

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

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The Chinese vs White men
by [Kelvin Johnson](#) - Saturday, March 7, 2020, 7:23 PM

Chinese

In class, we learned how the Chinese came over to America and started working. For example, men worked on the railroad while the women were kidnapped and “sold into indentured servitude or slavery and shipped to America to become prostitutes.”(pg. 505) The men were under harsh conditions while working. The Chinese men received less money than the white men. As I watched the video “Commercial on the ‘potential future’ of the United States”, I realized that events in the past, are being talked about today. For example, “so now they work for us.”(Video 0.48sec). They worked for us in the past. This does not upset me. Since we were so unfair to them, it makes me wonder if we would ever work for them, how would they treat us? I would say not good.

In the first cartoon concerning the Chinese, I see a hardworking, Chinese man. Doing any kind of work that he can think of, even women's work. While on the other side we see some teenager boys just standing around being lazy. We can see that a little boy is being held by his father. At the bottom of the cartoon, it says, “what shall we do with our boys?” This comes to show that Chinese men are hard workers while American boys are lazy.

Another cartoon that I would like to discuss, is number nine. In the cartoon, I see a railroad in the background and mountains. I also see that a Chinese man is trying to get away, from a white-California man. The white man is shown to be harming the Chinese man, I believe his name to be Leland Stanford who over saw the railroad in California. I feel that this is showing us that the Chinese man endured harsh conditions while working on the railroad. With this and the other actions of what the Americans have done to the Chinese it gives us an idea of how China would rule over us if they ever did.

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Re: The Chinese vs. White men

by [Noan Francis](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 10:42 PM

Hey Kelvin, I thought you had a really interesting take on the videos along with the cartoons. The way we treated the Chinese back then was terrible. Not only did they usually have the most grueling jobs, but they also worked for practically nothing. The Chinese were one of the most important factors when it came to the building of the continental railroad. I have no doubt that many of the Chinese that were working in the United States worked much harder than many Americans like you mentioned. Even in today's age, many of the Chinese men and women I've met are some of the hardest working people I know. I don't think people realize how important the Chinese were following the years after the civil war. They were the backbone of society during that time, and without them, I'm not sure much would have been accomplished. I'm interested in how differently events may have panned out if the Chinese Exclusion Act was never signed. I wonder if we would've seen more union strikes spread out across the country for a much longer duration, or even worse, more violence.

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Chinese now and then cartoon #1

by [Raleigh Reese](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:18 PM

The cartoon depicts a Chinese worker with non human qualities accomplishing many task at once. This is used to show that a single Chinese worker was better/cheaper than many U.S workers, most likely in cost and efficiency. Images like this were used to rile up U.S citizens for loss of work. In the image you can also see many white workers sitting on the street not doing anything, probably out of work. The commercial talks about the U.S debt to china and hoe that can change by reducing outsourcing to other countries. The cartoon and the add are similar in the sense that they attempt to show the damage of cheaper outsourced labor does to the american populace. China as country has a fairly bad reputation to U.S citizens because of the cheap knock offs and outsourced work, not tot the same degree as the 1800's but you can see the similarities between the modern ad and the much older anti Chinese image.

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Re: Chinese now and then cartoon #1

by [Lauren Meyer](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 5:23 PM

Hi, Raleigh. I like your take on how we view China today and how our prejudices live on. I wonder how we would feel differently today if the Chinese exclusion act and then after the Japanese. The Chinese exclusion act was put into place for 10 years initially. Thats a long time to build a stigma. Today we are building back into this stigma with the Covid-19. Unfortunately our society may be falling back in our old ways. This is shown through the commercial as well. The facts that the commercial was made shows that we still see the Chinese as a threat. The joking matter of the man presenting is striking us where is hurts most; our economy, national debt, and recessions.

