

HST 202: US History W20 (Escobar)

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Chinese - Now & Then
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, March 6, 2020, 6:34 PM

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

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes the questions & images you are addressing. Do NOT simply leave it RE:

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Cartoon #1: "What Shall We Do With Our Boys"
by [Riley McQueen](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 7:48 PM

The first cartoon is about how the Chinese immigrants who came to the United States started working in jobs that white men were doing except the bosses were able to pay them a lot less which made white men lose their jobs. Now a majority of jobs are being moved to China and other countries for the same reason, cheap labor, which is making Americans lose their factory jobs. The commercial is saying that China owns a majority of the debt the U.S. has and says that means they own us. Today, China is the largest manufacturing output in the world and supplies most of the world with what they produce. Many companies use China because they can make products at a cheaper rate and pay the workers. The commercial and the cartoon put out a similar tone and meaning.

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My Simple discussion about Chinese Exclusion Act and related exclude movements
by [Yibo Zhang](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 9:59 PM

I think Chinese Exclusion Act and other related anti-Chinese movements in American history around 1880s adapted economical and political requiemnts at that time, but brought long-term negative effects on American democratic construction.

Chinese Exclusion Act was issued in 1882. As we learned in class, Westward movements at the end of 19th century dramatically promoted the exploitation of west America. When people immigrated to the west and tried to find more opportunities to success, they should know that the conflict was inevitable. No matter the conflict

between American white and native Americans, or the conflict between Americans and Chinese, the initial causes of them were simply cultural conflict and economic dispute. This point can be reflected on cartoon 1. In Cartoon 1, a typical Chinese guy at that time (with long braid) doing many works all together, which implied Chinese workers occupied most job resources. At the right side of this cartoon, some young American workers standing on the street which implied they lost their job. From this cartoon, we could guess that what people concerned at that time was the economic and labouring dispute with Chinese. It was acceptable because nobody wanted to lose their job and opportunities to success.

However, the reason why I think anti-Chinese movements brought long-term negative effects on American democratic construction was because the related laws/policies lasted very long time after 1882 but didn't solve that problem well. In the video, "Anti-China Commercial," the host said the reason why some of empires fail was because "Turning their back on principles that made them great." It is an ironic video to China but I think this sentence is reasonable. Long- term prohibition of Chinese immigrants does not conform to Americans' value of equality and freedom. It was hard to say that why people saved African-Americans from slavery, but closed the door to another race. Today, there are very large amount of immigrants in the US and they come from many different countires. Although the problems of Immigration crime, job occupation still exist, governments should probably re-considered the policy for Chinese and other immigrants because the time changed.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Jasmine Foster](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:15 PM

The Chinese people is built on a culture of family and hard work. When they came to the US in the 19th century, the were both welcomed and reviled. The middle class felt threatened by them, whereas the upperclass wanted them for cheap labor. They were foreigners without rights or protection from the government. Many of the cartoons showed that the Chinese were strange and thus do not belong in the United States. Even today manufacturing companies are sending the labor to China, where products can be made pennies on the dollar. This causes both an outrage for the blue collar working class, and want for cheap items of the consumers. There is a constant struggle of being accepting of other cultures because the fervent preservation of the Great American culture. Being an Chinese American it often difficult to find a balance between the two cultures. I suppose the question is this: how are job opportunities able to stay while also attaining cheap costs?

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American Sentiment and the Chinese
by [Alexander Marx](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:17 PM

The influx of Chinese immigrants in the second half of the 19th century was significant enough to impact the labor force in various regions, draw intense reactions from Americans (particularly nativists), and ultimately result in the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. Even early on in 1850, before the larger waves of Chinese were coming into the country, legislation was passed in California to tax foreign miners and shortly after it was amended to specifically targeted the Chinese (textbook p. 597). The images in this forum do a good job of illustrating the perspective of so many Americans who had issues with the growing number of Chinese coming into the country.

