

**Immigrants of a Different Color:
New York Times' Representations of Chinese 1880-1892**

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Dedicated to all the professors,
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who have helped throughout this project

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Immigrants of a Different Color: New York Times' Representations of Chinese 1880-1892

Introduction

QUONG GEE LUNG'S WRONG HE TAKES A VERY CIVILIZED WAY TO RIGHT IT.

Quong Gee Lung deals in Chinese groceries and teas at 47 De Kalb-avenue, Brooklyn. He is no everyday specimen of his race, and never took in washing. Mr. Lung wears the pigtail of which the Quong Gee family has been justly proud for many centuries. He allows it to stream at full length down his backbone instead of knotting it up tightly upon his crown to admit of a "Melican" hat like most of the temporizing children of Confucius who dwell among the barbarian dogs...Last night...he sat in his store and "hit" a pipe to woo forgetfulness, but all to no purpose...When a visitor pushed upon the shop door and bade him good evening Mr. Lung, although safe from assault by reason of the wall of opium smoke which his pipe had raised, uttered a yell of horror and leaped through the back doorway, where he stood chattering unintelligibly...a fellow countryman [came] to the rescue, who explained that while Mr. Lung was the proprietor of the place,... he was yet unable to converse in English.¹

This New York Times article detailed the visit of an English-speaking man who had entered Quong Gee Lung's store to inquire about a reward, advertised in the newspaper, for the arrest and conviction of individuals who had vandalized Lung's establishment. The paper captured the story of Lung's encounter and his efforts to find the perpetrators.

The newspaper described Chinese as foreigners, who often participated in unlawful and immoral acts. In this particular story, the author demeaned Lung, and characterized him as a foreigner who wore a queue, smoked opium, and spoke broken English. The reporter compared Chinese to barbarian dogs. He also mocked the intelligence of Lung, stating that he was "chattering unintelligibly" after being surprised by a white man. Moreover, he stereotyped the ways in which Chinese spoke English by spelling American as "Melican." The reporter also included a sentence that portrayed Lung as an opium smoker who "hit" the pipe. At the same time, the reporter's title noted Lung's civilized behavior. The reporter commented that Lung acted in a "very civilized

¹ "Quong Gee Lung's Wrong," New York Times 29 May 1887: 2.

way” because he had offered a reward for any information leading to the arrest of the vandals. This title emphasized that Lung had acted in a proper manner. Tellingly, the reporter does not call Lung a civilized human. The newspaper, thus, offered an ambiguous view of Chinese in New York such as Quong Gee Lung.

Through an analysis of New York Times’ articles, this thesis investigates the nature of anti-Chinese sentiment from 1880-1892. An analysis of the years between 1880 and 1892 give a look at the American popular response to Chinese immigration restriction during the period of its broadest political debate. The newspaper presented an ambivalent image of Chinese and used cultural traits to intimate concerns about the Chinese presence in the United States. Representations of Chinese were used by editors of the Times and politicians as measures of Chinese’ assimilability or unassimilability into American society and were linked to larger economic and political debates in late nineteenth century America.

Prevailing racial beliefs of American workers, along with changes in the economy influenced the government’s decision-making processes, produced mixed messages about the issue of Chinese exclusion. The speeches given by U.S. senators showed debate over the future status of Chinese immigrants in the country. Some senators believed that Chinese could serve as productive workers and citizens in the United States while others believed that Chinese immigration harmed the economy and society at large. The representations of Chinese as unclean, drug-addicted, and treacherous revealed particular concerns about the potential for the Chinese race to spread disease, immorality, and violence throughout the city and the nation. Some politicians used these concerns to

object to continued Chinese immigration while others used stereotypes of the productiveness and intelligence of Chinese to support it.

As politicians debated over ways to restrict Chinese immigration, the New York Times' articles covered stories about Chinese immigrants who already resided within the nation's borders. The Times' images did not directly influence the beliefs and decisions of politicians, but the newspaper's multiple and varied images mirrored some representations of Chinese immigrants presented in the halls of Congress and in the courts. However, unlike the virulent language and harsh images used by most politicians, the New York Times' images were not so clear-cut. Some articles covered clean, astute, and hard-working Chinese, while others portrayed Chinese as diseased and dangerous.

Many authors discuss Chinese immigration and exclusion. They detail the voyages of Chinese immigrants, the jobs they occupied, and the violence they encountered from whites in America. Authors such as Roger Daniels, Stanford Lyman, and Stuart Creighton Miller, elaborate on the rampant violence and slanderous comments, targeting Chinese, which appeared in print journalism throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.² They fashion the experience of Chinese immigrants in the U.S. largely as a series of attacks on Chinese which stemmed from sinophobia and racist depictions of the Chinese during the nineteenth century.³ These authors assert that the

² Roger Daniels, Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850 (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), Stanford Lyman, Chinese Americans (New York: Random House, 1974), and Stuart Creighton Miller, The Unwelcome Immigrant: The American Image of the Chinese, 1785-1882 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

³ Many authors summarize the experiences of early Chinese immigrants on the western coast of the United States as one of violence and oppression. Other basic works also investigated the experiences of Chinese immigrants and their struggles against white workers and the wage system, but primarily investigate the lives of Chinese workers living in California during the nineteenth century. These works include Rose Hum Lee, The Chinese in the United States of America (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960) and Mary Roberts Coolidge, Chinese Immigration (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909).

birth of various Chinese Exclusion Acts resulted in an overarching antagonism towards this new group of immigrants. Their works provide a look into the atmosphere of anti-Chinese sentiment during the period and frame the history of Chinese immigration to the United States during the nineteenth century. Most important, these authors summarize the ways in which white citizens viewed Chinese immigrants and the ways in which they characterized Chinese culture.

While authors like Daniels, Lyman, and Miller highlight the violence and racism inflicted on Chinese immigrants by whites, others like Ronald Takaki look at the experiences of Asian immigrants from an immigrant perspective. Takaki's book, Strangers From a Different Shore, investigates the experiences of early Asian immigrants in the United States throughout the nineteenth century.⁴ Takaki explores the differing experiences between Asian and European immigrants and the difficulty with which Asians assimilated into the American culture. These differences include the various motives for immigrating of individual ethnic groups as well as the opportunities afforded them while they worked in this country. Takaki's book looks at the histories of a number of ethnic groups, Chinese, as well as Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Asian Indian and Southeast Asian peoples.

Unlike other studies of Asian immigration to the United States, Takaki looks at both the positive and negative reactions of nineteenth century Americans towards early Chinese immigration. His analysis contributes to this study of the conflicting ways in which Anglo-Saxons and whites viewed Chinese immigration and exclusion. Takaki names a rapidly changing political and economic climate as the most important factor

⁴ Ronald Takaki, Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans, 2nd ed. (New York: Brown, Littlefield & Co., 1998).

that influenced the change from a welcoming attitude to harsh criticism of the Chinese. During the mid-nineteenth century, large labor forces were needed to clear land and harvest crops and many white laborers, especially those living in California, welcomed help from Chinese laborers. Takaki argues that the new groups of Asian immigrants provided inexpensive, quickly-transportable labor for many employers in farming, canning, lumbering and textiles manufacturing.

Using newspaper accounts from the 1850s through the 1870s, Takaki clearly points out that California's Anglo laborers initially embraced Chinese immigrants. This early reception changed to alarm and later to violence against Chinese as white laborers came to believe that increased amounts of inexpensive Chinese labor decreased the availability of jobs and economic stability of white citizens. Employers in the western states often chose to hire Asian immigrants, such as Chinese, as contract laborers, a practice resented by white employees. In response, white workers in West-Coast based unions pushed for stricter immigration laws and criticized Chinese "coolies."⁵ Sometimes these tactics convinced employers to hire back the native, white workers, but often employers continued to employ Chinese workers who, of necessity, were often willing to accept lower wages.

While Takaki analyzes the influence of laborers and labor unions, historian Andrew Gyory looks at the influence of politicians in the creation of immigration laws aimed at Chinese. Gyory especially analyzes the forces that were instrumental to the

⁵ Coolies often referred to contract labor, Andrew Gyory, Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998) 32-36.

passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act.⁶ Among the forces that historians point out such as pressure from workers, a racist atmosphere, and national politicians, Gyory asserts that Democratic and Republican politicians played the most significant role in shaping restriction legislation. In fact, Gyory argues that organized labor had virtually no effect upon legislation. He attributes the passing of legislation to politicians who were vying for votes from West Coast citizens in the presidential elections of 1876 and 1880. Gyory places less emphasis on racial ideology or the violent actions of workers themselves.

