprising that they tried to have something social to attend where they enjoyed their friends. Bartoletti doesn't describe any of the men much. She talks about the rules and secret things that they make up and their first actions.

## Nathan Bedford Forrest

General Nathan Bedford Forrest of the Confederacy was responsible for the massacre at Ft. Pillow. He was a former slave trader and slaveholder. Being a hero in the Confederate Army he was asked to be Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. After the War, Forrest did some traveling for his work and it was noticed that the Klan grew after his visit to a town. When the federal government came down to stop some of the killing and terror going on in the South, Forrest claimed he was never a part of the Klan.



## Edwin Stanton

Johnson fired Stanton because Stanton did not agree with the more lenient laws that Johnson was trying to help the South to pass. The firing broke one of the Acts and made Johnson subject to impeachment. Stanton could not be fired. Johnson was the one who found himself powerless because he tried to fire Stanton. Edwin proved to be Johnson's downfall. The Congress was only too happy to help in that.

## Thaddeus Stevens

Thaddeus Stevens was the leading Republican from Pennsylvania who acted as a prosecutor in the Senate trials for impeachment of of President Johnson. He was threatened by the KKK.

## Samuel and Hannah Tutson

The Tutson's were the black family whose story is told at the end of Chapter Six. They were nearly beaten to death and the family was scattered. Although Hannah knew some of the men who had attacked the family, they were found innocent in court. Hannah was found guilty of filing false charges.

## Cornelius McBride

Cornelius McBride was a teacher who came from the north to help educate the freedmen. Cornelius was fortunate in that he had room and board offered to him, and he was very successful in teaching. The black field hands came to his special classes at night. Cornelius stood up to the KKK when he offered a test to advance his students. He was beaten and threatened by the Klan. He was about to be hanged when he ran at the leader and got away. He went back to school with his gun the next day and administered the test. The Klan didn't bother him again.

## Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington was born a slave. He got his education and became one of the foremost educators in America. He founded the Tuskegee Institute.

## Elias Hill

Elias Hill was a black man who was unable to walk or crawl probably because of polio as a child. He remained child-sized all his life. He became a circuit preacher who helped to organize the black community. The KKK dragged him from his home and nearly beat him to death. They threatened to kill him if he didn't quit preaching about equality and voting. Elias Hill was one of approximately 200 black freed people who took the ship the



American Colonization group offered and went to Liberia where he could be really free. At least he thought he would be really free. He didn't believe black Americans would ever be free.

## **Ulysses S. Grant**

President Grant followed Johnson. Grant attempted to reconstruct the South. He did send aid down South to break up the powerful KKK. He scattered the members and made it less powerful. Grant wasn't mentioned too often in this book. Bartoletti only brought him into the text when he was trying to deal with the KKK and the terrorism in the South. The Southern freedmen were Republicans and those who did get to vote helped Grant win two terms in office.

## **Rutherford B. Hayes**

Rutherford B. Hayes' presidency ended Reconstruction. He promised to leave the South alone. Bartoletti makes the point that Hayes promised to leave the south alone and that Reconstruction was over.



# Objects/Places

## Freedom War

Freedom War was the name the slaves used for the Civil War.

## Emancipation Proclamation

Abraham Lincoln signed the Proclamation on January 1, 1863. It decreed that all slaves in the eleven Rebel states were free. It was not until January of 1865 when the North was obviously winning that the Congress passed it as the Thirteenth Amendment. The Thirteenth Amendment freed the slaves everywhere instead of just the thirteen Rebel states. It took another year to fully ratify the amendment.

## Black Codes

The Black Codes were introduced to stop all the old slave labor from leaving the plantations and becoming part of a wandering people or those who made up shanty towns in the cities. Some of the code was based on vagrancy laws of the Northern states. If the Black Codes were broken, the black person became part of some place that needed his labor. These Codes were adopted while Congress was not in session. Johnson and the South pushed them through. The Congress took action when it was back in session.

## Calvin Jones

The six Confederates met in this office and through their talking and visiting organized the K.K.K. It is still debatable whether it was a social club or deliberately organized to be a terrorist group.

## Pulaski, Tennessee

Pulaski is the home of the KKK.