While gold mining was the biggest attractor for Chinese immigration initially, their ability to perform labor played to their advantage, as shown in cartoon number one. In this image we see a many armed Chinese person performing an array of tasks, representing the Chinese immigrants' versatility in the labor force while white Americans are standing outside loitering, implying that their jobs have been taken by this many-armed newcomer. Chinese were paid less by employers than white Americans which allowed the employers to save money, and this became a smart business practice that was justified by talking down the quality of life that the Chinese had, as shown in cartoon number five. It essentially says that is is okay to pay the Chinese less than a white American man because a white American man must feed his family and maintain his home while the Chinese live in communal housing and eat rats. The Chinese made a significant impact on the railroad construction, particularly the Central Pacific Railroad, for below average pay. Despite their contribution they were purposely excluded from photos of the transcontinental track joining due to racial prejudice and pride (textbook p. 598). Violence towards the Chinese is shown as well in the cartoons, with number six showing the damage that Dennis Kearney and the Workingman's

Party of California did to the Chinese community, inciting a violent riot against San Francisco's Chinatown (textbook p. 597). Finally, a representation of the fear of the time period is shown in cartoon number two as Uncle Sam is being swallowed up by a Chinese man and an Irish man.

This “Yellow Peril” and anti-Chinese sentiment was significant enough to continuously extend the Chinese Exclusion act for more than 50 years, all the way until it was repealed in 1943 (lecture notes). I think there is a small amount of relatability to this time period and the commercial by Citizens Against Government Waste that we have been shown. The idea of being “swallowed up” by China could be paralleled, but the big difference seems to be that the history we have been studying has been focused on the individual Chinese immigrants' impact on American society, while the commercial is making statements from a government and political standpoint. The commercial doesn't seem to blame China for where we are today regarding debt, but instead shows them as the country that will own us if we do not fix our government spending. This puts the target of the commercial on our own government, and for this reason I struggle to make a significant connection between this commercial and the Chinese impact on American society in the time that we are studying.

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Re: American Sentiment and the Chinese
by [Alexander Marx](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 6:16 PM

An obvious connection I failed to make between today's commercial and the 1800s in my initial post is the concept of cheap labor applying to both now and then. In the 19th century Chinese were coming to America for work and in turn ended up becoming cheap labor alternatives for employers. Companies now are exploiting a similar system with one key difference in that you can no longer legally hire anyone in the United States for such abysmal pay, so instead we send these jobs to China to be done for a fraction of the wage. This doesn't appear to be directly related to the commercial (however I am not sure how this does or does not tie in with our debt to China), but the parallel is certainly there. Hearing in lecture about the lengths employers such as Marshall Fields would go to to keep wages down in order to maximize profits at the expense of the working class is the same thing that is happening with outsourcing modern jobs to China. The theme of the rich and corporate powerhouses hoarding their wealth despite having a negative impact on the well-being of the general public seems to be ever present.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Ethan Rubus](#) - Monday, March 9, 2020, 12:05 PM

Historically Americans have not welcomed immigrants with open arms and the Chinese are no exception. In cartoon 2 it shows America (Uncle Sam) being eaten by foreigners Irish and the Chinese and it's pretty much said that the biggest fear is that they are going to take over America. Now fast forward to the commercial which is saying pretty much the same thing that America is going to be taken over or controlled by the Chinese. The makers of the commercial were using America's historical treatment and fears of the Chinese to get their message out there. I don't think that there is much validity in these statements. The reason why is because they are separated by so much time. The world is a much different place now then it was in the late 1800s.

