

HST 202: ONLINE U.S. History W19 (Escobar)

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Chinese - Now & Then

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Chinese - Now & Then

by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, March 2, 2019, 4:08 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Chinese - Now & Then topic.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then

by [Vince Shumway](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 11:54 PM

With the cartoons, commercials, and text it is easy to see that the Chinese have faced issues with white men and American ideology. Cartoons #7 and #9 show men who are being tortured and or killed. With “Pacific Chivalry” in #9 it shows a man getting his hair pulled on and getting whipped. We can draw a connection with that cartoon and some text in our books. We can see Chinese immigrants were being discriminated against and ordinances were specifically targeting them. For example, “... ordinances regulating the lengths of men’s hair (forbidding distinctive braid worn by Chinese men) to sidewalk ordinances preventing the carrying baskets on shoulders”. These laws were showing specific prejudice targeting Chinese people. There was also [violence](#) for example, also on page 597 there was “...a massacre in Rock Springs, Colorado after the Union Pacific Railroad decided to hire Chinese workers”.

I think that the commercial also shares some similarity with the cartoons even though they are so far apart in age. The commercial definitely seems to be made almost in fear of the Chinese, fearful to be put “under” China, Fearful to be in their debt, fearful to be working for them, and finally fearful that they will change or ruin America. Cartoon #2 I think really portrays this point of view by showing a Chinese man eating up Uncle Sam while standing on a globe. The Title is even “The Great Fear of the Period That Uncle Sam While Be Swallowed by Foreigners”. That explicitly says there fear is to be swallowed up, and I think the commercial was saying that as well. Being swallowed up financially and then eventually subdued.

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3

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Chinese Racism

by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 11:55 PM

Americans may have disliked the 3 million German and Irish immigrants who came to the US between 1845 and 1855, but that dislike seems to pale in comparison to the attitude toward Chinese immigrants. Editorial Cartoon #7 depicts not only a cop, a German and an Irish man, but an African American as well, all working together to hang a Chinese man. The German and Irish immigrants settled primarily in rapidly growing eastern cities, while the Chinese immigrants were drawn to the California Gold Rush in 1849, “by 1870, there were some 63,00 Chinese in the United States, with over three-quarters settled in California” (Murrin pg. 596). The Chinese generally did not want to be permanent settlers, they were escaping poverty in their home country as the Germans and Irish did, but they intended to save up and return home.

Calvin Samson hired 75 Chinese immigrants from San Francisco to travel to Massachusetts to work in his shoe factory after dealing with strikes for three years straight, and unintentionally began a trend of using the Chinese as strike breakers (TCE 4:02). Prejudice worsened as the Chinese immigrants continued to be used by bosses to bully the Unions and mobilize the working class (TCE 6:45). Unions were going on strike to achieve their demands, but now they could be replaced by Chinese immigrants that would work for half the wages. Editorial Cartoon #5 “A Picture for Employers,” shows the living expectations for Chinese men versus white families. White laboring men were scared, the “Chinamen infinite in supply, servile in nature, ready to take over every white man’s job” (TCE 5:57). This fear is shown in Editorial Cartoon #1 where a Chinese man is depicted indoors with eleven arms, sewing, building, working on shoes, painting, sawing, making cigars and holding a bag of money, while white men stand around outside “What Shall We Do With Our Boys?”

Chinese became the scapegoats for all that was wrong, and then came the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 drove out the Chinese, the first group to be banned from entering the United States because of their race or nationality. The “Chinese Professor” ad plays upon the residual hatred and fear from this time period. Instead of dealing directly with the issues of government debt and spending, the Citizens Against Government Waste resorted to Scare tactics.

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3

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#5 A Message for Employers...and the country at large

by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Thursday, March 7, 2019, 6:34 PM

In discussing the cyclical nature of American nativist sentiments toward Chinese folks, I want to focus on the fifth cartoon, “A Picture for Employers.” The perceived racial and cultural superiority of white folks in America led them to despise Chinese folks for their different appearance and behaviors. In the late 19th Century, even the most accepting of citizens of the United States believed “foreigners” should assimilate to American culture. This is demonstrated in the forced assimilation of native children in “Indian boarding schools” and the outrage over Chinese adherence to their own cultural practices and lack of assimilation into American culture. The outrage of white nativists led to legislatures finding ways develop institutional barriers to their prosperity in the country. That is what motivated the California State legislature to modify the “Foreign Miners’ Tax” to specifically target Chinese miners two years after the legislation was enacted (Murrin 597).

The fifth cartoon is another example of the weaponization of difference. The title of the cartoon is “A Picture for Employers” and depicts the differences between Chinese immigrants and White American in home life. There many explanations that aren’t rooted in racism for the significant difference between the two pictures. Many Chinese workers came to the US as sojourners without any intention to settle; they would not have brought their family with them because they were working to provide for them back in China. Additionally, the US government had heavily subsidized the expansion of homesteading across the country; this allowed white folks to have greater access to spacious homes, small nuclear families, and access to higher paying jobs. However, the cartoon argues that the homesteader can’t live on 40 cents a day because he has all these dependants, and the Chinese immigrants can live in on so little because they live in “squalor.” White culture was clearly superior but was threatened by the foreign culture of Chinese immigrants.