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Cartoon one

by [Lauren Meyer](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:33 PM

Starting off when we look into the textbook we start with the Homestead act: "embodied a cherished American ideal that stretched back into the Jerffersonian era" (595). This gives us the language of cherished and makes us feel of our history like is was an act for the people, by providing free land to western settlers. Yet this wasn't an "all inclusive act", the Chinese for example get kicked from this privilege. The book says "The act also denied access to Chinese laborers, who could not become U.S citizens and had few property rights." (596). The Chinese exclusion act of 1882 is seen in cartoon #1. California now had open land and jobs yet they didn't want the Chinese to move out west and take their land and jobs. The title at the bottom reads "What shall we do with out boys". The picture on the left shows a large asian man drawn with a monkey/monster face, with many arms multitasking completing good work. On the right hand the white men are doing quite the contrary, they look lost in a field starring off in the distance. This plays off of the theme that they thought Chinese were worker-monsters. White settlers thought the Chinese would steal their jobs. They weren't seen as regular immigrants, but instead money hungry monsters who were here to take over the economy. This is shown in the video we watch for this section of

the forum. The Chinese man is mocking us on how the turn tables. He's in the future explaining the past. America essentially put itself into debt due to government spending, taxes, and so on. The Chinese man fits the role of how we used to see the Chinese during this time. Money hungry and wanting to take over our economy. Old wounds don't heal, this commercial is digging into pasts fears we once had and showed. Living a nightmare for the people of this time.

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Fear of a Chinese Takeover
by [Beth Trower](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:34 PM

I want to start with talking about the commercial. Paid for by Citizens Against Government Waste (CAGW), the ad depicts a 2030 A.D. China owning the US because of how indebted the US was to them. They depict the Chinese professor as arrogant, and the students laugh at his remark about China owning the US. The commercial ends with the narrator saying "You can change the future. You have to" (anti-China commercial).

The commercial plays on the fears of a takeover by China, and we can directly tie this back to the 19th century with cartoons' #2 and #4.

Focusing on cartoon #2 first, it depicts an ape-like figure on the left and a Chinese person on the right. Uncle Sam is being swallowed by both. Both people are standing on the globe that shows the railroads, and the caption reads: "The Great Fear Of The Period: That Uncle Sam may be Swallowed by Foreigners". The caption here is a visible connection to the commercial's intent, which is to play on the fears of a Chinese takeover.

As for cartoon #4, this illustration is a more violent portrayal of a Chinese takeover. A Chinese man has a dagger in his mouth, holding a pistol in his right hand and a torch in his left. He is stepping over a white woman as the smoke from his torch engulfs all, including the house on the left in the background. The caption reads: "The Yellow Terror in all his Glory".

Our textbooks states that "Even before they began working on the railroads, Chinese miners and laborers faced prejudice from white nativists. In 1850, the California State legislature responded to anti-foreigner agitation with a Foreign Miners' Tax aimed at all foreigners; two years later, the legislature specifically targeted Chinese immigrants" (online textbook 497). It later goes on to say how strict the laws were against the Chinese. It got to the point of enacting the Chinese Exclusion Act, which "...suspended Chinese immigration for 10 years... the law forbade Chinese laborers, who were said to endanger "the good order of certain localities"" (online textbook 497). With all of these things in mind, we can look back on the cartoons again. You have one cartoon that decries foreigners, and another cartoon that specifically decries Chinese people. Both have anti-China sentiment. Both cartoons are tied to fear of a foreign takeover. Both cartoons share the same idea as the anti-China commercial. It's important to note that this commercial came out a decade ago in 2010, but the same residual effects remain in both time periods.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Joshua Dalton](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 11:29 PM

I begin this forum writing about cartoon #7, titled "The Argument of Nationality."

In my opinion the artist depicts an unjust moral reality the Chinese people more often faced, then they ever should have in the United States, as I look back in history.

I start with the background were I see a large sign that reads, "CHINESE PEOPLE NEED NOT APPLY". I can't make out what the rest of the what the sign reads, but I do see four men in the foreground. Each of a different ethnicity. They are shown pulling on a rope that is strung over the top of a lamp, tied to a Chinese man's neck, while they hang him. The four men committed to the hanging consist of a Nativist, an Irishman, a German, and an African American. In this collective group the the artist shows a combined animosity and anger towards the Chinese Laborer. The cheaper Chinese labor made it difficult for these different ethnic groups to compete financially with their own skill sets. History shows that corporate gluten and influence over government contracts was a major cause for the animosity built within laborers that were not Chinese. The corporations simply paid the Chinese less money to do the same work.

This cartoon reminds me of 1877, when one of the leaders of the Workingman's Party of California, Dennis Kearney

in-sighted local Nativist to riot in San Francisco's Chinatown. This was one of the many act of violence throughout the west from 1870 to 1880. Instead of regulating the the corporations for hiring only cheaper Chinese labor, the Federal government responded with the discriminatory Chinese Exclusion Act, which suspended immigration of Chinese laborers. The Federal government had declared them to be an endangerment to "the good order of localities", (Textbook pg. 498).

