

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.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

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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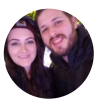
Cartoon #8
by [John Kowalchik](#) - Saturday, March 7, 2020, 3:45 PM

Cartoon #8 and the video to me are strikingly similar in message, tho the earlier made cartoon is very racist in its delivery. In the cartoon, China (or the Chinese) are depicted as having a stranglehold on America in various ways: suppressing native workers by working cheaply, corrupting our culture with opium, gambling and bribery, as well as infiltrating our customs office to steal secrets. The octopus creatures head is a racist portrayal of a late 19th century Chinese worker. In the video, a senior Chinese official or teacher explains the world history of the downfalls of civilizations to a group of students. He then mockingly implies that by financing America's debt, China's intent was to destroy our country by leading us farther and farther into debt.

By looking at these two political statements side by side, it is apparent that America has always feared undue influence from China, and this continues today. While it may be possible that Chinese laborers did introduce recreational opium use in the USA, it seems unlikely as the habit was introduced to China by the British in the early 19th century. Historically, it seems as though the influx of poor Chinese laborers was viewed as a conspiracy by residents of the United states. However, it seems unlikely that the government of 19th century china would be able to orchestrate any sort of real conspiratorial actions against the United States. This is far from the case today, where China features a state run economy and centralized state planning. While the racist cartoon of old expresses fears based on emotion, the more modern video does bring up the very factual issue of most of our nations debt being owned by China. This is a real issue, and loaning us money was not done benevolently.

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China and America swapped?

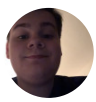


by [Kerry Herring](#) - Saturday, March 7, 2020, 11:20 PM

Chinese Cartoon # 9 stood out to me the most in this forum. The video showed the swapping of who owned who based on today's conflict with China. The cartoon showed an American man pulling on a Chinese's hair while whipping him next to the railroad. In the distance was a building that stated courts of justice closed to Chinese. This representing the China exclusion act of 1882, (Textbook page 499) which suspended Chinese immigration for 10 years. Back then america was much bigger of a threat to China, now the vision is that America no longer has control like we used to, it is the exact opposite now. China controls most of our debt, there military is as big as ours. This begs the question for me, would the Chinese attempt to treat America like we treated them 132 years ago? Will they flex their power over us and do they still harbor resentment for what "we" Americans did to them? The culture in China is that it matters more about what their ancestors went through and the history of their land then socialism. I am certain that their past still influences their future when it comes to what they will do. Its a scary thought when you take a look at how our people treated them. We used them for cheap labor, beat them, cast them out and treated them like parasites. I too would be itching at the chance to give what i thought Americans deserved after what happened. Should we be worried about the mindset of that country? Yes we should.

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Re: Cartoon #1 Analysis & Details

by [Caleb Willis](#) - Saturday, March 7, 2020, 11:54 PM

In the commercial, the speaker is talking to his audience about why great nations fail, and the reason is because they turn their backs on their principles that made them great. That America owes most of their debt to China, so now they work for China. In Cartoon #1, "What Shall We Do With Our Boys?" there is a similarity. In the cartoon, we see that the Chinese laborer is doing multiple jobs with his many arms. He's depicted as a giant among the white workers standing outside, and has a very long braid, which may or may not be a jab at the Chinese. The textbook states that on a local level, the Chinese immigrants faced discrimination for the length of their braids (textbook chapter 18 pg.498). The Cartoon also depicts white laborers loitering outside, jobless, which tells that the Chinese laborer has stolen all their jobs (hence the multiple arms performing multiple jobs that typically white laborers would do and the title, "What Shall We Do With Our Boys?"). In this cartoon, in relation to the commercial, the Chinese are working for the American people, and are in a sense belonging to the American people, despite the setbacks for the white laborers. In the commercial, it's the opposite, as America is indebted to China so now they work for the Chinese people. History itself does not repeat, but rather behaviors seen in history repeat, so that would be valid when talking about modern times with the commercial.