Authors such as Gyory and Takaki look at the specific groups who influenced anti-Chinese legislation and sentiment whereas Matt Jacobson investigates the evolution of racial hierarchies and the place in which Chinese immigrants fit into the period's racial hierarchy.⁷ Jacobson's Whiteness of a Different Color explains the multiple meanings of race in U.S. history. Jacobsen sees three main ways in which race characterized the period between 1790 and 1965. According to Jacobson, race was used as an organizer of power, a mode of perception affected by circumstances at the moment, and as a product of specific struggles.⁸ Jacobson's idea that race was implemented as a mode of perception supports the assertion that Chinese could not be viewed apart from stereotypes of their race. In the pages of the New York Times and the words of the nation's

⁶ The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act is a titled used by many historians. The official name of the act is called "An Act to Execute Certain Treaty Stipulations relating to Chinese." It was passed on May 6, 1882. William L. Tung, The Chinese in America 1820-1973: A Chronology & Fact Book. Ethnic Chronology Ser. 14 (New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1974).

⁷ Matthew Frye Jacobson, Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

⁸ Jacobson, Whiteness, 11.

politicians. Chinese were separated into a category of foreigners because of their cultural habits and practices.

Moreover, Jacobson expands on the idea of republicanism and its meaning in America during the late nineteenth century. Jacobson asserts that the American “experiment in democratic government seemed to call for a polity that was disciplined, virtuous, self-sacrificing, productive, farseeing, and wise individuals-traits racially inscribed.”⁹ Those who expressed these traits were deemed worthy of citizenship, while those who did not demonstrate or embody these virtues were deemed unassimilatable. If the American republic demanded an extraordinary moral character from its people during the nineteenth century, Chinese immigrants diverged from the ideal image of a citizen.¹⁰ As much of the New York Times reporting showed, writers created images of dirty, lustful, and sinful Chinese. Specifically, Chinese were often seen as incapable of restricting their passions for white women and drugs, among other non-virtuous traits. These representations were in direct opposition to the imagined law-abiding, virtuous, American citizen of republican ideology. The destructive representations not only defined Chinese as morally and physically debilitated, but also separated Chinese as a group ineligible for citizenship by birth and religious practices. Jacobson’s claims have helped to frame the period and the ways and terms people of the past used to categorize Chinese immigrants.

The New York Times’ coverage of Chinese reflected popular understandings of republican ideals. To see how republican ideals played into the descriptions of Chinese

⁹ Jacobson, Whiteness 7.

¹⁰ Jacobson, Whiteness 26.

immigrants requires an examination of the New York Times' goals, missions and leaders of the newspaper. Elmer Davis, a historian and past editor of the New York Times from 1914-1921, tells the history of the newspaper and its mission.¹¹ Davis's book examines the ways in which the Times geared its format to fit its readers, the elite of New York society. Davis's book and the works of other historians provide help to situate the newspaper in a local context.¹² Thus, the New York Times provides a window into the complexities of the era's anti-Chinese sentiments.

Various authors have demonstrated that multiple factors and opinions contributed to the image of Chinese in America. These authors have helped to frame the history of race conceptions and racial perceptions of Chinese immigrants within the minds of politicians and workers. However, none have presented a thorough account of the ways that the newspaper formulated and represented racial images of Chinese. To fully understand the context of these racial stereotypes requires an acquaintance with the history of Chinese immigration to California and Chinese dispersal throughout the country. Chapter 1 gives a brief summary of the history of Chinese immigration to show how Americans reacted to the first wave of Chinese workers in the nineteenth century and how they attributed certain cultural traits to the immigrants. After considering the

¹¹ Elmer Davis, History of The New York Times: 1851-1921 (New York: J.J. Little & Ives Co. Press, 1921). The newspaper was urban in that it covered much of the events of New York City and the surrounding areas. It detailed stories outside New York City and State, but much of its reporting centered on New York City.

¹² Many journalism historians such as Meyer Berger, The Story of The New York Times: 1851-1951 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951), George H. Douglas, The Golden Age of the Newspaper (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1999), Sidney Kobre, The Yellow Press and Gilded Age Journalism (Florida: Florida State University, 1964), John C. Merrill and Harold A. Fisher, The World's Great Dailies: Profiles of Fifty Newspapers (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1980), Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962) and John D. Stevens, Sensationalism and the New York Press, Kenneth T. Jackson, ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991) are in agreement with Davis that the New York Times was regarded as one of the most moderate, conservative papers during this period.

history of Chinese immigration, we can turn to the main task of investigating the imagery of Chinese immigrants in both the words of politicians and the New York Times.

Chapter 2 demonstrates how reactions to Chinese immigration were transformed into Chinese exclusion laws. Chapter 3 briefly introduces the history of the New York Times, its status and image as a newspaper and its perceived audience. The remainder of Chapter 3 and of Chapter 4 show the various Times' descriptions of Chinese as on the one hand dirty, drug-dependent and dangerous and on the other hand fascinating, intelligent, industrious, and similar to Americans. The last two chapters also show how the reporters of the New York Times, measured Chinese fitness for self-government. Specifically, these descriptions explain how the portrayal of certain traits contributed to U.S. citizens' wider concerns of the impact of Chinese immigration and citizenship.

The majority of the newspaper's articles rendered Chinese immigrants in a negative light. The combination of critical articles and various Chinese Exclusion Acts showed that most of the American public viewed Chinese immigrants as a danger to labor and society. Yet, the Times' images were not solely negative. After the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the newspaper occasionally presented Chinese residents as hard-working and smart. The New York Times reflected the potential for Chinese to adopt American traits and customs and approved of Chinese' efforts. These multiple images revealed the complexity of anti-Chinese sentiment during this era and the ways in which the newspaper described this complexity in terms of Chinese cultural habits.

Chapter 1

History of Chinese Immigration and Anti-Chinese Sentiment

Significant Chinese immigration began in the middle of the nineteenth century. Like many immigrants, Chinese hoped to establish a better life in a new country. The Chinese who immigrated to America during the nineteenth century left behind agricultural disaster and internal revolution in their homeland.¹³ Revolts by the peasantry, floods and famines affected many provinces in China, especially the Guangdong province. As breadwinners for their families, many sons and fathers could no longer stay in a country plagued with such turmoil. Chinese men needed to find new opportunities for themselves and their families: they believed they could find these in the United States. Following rumors of California's gold rush of 1849, nearly 300,000 Chinese crossed the Pacific Ocean during 1850-1882.¹⁴ Chinese men hoped to find riches beyond their imaginations in California- the land they called *Gam Suan* (Gold Mountain).

In 1868, with the signing of the Burlingame Treaty, the United States government officially allowed free immigration of Chinese immigrants to America.¹⁵ Both countries formally acknowledged that Chinese men were flowing into the United States to look for jobs. The Burlingame Treaty served as the first official piece of policy between both countries that established the rules and restrictions concerning Chinese immigration to the United States. While both countries officially recognized the right of free immigration of both American citizens to China and Chinese citizens to the United States,

¹³ Lyman 5.

¹⁴ Lyman 5.

¹⁵ Alexander Saxton, The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971) 12.

many more Chinese migrants traveled to America than vice versa. The United States government authorized travel by Chinese subjects “‘for the purpose of curiosity, trade, or permanent residence’ but expressly reserved the right of naturalization.”¹⁶ Both governments hoped that this treaty would encourage trade relations between their nations, but neither encouraged Chinese migrants to become permanent citizens of America. Still, the restriction concerning naturalization did not deter most Chinese. Not only did the treaty formally acknowledge Chinese immigration to the United States, it also promised to support and protect those laborers who traveled to the United States by offering equal protection of all legal rights enjoyed by other foreigners residing in the United States.¹⁷

The guarantees of protection by the Burlingame Treaty encouraged some Chinese to travel to the United States, but for most men, the trip was very costly. Many Chinese men spent their entire savings on a one-way ticket to California. Those who could not finance a trip on their own agreed to participate in credit systems that allowed creditors to deduct money from Chinese workers’ wages until workers had repaid, with interest, the costs of travel.¹⁸ Chinese agreed to the terms of the credit systems, believing that they could quickly accumulate money in America and return home with greater wealth than they could ever earn in China.¹⁹ Chinese immigrants assumed they would only stay for a short time in America; scholars have called this belief the sojourner mentality. However, soon after Chinese settled in California, they learned that the gold mines could not

¹⁶ Saxton 12.

¹⁷ Benson Tong, The Chinese Americans (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000).

