

Whiteness of a different color essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In short Jacobsen argument is that race is a social construct and not a biological fact, Jacobsen shows how this premise is applied to the Irish throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Essentially the label as a social construct could and was both applied and even denied when needed to serve political purpose. When it comes to non-whites Jacobsen brings into play the prominent ideologies of people in power such as Thomas Jefferson during the antebellum era, “in reason [blacks] are much inferior.

.. In imagination they are dull, tasteless, and anomalous” (Jacobsen, 29). This ideology was also very prominent in science at the time but none more outspoken than Josiah Nott who’s attempts to scientifically prove the superiority of Caucasian people by the “intellectual endowments” *Crania Americana* [whites] had attained.

Nott goes on to elaborate on the peoples of east Africa as, “presenting physical characters more or less hideous; and, almost without exception, not merely in a barbarous, but superlatively savage state. All attempts toward humbugging them have failed. In short Nott pushes his theory of Polynesia to prove that people do not come from one ancestral line instead many and therefore other lines are inferior. Jacobsen elaborates on the bogus science used to rather differentiate whiteness by bringing in these ideologies many of these ideas were framed by the law of 1790 which allowed whites to emigrate to the states but for those considered favorable white certain probation’s were proposed.

Furthermore the implications of the 1790 naturalization law played an immense role in Asian American immigration policy both in exclusion in the sass's and the wartime hysteria In World War II.

In *Ethnic Islands: The Emergence of Urban Chinese America*, Ronald Attack speaks to the role of china towns had in the perception of Asians in the U. S on one hand tourist old imagine themselves in Canton or see themselves, “ some hoary Mongolia city. On the other hand the ghettos that were Chinatown, “ confirmed views of the Chinese as unhealthy unassailable, and undesirable immigrants (Attack, 139)”.

In the mid nineteenth century there was an influx of German and Irish immigrants due to the famines in their home countries. The U. S. And the socially constructed concept of race was an excluding one.

Jacobsen points out the degradation of the Irish people. The basis of the 1790 naturalization act serving as, ‘ the core principle that only certain peoples [of certain races] were sound candidates for good citizenship” (Jacobsen, 223). Furthermore, by proposing certain degrading features the country could exclude the Irish from being white by pointing out certain features that separated them from being white, Dale Nobel writes, “ something contemporaries had begun to call ‘ Irish’—an alleged condition of depravity and degradation habitual to immigrants and maybe even their children (Jacobsen, 48)”.

With the idea of “ self governing’ which was a concept of republicanism, which Jacobsen attempts to show how, it was used as justification of white inclusion. As stated before science in Ethel ass's attempts to disprove the

theory of monogenic that society all comes from one ancestral background. A notion that proved necessary due to the high influx of immigrants from Ireland and Germany.

Ultimately, “ enumerate, describe, and ultimately rank the world’s peoples” (Jacobson, 33).

Fluidity of whiteness in America changes throughout history with the influx and industrialization of America in 19th century the response according to Jacobsen to demote the Irish as a savage in order for the white native born Americans can govern as he ideals of republicanism suggests to govern those who are unable to govern themselves. In pages 200, 201 , 203 Jacobsen shows three photographs that portray the Irishmen in a certain light. As the Nobel interpretation of differences in Irishmen such as, “ rough skin” “ pug skin” and “ darker tint” are apparent in the photographs.

Perhaps the one picture that sticks out the most is the first one on page 200 where a man ape like with a very dark skin tone and in much worn down clothes is carrying a club and a sack on the end inferring a similarity to blacks.

Another picture of Irish being hardhearted as blacks is a picture on page 204 where an Irishman is on one side of the scale while a black is on the other and they are exactly equal in weight however as the first picture in 1854 is hinting similarities to blacks the second on the scale is outright proposing it.

The depiction of the Irish as inferior and similar to blacks and Indians is captured in the witnessing of the Irish New York City draft riots Of 1863. In

Harpers Magazine (1867), Eleanor Leonard recalls, “a howling as of thousands of wild Indians let loose at once” (Jacobson, 52). As Jacobsen puts it the depiction of the Irish as wild Indians is no accident indeed the sentiment among natives was overwhelming at this point. The fluidity of whiteness is shown in detail through the Irish as Jacobsen shows through 19th century.

At the end of the civil war under reunion over race and the start of presidential reconstruction under president Johnson the Irish became once more white in order to assert political power through unification as Jacobsen puts it, “race is an organizer of power” (Jacobson, 17). Another people that Jacobsen discusses is the Jewish people who for all purposes were not considered white or Caucasian but because of hysterical attributes attributed to Jews Jacobsen suggests that “relationship between race as a conceptual category and race as a perceptual category” (Jacobson, 173).