The treatment of others in the 19th century seems very brutal and far out of touch for what we would consider civilized in today's era. I am appreciative for artist like the one who drew this cartoon, for displaying a level of contexts we would not otherwise have for the historical record, had they not been so forthright in their point of view.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then

by [Beth Trower](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 9:26 PM

Hi Joshua,

I agree with your interpretation of cartoon #7. The anger towards Chinese laborers was so intense that California introduced Chinese Exclusion Act as a major act.

They also introduced many minor acts that we would consider bizarrely specific and unnecessary: "At the local level, Chinese immigrants faced a host of discriminatory ordinances specifically targeting them, from queue ordinances regulating the length of men’s hair (forbidding the distinctive braid worn by Chinese men) to sidewalk ordinances preventing the carrying of baskets on shoulders. At the state level, California laws denied Chinese the right to own land, to testify in court, to intermarry with whites, and to immigrate" (online textbook page 497).

The details of so many minor ordinances, plus the sentiment described in this cartoon, seems, as you said, brutal and out of touch. They seem established out of anger and hate, rather than reason and logic, which is a reoccurring theme throughout the 19th century with how blatant and cruel these minor acts were. It feels like a different world.

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Similar Yes, History Repeating? No.

by [Nathan Lee](#) - Monday, March 9, 2020, 6:59 PM

The execution of this commercial is really ironic because of the hypothetical situation that China would be owning the U.S. after banning the Chinese from the country for so long with the Chinese Exclusion Act. Also that the U.S. would work for China after how prejudice we were, and still kind of are, against the Chinese people. The commercial makers obviously don't want to be owing the Chinese anything, which is a bit similar of a sentiment as to how the country felt back when cartoons #7 #2 and #6 were published. I'm not sure if I would say it's history repeating itself, but there are definitely similarities to be drawn here. Nativism has always been a part of this country and this commercial is another example of it. The thought of owing another country goes against any Nativist or Nationalist agenda, but I will say that the commercial is a significantly less violent and racist way to put things. I also don't consider this history repeating itself because the commercial is in response to our government spending, not the Chinese people stealing American jobs on American turf. Yes, the commercial is depicting the Chinese as evil and ignorant people much like some of these cartoons, #8 for example, but the commercial is meant to attack our government budget, not the Chinese people. Overall, I'd say the idea is vaguely similar, but the context and purpose are quite different.

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Re: Similar Yes, History Repeating? No.

by [Kelvin Johnson](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 10:51 AM

Hello Nathan,

You are right, that Americans were prejudice back then, but Americans have been getting better since world war two, when the immigration laws against the Chinese changed. I liked your thoughts that now and back then

are similar but, probably won't repeat itself. I would hope it would not repeat itself, isn't that why we go to history class, so that we can learn and become better so history will not repeat? That's true, debt and nativism has been apart of America, and taking away this debt will take a long time if not, never. Although creating a comic is not as violent as actually doing something physical, but it gets people thinking about it before it might happen.

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Re: Similar Yes, History Repeating? No.
by [Beth Trower](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 11:10 PM

Hi Nathan,
I like your take on the commercial. I didn't notice the irony of the commercial, although I'm not sure if the video creators were aware of it when filming. I also agree about history not repeating itself because of the context. The commercial seems to be attacking both the debt and the Chinese government itself, although not really the people themselves. You can attack the system without attacking the people working on it.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Joshua Dalton](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 10:32 PM

This portion of the forum is about cartoon #5, titled "A Picture for Employers".

I found this split scenario cartoon to be very interesting and here is why.

Starting with the left of the two scenarios there is a caption at the bottom of the scene that reads, "Why They can Live on 40 Cents a day". This side of the cartoon shows a crowded, damp, and low lit sleeping quarters, infested with rats. There are many Chinese men piled up on each other in an uncomfortable manner as they sleep on makeshift bunk style cots. Two men are sleeping on the floor underneath these cots. One of these two men is pasted out with an opium pipe in his hand. In the center of this scenario two more men sit on the floor eating rats. The Chinese men live in a dirty environment, and they don't have any furniture or even blankets to keep them warm as they sleep.