¹⁸ Takaki 33.

¹⁹ Takaki 34.

provide riches for everyone. Indeed, of the 300,000 immigrants who traveled to America after 1850, more than half returned home by the early 1880s.²⁰

A few Chinese immigrants struck gold in California and some found lucrative work, but a large number of Chinese found themselves stranded in a foreign land. For many Chinese families, men provided the only financial support, so Chinese men often remained in the U.S. to provide funds for their families back home. Even those Chinese who learned that California no longer held vast amounts of gold still embarked to America. Chinese realized that regardless of the possibilities of finding gold, the U.S. offered many more opportunities for work and pay.

Many of those who did not return to China were hired to work on railroads and in California's mines, canneries, hatcheries, and cigar factories.²¹ Other Chinese immigrants found work in Washington and Oregon; Chinese workers spread throughout the West Coast and even trickled into Idaho and Wyoming. Western regions were relatively undeveloped and employers steadily utilized inexpensive Chinese labor, especially in agricultural, fishing and factory industries. The combinations of low pay, debt, and obligations to send money home forced many Chinese men to continue to work in America.

The influx of Chinese immigrants, willing to work for low wages, aroused the hatred of other workers in western states. Beginning primarily in the 1860s and escalating through the next twenty years, many white laborers and white labor organizations like the Central Pacific Anti-Coolie Association, the Knights of Labor, the Knights of St. Crispin, and the Workingmen's Party of California targeted Chinese

²⁰ Lyman 5.

²¹ Saxton 418.

laborers as the source of their economic troubles.²² Many whites believed that Chinese were taking away their jobs and undercutting their pay. Since a majority of Chinese immigrants resided in the West, many western white labor organizations and laborers vocally and violently attacked the Chinese. For example, on October 24, 1871, nineteen Chinese were shot, hanged, or stabbed to death in Los Angeles' Negro Alley, an area known as a Chinese quarter. Several hundred whites, many of them unemployed laborers, massacred these Chinese, claiming that Chinese were taking away their jobs and wages.²³

Whites also attacked Chinese in downtown Denver on October 13, 1880.²⁴ Provoked by the absence of jobs in Denver, as many as 300 white laborers who had themselves migrated from the South and Midwest, rampaged through downtown Denver, broke the windows and doors of many Chinese' homes, and brutally beat and cursed at Chinese.²⁵ One of the most famous massacres of Chinese occurred at Rock Springs, Wyoming, on September 2, 1885, when a band of 150 white workers attacked Chinese miners. The white workers accused the Chinese of breaking strikes and undercutting whites' pay. White miners brutally killed twenty-eight Chinese miners, wounded fifteen others, and chased several hundred out of town.²⁶ Local, state, and national politicians also took up the Chinese labor question and geared their platforms against the use of "Chinese cheap labor." Many white labor organizations and politicians cried "The

²² Daniels 36-63 and Saxton 72-83.

²³ Shih-Shan Henry Tsai, The Chinese Experience in America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986) 67.

²⁴ Tsai 69.

²⁵ Tsai 69.

²⁶ Tsai 70.

Chinese Must Go” during their speeches and meetings, supporting the prevalent anti-Chinese sentiment of the time.²⁷

Hoping to escape white hatred and violence in the West and searching for new economic opportunities, numerous Chinese traveled East towards cities like New York.²⁸ Some Chinese workers settled in New York after working on the transcontinental railroad in 1869 that connected San Francisco and Omaha. Groups of Chinese men also traveled eastward, hired out by separate contractors to work in various factories. Beginning in the 1870s, employers hired Chinese workers to work in eastern towns such as North Adams, Massachusetts, and Belleville, New Jersey. In June 1870, for example, Calvin T. Sampson hired 75 Chinese workers as strikebreakers from San Francisco and employed them in his shoe factory in North Adams. Three months later, James B. Hervey also brought Chinese from San Francisco to work in his steam laundries in Belleville, New Jersey.²⁹ As Chinese migrated eastward, the cosmopolitan city of New York attracted many of them, and a burgeoning Chinese male population settled in areas between Mott,

²⁷ At the height of anti-Chinese sentiment in the 1870s and early 1880s, “The Chinese Must Go” became a popular slogan for white labor organizations and some politicians such as the Knights of Labor’s president, Terence Powderly, American Federation of Labor’s Samuel Gompers, Denis Kearney, and senator James Blaine of Maine, Lee 13 and Miller 195-200.

²⁸ Peter Kwong, Chinatown, N.Y: Labor and Politics, 1930-1950, 2nd ed. (New York: The New Press, 2001) 38 and Xinyang Wang, Surviving the City: The Chinese Immigrant Experience in New York City, 1890-1970 (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001) 19.

²⁹ Arthur Bonner, Alas! What Brought Thee Hither? The Chinese in New York 1800-1950 (Cransbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1997) 16-32. Chinese were also brought to Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, to work in the Beaver Falls Cutlery Company when white workers decided to strike, Takaki 99.

Park Row, Bowery, Doyer and Pell streets.³⁰ By 1880, at least 748 Chinese people resided in a growing area called New York's Chinatown.³¹

During the 1880s, New York's Chinese population formed ethnic enclaves filled with Chinese-owned laundries, restaurants, grocery, and cigar stores. In New York's growing Chinatown and other Chinese-inhabited areas, many Chinese men found success in New York, completing work that did not directly compete with the work of white laborers.³² Chinese no longer worked for white employers, but established businesses of their own, in and around Chinatown and other New York regions. Chinese stores and groceries provided native products from back home and many Chinese readily found foods, gifts and Chinese medicine in the shops of Chinatown. Shopkeepers supplied rice, noodles, exotic fish, and Chinese herbs to the residents and workers of Chinatown and Chinese areas. In addition, New York's Chinese community also found safety in numbers and a place to speak their own language, practice their own customs, and celebrate cultural events like Chinese New Year, and spring and Autumn Festivals.³³

By 1890, the federal census estimated New York's Chinese population as 2,048 Chinese. but according to other historians of New York such as Edwin G. Burrows, Mike Wallace, and Kenneth T. Jackson the true figure probably rested from eight to ten

³⁰ Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 215, 217 and Kenneth T. Jackson, ed., The Encyclopedia of New York City (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995) 1107.

³¹ Lee 34. For a map of Manhattan's Chinatown, detailing the neighborhood surrounding the Chinese Exclusion Era (1882-1892), please refer illustration in Appendix A.

³² Bonner 61-76, Kwong 38, and Takaki 93.

³³ Bonner 77-81.

thousand, as immigrants often stayed there temporarily.³⁴ Jackson gives higher estimates for the Chinese population of New York because many Chinese either operated laundries, restaurants or worked in whites' homes as servants, outside of Chinatown.³⁵ The dispersal of Chinese around the city also decreased competition between Chinese-run establishments. After work during the evenings or on Sundays though, many Chinese who lived outside Chinatown would flock to the area to socialize, gamble, smoke opium, get mail and hear news about their villages back home in China.³⁶

A feeling of community, along with anti-Chinese sentiment of the decade, pushed more and more Chinese into ethnic enclaves. Within the confines of New York City, Chinese hoped to escape the hatred of many white labor organizations and individuals. Many Chinese men continued to live and work in and around Chinatown, creating neighborhoods of their own around New York City. In Chinese areas, Chinese immigrants were among their own people, able to practice their unique customs and establish their own businesses. Although they faced discrimination and prejudice from many outsiders, Chinatown and other Chinese enclaves provided shelters for many Chinese.

³⁴ Burrows and Wallace 1128, Jackson 217, and Wang 19. Most of the thousands of Chinese were men as many women stayed behind in China. The 1888 Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited entry to many wives and single women who were not married to a member of the exempt classes or did not qualify as a member of the exempt classes. Please refer to Chapter 2 for a more thorough explanation of the 1888 Chinese Exclusion Act and the classes that were allowed into the United States. Chinese customs also deterred Chinese women from traveling to the United States during this era. Between 1880-1890, females consisted roughly 5% of the Chinese population in America. The number of Chinese women in New York was probably less than the national average, Wang 44.

³⁵ Jackson 1128.

³⁶ Jackson 1129.

