

HST 202: History of United States W19 (Escobar)

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Chinese - Now & Then
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, March 1, 2019, 9:10 PM

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

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Scott Carpenter](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 7:01 PM

Cartoon #1

Left side of carton shows Chinese man with over 10 hands and on right side it displays a bunch of Americans doing nothing (page 596 in text) "while only a few hundred emigrated from china in 1849" "by 1870 there were some 63,000 Chinese in the United States, with over three-quarters settled in California." "Chinese immigrants intended to be sojourners, not permanent settlers: They planned to take their hard-earned saving home to the wives and families they had left behind."

The picture looks like the Chinese man was doing a lot of different jobs! / payed substantially less pay than white laborers

(page 597 in text) "Dennis kearney of the Workingman's Party of California, inflamed nativist crowds of white workers with anti-Chinese rhetoric: In 1877, during the national Great Railway Strike, mobs o white workers rioted against Chinese workers in San Francisco's Chinatown. Violence against Chinese's 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." "Twenty-eight Chinese died in an attack that included burning down Chinese homes; similar attacks soon occurred throughout the West."

THE ANTI CHINA COMMERCIAL comparing Ancient Greeks and Roman Empire the United states to how we make mistakes and that now they own most of our debt, so know we work for them.

Interesting that the cartoon and the Video are portraying the exact opposite of each other (kinda)

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Fear of Immigration

by [Nicolette D Erazo](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 9:41 PM

In the political cartoon #2, Uncle Sam is seen being swallowed by an Irish man and a Chinese man. I believe the idea behind this cartoon is that the immigrants were seen as taking over the U.S. in the labor force, taking jobs from white workers. "By the mid-1850s, thousands of Chinese immigrants arrived annually. By 1870, there were some 63,000 Chinese in the United States, which over three quarters settled in California." (p.596). In relation to the commercial, the Chinese population of that time period created enough of a presence that California government felt the need to tax Chinese workers. "In 1850, the California State legislatur responded to anti-foreigne agitation with the Foreign Miner's Tax aimed at all foreigners, two years later, the legislature specifically targeted Chinese immigrants" (p. 597). In the commercial, the professor take about how the U.S. taxes could lead to its downfall, as it has been seen in history.

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Re: Fear of Immigration

by [Nicolette D Erazo](#) - Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 4:46 PM

After Tuesday's class and some direction from our instructor, it seems that the relationship between the commercial and our nation's history with China is not comparing the issue of taxing, but rather the work that they have done in/for our country for hundreds of years. They have made numerous products for us in recent years, just as they have in history, including the Central Pacific Railroad. Additionally, many have argued that the people of China are taking our current jobs, just as they did during the 19th century, when all the riots broke out because of the many Chinese immigrants coming to work for the large capitalist companies. As stated in class, the angered white workers held signs saying "No Chinese Cheap Labor For Us".

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Re: Fear of Immigration

by [Scott Carpenter](#) - Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 6:56 PM

Nicolette D Erazo you bring up a good point

You said: "They have made numerous products for us in recent years"

There are many items I could mention but for the purpose of this I will mention toys. I believe most toys no a-days are made in China. Their working conditions are horrific. Hours of overtime they must perform, being paid very cheap wages, very poor working conditions barely enough to live on and all this is done in their own country. A lot of these products are sold at Costco Walmart, and other retailers.

Here in America a lot of manufactures try to get made at a cheap rate. To save a buck. So, hay lets have made overseas and save a buck. And we will not have to hire here in the United States. taking away jobs. Sounds familiar.

It appears that we took advantage of Chinese when they first came over. It appears that were still taking advantage of them now.

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Re: Fear of Immigration

by [Nicolette D Erazo](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 11:41 PM

Scott, you stated "Here in America a lot of manufactures try to get products made at a cheap rate." The idea behind this is that history could be repeating itself, as you said. During the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad, the labor the Chinese did was very strenuous. "Some 12,000 Chinese laborers ultimately built the Central Pacific Railroad, often under exceptionally harsh conditions, and with

substantially less pay than white laborers." They were hired to get the work done for far less money and as stated in class: Leland Stanford, the governor of California, needed cheap labor to build the railroad, so he became very pro Chinese to help accomplish his goal. If America in today's society wishes for a large amount of work to be done in a short amount of time, and other countries will help meet these goals accepting less payment, then it would seem that a connection between the behaviors of then and now is present.