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Chinese Now & Then : Cartoon #4

by [Phoebe Fergus](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 10:24 PM

When looking at the cartoons depicting the Chinese, it is easy to see that Americans were making them out to be very bad people. Focusing on cartoon #4, a Chinese man stands over a white woman who is dead. He holds in his left hand a smoking gun, and in his right hand, a torch. Between his teeth is a knife. At the bottom of the cartoon the caption states "The yellow terror in all his glory". The first thing that stood out to me was simply the use of the word yellow. As many know, this is a racial slur and derogatory term for someone who is Chinese. I feel that one reason why the Chinese were displayed this way was because they were coming to the United States in large numbers, and many felt threatened by this (textbook pg. 497) The Chinese were seriously discriminated against at this time. In the textbook it is stated that "the law forbade Chinese laborers, who were said to endanger "the good order of certain localities (textbook pg. 498)." Laws were made to restrict the action of carrying baskets on shoulders, the length of hair, and they were not allowed to own land (textbook pg. 498). The Chinese had come to the United States due to poverty back at home. They came to make money to support their family and leave, but during this time they were treated like animals. In the commercial by Citizens Against Government Waste, I would say there are some similarities between now and then. One of these being that, the Chinese were not sent out of the United States, due to trading purposes, while trading with the Chinese is still something Americans are using today.

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Re: Chinese Now & Then : Cartoon #4

by [Kerry Herring](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 9:16 PM

I like your take on this cartoon. I would also look at this way. The Americans were probably scared to an extent that giving the Chinese citizenship or the ability to become one was fearful. The Chinese if left unchecked would potentially take over. They worked for less pay, they were more efficient and would've more than likely done anything to establish this as being their home as well. We all know what happened in China... The population for China is a whopping 1.4 billion where as the United States is 331 million. They would have taken over is my assumption. This scared the Untied States at the time. The cartoon clearly puts it as though they were dangerous and crazy. They would burn down things, kill the women, take our guns and use them against us and eventually slash our throat. All with a smile on their face. Notice that if you take the knife out of his mouth on cartoon number 4 there is defiantly a big smile. I think this whole cartoon is representing the power that the Chinese could have and today we are still afraid of the power they have in regards to trading of exports, population and the military.



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Cartoon #9 Response

by [Thomas Lemelin](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 11:53 PM

Cartoon #9

In this cartoon, we see a presumably Chinese man having his traditional hair being pulled from his hair forcibly by a white man. The white man's hat says "California" on it, symbolizing that he is the government of the state. He is also holding a whip and beating the Chinese man. Under the cartoon the caption says "Pacific Chivalry" and from this we can deduce that the purpose of the cartoon is to criticize California's treatment of Chinese immigrants that have been coming to the area to work in the gold and railroad industries. I believe that this is in response to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, for the specificity of the whipped man being portrayed. The first law that was passed in response to Chinese and foreign immigration was the foreign miners tax in 1850 when the gold wasn't as plentiful as it had been before and white resentment toward minority groups started to rise, and the text on the building that says "extra taxes to yellowjack" makes me think it could possibly be before 1882 that this was published, but the rest of the writing ("Courts of justice closed to Chinese") specifically targets the Chinese which supports my theory that it was later.

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Re: Cartoon #9 Response

by [Phoebe Fergus](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 11:40 PM

Hey Thomas! I really liked your interpretation of this cartoon, because originally, I had a pretty hard time interpreting most of them. In my post I talked about cartoon #4, where the man is portrayed as a killer and a

savage. After reading your response to cartoon #9, I noticed some similarities between the two. One of the main things I focused on in my post was about how the Chinese were painted in a very bad light, most likely due to Americans feeling threatened or scared of them. While all of the cartoons do that, I felt that these two were interesting to look at based on how the artists portrayed each person. The main thing I found interesting was seeing them from different points of view. Cartoon #4 makes the Chinese man out to be scary and dangerous, while cartoon #9 makes the white man out in this way. How do you feel about cartoon #4 and any similarities?

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Re: Cartoon #9 Response

by [Thomas Lemelin](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 11:54 PM

Hello! That is an interesting observation and I appreciate your response. I also see the similarities between the two cartoons. In cartoon #4, the Asian immigrant looks very angry and dangerous with a torch and gun in his hands, and a knife in his mouth. Where in cartoon #9, the man is in a place of harm and the cartoonist is trying to convey a completely different message. It is interesting the different opinions people had at the time.

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Commercial & Cartoon 1

by [Patryce Miller](#) - Monday, March 9, 2020, 11:33 PM

The connections I can infer between this current commercial, and historical American behaviors is that we fear them. We fear that they will over run us. Cartoon # 1 is a prime example of it. It has a Chinese man with multiple arms doing work that young white american born men should be doing and the young men are outside doing nothing by unemployed with a sentence "what should we do with our boys below. Which basically said the Chinese will take over every job leaving us if we do nothing. In the commercial they are painted as the bad guy to our country. The teachers there mocks us for our debts and basically saying that were are second class to them and that they are in charge of us. In both cases they're trying to make us afraid and angry about them. I mean look in slide 8 in week nine there are no Chinese people there. We were told that most of the work were done by Chinese on the California side. To my knowledge most of history Chinese people are the bad guys. I believe that history is not repeating itself. One reason Joe Escobar said that "history doesn't repeat itself but it often rhymes". Secondly because I don't believe we got rid of that fear. I mean look at our immigrant problem and what they are saying. the only thing that changes is the faces. But now when China is richer then us and can basically "bully" us with our debt. They return as the bad guy.