Chapter 2

Legislation of and Political Debate over Chinese Exclusion Acts

The Times' multiple representations of Chinese and Chinatown reflected the United States political situation during the initial period of Chinese exclusion (1882-1892). Inherent in the paper's representations of Chinese were the contradictions between dirty, foreign immigrants and industrious, assimilable people. These contradictions were argued as well in the halls of Congress by pro- and anti-immigration legislators. Discussions over the status of Chinese residing in the U.S. or even the possibility of citizenship were intertwined with the perceived impact of Chinese as a labor force and the economic and social effects of Chinese integration into American society. Advocates of Chinese exclusion pointed to two assumed dangers: that Chinese workers were undercutting white labor and that a foreign culture was infiltrating the American society. Dissenters supported a different view of Chinese laborers as bright, hard-working contributors to American society while stressing the nation's rhetoric of equality.

The Chinese Exclusion Acts of the late nineteenth century and their revisions through the early twentieth century dealt with continued Chinese immigration to the United States.³⁷ By 1882, with some exceptions, politicians were fairly unanimous about exclusionary restrictions. The debate that did occur surrounding Chinese exclusion, primarily concerned the effects of exclusionary restrictions on trade with China. A few congressmen also appealed to higher ideals of civil liberties and Constitutional principles

³⁷ Mention of Chinese Exclusion Acts in this thesis refers to the 1882, 1888 and 1892 acts, passed by Congress to restrict the entry of Chinese immigrants to the United States.

when they voiced their objections against exclusionary acts and violations of the 1868 Burlingame Treaty.

The first piece of legislation, dubbed the “Fifteen Passenger Bill,” tried to amend the terms of the 1868 Burlingame Treaty and quickly marked the beginning of later attempts to restrict Chinese immigration. The “Fifteen Passenger Bill” limited the number of incoming Chinese passengers to fifteen on any single vessel landing at any U.S. port.³⁸ President Rutherford Hayes vetoed the bill on the grounds that it practically banned Chinese immigration and demonstrated the legislative branch’s attempt to nullify a treaty with a “friendly foreign power.”³⁹ The President vetoed and extinguished the “Fifteen Passenger Bill,” though he did not object to the principle of checking Chinese immigration.⁴⁰ However, Hayes sought a more diplomatic approach of restriction that would keep the ports of trade open between both countries. His objections illustrated the conflict between commerce/trade and concerns over Chinese danger to labor and society.

While Hayes illustrated one of the more moderate opposers to Chinese exclusionary legislation, Republican senator James Blaine (Maine) symbolized the thoughts of many who supported Chinese exclusionary legislation. Blaine frequently attacked “servile Chinese laborers.”⁴¹ Indeed, Gyory argues that Blaine’s fierce anti-

³⁸ Charles J. McClain, In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth Century America (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) 147.

³⁹ McClain 148.

⁴⁰ Gyory 166.

⁴¹ Gyory 3. In 1876 and 1880, Blaine unsuccessfully ran for the Republican Party’s nomination for President. In 1884 he ran for President but also failed. However, he served as the Secretary of State in the Cabinets of Presidents James Garfield and Chester Arthur from March 5 to December 12, 1881 and Secretary of State in the Cabinet of President Benjamin Harrison 1888-1892 then later resigned, Matthew Frye Jacobson, Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917 (New York: Hill and Wang-Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000) 25, and Miller 3, 5, 153, 178, and 189.

Chinese message was explicitly designed to garner votes. Gyory notes, "James Blaine would have sold his soul to be president, but as that was not possible, he sold out the Chinese instead."⁴² In his bid for presidency, he tried to utilize an economic approach to attack Chinese claiming that Chinese laborers took away the jobs of American laborers and forced them into destitution. To persuade workers to vote for him, Blaine criticized Chinese, not the work of Chinese laborers. He called Chinese immigrants "vicious, odious, abominable, dangerous, and revolting."⁴³

Moreover, Blaine judged Chinese' lack of fitness for immigration based on supposed Chinese cultural traits such as disease and criminality. Additionally, Blaine highlighted concerns over the perceived dangers of Chinese integration into the larger society. In a New York Tribune article, he likened the right of Chinese exclusion to the "right to keep out infectious diseases" and the "right to exclude the criminal class from coming to us."⁴⁴ Blaine believed that Americans had the "right to exclude that [Chinese] immigration which reeks with impurity and which cannot come to us without plenteously sowing the seeds of moral and physical disease, destitution, and death."⁴⁵ Through his assertions of the dangers of Chinese labor and presence, Blaine helped to nationalize the conflict between American labor and what he identified as Chinese "coolie" labor.⁴⁶

⁴² Gyory 137.

⁴³ Gyory 3.

⁴⁴ Gyory 3.

⁴⁵ Gyory 4.

⁴⁶ Gyory 143.

On the other side of the debate, few politicians opposed anti-Chinese legislation. In 1882, after a successful revision of the Burlingame Treaty in 1881, Congress presented to President Chester Arthur a Chinese immigration bill that requested a twenty-year suspension of the immigration of Chinese laborers and the creation of an international passport system.⁴⁷ The President vetoed this measure, finding many of the provisions “objectionable.”⁴⁸ According to Arthur, the measure was too stringent against Chinese and not in accord with the stipulations of the Burlingame Treaty. Like Hayes, Arthur stressed the possibilities of trade with China and did not want to hurt relations with this nation.

While President Hayes’ and President Arthur’s vetoes demonstrated some leanings towards continued Chinese immigration, other politicians openly opposed Chinese exclusion and consistently supported the rights of Chinese. Republican senator George Hoar (Massachusetts) was just one of the few examples of a politician who attempted to defeat or alter the bills passed against the Chinese.⁴⁹ Notably, he recognized that Chinese people were being discriminated against on the basis of their race and occupation. In a speech delivered during Senate proceedings on March 1, 1882, Senator Hoar expressed his hostility towards passing the first Chinese exclusion bill.

⁴⁷ The Burlingame Treaty of 1868 was revised and passed on July 19, 1881. The passport system was suggested as a way to identify Chinese laborers who were entitled to reside in the United States. However it hastened the creation of a Chinese immigration bill that later became the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, McClain 148.

⁴⁸ McClain 148.

⁴⁹ Other Republican senators also opposed the bill that later became known as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Some of these senators include Henry L. Dawes of Massachusetts, Orville H. Platt and Joseph R. Hawley of Connecticut. They opposed the content and timing of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, Tsai 62. Hawley said that the bill was “a repudiation of the nation’s heritage and a subversion of a person’s right to work wherever, whenever, and however one chose,” Gyory 252.

Hoar asserted, "Nothing is more in conflict with the genius of American institutions than legal distinctions between individuals based upon race or upon occupation."⁵⁰ The framers of the Constitution, he argued, "mean that their laws should make no distinction between men except such as were required by personal conduct and character."⁵¹ The enactment of Chinese exclusionary restrictions would "put into public law of the world and into the national legislation of the foremost of republican nations a distinction inflicting upon a large class of men a degradation by reason of their race and by reason of their occupation."⁵² Hoar spoke of the founding fathers' beliefs about the freedom of all men and also related that if the law should restrict the rights of one group it should restrict the rights of all groups. Since the law unjustly singled out the Chinese, he argued it directly violated the precepts of the Constitution.

Senator Hoar also saw the draft of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act as a violation of the 1868 Burlingame Treaty. He termed the bill as an "express disregard of our solemn treaty obligations."⁵³ He clearly showed his disapproval for continued anti-Chinese legislation, for himself and "for the State of Massachusetts," when he announced, "I refuse consent to this legislation. I will not consent to a denial by the United States of the right of every man who desires to improve his condition by honest labor – his labor being no man's property but his own – to go anywhere on the face of the earth that he

⁵⁰ Philip S. Foner and Rosenberg, eds., Racism, Dissent and Asian Americans from 1850 to the Present: A Documentary History (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993) 53.

⁵¹ Foner and Rosenberg 53.

⁵² Foner and Rosenberg 54.

⁵³ Foner and Rosenberg 53.

please.”⁵⁴ Hoar made his choice clear to the other senators when he further chastised those who supported Chinese exclusionary legislation. The senator reported the discrepancy between the many citizens and politicians who “go boasting of our democracy and our superiority, and our strength” while legislation clearly violated American notions.⁵⁵ Hoar clearly disputed the restrictions laid forth in the drafts of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and found them to contradict the very ideals of freedom upon which the nation had purportedly been built.

In order to pass the bill over the President’s veto, Congress modified it to include a reduction from a twenty-year to a ten-year suspension of Chinese immigration.⁵⁶ One important addition to the bill allowed Congress to forbid any state or federal court from admitting any Chinese to citizenship. Revisions to the original bill also included the elimination of a passport provision which required Chinese laborers to carry passports legally identifying them as current residents of the United States.⁵⁷ Propelled by workers, national labor organizations, and politicians, the U.S. government passed the bill and it became the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act.⁵⁸ This act halted further immigration of the Chinese for ten years and imposed a heavy fine of \$500 for every skilled or unskilled laborer who illegally entered the United States.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Foner and Rosenberg 54.