The cultural differences between the United States and China persists to this day and they heavily influence the American fears of being devoured by China. The advertisement made this fear crystal clear; unless Americans act now, the wave of Chinese money and influence will overtake the political dominance of the United States. While the

fear in the 21st Century is based in debt-related economic dependance, the sentiment is the same as in the 19th Century. The ability for Chinese folks to undercut Americans and take advantage of their prosperity will lead to American demise. While the scenes in the picture may need to be updated, I can see a version of this image shared by folks on facebook today.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then

by [Miles Long](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 6:28 PM

These cartoons reflect the feelings of many durings the 19th century. It portrays the Chinese as swindlers, as people who are a threat to Democracy, and as immoral people who could not be trusted. This was reflected by the Chinese exclusion act of 1882, which restricted Chinese immigration to the United States.

The video tries to create a “red scare”, kind of like propaganda between the U.S. and the USSR during The Cold War. It makes it seem like America has fallen, and China now controls the U.S. if the people don’t do something to stop them. This propaganda to me is similar to comic #2, which shows Uncle Sam being swallowed by foreigners. The video infers that America has fallen because of their internal struggles and that the Chinese are the cause of this.

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Different Century Same Thoughts

by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 4:35 AM

The biggest connection between the commercial and the cartoons is with #2. They both portray the attitude that some Americans share both then and now towards Asians. That Americans will be taken over by the Asians. Even though the cartoon was made over a hundred years ago history and the message is still repeating itself today. Back then it was because so many were migrating to this country, filling jobs here, and developing communities. Now it is fear that they will financially and technologically overtake us. Many different measures were implemented at the end of the 19th century to prevent the imagined takeover. Pg. 597 of our textbook tells of the Foreign Miners Tax and The Chinese Exclusion Act. As well as discriminatory ordinances, [violence](#), and riots against Asians. Now its commercials like this one promoting these derogatory and racist thoughts. Politics are also so focused on creating laws about what we should allow between our country and Asia based on these fears.

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Re: Different Century Same Thoughts

by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 3:26 PM

I agree with your point about commercials like the "Chinese Professor" promoting derogatory and racist thoughts. Those who made the commercial may not have intended for racism to be a part of their message, rather to encourage Americans to do something about government spending, but the message is there regardless and is inappropriate.

I researched the origin of the ad, it was made by Citizens Against Government Waste and broadcast initially in 2010 and then again in 2012. It "pays homage to a 1986 ad...called 'The Deficit Trials.' The national debt was \$2 trillion in 1986 when 'The Deficit Trials' was denied broadcast time for being 'too controversial'" (1). I watched both ads, and the newer ad seems far more controversial to me, due to the inherent racism, yet it was aired on two separate occasions.

Time published an article in 2012, a week after the second broadcast of "Chinese Professor" entitled "Viewpoint: Bashing China is the Politics of the Week" written by Eric Liu, who describes himself in the article as Chinese American. He expresses concern about how "propaganda" like this influences how people see Asian Americans.

"Asian Americans always react with trepidation in moments like these because we are subject to truly bipolar stereotypes. Days after the "Chinese professor" ad began to air, stories in the [New York Times](#) and the [Wall Street Journal](#) painted Asians as robotic test takers swamping New York City's elite public schools and as a diasporan Tiger Nation within America.

A wave of alien adversaries or a mass of hypercompetitive newcomers? These are the two dominant images of Asians in our culture. One marks Asians with indelible foreignness. The other damns them with excessive praise." (2)

The stereotypes that Eric Liu references match with the attitude toward Chinese Americans in the mid-1800's. Editorial cartoon #1 shows a Chinese man doing many jobs, while white men sit outside, the "hypercompetitive" Chinese Americans worked long hours for less pay and were used by bosses to combat the demands of work unions. Every single Editorial cartoon that Mr. Escobar provided, shows Chinese Americans as being "alien" in appearance, although the contrast between the Chinese man and the white women is the most extreme. Not only did Chinese immigrants face many "discriminatory ordinances specifically targeting them" (Murrin pg.597), they also were faced [violence](#) from white workers that were rioting against them, "including a massacre in Rick Springs, Colorado, after the Union Pacific decided to hired Chinese workers" (Murrin pg. 597). There were twenty-eight Chinese immigrants who died in the massacre.

(1) - <https://www.cagw.org/media/press-releases/%E2%80%9Cchinese-professor%E2%80%9D-returns>

Video of "The Deficit Trials" - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiBCRQL58_k

(2) - <http://ideas.time.com/2012/10/29/viewpoint-bashing-china-is-the-politics-of-the-weak/>

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Labor Tug of War Then and Now

by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 5:00 AM

No matter what time period we are in Americans are worried about their jobs. Worried that the Chinese will steal our jobs and opportunities. In cartoon #1 we see a single Chinese man doing the job of many. Now all these white men who used to be gainfully employed are unemployed and left to loiter and commit crime. This idea repeats itself today with many Americans worried about the mass manufacturing of most of our goods in China. That by manufacturing there it is sending jobs meant for Americans overseas. This has sparked trade wars between our country and China that seem to be never ending.