The second scenario on the right side of the cartoon has a caption at the bottom the reads, "And They Can't". This scene shows a husband and father coming home to a clean house, and his family is greeting him as he walks through the front door. His wife holds a small baby out to him, and a little boy and his toddler sister plays with the family cat as the boy waves to his father. The house looks very cozy with nice furniture and dishes on the table. This scenario reminds me of a modern day middle class family. I understand the sentiment the artist is displaying, by depicting the needs of a husband to require a good paying job in order to adequately support his wife while she raises their children.

I believe, to an extent, the artist of this cartoon is exaggerating the lifestyles of the Chinese and American laborers. The White American laborer has a perfect home and family, and is in need of good wages over that of an immigrant working to earn for themselves and supporting less. While in this cartoon the Chinese laborers have no desire to have anything nice and would rather live with the rats like barbarians. Earning low wages and living away from their families. I have been on a tour through the Chinese underground in Pendleton, Oregon, and yes although they did live under the city, they still had nice oriental furniture and decorations in their hallways and rooms.

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Cartoon 4&9
by [Lauren Meyer](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 5:07 PM

I look at these two cartoons and cant not see the contradicting points. It's always really interesting to look at multiple cartoons on the same topic and see how aspects of different points are portrayed. Cartoon number four has the title "The yellow terror and all his glory". It shows a Chinese man holding a revolver standing atop a white woman. The Chinese cartoons and almost always men because woman generally weren't allowed to immigrate. The depiction of the white woman could symbolize the threat to white men that the Chinese gave them. In the contrary to this cartoon we have number nine. Cartoon nine shows a white man, weapon in hand, holding a Chinese man by his ponytail. This is an opposite power than what cartoon number four shows. Maybe this author is

sympathizing for the Chinese at this time. The facts that the white man is grabbing him by his ponytail represents the fact that when the Chinese immigrated we forced them to shave their heads other than a long part in the back. This was to be able to distinguish easily who the Chinese men were. The white mans hat reads California: "The global economy had drawn thousands of Chinese during the gold rush, beginning 1894" (596), says the textbook. There is also a picture of a railroad on the right side of this image. This depicting the Chinese laborers and the railroads.

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Re: Cartoon 4&9
by [Lauren Meyer](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 5:10 PM

The commercial doesn't give us the feeling of sympathy that cartoon nine gives us. But instead gives us the threat of cartoon number four. The Chinese man is portraying and living the 'stereotype' we are giving him in these cartoons where they are a threat and have taken over. It is a man like shown in the cartoons and he is basking in the power.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Noah Francis](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 9:11 PM

Cartoons one and two

Based on the cartoons that were provided it's pretty easy to see how much Americans hated the Chinese coming here in the late 19th century. Even in today's age, commercials such as the one provided dictate a clear separation between Chinese and American citizens. Out of all the cartoons, I was mostly interested in the first and second cartoon. In the first cartoon, it shows a Chinese man with numerous arms doing multiple tasks at the same time. The cartoon is without a doubt racially driven by the way the Chinese man is drawn. Americans disliked the Chinese due to the fact that they were willing to work for much cheaper than Americans. Even if employees went on strike, factories would just hire more Chinese workers to make up for the employees. This can also be seen in the second cartoon as well. It shows Uncle Sam being swallowed by an Irishman and a Chinese man. This was drawn to show how Irish and Chinese immigrants took over industries because they would work for cheaper wages. This would end up being a massive problem for Americans all over the country. The hate for the Chinese was so intense that eventually the US passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. This act made Chinese immigration to the United States illegal. It was created under the false impression that it would restore jobs to the American people and provide fair wages for all.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Melissa Johnson](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 3:37 PM

Hi Noah,
I also liked the first cartoon. The Chinese man is working everywhere for any pay. This I would feel would make everyone nervous, and it did. The jobs in the cartoon that the Chinese were doing was bullets for guns, shoes for anyone, painting, sewing any type of clothing, making boxes, packaging, etc... As you can see, they could work anywhere, and with them willing to work for low wages. They would be hired on the spot. At the bottom of cartoon, it says "what shall we do with our boys" I now feel that this could be said out of worry. America worried for their own workers getting replaced by immigrates. Chinese. With them getting replaced they would be on the street doing nothing. As shown in the cartoon.