⁵⁵ Foner and Rosenberg 54.

⁵⁶ McClain 148 and Tung 58-61.

⁵⁷ Tung 58-66.

⁵⁸ Although the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act on May 6, 1882, it added various amendments to the law throughout the 1880s, 1890s and into the twentieth century, Tung 58-73.

⁵⁹ Tung 58-61.

After the passage of the 1882 Act, the number of incoming Chinese immigrants plummeted from 39, 579 in 1882 to 8,031 in 1883. The number continued to drop with a record low of 10 in 1887.⁶⁰ Although the number of incoming Chinese workers dramatically decreased, anti-Chinese agitation and violence continued to thrive. Similar to the Rock Springs, Wyoming, massacre in 1885, on February 7, 1886, whites forcibly attacked Chinese in Seattle, Washington.⁶¹ Whites expelled nearly 200 Chinese and attacked Chinese laborers.⁶² The Seattle riot in 1886 pushed the governor to declare martial law and send for federal troops.⁶³ Troops quelled the outbreak three days later while most of the remaining Chinese left.⁶⁴ Additionally, in 1887, whites robbed, murdered, and mutilated thirty-one Chinese in Hell's Canyon Gorge, Oregon.⁶⁵ Whites believed that Chinese still threatened their jobs and quality of life and many wanted them to leave the country.

The text of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was broad enough to allow a range of interpretations. For example, while it outlawed immigration of Chinese laborers, the original act did not specify exactly who could be classified as a Chinese laborer. It also did not include stipulations that handled Chinese immigrants who were citizens of

⁶⁰ Wang 135. A small amount of Chinese continued to immigrate to the U.S. because the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act barred only skilled and unskilled laborers and miners for ten years. It exempted groups such as certified merchants, students, teachers, tourists, diplomats and government officials. However, the definition for each of these classes was extremely vague and allowed for much disagreement and confusion, until later clarifications appeared in the 1888 Scott Act, Lyman 66 and Tung 67.

⁶¹ Daniels 64.

⁶² Daniels 64.

⁶³ Daniels 64.

⁶⁴ Daniels 64.

⁶⁵ Daniels 64.

countries other than China. Without a clause that dealt with these issues, some Chinese were able to entrance into the United States if they proved they were citizens of British owned colonies, such as Hong Kong. To cope with problems such as these, customs agents and judges applied their own judgment to the law, producing a wide array of decisions concerning acts such as illegal smuggling, Chinese naturalization, and Chinese possession of land.⁶⁶

Over the next ten years, Congress continued to make adjustments to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. On September 13, 1888 Congress initiated an act called, "An Act to Prohibit the Coming of Chinese Laborers to the United States," later dubbed the Scott Act.⁶⁷ Among the stipulations of the 1888 Scott Act, the government stated that no Chinese laborer could re-enter the United States unless he had a lawful wife, child, or parent living inside the nation's borders.⁶⁸ Chinese could have also gained re-entry to the United States if they owned property worth at least one thousand dollars or debts owed to them for the same amount.⁶⁹ Among its clauses, the 1888 Scott Act defined the word laborer and gave specific descriptions for certain classes of Chinese people which could be deemed as acceptable immigrants such as students, foreign diplomats, merchants and

⁶⁶ New York Times gives evidence for these problems as well as the various ways that customs agents and judges applied their own judgments to the law. For example, federal census records showed that Chinese continued to enter the United States after the enactment of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Law and New York Times showed that Chinese continued to press for U.S. citizenship during the Chinese Exclusion Era of 1882-1892, Tsai, Appendix 3: 194.

⁶⁷ Tung 67. The 1888 Scott Act was revised on October 1, 1888 but was officially called "An Act to Supplement an Act Entitled 'An Act to Execute Certain Treaty Stipulations relating to Chinese.'" The 1888 Scott Act received its name from William L. Scott, Chairman of the National Democratic Campaign Committee at the time. He drafted the anti-Chinese bill and introduced it into the House of Representatives on September 3, 1888, Tsai 73.

⁶⁸ Tung 67.

⁶⁹ Tung 67.

travelers for the purpose of pleasure or curiosity.⁷⁰ The 1888 Scott Act also halted the issuance of travel certificates and voided those certificates that were currently in the possession of Chinese immigrants abroad.⁷¹

Following the 1888 Scott Act, Congress passed another bill in 1892, later nicknamed as the Geary Act.⁷² Among the stipulations under this law, the government required Chinese to obtain official certificates of residence.⁷³ Those who did not produce residence certificates were arrested, imprisoned at hard labor for no more than one year, and afterwards deported back to their home country.⁷⁴ The 1892 Geary Act also upheld all the previous provisions of the 1888 Scott Act and extended them for another ten years.⁷⁵ Both the 1888 Scott Act and the 1892 Geary Act reformulated guidelines restricting the entry of certain classes of Chinese immigrants.

The increased restrictions imposed on Chinese and the adjustments and revisions of the original 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act demonstrated some degree of conflict over the terms of Chinese immigration.⁷⁶ Some politicians disagreed with the principles of the Chinese Exclusion Acts. Although the detailed guidelines of the first Chinese Exclusion

⁷⁰ Chinese who planned to travel to the United States after the passage of the 1888 Scott Act were required to obtain permission from the Chinese government or the government of the country in which they belonged. Tung 67.

⁷¹ Tung 70.

⁷² The 1892 Geary Act received its name from Thomas J. Geary, a Democratic Congressman from California, who introduced the bill, Tsai 74. It was formally titled "An Act to Prohibit the Coming of Chinese Persons into the United States." The bill was passed on May 5, 1892. Tung 71.

⁷³ Lyman 66.

⁷⁴ Tung 67.

⁷⁵ Tung 71.

⁷⁶ The 1888 Scott Act and the 1892 Geary Act were only a couple of acts which imposed restrictions upon Chinese during the end of the century. Congress passed a number of other acts before and after 1888 that are not mentioned in this thesis. The 1888 Scott Act and the 1892 Geary Act are included because they posed some of the harshest restrictions against Chinese during this era.

Act spanned over two and a half folio pages of small print, events and later revisions to the Act would show that even this lengthy text of legislation did not provide a uniform stance regarding Chinese immigration and exclusion. Some senators such as Blaine purported that Chinese laborers decreased employment opportunities for white workers while Senator Hoar believed that Chinese Exclusion Acts violated the Burlingame Treaty and the principles of the U.S. Constitution. Hoar also believed that Chinese Exclusion Acts discriminated against Chinese based on race and occupation. Still both President Chester Hayes and President Cleveland opposed Chinese exclusion bills based on perceived effects concerning trade with China. In the midst of these arguments, politicians showed that perceived cultural stereotypes of Chinese danger, such as disease and criminality, echoed in the halls of Congress as much as they did in the pages of the New York Times.

Chapter 3

The New York Times and its Images of Harmful Chinese People

From its beginnings on September 18, 1851 until the end of the nineteenth century, the New York Times sought to provide international news, stock market reports, financial information and reviews of the latest books and plays to its audience.⁷⁷ The Times also popularized highly colored headlines and crusading exposés, revealing corruption at some of the highest levels of the city's government.⁷⁸ Most important, the newspaper sought to bring "excellence in news service, avoidance of fantastic extremes in editorial opinion, and a general sobriety in manner" characterized by its avoidance of the sensationalist inclinations of many of its competitors.⁷⁹

Starting with its first issue, the New York Times' first editor-in-chief, Henry J. Raymond, determined to make the newspaper "appeal to a highly intelligent audience."⁸⁰ The Times largely appealed to upper/middle class businessmen and professionals of New York, "the financiers and the educated," who were concerned with governmental news and information about the latest economic policies of the United States and foreign nations.⁸¹ Raymond also strived for a high moral tone and conservative stance for the paper, yet one that did not "establish the advancement of any party, sect or person."⁸² He

⁷⁷ Kobre 90.

⁷⁸ Kobre 90.

⁷⁹ Davis 6.

⁸⁰ Merrill and Fisher 224.

⁸¹ Kobre 88-90.

⁸² Davis 18 and Merrill and Fisher 224.

hoped to produce a “news-paper,” which presented its readers with a “well-balanced and heavy diet.”⁸³ His leadership and motives set the tone for the paper throughout its history.