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Re: Fear of Immigration

by [Robert Whitney](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11:37 PM

I agree with you that the Chinese were hired because of their cheap labor but I would argue that the uproar about Chinese labor now is a result of decades of Chinese abuse. Because the Chinese were known for their cheap labor, American capitalists used them to their advantage to make the most profit they could. This began the abuse of the Chinese and their labor. Once branded with the stereotype that their labor wasn't worth much, it was difficult for them to make good money in America. Since the 19th century, not much changed and the Chinese are still being exploited. American business owners now have not only enforced the stereotype of Chinese labor, but have taken jobs from perfectly able American citizens and enforced poverty in China.

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Re: Fear of Immigration

by [Maximillian Prentice](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 7:17 PM

I also found cartoon #2 interesting. I agree with your interpretation that it is portraying the Chinese and Irish immigrants taking over the U.S. The first thing that popped into my head when I saw the cartoon was the railroad. The transcontinental railroad was built mostly by immigrants, Irish and Chinese, starting from opposite sides of the country and meeting in the middle. In the cartoon, the caricatures are shown swallowing up Uncle Sam from opposite sides to meet in the middle.

That is probably what the people of the time felt. A large about of immigrants were working their way across the United States, taking labor jobs that were usually done by poor whites. It probably felt like the America they knew was being swallowed up. It is kind of ironic though, that the "fear of the period, that Uncle Sam may be swallowed up by foreigners" was so prominent when those foreigners were actually building the infrastructure that shaped the United States as we know it today.

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America is still Anti-China

by [Jesse Carr](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 10:46 AM

In the fourth cartoon and the Anti-China commercial I see a lot of similarities. In the fourth carton it is representing a Chinese person killing a white woman and talking over with the quote under it saying “the yellow terror in all his glop” I take this cartoon as the people in America being scared of the Chinese taking over America and killing all our people. Now in the Anti-China commercial taking place in 2030 is the same type of fear that china will take over America. They are scared because the U.S. owes such a big debt to china that they feel that Americans will have to start to work for China to pay their debt to them if the government doesn’t make a change in the way they spend money. If this actually happened, you could think about it as karma hitting America in the face. When the Chinese where building the Union and Central Pacific Railroad the where treated very poorly and payed poorly as well. They also didn’t want to give the Chinese any credit in photos for helping with the build. So, if the roles were reversed hundreds of years later you could kind of think about it as natural pay back for treating the Chinese people so terribly. So yes, this is a perfect example of history repeating itself they American where scared of the Chinese taking over that’s why they decided to make the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 that didn’t end until 1943 why they became our allies in World War II. The American are still scared that the Chinese will be a power over America they just think the roles will be reversed. The commercial, I feel, is just as Anti-China as America was when it made the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

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Fear of Chinese Influence
by [Tyler Weiss](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 7:28 PM

Many of these cartoon share a similar theme of the fear that many Americans felt at the time about the waves of immigrants coming to the country looking for work. The Chinese would work for much less pay than white Americans would, making it harder for white men to find some hard labor work. The Central Pacific Railroad was built almost entirely by Chinese workers who were paid significantly less than the white Americans laborers (textbook, pg 597). This sparked a fear amongst Americans of what would happen when all the factory, mining, and railroad jobs were being filled by Chinese instead of Americans.

I believe this is pretty accurately portrayed in both cartoons #1 & #5. In cartoon #1, we see on the left hand side an eleven-armed Chinese man working many different jobs at one time, while white American men stand idly by outside, with hands in their pockets and nothing to do. The caption at the bottom reads, "What shall we do with our boys?" This is definitely a pathos approach intended to make the viewer sympathetic towards all of the American boys being put out of work as well as angry at all the Chinese immigrants who pushed them out of their jobs.

These same intentions can be found in cartoon #5, where on the left we see a dozen or so Chinese men crammed into tiny quarters, some feeding on rats, most trying to sleep, and below is a caption that reads, "Why they can live on 40 cents a day," and on the right we see a white man coming home from a long day's work to a wife and three kids and a well furnished home with a cat, and the caption here reads, "And they can't." This image focuses on the living conditions of the Chinese workers, but instead of showing these men living in dreadful conditions in a sympathetic light, they illustrate it as just the way these men chose to live, and the reason that they are able to work for so much less and push white men out of work. These cartoons also point at an underlying fear of the loss of core American values and culture, especially in the way that the man's home in cartoon #5 is illustrated. All of those wonderful things he has in his home are things he stands to lose if he can't find work.

This fear of losing American values and principles is apparent also in the short commercial clip. The Chinese spokesman featured in the commercial makes the claim that The United States fell because we turned our backs on our main principles. The U.S. has spent itself into an enormous debt, most of which China owns. This commercial is just adding one more voice to the narrative saying that Chinese influence in America will lead to the loss of American culture and values.