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Chinese in American, Then and Now
by [Brontae Sodeman](#) - Monday, March 9, 2020, 12:35 PM

The Chinese were brought in as cheap labor to build the Transcontinental Railroad in the 1860s. Competition with American workers and growing nativism brought pressure on the labor gangs. The Chinese suffered racial discrimination at every level of society and many organizations rallied against the immigrants. The opposition was so hostile in 1882 the United States Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion acts. Asian immigrants were excluded by law, denied citizenship and prevented from owning land. Cartoon #5 is a good example of how we treated the Chinese while they labored for us. On the right you have the white man's perfect family values displayed, a clean home, wife and children and even a cat they're obviously able to feed. The conditions of the Chinese during the construction of the railroad was similar of that in slaves quarters but much less permanent. As you can see in the cartoon, the laborers share a barracks with rats and there's not even enough room for all the men to lay down. This is only the beginning of a long history of Asian discrimination in the United States. A perfect current example of

Chinese discrimination is the COVID-19 pandemic. Citizens of Asian decent are experiencing discrimination in public, especially those who may show a sign of illness. 160 years later, Americans still fear and mistreat the Chinese.

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The negative view on Chinese

by [Brett Lee](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 2:25 PM

Perspective is everything and during the 1800's we can see this harsh perspective on the Chinese. looking at it from an average joes perspective of middle class working American family its easy to see that the intruding foreign persons were taking over the jobs, so few there were at the time. this can put a red flag on Chinese as those who are taking over the working class of America. Conversely, looking at it from the high class owners, cheap labor makes the profit rise, and its this greed that is the secret death of America or more precisely the rise of tension between the two classes. Its easy to see this when looking at art of the time, for example, the 8th picture depicts an octopus with the head of a Chinese man, crippling or invading all in its path with words on the arms of immorality, customs robbery and cheap labor to name a few. And in the 6th photo we see this tension of the working class in form of anger as a man is depicted punching the foreigner. Now looking at the video its more prominent that we see a sort of speech or talk, where its depicting Chinese in a negative standpoint, featuring all black and this evil looking orientation. the man speaking is explaining how great nations have fallen and light-heartedly laughs at Americas downfall and saying they own us now. This shows how history can repeat itself, as the ad is putting the Chinese down for some reason to further there agenda this being government waste. respectively in the past we see this same negative standpoint on the Chinese as this evil force though with different intentions, and it can be seen in the first picture where a group of American men are waiting outside a building where inside a Chinese man is doing multiple jobs at once. depicting how multiple Chinese workers could be the same price as just one American.

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I agree with your idea about the attitude between two different social levels.

by [Yibo Zhang](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 8:17 PM

Hi Brett, I like your analysis about How Chinese labors impacted two different social levels of America at the end of 19th century. In my last post, I expressed some similar effects that Chinese immigrants occupied too many job positions and it caused higher unemployment for American workers. What I forgot is that Chinese workers were usually cheaper to hire and employers would like to have that cheap labor power at that time.

In short-term, Cheaper labor power brought more profits to employers. However, in long-term, employers earned much more money but American workers earned less under the competition with Chinese. When income inequality getting larger, the contradiction was inevitable.

In addition to the perspective of economy, I believe that the reason why Chinese immigrants were excluded was because of people's worry about foreigners. In cartoon 2, we can see that an American guy is being eaten by a Chinese and an Irishi. The title "The uncle Sam maybe swallowed by foreigners" also reflects people's fear about foreigner immigrants at that time. On the one hand, it was an expression of nativism at that time. On the other hand, we might believe that immigrants brought too many uncertain things (May be good things but may be bad things) to Americans, such like "Will they make our country better? Even 100 year past, that "uncertain concern" still exist in today's American society.

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Cartoon 1

by [Ethan Rubus](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 4:39 PM

The first cartoon shows a Chinese man who is working and doing many different jobs at once. It then has the white middle-class workers pretty much losing their jobs. With the world “What to do with our boys”. This cartoon is about what the middle-class worker thought and feared what was going to happen. That they would lose their jobs to the Chinese immigrants. Which is something that we still see today. While it's not the same as it was in the late 1800s, I don’t know how many times I've heard people talking and complaining about Americans losing their jobs

to China. So even though we are separated by 138 years you can still see this underlying fear that Americans have. The commercial that we giving and an example of this fear. While in today's world the fear is not as extreme as it was in the late 1800s. It is definitely still there.