According to Elmer Davis, the New York Times filled a void for “sane and sensible” newspapers right from its inaugural issue.⁸⁴ Its main rivals, the New York Tribune (1841) and New York Sun (1833) clearly showed its preferences for particular political parties, whereas Raymond hoped to keep his own Republican affinities from influencing his paper’s coverage.⁸⁵ The New York Times also tried to avoid excessive editorials as part of its attempts to stay away from extreme positions on many issues.⁸⁶

The newspaper’s ability to present honest accounts of events led to a circulation of 40,000 by 1857.⁸⁷ Raymond and his business partner and financier, George Jones, had taken hold of New York’s readership in less than ten years. In the following decades the Times’ coverage of the United States’ Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln’s assassination, and subsequent presidential elections helped to solidify its prestige as one of the nation’s most elite and reputable newspapers.⁸⁸ The paper continued to enjoy success throughout the 1860s with a daily average circulation over 75,000 at the end of 1861.⁸⁹

Though the newspaper aimed for an unbiased presentation, the Times showed favor towards the Republican Party. The newspaper’s editorial staff fell in line with

⁸³ Merrill and Fisher 224.

⁸⁴ Davis 6.

⁸⁵ Davis 117 and Kobre 94.

⁸⁶ Kobre 88.

⁸⁷ Davis 27.

⁸⁸ Kobre 88-99.

⁸⁹ Davis 64.

Republican ideology for nearly three decades and it showed through its agreement with the Republican Party's platform.⁹⁰ Moreover, the Times' preference towards the party was probably influenced by its readers, many of who were Republican. The Republican Party and New York's businessmen continued to support the newspaper throughout its early years as it catered to their interests.

The success of the 1860s took a sudden turn for the worse during the next decade. Circulation rates dropped to nearly 35,000 a day during the late 1870s partially due to the Times' discouragement of James G. Blaine, a repeated Presidential candidate.⁹¹ With the deciding vote of its principal financier George Jones, editors, and journalists the New York Times finally ended the newspaper's support of the Republican Party in 1884.⁹² According to Davis and historian Sidney Kobre, the editors would rather sacrifice profits than support a political party festering with corruption.⁹³ Davis asserts that the Times' management believed that Blaine misrepresented himself and that he and his campaign representatives often lied to their supporters. Jones declared Blaine "undeplorably unfit for the Presidential office."⁹⁴ A dishonest candidate combined with a corrupt campaign pushed the New York Times' officials to disaffiliate from the Republican Party. After the newspaper pulled away from the party it convinced a small group of its Republican

⁹⁰ The fact that its founder, Henry Raymond, ran for various positions of the Republican Party more than likely influenced the early writings of the paper, Kobre 88-94.

⁹¹ Davis 118.

⁹² Berger 67-68, Davis 64, and Kobre 93. In 1884 the paper officially dropped its support for Blaine, the Republican Party's Presidential candidate, and urged its readers to vote for Grover Cleveland that year. However, the Times, and other papers such as the New York World, the New York Herald, and the New York Sun also found fault with the Democratic Party. The revolt of the Times from the Republican Party and ambivalence with both parties helped to solidify its image as a moderate newspaper for its era, Kobre 94.

⁹³ Davis 151 and Kobre 94.

⁹⁴ Davis 151.

readers to follow suit, but many more conservative Republicans dropped their subscriptions to the paper.⁹⁵ During the late 1870s and into the late 1880s, the New York Times attempted to hold true to its principles of honesty and integrity more so than to its political leanings.

From 1883 to 1884 the net profits of the paper plummeted from \$188,000 to \$56,000.⁹⁶ The rejection of Blaine brought considerable losses to the Times but did not bring an end to its popularity or its position as an esteemed, reliable newspaper. Decreases in profits also stemmed from the reduction of four cents to two cents in the price of a daily copy of the paper.⁹⁷ However, the New York Times rebounded from its 1880s slump and was “nearly as prosperous as it had been in its best years of the past.”⁹⁸ By the end of the 1880s the newspaper supported Democratic President Grover Cleveland in 1884, 1888 and later in 1892, but declared itself independent of party politics.⁹⁹ The Times supported the candidate they felt most worthy of Presidency and not any particular political party. This change propelled many readers to return.

For the most part, as Davis writes, “The Times had an important part in forming the public opinion of the new day.”¹⁰⁰ Of the major New York-based newspapers, only the New York Times and the New York Tribune survived into the twentieth century with

⁹⁵ Although a certain bias resounds in Davis’ view of the New York Times, other journalism historians such as Berger and Kobre agree that the paper’s conservative and more moderate tone caused it to turn its back on the paper’s perceived corruption of Blaine and his party, Berger 67-68 and Kobre 94

⁹⁶ Davis 156.

⁹⁷ Davis 156.

⁹⁸ Davis 156.

⁹⁹ Kobre 94.

¹⁰⁰ Davis 158.

their original images and formats intact.¹⁰¹ The Times' dedication to world and local events continued to attract readers across the nation.¹⁰² The excellence in news service included coverage of Chinese people, especially the Chinese people in and outside New York's Chinatown. From the time of Chinese arrival in New York City and throughout the 1880s, the newspaper provided information about Chinese residents and workers. However, despite its ideals for unbiased editorials and accounts, the New York Times could not escape the racial thinking of its era.

Some Images of Chinatown—Dirty, Drug-infested and Dangerous

News of Chinese events regularly appeared in the New York Times during the period surrounding the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Part of the newspaper's articles on Chinese culture included descriptions of the area of Chinatown.¹⁰³ Reports of Chinatown's mysterious opium dens and dangerous gambling houses provided readers a quick look into an unknown section of the city, but largely created images of New York's Chinatown and surrounding areas as dirty, drug-infested and dangerous foreign spaces. Through these images, the Times helped further a representation of Chinatown as diseased and Chinese people as needing to be contained, imprisoned, or totally excluded from the country. These particular New York Times' furthered perceptions of the moral unfitnes of the Chinese. In these representations, Chinese deviated from Republican ideals.

¹⁰¹ Davis 161.

¹⁰² Merrill and Fisher 223.

¹⁰³ During this period, often the New York Times did not include references to particular authors or reporters of its stories concerning Chinatown.

The New York Times portrayed Chinese people and Chinatown as a separate people and as a distinct neighborhood, apart from the rest of the city. The filth and close quarters of notable Chinatown's buildings were juxtaposed against the rest of New York; Chinatown failed in comparison to the "fair outlook" of other New York streets.¹⁰⁴ One particularly lengthy report about the dirty "Chinese Quarter" appeared on March 22, 1880.¹⁰⁵ The reporter portrayed the area as one of the dirtiest parts of New York, "beyond being a disgrace to the city." On Mott Street, a street that bordered Chinatown, the reporter commented on the filth of the area "so thick and deep that it is hanging out of the windows like icicles." The reporter quickly dispelled rumors of Chinatown's tenements filled with "dragon's wings scattered over the floor[s]", "serpents' tails disappearing under the beds" and "great horned toads, hopping about catching grasshoppers with red-hot pins for legs," but added that Chinatown's true state did not appear until "you are away from it, and sit down and think about it, that its horror really strikes you."¹⁰⁶ Although the dirt created by mythical creatures was untrue it was replaced by actual dirt on the windows of Chinatown residences.

The reporter continued his illustration of a dirty Chinatown as police officers escorted him through a "narrow alley" to "see the opium-smokers."¹⁰⁷ While he traveled through the alleyways he began to connect the dirt in the area to the dirtiness of its residents. The Times' reporter compared the inner buildings of Chinatown to earlier

¹⁰⁴ "With the Opium-Smokers- A Walk Through the Chinese Quarter—Where the Celestials Dream Away the Unhappy Hours in an Underground Den—A Chinese Drug-Store and Some Other Curiosities," New York Times 22 Mar. 1880: 2-5. For a list of other articles that detailed the dirtiness of Chinese areas refer to Appendix C.

¹⁰⁵ "With the Opium-Smokers": 2-5.

¹⁰⁶ "With the Opium-Smokers": 2-5.

¹⁰⁷ "With the Opium-Smokers": 2-5

looks at Mott Street, asking, "Did you think those were dirty, uninhabitable-looking houses we saw in Mott-street?" He answered himself, "Then look at these." Not only were the areas full of grime, the reporter further described Chinatown's "low brick buildings, very old and dilapidated, swarming with people who cannot afford to pay the rents of the front street." He also characterized the smell of Chinatown's courtyards as "foul and unpleasant." The reporter resumed his journey of the opium dens and alleyways of Chinatown amid looks at the den littered with opium paraphernalia and passed out opium smokers. He noted that the entire neighborhood appeared dirty, right down to the opium smoker "with his head on the dirty pillow." A diagram of the opium den also served to illustrate the reporter's look at the dirty inhabitants of the room. As he detailed the layout, he described beds as "wide enough for only one person, but dirty enough for a dozen."¹⁰⁸ Dirt surrounded both people and objects.