## Freedman's Bureau

The bureau was organized to help the poverty stricken people both white and black. It was intended to be in existence for one year. It went on for four. It was to help with food, education, and hospitals. The white taxpayer felt they were paying for freed people who should get a job.



## **Nashville, Tennessee**

Nashville was appointed for grand convention of the Klan. The Klan was strong within one year of beginning. The Klan came from all over TN and some of the surrounding states.

## **Maxwell House**

Maxwell House hotel was the meeting place for the first big Klan convention. They shared the hotel with the Democratic convention.

## **Invisible Empire**

The KKK dubbed itself the Invisible Empire because it was such a secretive organization

## **Tenure of Office Act of 1867**

Johnson broke this Act when he attempted to fire Stanton.

## **Enforcement Act**

Additional legislation intended to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

## **Jim Crowe Laws**

Southern laws that made segregation imperative. The black man was unequal.

# Themes

## **HATE AND DESTRUCTION**

North and South alike were full of hate during and after the war. The North thought that the South needed to be punished far beyond a destroyed land and wounded people. Many of the Northerners wanted control of the South to be sure that they "know their place." The South was full of hate and resentment because the North had ruined their financial wherewithal. The slaves made the plantations possible. The North took the slaves. The Emancipation Proclamation had stolen from them because slaves had been property for which they had paid and now had no more return on their investment.

## **VIOLENCE DESTROYS**

The KKK's violence against the good things as well as bad didn't help the South. When the freedmen were chased off their sharecropped land, the KKK was stealing from the planters who were going to get some profit from the land. With the freedman gone, there wasn't a crop. The planter lost in the long run. When the black schools and churches were burned, it just added another strike against the Union and being one country again. Education would have helped the whole country. The KKK tried to destroy educational opportunities for the blacks when this would have made the freedmen able to do something besides pick cotton. There were so many black people in the South, they needed more skills.

## **FEAR STOPS PROGRESS**

Perhaps deep in the heart of man there is a truth that tells him that all men are created equal. If the person who believes himself superior sees some of his superiority slipping away, he gets scared. What will a freedman be able to do to him if he is no longer superior? When the owner of slaves considers how he has treated the slave, he has reason to be afraid. If it has been acceptable for the white master to rape the slave, what will happen when the slave has rights? Will the black freedman take advantage of the white woman? Will the former slave take the white man's job?



# Style

## Perspective

*They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* is written in the third person and is the history book it claims to be. Bartoletti's narrative is exciting and alive as she lets the reader see things through her eyes. While it is factual non-fiction, she uses many of fiction's skills to make the story very readable. It draws the reader into the story and makes history very real. Obviously the writer is for Civil Rights. She points out that the KKK is a terrorist group. She is in favor of getting rid of hate crimes.

## Tone

While the reader can tell simply by the facts that the author is giving us that she is not in favor of terrorist groups, Bartoletti seems careful to give us the facts without personal commentary. The author gives plenty of stories which show the Klan for what they are. Not only does the Klan bully the blacks but they bully their own members. It would seem that it would have been difficult not to react to some of the illustrations and stories. The author is more than fair. She doesn't say much about the trials of the Klan and one would think a whole book could have been written about those and their effectiveness. She would make the ideal reporter. She wouldn't give it a slant. One believes that she simply wants the truth.

## Structure

*They Called Themselves the K.K.K.: The Birth of an American Terrorist Group* is written as a chronological history of the Klan. Bartoletti begins with a description of the life of the Southerner before the war and then explains the destruction of the South. She makes the reader very aware of the problem that the whole United States has. She talks about the land itself. She talks about the economics of the area. She explains the climate in the South and the problems coming out of Washington. She stays with the beginning of the KKK. She moves to a chapter about sharecropping which would help the South. She takes another chapter to discuss education. Then she moves on to the spiritual side of life and how the ministers were the community leaders. The KKK and their actions move all through the chapters. Someone tries to make things better and the KKK comes in and destroys it. She finally gets to the trials of the Klan. They did scatter members and made the group split. They had to leave some people alone once it was done or the federal government would come in and help with the problem. The Klan touched everyone and everything and Bartoletti interwove it well throughout the book.



## Quotes

"Although many white Northerners did not favor racial equality, most supported emancipation, because as one Union soldier from Illinois wrote his parents, 'Slavery stands in the way of putting down the rebellion.'"