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Misplaced Anger -- Chinese and Americans
by [Maximillian Prentice](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 7:56 PM

A common theme in the relationship between Americans and Chinese seems to be that Americans are always worried about the Chinese taking work for them or passing them in industry. In the 19th century, Americans were worried the Chinese would take over all factory and labor jobs. Today Americans share similar fears, as well as competition with China to stay at the forefront of education. What I find interesting is how corporations bring the Chinese in to save money (or ship work there, in present time) and that is what creates the hatred from the working class. As the book states, "In the 1860s, labor contractors in China actively recruited young men and women to come to America to build the transcontinental railroad, as well as to work as agricultural laborers, to develop fisheries and vineyards, and to help reclaim California swamplands" (Text Book, 597).

After reading that, cartoon #1 seems very ironic. The only reason the Chinese man on the left is doing all those jobs is because he was sought out by the U.S. to come work here. Yet, the backlash of the American people was not felt but the contractors or corporations that employed the Chinese, but by the Chinese themselves. I think the commercial in the forum materials really shows that the present-day mindset about the Chinese is not all that different from 1882, when the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. It is more subtle than some of the comics, like #2, #3, and #7, but still paints the Chinese in a negative light.

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Re: Misplaced Anger -- Chinese and Americans
by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 2:58 PM

I agree with you on the misplaced anger subject. As we read in our textbook men like Leland Stanford were actively recruiting Chinese men to come to America and to make a "profit" building the railroad, even though the conditions and the pay were much worse, Stanford won the immigrants trust in order for them to work for him and then when it became a problem he betrayed them until it became a problem and then he was against the Chinese again. I had no idea that there was a time in our history where the Chinese not allowed to come over to America -- and it lasted for 30 years too! Thats crazy. The anti-chinese rhetoric displayed by the Workingman's party of California is interesting because it is lead by Dennis Kearney who is irish. And not too long ago in history the irish were the ones being discriminated and people were afraid they were going to "steal the vote". To me this supports what Joe tells us in class that as much as we want America to consistently be open, land of the free, welcoming to immigrants, it is not. Chapters in history such as this prove that that story is not usually the case.

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A picture for employers
by [Meri Pedelini](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 9:58 PM

In ch. 18 we learn about the huge pushback the Chinese got from Americans during the construction of the railroad. Corporations found that they could pay Chinese men much less for the same job and harsher conditions than the white laborer. In cartoon #5 titled "A Picture for Employers" it shows two frames, on the left a den full of Chinese immigrants crowded room, eating rats, smoking opium and unpleasant and on the right a white man coming home to a wife, his kids, and a home to theirselves -- along with a caption that says "why THEY can live for 40 cents a day, but THEY can't" Insinuating the Chinese do not lead civilized lives and how it is more important for the white worker to be employed with respectable wage.

The Workingman's Party of California was headed by a laborer and public speaker Dennis Kearney. Kearney fueled hate and fear into crowds of white nativist laborers. This fear and hate tuned into riots and violence, a good example of this fear of being replaced and taken over by the Chinese can be seen in cartoon #1 called "What Shall We Do With Our Boys". From what I can gather in this picture is on the left is a Chinese man multitasking and doing many Jobs. Many Americans thought that Chinese were only here to make money. Shoemaking, running tobacco, sewing etc. There is a sign that says "Chinese trade monopoly". Many Americans were afraid the Chinese were going to take over production industry. On the right it looks like young boys, just standing around, not having a job. They are drawn to look innocent and good, unlike the menacing and monster like Chinese man on the left side. It looks like one of them is being dragged off by a police officer towards a building that looks like a jail or some sort of boarding school. To me it seems like the author is trying to say that the Chinese are creating an obstacle for American boys to find good work and have a secure future.

After reading this chapter I do see a relation to modern times, mostly to do with the old argument of "they're stealing our jobs" or the idea that the United States is "weaker" and losing to China. (as we saw in the modern commercial). The commercial is evidence that there is still a huge population of people who fear the Chinese taking over and taking advantage of the United States, calling it a "weak" nation. The commercial is hinting that we must change our ways otherwise we will be "working" for China, this strikes the same sort of anger and fear that I imagine Kearney sparked in his anti-chinese speeches.

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Re: A picture for employers
by [Nicolette D Erazo](#) - Thursday, March 7, 2019, 9:00 AM

The idea of the U.S. 'working for China' is something that I didn't think of, rather focusing on fear of the potential lack of jobs. However, Dennis Kearney believed, as said in class, "The Chinese were a weapon of rich capitalists trying to suppress the working class white men." Cartoon #1 could interpret that because the Chinese supply so much production demand, working so many jobs, the people would fear the suppression and the idea of Chinese controllingthe economic future of the time.