Instead of enticing readers with images of fantastic creatures, the reporter characterized Chinatown as a foreign space filled with dirt and absolute terror. As he continued farther and farther into the heart of Chinatown, less and less light, cleanliness and fresh air emerged. Through his descriptions, diagrams of rooms, and picture of an opium pipe, the reporter created an image of a dirty, poor, run-down neighborhood where nothing had a fresh or new quality to it. These notions of a dirty Chinatown played on fears that perhaps Chinese might spread dirt outside of the quarter and into their homes and onto themselves. "Four or five years ago," the area in which Chinatown encompassed was "once the scene of the most gorgeous Church pageant ever seen in

¹⁰⁸ "With the Opium-Smokers": 2-5.

New York,” but it grew into an area unsuitable to “walk in for pleasure.”¹⁰⁹ With each step closer to Chinatown, the street would “run from bad shops to worse.”¹¹⁰ While the reporter discovered that stories of dragons and rats were untrue, he painted a picture of Chinatown as a run-down, squalid place, potentially spreading into other parts of the city. To him the myths of the area were almost more bearable than the truth.

By creating an image of Chinatown as a polluted neighborhood, a direct corollary was drawn between a dirty Chinatown and its supposed diseased people. On January 21, 1881, the paper printed a story about one of Chinatown’s most famous buildings known as “The Big Flat.”¹¹¹ Bounded by Mott, Canal and Hester streets, this building was “the largest tenement-house in the City.” “The Big Flat” became the “home of a miserably poor and degraded class of tenants.” The “degraded class of tenants” in which the reporter referred to included “Chinese” and also “Irish people, Germans, Italians, Polish Jews [and] Negroes.”¹¹² In this case, specifically “degraded” Chinese immigrants of this run-down building represented fears of the spread of disease and infestation to other areas of the city. Historian Stuart Miller asserts that whites’ fears of the relationship linking dirt and disease to Chinese immigrants gave voters, especially Eastern voters, a cause for concern.¹¹³ Miller argues that, “By 1870, Americans had become sensitive to the relationship between dirt and disease. During the next decade they grew concerned over

¹⁰⁹ “With the Opium-Smokers”: 2-5.

¹¹⁰ “With the Opium-Smokers”: 2-5.

¹¹¹ “Fire at Night in ‘The Big Flat’- Saving the Tenants of the Most Populous Building in Town,” New York Times 21 Jan. 1881: 8. For a look at other articles that discussed the diseases of Chinese please refer to Appendix C.

¹¹² “Fire at Night in ‘The Big Flat’: 8.

¹¹³ Miller 194.

specific Chinese germs that would afflict the nation with syphilis, cholera, leprosy, and much worse, nameless contagions spawned in the fleshpots of Oriental lechery."¹¹⁴

These concerns over the assumed diseases of Chinese were furthered by the New York Times' images of the dirtiness of Chinatown buildings and its Chinese residents.

This reporter titled his article, "Fire at Night in the 'The Big Flat,'" but residents and the building itself received more coverage than the actual details of the fire. His article portrayed an image of a crowded, dirty house filled with some of the lowest classes of the city. The Times' writer painted a picture of the crowded, dirty, oppressive building when he wrote that the house "resembles more a prison than a habitable dwelling."¹¹⁵ To the reporter, the residents of the Big Flat could be likened to inmates. He retold the actions of the "policeman" who "rushed into the building, arousing the inmates and getting them out into the street," and insinuated again that the inhabitants were less than law-abiding citizens. Moreover, he added, "The police say it is a resort for thieves and unfortunate women from the Bowery and other East Side thoroughfares. Officers on post never go into it singly. There is scarcely a night when they are not called in to quell disturbances."¹¹⁶ The reporter depicted this area of Chinatown as a constant problem for law enforcement and a hindrance to American society. These images rendered Chinese as criminals, a class who could not fit the ideals of productive American citizens.

Delving further into Chinatown, many Times' reporters covered stories of Chinatown's numerous opium dens, further characterizing Chinatown as a foreign space

¹¹⁴ Miller 194.

¹¹⁵ "Fire at Night in 'The Big Flat': 8.

¹¹⁶ "Fire at Night in 'The Big Flat': 8.

of illegal activity. Stories about police raids and discovery of caches of “eleven pipes and a quantity of opium.” “12 pipes... each containing a tray, a shell, a lamp, and a needle,” and “seven opium pipes and other paraphernalia” graced the pages of the paper.¹¹⁷ One descriptive example of the harmful effects of drugs appeared on December 8, 1884 when the New York Times again covered a story of “The Big Flat,” building No. 9 on Chinatown’s Elizabeth Street.¹¹⁸ This article focused on drug paraphernalia such as “pipes, lamps, jars of opium, and prongs used by the smokers,” and of the building’s occupants. In room no. 15, “Three women and five Chinamen were found reclining in the bunks half stupefied from the effects of the drugs.” Drugs had weakened the body and minds of Chinese making them unfit to function. The reporter characterized the Big Flat’s occupants as “the worst character... Most of the tenants are Chinamen and women of the lowest type.”¹¹⁹ The images of Chinese, unable to function, suggested their inability to assimilate into a republican society. Chinese who used drugs were not able to fully perform their duties as respectable citizens.

Moreover, the article asserted that Chinese men passed their drug habits to women. Times’ reporters described white women “smoking opium and lying around in a stupor for its effects,” “dissipated white men,” and a “girl lying in an almost nude condition...evidently under the influence.” The article further noted that the girl “was

¹¹⁷ “Opium-Smokers Locked Up,” New York Times 29 Feb. 1884: 2 and “Twenty Opium Smokers Arrested,” New York Times 1 Mar. 1884: 2. For a look at other articles that discussed opium, drugs and Chinese please refer to Appendix C.

¹¹⁸ “The ‘Big Flat’ Raided – The Police Capture Twenty-Nine Opium Smokers with Their Pipes,” New York Times 8 Dec. 1884: 2.

¹¹⁹ “The ‘Big Flat’ Raided”: 2.

partially unconscious."¹²⁰ Chinese had brought the illegal drug to white men and women who then became addicted to the substance. Many white people such as "Ada Turise" were "confirmed" victims of "the use of opium" and "frequently renewed" these "vicious habits."¹²¹ "Ada," like many other opium users, had found and smoked opium in Chinatown's dens and joints.

Along with reports that presented the neighborhood as dirty and drug-ridden, Times' writers integrated elements of danger and violence into their stories of Chinatown and other New York regions where Chinese lived and worked. A certain element of sexual predation permeated some of the newspaper's stories and it served to characterize the Chinese as less than law-abiding, virtuous people. A story about one of the inhabitants of the infamous "Big Flat" of Chinatown, Charles Lee, represented only one of the numerous stories that reporters used to highlight views of danger and immorality surrounding Chinatown.¹²² For instance, during the December 8, 1884 raid on the "Big Flat", a reporter covered the discovery of Lee's "house of ill-fame." The reporter asserted that Lee, the proprietor of the house was "known to lure little girls in his disreputable house," and had attracted "surveillance for a long time" from "Officer Young, of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children."¹²³ This story suggested that Chinese men had a history of tricking young white girls into their dwellings. This

¹²⁰ "An Opium Den—A Place Which Should Have Been Closed Up Long Ago," New York Times 10 Aug. 1882: 8 and "Hop Wah's Laundry—Two Chinamen Held for Keeping an Opium Joint," New York Times 26 Aug. 1883: 2.

¹²¹ "Pretty But Depraved—Sixteen Years of Age and a Confirmed Opium Smoker." New York Times 12 Nov. 1884: 8. For a look at similar articles please refer to Appendix C.

¹²² "The 'Big Flat' Raided": 2.

¹²² "The 'Big Flat' Raided": 2.

¹²³ "The 'Big Flat' Raided": 2.

idea of a trap-setting Chinese man further increased fears of continued Chinese immigration.