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Chinese - Image #2
by [Jahaziel Reyes](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 9:00 PM

The commercial shows a future where the many debts that America has accrued to China has made us subservient to them or work for them. So the sentiment is the same, that the Chinese, foreigners, have hurt America and its people. Swallowing America up. The best cartoon for this is #2, self explanatory Uncle Sam the symbol of America is being eaten on both ends by the Chinese and the Irish, the classic nativism that permeates america. Additionally this specific time when the railroad was rapidly expanding, referenced under the feet of the figures in the cartoon, the Chinese were a major force for the Central Pacific rail with "Some 12,000 Chinese laborers ultimately built the Central Pacific Railroad"(pg597). Along with the Irish who, from west to east built the Union Pacific portion of the Railroad. So the imagery of the Irish and the Chinese swallowing up america from both ends makes sense and fear of foreign nations taking over the US is still seen in the advertisement.

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Cartoon #3
by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 10:41 PM

I think Cartoon #3 is very telling of the times. Americans, historically, have been anti- racial. They preferred their "superior" race to any other. In this specific cartoon Uncle Sam is restraining the Chinese behind a door labeled Exclusion Act. Americans did love to exclude other races from their country. This Act, signed into law by the current president, excluded the Chinese from America. Chinese were no longer allowed to enter the country. This is the first time that this ever happened. As a modern person this is shocking to me, keeping an entire race out of a country seems crazy.

This, I think, relates to nowadays. President Trump talking about building a wall between us and Mexico is an easy similarity to find. Americans wish to separate themselves from other races. Americans don't like having immigrants come into their country, and "take" their jobs. It feels like the immigrant is taking their jobs because they will work for less money than an average American will.

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American Attitudes of Cheep Labor
by [Leon Bohmer](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 11:06 PM

Following the American Civil War, white American labor had a fear of being undercut but cheep immigrant labor. Exemplified by cartoon one, the depiction of a many armed Chinese man working while white men wait on the street, in other words, the fear that cheep Chinese labor would leave white America out of work. As we learned in class and the textbook, this fear would drive white American political ideology in the later part of the 19th century, culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Cartoon three is a depiction of the Scott's Exclusion Act (1888), which was an amendment to the Chinese Exclusion Act, expanding the restrictions on Chinese reentering the country.

We can perhaps see echos of this sentiment today; a major talking point of president Trumps presidential campaign was correcting/renegotiating the United States' trade with China. His victory in the presidential race perhaps shows that there is still much fear in America that cheep foreign labor damages US jobs.

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Re: American Attitudes of Cheep Labor
by [Leon Bohmer](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 8:03 PM

To be more general about immigrants affecting views and politics of immigration; the established order, that being white America in this case, has always been cold to immigrants, not just Chinese, Irish and Germans did not arrive into welcoming arms. The vitriol with which the white population push against Chinese immigration may be more extreme the what European immigrants faced, but as we learned reading through chapters 14 through 20, white on white race relations were not good. Irish immigrants, in cartoon number 2, are portrayed right across from the Chinese devouring Uncle Sam. To make a generalization, it could be said that American is afraid of change that immigration entails, and perhaps with good reason, as discussed in class, in the short term at least, change, is often for the worse; or at least it has unintended consequences.

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Re: American Attitudes of Cheep Labor
by [Jasmine Foster](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 11:30 PM

Hello,
Though you make some interesting point in regards to immigration conflict, in cartoon 2, though the Irish were being portrayed poorly the whole there was never an exclusion act against the entire race. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act did just that, if white American were just afraid of immigrants they would've banned all immigration rather than one race. By creating and enforcing that act the people of America were making a statement that the Chinese were like criminals, mentally unstable and diseased people. Even though the Chinese were supposedly smarter because the had larger heads, they were being compared to prostitutes. The sentiment towards the Chinese was much harsher than those of caucasian descent. Even today, Chinese people may be held in contempt and people complain about the Chinese taking away jobs of 'hardworking' Americans. So though people want their cheap products, they are still desiring that American people be treated better.