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Re: Cartoon #10 Analysis

by [Caleb Willis](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 10:16 PM

This cartoon has a lot to tell. To start off, we see a Chinese laborer who looks defeated, crouching down. To his side is Columbia with her hand on him, sort of watching over him from the white laborers. The Chinese man crouches below a wall of anti-Chinese rhetoric, which would belong to the Workingman's Party of California. The textbook describes this situation depicted in the cartoon identically: "Western labor leaders, particularly Dennis Kearney of the Workingman's Party of California, inflamed nativist crowds of white workers with anti-Chinese rhetoric." (textbook page 498). That is what is going on here, as the crowd are white Irish laborists, wanting to defeat the Chinese man, who they claim to have taken all their jobs. This is backed by the fact that the Central Pacific Railroad was mostly employed by Chinese immigrants. Behind them is a burned down colored orphan asylum, depicting the radical mob mentality of the white laborers. To add, the Workingman's Party of California was comprised of Irishmen and were Nativists (lecture notes week 9), so Dennis Kearney would realistically be in this mob in the cartoon.

The commercial and this cartoon are similar in that with this cartoon, the Chinese men are working for the white men for cheap labor, and in the commercial the Americans end up working for the Chinese due to their indebtment to them. It is essentially a situation of how the tables have turned, and the Americans are now in the same exact shoes 135 years later as the Chinese were in the 19th century. That the Chinese immigrants were so frowned upon

by the white nativists and faced such prejudice against them, and now in this future the commercial portrays, the Americans are now feeding from the hands of the Chinese and are now imprisoned, for lack of a better term to them. This is an example of how history doesn't repeat itself, but it rhymes. That historic events do not repeat themselves, but similar instances and behaviors repeat, hence "rhyming" when talking about this commercial.

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Re: Cartoon #2 Breakdown

by [Caleb Willis](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 7:31 PM

Cartoon #2 is simply filled with xenophobia and racism. To start, we see an Irish and Chinese immigrant swallowing Uncle Sam. The Irish laborer has Uncle Sam's head in his mouth, and the Chinese laborer has his feet in his mouth. The Chinese worked for the Central Pacific Railroad while the Irish worked for the Union Pacific Railroad. The faces of the workers are drawn in a stereotypical fashion, and behind them in the background is land filled with railroads. This cartoon depicts the Chinese and Immigrant workers swallowing up America and its jobs, precisely what Uncle Sam had represented to the 19th century nativists, and the railroad was no exception. Focusing on the Chinese, all these fears portrayed by the white nativists instilled by the anti-Chinese and nativist Workingman's Party of California led to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, suspending Chinese immigration for 10 years. They were said to endanger the "good order of certain localities" (textbook page 498). This cartoon captures what exactly the nativists were thinking during these times perfectly.

In this case, history is not repeating itself, but merely rhymes. Today, we see things such as banning certain countries from the states, or hostility to other countries out of fears of terrorism and such. Escobar said in class that these things are not new. These behaviors have been seen before in the past, and certainly in the 19th century. A perfect example would be the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring Chinese immigration for laborers. Just as today, we see travel bans to Muslim population dominated countries. When people say things like "we've never seen these things before," it's simply not true, as these behaviors have been seen as long as 135 years ago.

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The big problem with cheap labor

by [Ryan Peel](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 8:27 PM

I'm looking at cartoon #10. It seems to be the tamest of them all. What I can see is a chinaman with a depiction of the lady of justice. The Chinese, no matter whether they were being assailed by the white labor force, the Irish labor force, or the German labor force, they were used by employers and abused by the unemployed. This is because they would work for less than the American workforce. I can see many articles in the comic, most of them have the phrase "Chinese Barbarians." They really got it badly from all sides, the unemployed, those employed by others, and the other immigrant workers. I remember from the video in class that the guidebook had phrases such as "he tried to assassinate me, he was smothered, I had to defend myself, he was assassinated." Terrible stuff like that. Gives me the chills thinking about that. They aren't "barbarians" but, they weren't viewed highly at all. At least now, they don't have to keep that awful guidebook anymore...

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