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Chinese – Now and Then

by [Joe Escobar](#) – Friday, February 26, 2016, 10:07 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Chinese – Now and Then topic.

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Chinese cartoons and immigration

by [Jessica Driver](#) – Monday, February 29, 2016, 4:04 PM

A common thread in these anti-Chinese cartoons is labor, particularly in the first two cartoons. In the first, a Chinese man is shown with eleven arms performing many jobs at once while young white men stand idly outside the door. The caption reads, “What shall we do with our boys?” In another, Uncle Sam is being “swallowed by foreigners” – Irish immigrants in the East and Chinese in the West. (Of course Mr. Escobar would complain about the cartoon being backward, and I would agree. It’s a bit confusing.)

I think there is a strong similarity between these cartoons and sentiments felt today. One aspect of similarity is the economic dependence, as was illustrated by the video. But another is the old issue of immigrant workers. Clearly the authors of these cartoons are upset that immigrant workers have jobs and many hereditary American citizens don’t. There were plenty of white itinerant workers in the west (textbook, p.603) that would have been eager (at least at first) to have a steady job working on the railroads like some of the Chinese men had working on the railroad. The same complaint can be heard today regarding the immigration issue – we have enough unemployment here as it is, so why are we still importing workers and exporting work? Perhaps it is because we Americans are spoiled in that we are unwilling (or unable, due to our standard of living) to work for smaller wages like the rest of the world.

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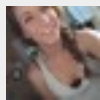
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Fear

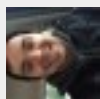
by [Victoria Hayles](#) – Monday, February 29, 2016, 8:48 PM

The largest connection I see between the commercial and the cartoons is the fear that the Chinese are overtaking America. The Chinese Exclusion Act that was passed and then later renewed showed that fear going all the way into government, and it is evident that the fear of overwhelming Chinese influence is still present today.



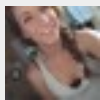
History repeating. Jennifer Jones
by [Jennifer Jones](#) – Monday, February 29, 2016, 10:20 PM

The connections I can make between the current commercial and historical American behaviors/attitudes towards the Chinese based off the cartoons is that there is the fear that if China takes over America we are out of luck. There is an unsaid message in these cartoons and this commercial that if the Chinese continue to benefit off our mistakes that they will take over as well as an unsaid fear that we will lose all our jobs to Chinese workers. In the 19th century its evident that Americans were terrified of immigrants taking over the country, that still continues to this day. In the 19th century it was a fear of jobs being lost to immigrant workers, although in today's world I believe its a fear of losing jobs to immigrant workers and terrorism. I think that is how it is an example of history repeating itself.



Re: Chinese – difference through out time
by [Erich Geisler](#) – Monday, February 29, 2016, 10:28 PM

What I seem to gather through all the pictures of the chinese is that they look like they are invading like cockroaches and taking our jobs. In one picture it shows uncle Sam trying to block out the chinese but they keep finding other means of coming into America. In another picture it shows a dead woman under a Chinese man's foot while he has weapons like he came in and invaded and plundered somewhat like a pirate would on another ship. It would seem that these pictures sort of tell a string of events that will happen if the Chinese enter the United States. First they come into America, take jobs, and soon take over. That is what I gather from all the pictures shown about the Chinese.



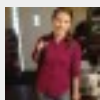
Re: Chinese – difference through out time
by [Jennifer Jones](#) – Wednesday, March 2, 2016, 9:21 PM

Just like what we were shown in class on Tuesday, it seemed as if the US almost faked to like the Chinese when they needed them for jobs and cheap labor, but as soon as they were taking the jobs from Americans they were hated and then eventually banned for years.



Re: Chinese – Now and Then
by [Daniel Padilla](#) – Monday, February 29, 2016, 11:50 PM

The connection between the recent commercial and the older cartoons is very clear, Americans are afraid of the Chinese and them taking over our country. As seen in the cartoons, Americans believe that the Chinese are swallowing Uncle Sam (the United States) That is why as seen on the "Chinese Question Again" cartoon we have tried to keep them out to keep something like the video happening. I do not believe it is just 'history' repeating itself, but rather a clear sign that racism and discrimination against Chinese is still happening.



Economics and discrimination
by [Jessica Driver](#) – Wednesday, March 2, 2016, 3:06 PM

I agree that our attitudes today reflect those of the 1800’s. We are still afraid that the Chinese, with all their manpower and their foreign allegiance, will take away our jobs. However, I don’t think that this fear is necessarily equivalent to racism.

The source of the tension is economic, as was illustrated in class when we discussed fluctuating attitudes

toward the Chinese. When their industriousness proved valuable to completing the railroad, they were praised (despite their race) by none less than Leland Stanford. But when economic hard times hit and men were out of work, they were seen as the evil foreigners depicted in the last cartoon. Racial hatred existed the whole time, but it was an independent factor that was muted and augmented by the ebb and flow of the economic situation.

Today, cartoons like the last one would be universally denounced by a horrified public. There is economic fear regarding immigrants and jobs going to China, but legally and in person our attitudes towards Chinese people are much different. We see them as full equals, with the same inherent moral qualities as ourselves. Yes, our culture still struggles with racism. But it is the economic fears, not the racism, that remain unchanged.

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History always repeats itself
by [Cheree Scott](#) – Wednesday, March 2, 2016, 11:26 AM

History is repeating itself. It has and always will. We are humans and our natural reaction is too question new things that we don't understand or know.

We also label people by what they look like and by their ancestors. We can try and not do it but we do judge and label others passed on the past, whether personal or not. Sometimes though our reactions and the way we handle situations though are taught behaviors. And when we act a certain way, whether by speech or actions, we will get stuff back at us that we don't agree with.

With the commercial though China was giving back what they received in the 19th century from the United States and the Railroad. We became their workers. And the spokesperson laughed about it. What did the Americans of the 19th century do to the Chinese? The same thing.

History is repeating itself. It maybe decades before we see a trend or it could be so continuous that we never see but it is there.

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Irony
by [Taylor Trujillo](#) – Saturday, March 5, 2016, 4:22 PM

Chinese immigration was definitely unfair. After hearing what a contribution they had put into the railroad, and then seeing the picture of all the people who had "helped" build the railroad with none of them in it: I was almost offended for them. They were just used to build and get resources, as well as, used for political reasons within factories where the American workers were on strike. I just find it ironic that we would ban their right to be in the US for them to only become our allies later in history, forcing to allow such a thing to happen again.

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Race to the bottom
by [Dan Johnson](#) – Saturday, March 5, 2016, 8:29 PM

In economically difficult times, often times individuals with a lot of power find ways to make the common people fight amongst themselves. In times such as these, the common laborer doesn't feel empowered to ask for better conditions or pay from those who own large amounts of financial and political power, so they fight amongst factions of their own class and often find the most disenfranchised group to take power from. In American history, the a group often times scapegoated is the Chinese. In general, the Chinese culture is more collectivist in nature and have historically felt more comfortable with personal sacrifice for the good of the group. American culture is generally based more on individualism. In the American market, it is of great importance for individuals to have there achievements recognized for their individual effort. Chinese culture places the purpose of their collective effort above that of the idea that the individual has their own separate effort themselves which should be accounted for. As shown in recent commercial advertisement, people of influence use the Chinese for their own personal gain economically while using them for their own gain politically to distract from their

simultaneous exploitation of the American workforce. Leland Stanford played this game himself. Although the American workers were able to recognize Stanford's role in giving away their jobs, in their powerlessnes, instead of looking to move politically for a better system of wages, they displaced their anger and frustration on the Chinese and looked to solidlify their place as the prominent working class in America.

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