Chapter One, p. 3

"Slavery had mocked the ideals of a nation dedicated to freedom and equality. Now as the United States faced Reconstruction, or the work of putting the country back together, it had the chance to live up to its creed."

Chapter One, p.7

"Most white Southerners believed that God created black people for the special purpose of working and serving white people."

Chapter One, p.7

"Most white Southerners scarcely knew a family that didn't mourn a relative or friend killed or wounded in the war."

Chapter Two, p. 14

"Tennessee had witnessed more battles than any other state except Virginia, including three of the deadliest battles of the war."

Chapter Two, p. 15

"Although some moderate Republicans believed that the South had suffered enough, radical Republicans wanted the defiant South to pay, and to pay bitterly."

Chapter Two, p. 17

"What should be done with the four million freed men, women, and children who made up 40 percent of the South's total population? There was no doubt the former slaves were free, but free to do what?"

Chapter Two, p.18

"That December, they refused to seat any Southern senator or representative who had been in power during the Confederacy."

Chapter Two, p. 21

"Most freed people, however, weren't fooled. They knew that the disguised Kukluxers weren't dead masters or Confederate soldiers arisen from the grave."

Chapter Three, p. 33

"This amendment entitled all persons born or naturalized in the United States to citizenship and equal protection under its laws."

Chapter Three, p. 37



"The Ku Klux Klan outlined its principles in a secret constitution of its own, called a Prescript."

Chapter Four, p. 44

"The words 'All men are created equal' meant white men, not all men."

Chapter Four, p. 45

"I was induced to join, because they came to my house and told me if I didn't, I have to pay \$5 and take fifty lashes."

Chapter Four, p. 49

"In addition to secrecy, the order's strength also came from absolute obedience."

Chapter Four, p. 55

"The impeachment proceedings lasted more than three months, but the Senate ultimately acquitted the president by one vote."

Chapter Five, p. 61

"In November 1868, Republican Ulysses S. Grant won the presidency, garnering 214 electoral votes to his opponent's 80. A former Union general, Grant symbolized a double Northern victory over the South."

Chapter Five, p. 69

"In an odd twist, the Ku Klux Klan added to the economic troubles of the South as they drove off the field hands and sharecroppers that some landowners desperately needed."

Chapter Six, p. 82

"They worried that such venting of emotion—the singing and clapping, the shouts and cries, the dancing and stamping of feet—might lead the freed people to rise up against white people and seek revenge for the years of bondage and other injustices."

Chapter Eight, p. 112

"Cornelius McBride, the white schoolteacher from Mississippi, carried his notebooks to Washington."

Chapter Ten, p. 134



## Topics for Discussion

Imagine what it would be like to have lived in the South before the War. Think of the movies you have seen and the life it showed. Think of how the black men and women were depicted in *Gone with the Wind*. Now, imagine what it was like after the War. What would a war savaged land look like? What could one man do with acres of land that he couldn't work even if he could afford to plant it? Discuss the new world that you would be living in. Discuss the physical aspects as well as the emotional.

How do you imagine the Reconstruction would have happened if Lincoln had been alive? How could he have helped the transition? What do you think Johnson's part was? Did he help or hinder the situation? Use specific examples in Johnson's case.

Do you think the KKK was just a social club at the beginning or was it a revenge type organization toward the freed man? Make a solid case with examples.

What do you think of Nathan Bedford Forrest? Would you call him an officer and a gentleman?

Do you think an organization takes on the personality of the leader? Did the Klan's personality resemble Forrest's?

Discuss the "Invisible Empire." Compare the Empire to the Underground Railroad.

Write an essay about voting and the ways the white man tried to trick the black man to vote a Democratic ticket.

Talk about one of the stories of a run in with the Klan. Should the black man be allowed to have some land and receive something for his labor? Do you think that sharecropping was a good plan for the South?

Would you be alarmed if you were living in the South at this time and the black man and woman was learning to read? Do you believe that reading makes a difference in a person's life?

Do you think that the ministers were the right people to be leaders of the black community? Is this still true today of the black churches?

Discuss the Ku Klux Klan Act. Do you agree with Grant's action? Why?