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Cartoon #2
by [Riley McQueen](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 3:00 PM

The message in the second cartoon is that the immigrants coming to the United States are “swallowing” or taking over the country by taking jobs from working Americans. The commercial touches on a similar theme, in the video a China in the future owns a majority of the US's debt making America inferior to China. That was a big fear to Americans in this time from the textbook, there was the idea that both Irish and Chinese people were taking all the jobs away from the native Americans. An example of this would have been the two major railroad companies. The Central Pacific Railroad Company hired Chinese immigrants who made up the majority of the laborers working at the time, the same thing was happening at the Union Pacific Railroad company but with Irish immigrants. These companies hired Chinese and Irish workers to cut costs because they worked for less than the American laborers did.

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Cartoon 5
by [Ethan Rubus](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 4:37 PM

Cartoon 5 was really interesting to me. This cartoon was supposed to be a message to employers to persuade them to hire Americans instead of Chinese immigrants. To do that the artist was trying to show the difference between them and how they live. They have the Chinese all in a room that looks like a barracks while the American

is coming home to his family. Showing why the Americans can't live on 40 cents a day and the Chinese can. This was interesting to me because it's not true the Chinese also had families to feed; they were just willing to work for much less. It shows the resentment that the American public had for the Chinese. This cartoon is much harder to relate to today as some of the other ones. The only thing that it may have is the sweatshops that many big American corporations have or are using. But even that also isn't the same as what trying to be conveyed through this cartoon. While this particular cartoon, in my opinion, doesn't really relate to today it is still a good cartoon that shows the Chinese anti sentiment in the late 1800s.

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Chinese - Image #5
by [Jahaziel Reyes](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 11:05 PM

This cartoon is intended for employers, as it says below. It depicts the different expectations of Chinese workers and American native workers. The Chinese are seen as being able to sleep and gather in cramped bunks, all adult men they are solely workers who have come to take every available job and are willing to live under these conditions to do so. In contrast the ideal American family, with a working father coming home to a family who rely on him and his income to survive in this pristine home.

With this being intended for employers it tries to drum up the need for native born Americans for these jobs and not the Chinese. Americans have homes with wives and children who depend on these jobs for everything, while the Chinese are here for themselves with no family in the picture they are intruding on the jobs market and with their low standards they pose a threat to American workers who demand a higher income than the foreigners who are willing to sleep in these conditions for little.

As always it is the threat to people's livelihoods that inspire this form of nativism; foreigners who are willing to undercut native workers present a great threat to the American people and like in the advertisement this would represent the erosion of America and its ideals. That's at least what they would believe. The Chinese being presented here as the other with motives and ideals that couldn't be understood by the god fearing American.

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Cartoon #5
by [Riley McQueen](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 1:48 PM

On the left side of Cartoon #5 are Chinese immigrant workers being portrayed as living in a packed room with other immigrants eating rats. On the right side of the cartoon is a typical American family, a working man coming home to a wife and his children. Under the picture it says "Why they can live on a few cents a day, and they can't". The major issue here was the wage differences. The belief system then was that the Chinese workers should get paid less because they don't have anyone to support while the American workers shouldn't because they have a family that they are supporting. The cartoon is called "A Picture For Employers" because it was trying to persuade and promote employers paying their American employees more than their Chinese or any other immigrants that they employ. This is an example of American Negativism, people who believed that immigrants should be paid less for the same kind of work because they believed immigrants were inferior to the American people.

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Cartoon #10
by [Riley McQueen](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 1:01 PM

In this cartoon a Chinese man is being protected by a woman who is representing the United States. Under the political cartoon says "Hands off, gentlemen. American means fair play for all" which means that this cartoonist was taking the side of the Chinese immigrant workers. On the wall are quotes and beliefs from white men specifically on how they feel about the Chinese or any worker who isn't white working with them. Looking behind the mob you can see a burned down building with the writing 'Colored Orphan Asylum' on it and next to that is a

tree with a noose hanging from it. The mob in the cartoon is trying to hurt or kill the Chinese man for taking away jobs and also for cutting wages for all the other workers. This political cartoon isn't just about the Chinese immigrant workers, it is also about black workers. The white man believed that they were superior and deserved better treatment because they were white and looked down on any other race.

