

Vocabulary

Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters | a union representing Pullman Porters, which began in 1925

Clean work | Jobs in the service sector or “skilled” trades

Clerical | office duties

“The Defender” | (The Chicago Defender) a prominent Black newspaper founded in 1905 that advocated for civil rights and provided a platform for Black voices, particularly during the Great Migration

Domestic | work related to performing tasks in the home (such as childcare, cleaning, cooking, etc.)

“Job Ceiling” | the invisible barriers or limitations that prevented Black laborers from advancing to higher positions, due to discriminatory or racist workplace practices

Occupational Distribution | the arrangement of different people across different job types

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Promised Land | metaphor to describe the northern cities in the US where Black southerners could migrate to for a sense of hope and better living and working conditions outside of the threat of racial oppression

Pullman Porter | employees who worked on Pullman Company railroad cars, where they assisted passengers, carried luggage, and performed other service-oriented tasks

Restrictive Covenants | legally binding agreements that impose limitations and restrictions on who can sell, buy, lease, or own a property

Semi-skilled | Typically refers to workers who have acquired some basic training or experience in a particular field or occupation but may not possess the advanced skills or qualifications required for highly specialized tasks

Tenements | multi-story buildings that are divided into multiple small apartments; they are typically found in urban areas and are low-quality and overcrowded

Unskilled | Refers to work that requires minimal training, education, or specialized knowledge, often involving repetitive tasks or manual labor that can be performed with little to no prior experience

White Collar | Typically refers to professional workers and administrative roles and is often associated with office work, business, finance, or other industries that require higher levels of education, specialized skills, and knowledge