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Chinese experience

by [Brianna Shelley](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 2:30 PM

History has shown that if you are not a white male, then you are thought of as less than. First it was African Americans and the Spaniards in Texas, now it is the Chinese. I think the commercial "Citizens against Government Waste" shows that even today there are people in this country who think they are superior to others, simply based on their race and ethnicity. I think the fear from whites back in the late 19th century was that the Chinese were immigrating to the United States and they thought that they would take over every "white mans" job. They would work for far less than the white workers and they could be tasked with doing many different jobs. Cartoon #1 I think depicts the Chinese workers as being all encompassing, that they could be given any job that had previously been done by the white man and they would do for pennies on the dollar. One historian from [the Chinese Experience](#) video describe the Chinese as "they will work for half price, live upon a mouse or rat and call it a dainty morsel." (6:25)

Chinese men faced many prejudices from white natives, they lived and worked in poor conditions and had many ordinances that specifically targeted them. Some examples are the length of men's hair, forbidding distinctive braids, prevented them from carrying baskets on their shoulders while walking on the sidewalks, prevented them from owning land, they were not aloud to testify in court or intermarry with whites. (Liberty, Equality, Power; Page 597)

I think throughout history, one thing remains a reoccurring theme, that some white men think they are the superior race and if you are not a white male you could be treated horrible by some of them. You will face injustices, you will have less rights, you will be discriminated against based on the color of your skin. Unfortunately, many of things remain true today. As a Nation we have made progress in procuring equal rights for everyone, but racism is a lot harder to fix in the minds and hearts of those who believe themselves as better then other, simply because of their race.

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The Chinese Treatment

by [Taylor Reid](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 8:15 PM

The commercial shows a hostile attitude from the Chinese about how America and other empires have been leading their governments wrong. This connects to how the Chinese were treated so poorly and looked down upon when they immigrated to the United States. In the first cartoon it shows a Chinese man doing a lot of different jobs while the Whites just sit around waiting for his to finish. This relates is talking about how once the Chinese started living here, they were given the lowest of low jobs and weren't considered citizens. Cartoon ten shows a lady labeled America protecting the Chinese man while all of the white men wanted to hunt him and harm him. He is surrounded by slandering headlines talking down about the Chinese population. I think history is repeating itself but not in such a drastic way.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then: Cartoons #5 & #10

by [Emilie Ormsby](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 10:10 PM

After examining the political cartoon and watching the commercial urging us to stop frivolous government spending, many connections are made between the different attitudes being reflected towards the Chinese in these forms of media. The Chinese man in the commercial informing people of the patterns of fallen countries states "America has fallen because they turned their backs on the principles that made them great in the first place." This sentence in itself could have a lot more meaning under the surface of it's text as well. For example, the foundations of equal rights and freedom to all was obviously not enforced to any immigrants. Cartoon number 10, captioned "Hands off, Gentlemen! America means fair play for all.", depicts a woman wearing a tiara reading "U.S" guarding/defending a Chinese man hiding from an angry mob of people. The background imagery shows a noose hanging from a tree as well as a colored orphanage that appears to be burning. These images are directly related to the atrocities during the Civil War era and although the woman is defending the Chinese man, these images also represent a mockery being made of America's foundations of equality. Because these foundations held little truth considering the acts of [violence](#) and oppression. The text reads "In 1877, during the national Great Railway Strike, mobs of white workers rioted against Chinese workers in San Francisco's Chinatown. [Violence](#) against Chinese workers occurred in numerous places in the West during the 1870s and 1880s, including a massacre in Rock Springs, Colorado, after the Union Pacific Railroad decided to hire Chinese workers." (Murrin pg. 597)

In comparison, the Chinese citizens of the future (2030) featured in the commercial laugh at America's faults, specifically financially, as well as the American people now being the ones working for the Chinese. Another cartoon that stood out to me was number 5 where several Chinese men are pictured living in very small bunks living off rats, while the other half depicts a happy American family. The cartoon is captioned "A Picture for Employers". Aside from the financial faults described in the commercial, it's almost as if the Chinese are laughing in the faces of those who once oppressed them and laughing at the fact that these people will now have to work for them as the Chinese once had to, as pictured in the cartoon.

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3

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exclusion

by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 11:54 PM

(In regards to images #2 and #3)
At this time of western expansion, "...immigrants from China, Mexico, and other countries were drawn to the economic opportunities of the West as part of a global movement of peoples...(593)" which turned the West into a place full of diversity. Due to the many opportunities the West provided, many Chinese arrived in the hopes of better pay and an escape from poverty for their families.

Unfortunately, for these Chinese workers, they were looked down upon and had fewer opportunities. For example, they could not participate in the Homestead Act which, “...denied access to Chinese laborers, who could not become U.S. citizens and had no property rights

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