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Cartoon #7

by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 1:42 PM

Cartoon #7 is disturbing to look at. In the background of the hanging there is a sign that says "No Chinese Need Apply". America has done this to several races including the Irish. Americans historically dislike immigrants. I think it is a little ironic that this is happening in front of Art Culture History written on the wall. These Americans are hanging a Chinese man right in front of a place where I would think there should be more tolerance.

"But, the law forbade Chinese laborers, who were said to endanger "the good order of certain localities."" (Page 597 of Liberty, Equality, Power). The Chinese man in this cartoon looks like a worker because of his shovel that fell to the ground. I am sure this working Chinese man did nothing to "endanger the good order" but Americans were afraid, and when people are scared they lash out.

I know that everyone is talking about the COVID-19, but I think that relates to the Chinese problem in the 19th century. It is clear by what we have learned in class that the Chinese were treated poorly, but they still are. Since this virus outbreak I have seen several Chinese hate posts on social media. The scary thing about racism is that it has not stopped, it has only changed.

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Cartoon #9

by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 2:17 PM

The definition of Chivalry is "the combination of qualities expected of an ideal knight, especially courage, honor, courtesy, justice, and a readiness to help the weak.". So why does it say Pacific Chivalry under a cartoon of a California man holding a Chinese person by the hair? I was reading our class textbook, and I found this quote: "Chinese immigrants faced a host of discriminatory ordinances specifically targeting them...forbidding the distinctive braid worn by Chinese men" (page 597). Americans did this to Native Americans as well. During Assimilation the Native Americans' hair was cut. Is the California man doing this to the Chinese? Hair cutting is a way of stealing the individual's identity. This is an effective way of making a person feel unlike themselves, and feel disconnected from their past.

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I Looked Again

by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 4:39 PM

On looking at this cartoon again I do not think that this California man is about to cut the Chinese man's hair. What the Californian is holding I can't tell but it looks like a weapon. An American attacking a defenseless Chinese man.

I also noticed in the background "Courts of Justice Closed to Chinese" and "Extra taxes to Yellow Jack"". The cartoonist is being sarcastic about the Pacific Chivalry title at the bottom, because clearly there is no chivalry in this image. The courts being closed to the Chinese is pretty accurate though. "the legislature specifically targeted Chinese immigrants" (Liberty, Equality Power page 597).

I haven't heard the term "Yellow Jack" before so I googled it. I had assumed that it was a derogatory term for the Chinese people. What I found in my Google search is that most of the sites that popped up were about the Yellow Fever, or other illnesses that begin with Yellow. That got me thinking that it is racist to call Asians Yellow, but how much worse it is when that term is also associated with diseases.

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Cartoon 4



by [Ethan Rubus](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 9:59 PM

To me, Cartoon 4 is disturbing because it is completely false and was used as just a fear tactic. This cartoon was used to slander the image of Chinese immigrants. In this cartoon, it has a Chinese man who is looking crazy. He is wielding a pistol in one hand, a knife in his mouth and a torch in his other hand. It also has him stepping over a dead woman. It also says "The yellow terror in all his glop" at the bottom of the page. Cartoons like this are not uncommon in American history we have seen them before like with the Irish being depicted as ape-like. And for each one, the sole purpose was to create an unfriendly image of a group of people. This is another cartoon that I can't really relate to today's world. As I have said before in today's world there isn't this type of fear for Chinese people. What I mean by that is that the fear isn't that they are coming to American and taking jobs and such. The way that this cartoon depicts the Chinese was sad and no doubt this cartoon and cartoons like this where used in the late 1800s to hurt the image of the Chinese immigrate.

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