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American Prejudice Against Chinese
by [Bailey Deverell](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 4:04 PM

From both the cartoons of the past and the modern commercial I can infer that there is still a prejudice against the Chinese deeply rooted in the subconscious of some Americans. In all of the cartoons that were shown and the commercial I noticed a prevailing “us and them” mentality stemming from the American side of the equation. Take note that in all the cartoons the Americans are shown on one side of the picture and the Chinese on the other, like there is an invisible divider separating the two peoples. In Cartoon 1, 5 and 10 this symbolic “line of separation” that I am referring to is actually physically represented within the pictures. In the video the “divider” is represented in that the Chinese are in Beijing, speaking in their own language, about the collapse of the United States- which was apparently partially caused by the People’s Republic of China in this hypothetical and in my opinion somewhat racist scenario- all the while looking at images of prominent American landmarks and historical sites through some sort of futuristic PowerPoint software.

The source of this prejudice that Americans have had toward the Chinese people, both in history and in the present, I believe is pretty clearly seeded in economic and social motivations. As Mr. Escobar stated in class last Thursday when Leland Stanford brought in Chinese immigrants as cheap labor for construction of the transcontinental railroad in the 1860’s and 1870’s it undermined the potential for many other kinds of people, particularly white Americans, to find work on the railroad. But the prejudice against Chinese immigrants seems to have actually began earlier in the 1850’s, as the Chinese had started immigrating to the western United States during the Gold Rush, later staying as miners and laborers (pg. 597). This prejudice toward Chinese immigrants expanded into institutionalized racialism, which eventually manifested itself in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. And as we already know, again from the lecture on Thursday, this legislation was extended in 1892 for another ten years, and then again in 1902 with the difference being that the ban would be permanent. It was only in 1943, half way into the second World War, when the immigration ban on China was repealed- and then only because China was an ally by circumstance against the Empire of Japan.

Modern day prejudices that Americans may have against the Chinese is based upon similar economic motives, though with the passing of 135 years the game has changed significantly. Now Americans are concerned, perhaps legitimately, about the outsourcing of labor and industry to other major economic powers, such as China. The organization who developed the commercial, Citizens Against Government Waste, brings up another concern that Americans might have, again perhaps legitimately, that as a nation the United States owes over a trillion dollars worth of debt to the Chinese government.

That these concerns Americans have had have been externalized in the form of prejudice and discrimination in our present and in our history is unfortunate because it serves to delegitimize the valid economically and socially motivated considerations that Americans have about the modern debt crisis.

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Chinese Cartoon 2
by [Robert Whitney](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 9:58 PM

In this response, I will be talking about the second of the Chinese cartoons. In this drawing, an Irishman and a Chinese man are drawn eating Uncle Sam. Words above them read, "The Great Fear of the Period, that Uncle Same may be Swallowed by Foreigners". The Chinese man is drawn with a large, straight braid of hair and a large hat, while the Irishman is drawn with the stereotypical "ape-face". The "swallowing" of Uncle Sam represents the fears of "true" citizens of America that the country would soon be overrun by people from Ireland and China, who would work for less pay and steal their jobs. The message in this cartoon is almost equivalent to the message in the anti-Chinese commercial. In that commercial, a tone of social hatred or disfavor of the Chinese as well as an economic hatred. In both the commercial and the cartoon, the general message is to "get the Chinese out of our business". I think that this is a form of history repeating itself because once again we are trying to force the Chinese out of our economics. Granted the federal government has dug us into a hole that seems impossible to get out of, it still seems race fueled.

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America's view of China
by [Robert Whitney](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11:20 PM

After reading the entries by other students I have come to a conclusion about America's view on China now compared to in the 19th century. It seems as though in both in history and today that Americans have a view of themselves as being better than the Chinese. Historically the Chinese have worked for low wages to undermine Americans' jobs. While in the time period discussed in class and the textbook consisted of the Chinese actually coming to America to work, today the Chinese provide the same effect of taking American jobs, but from their own country. It seems as though for the past 150 years, the Chinese workers have been finding a way to beat the American worker. However, I believe that is because our own views on the Chinese being inferior have lead to us exploiting them for their labor and limiting them to only extremely low wages. Originally the Chinese were hired on the railroads because they would work cheap, similar to the Irish. The Chinese held on to their reputation in America as cheap labor, which in the end has made them almost a country of slaves working for tiny amounts of money.

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