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Chinese then and now cartoon #2
by [Raleigh Reese](#) - Wednesday, March 11, 2020, 10:20 PM

The cartoon shows 2 men of different races and cultures devouring both sides of Uncle Sam. On the left is an Irishmen most likely representing the east coast immigrants and their influence in politics during this era. On the right is a Chinese man representing the Immigrants in the west. The 2 individuals eating uncle Sam represents the

elimination of the traditional American life style by immigration. This cartoon lines up with the video in regards to some U.S citizens belief that immigrants and other nations are eating away at what the U.S is. The U.S dependence on foreign supply and outsourcing of work in a way is changing american lives now, similar to the Chinese taking work in the 1800's for less pay pushing Americans out of jobs.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Melissa Johnson](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 9:47 AM

I do believe that the Chinese men were mistreated. With the commercial Anti-China, it shows what would happen if we kept getting into more dept. The speaker said, "so now they work for us" (video 0.47) This made me think about how they came over and soon began to work in America. With the railroads, being sold, slaves, and prostitutes. The men did the railroad while the women started to be bought, sold and became prostitutes. "In 1860's, labor contractors in China actively recutied young men to come to America to bulid the transcontinal railroad." (pg. 497) Hence why they could ahve said "so now they work for us". They almost all the jobs in the #1 cartoon. We see the Chinese man working on shoes, bullets, painting, sewing, and packaging. Whlie the boys on the other side are getting dragged to school or work. At the bottum it says "What shall we do with our boys?" You could say a couple of things about this. One of the being how since the chinese man were taking or doing the jobs that the "white man" do not have enough for them.

They were under harsh conditions while working on the railroad. Low wages, un pleasant living conditions, and under harsh leaders. With all of these things, that have happened in the past it makes me wonder what, and how the Chinese rulers would treat us if under the rule, or working situations.

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Re: Chinese - Now & Then
by [Melissa Johnson](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 3:13 PM

Sorry,
Subject line is: We can only imagen how the Chinese would rule.

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Cartoon #2
by [Nathan Lee](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 5:22 PM

In reviewing the materials I've decided I want to post specifically about the second Cartoon because something caught my eye that I missed the first time. So, this Cartoon is obviously pointing out the discontent that many people are having regarding immigrants taking jobs away from resident American citizens. The Irish and Chinese workers in the cartoon are depicted racially and they're eating Uncle Sam as mentioned by the caption. Here's where we get into things I glanced over the first time I looked at this cartoon. Behind the Chinese worker, you can see what looks to be the ocean written on it is "Pacific". That tells us this is a look down view from the North looking down South the right side being the Western U.S. and the Chinese worker is likely meant to be a Central Pacific Railroad worker, and the Irish a Union Pacific worker. We can infer this from where they're standing relative to the locations on the map. It's hard to see specific locations, but we can pretty much assume these two along with Uncle Sam's stretched out body represent the Transcontinental Railroad. So, why is the view from this perspective? Wouldn't it make more sense for the Chinese worker to be on the West? I cannot for the life of me think of a good reason that the cartoon was drawn in this view. I also wonder why the Irishman is eating the head of Uncle Sam, I think this is likely due to the Irish immigrants being a hot button topic for Americans for much longer than the Chinese, or perhaps it could've just been pure coincidence that the artist chose to draw it this way.

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Chinese now and then cartoon #3
by [Raleigh Reese](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 9:01 PM

In the 3rd cartoon we can clearly see uncle Sam representing the U.S government/people, holding a door labeled "Scott's exclusion act" which excluded Chinese from emigrating to the U.S. In the image it seems that uncle same is struggling to hold the door and small people representing Chinese immigrants are entering by any means

necessary. This is showing that the act is seen as in-effective or not enough done to prevent the Chinese from coming into the country.

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Re: Chinese now and then cartoon #3
by [Melissa Johnson](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 2:41 PM

Hi Raleigh,
Yes in the Cartoon it says "Scott's exclusion act" which refers to the Chinaese Exclusion Act. In the book it says that this act "suspensed CHinese immigration for 10 years with th eexception of a few categories. Wealthy Chinese businessmen and merchants were allowed entry." I also thought at first that the tiny Chinese men in the cartoon were still getting in with out permission. But now I believe that the few Chinese man that made it out side the door, window, wall, or even the ground. Were the ones that the government allowed. But I also agree that this act was in-effective in some ways.

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