Other articles also argued that Chinatown served as a danger to young girls. A Times' writer told the story of a "17-year-old girl named Mary Gell," who accused a Chinese laundry man named Wing Sing for "having criminally assaulted" her.¹²⁴ The writer reported, "The girl was induced by Wing Sing to enter the shop. The Chinaman then locked the door, dragged her into a rear room, and there made the assault." The reporter further alleged that cries from the girl attracted people outside of the Chinese shop, who "entered the place and found her in an almost unconscious condition." The courts acquitted Sing for lack of evidence, but this story, as well as the story of Lee's "House of Ill-fame," created images of the danger lurking in Chinatown.¹²⁵ In the eyes of these reporters, even young girls could become victims of the danger and violence that enveloped. With these articles, the paper alluded to the dangers which Chinese men presented to white women and fashioned an image of Chinese men who participated in sexual misconduct.

From the Times' perspective, Chinatown not only held the potential for danger it became the location for violence. The paper created an image of Chinatown as a place where "riots", "rows" and "altercations" frequently broke out.¹²⁶ The paper reported on one particular riot that occurred on June 6, 1880, in the "Chinese section of Mott-

¹²⁴ "A Chinaman Assaults a Girl," New York Times 10 July 1883: 8.

¹²⁵ "A Chinaman Assaults a Girl": 8

¹²⁶ "A Row in an Opium Den," New York Times 6 Feb. 1882: 8. To obtain a list of similar articles that discussed the danger and violence of Chinese inhabited areas, please refer to Appendix C.

Street.”¹²⁷ The fight, which took place in a “gambling-house kept by Wah Lee at No. 17 Mott-street,” involved members of a club and a man named Lee Sing. The reporter noted that among the “20 Mongolians” that Sing fought, he knocked down Tom Lee, “the Celestial Deputy Sheriff” of the neighborhood.¹²⁸ With this image and others like it, the paper showed Chinatown as an unsafe place for citizens outside of the area.¹²⁹

Another caustic article about the dangerousness of New York’s Chinese gambling dens included, “Three Hundred Chinese Dudes” of Mott-Street.¹³⁰ A reporter interviewed a Chinatown resident, Mr. Ah Wong, about the groups of Chinese men in Chinatown who consistently gathered in the store-like houses. Ah Wong confirmed the suspicions of the reporter and revealed that hundreds of Chinese men gambled into the late hours of the night. Wong reported that he had “frequently known a Do Sho (a class of Chinese gamblers) to run short of cash while gaming at the table.” Wong also attested that these risky gamblers were given loans for as much as \$1,000 even though they had lost all their cash for the day. The reporter informed readers that many victims of gambling were enticed by gamblers called Han Tons or ‘steerers’ who “stand outside of the Fan Ton dens every afternoon and evening, calling to the Chinese passer-by... They

¹²⁷ “Chinese in the Courts,” New York Times 18 Oct. 1881: 8. The fight occurred on June 6, 1880 but the story also covered the 1881 court case that ensued afterwards.

¹²⁸ “Chinese in the Courts”: 8.

¹²⁹ Please refer to Appendix for more articles that discussed the violence in Chinatown and other New York regions where Chinese lived and worked.

¹³⁰ “Three Hundred Chinese Dudes-A Glance into and Around the Gambling Dens in Mott-Street”, New York Times 21 Jan. 1884: 8.

are paid by the Fan Ton bosses about \$5 per week, with a percentage on all the ‘suckers’ they seduce inside.”¹³¹

In the gambling dens, Chinese people played for high stakes and many paid dearly when they could not settle their losses. The danger of losing money existed within these dens, not only for high-rollers, but for all players. Many people bet and lost large amounts of money and Chinatown’s gambling bosses also duped outsiders out of their money. Images of Chinatown’s gambling dens served as yet another example of the potential for danger in the neighborhood, not only for Chinese gamblers, but for whites as well. Any person could have potentially become a victim to the gambling dens of New York’s Chinatown. Moreover, the Times characterized gambling dens and thus a part of Chinatown as a place of potential danger and evil. The newspaper argued that gambling houses and “the opium dens” in the city “were evils” that needed “suppression.”¹³² It also published other articles picturing places of Chinese resident workers as locations for a “gambling hell.”¹³³

The New York Times included altercations along with other stories of attempted murder and robberies that further propagated a violent, dangerous image of Chinese residential areas and workplaces. One small story noted a Chinese man named “Ah Yanne” who had “attempted to kill Gam Wah and his wife Cum Wah with a hatchet, in the Chinese laundry, No. 69 West Twenty-first street.”¹³⁴ Another story covered the

¹³¹ “Three Hundred Chinese Dudes”: 8.

¹³² “A Row in an Opium Den”: 8.

¹³³ “A Chinese Gambling Hell—Fourteen Chinamen Captured in a Den in Brooklyn,” New York Times 2 Oct. 1883: 8 and “A Chinese Gambling House Closed,” New York Times 6 Oct. 1883: 8.

¹³⁴ “City and Suburban News,” New York Times 18 Apr. 1882: 8.

numerous robberies in Chinese laundries in New York and Brooklyn of which police attributed to a Chinese man named Tong Sing.¹³⁵ The police sought to question Sing about a murder and robbery that occurred at No. 17 Clinton Street. This particular incident involved a Chinese laundryman named “Loo Sing [who] was assassinated, and [had] his trunk rifled.” Police hoped to also question Sing for the robbing of \$600 and the torturing of a Chinese laundryman named “Hong Chung.”¹³⁶

The New York Times’ exaggerated depictions of Chinatown and surrounding New York areas, mainly pictured it as a horrid quarter teeming with dirt, drugs and danger. Intoxicated smokers and conniving Chinese businessmen became regular images in the newspaper. Chinatown and other Chinese areas were places where Chinese gambled, produced violence, and participated in drug use and often spread these vices to whites. The Times intimated that whites frequented gambling and opium establishments and became the victims of Chinese brutality. Inherent in all of these images of Chinese areas and people was the moral unfitness of Chinese. The newspaper had shown Chinese in the worst ways; as unclean and disease ridden, as capable of spreading illnesses to whites, as drug-users who habitually enticed whites to accompany them in their drug-induced stupors, as criminals who captured whites’ money, and as sexual predators who preyed on young white women. All of these racial traits clashed with an imagined ideal of a pious, industrious, productive and law-abiding, American citizen. Like Senator Blaine, the New York Times presented the dangerous and corrupting influence of Chinese migrants in America.

¹³⁵ “Hong Chung’s Assailants,” New York Times 30 Dec. 1884: 8.

¹³⁶ “Hong Chung’s Assailants”: 8.

Chapter 4

The “Peculiar Institutions” of the Chinese

In contrast to the images of immoral Chinese, through stories of customs and daily events, the New York Times presented a view of hardworking, smart Chinese people who ably served their white employers. These admirable traits of Chinese workers served as markers for Chinese assimilability. Exhibiting another side of the debate over citizenship, the newspaper expressed its views of Chinese through explorations of Chinatown and surrounding Chinese-inhabited areas of New York, Chinese holidays, religious customs, food and behavior. This chapter focuses on the ways in which the newspaper included other images of Chinese intelligence and industriousness in its pages and how these images, while complimentary, played into the racist stereotypes of the Chinese living in the era.

The Times conveyed multiple intriguing images of Chinese customs as it tried to educate and attract readers. Many of the newspaper's stories described the exotic customs and events of Chinatown's residents and workers. One of the most important events of the Chinese culture was Chinese New Year. Generally falling in the first weeks of January or February, the celebration of Chinese New Year brought together New York's Chinese for a day of feasting and festivities. This momentous occasion attracted the attention of New York Times' editors, who seemed fascinated by this departure from American New Year celebrations.

In a lengthy 1880 description of a Chinese New Year celebration, the paper showed its curiosity with details of this new event.¹³⁷ The writer focused much of the

¹³⁷ “The Chinese New Year,” New York Times 10 Feb. 1880: 3. Please refer to Appendix C for a list of other articles that detailed celebrations of New York's Chinese people.

story on the foods of the Chinese. He described the “dishes containing the most curious Chinese confectionery, nuts, cake, and sweet meats.” These traditional Chinese dishes piqued the curiosity of New York Times’ reporter as he described in detail the “puzzling and different ingredients” of the Chinese feast, ingredients, he wrote, which would have baffled the “most accomplished cook”. The author also noted the “peculiar fashion” that Chinese scholars wished their visitors a Happy Chinese New Year. Among a culture distinct from his own, the writer found himself attracted to the exoticism of his surroundings and tried to relay this message to his readers. His descriptions of other elements of the celebration such as “colored scrolls bearing Scriptural exhortations in Chinese characters, glittering and curious ‘Jos House’ ornaments, brilliant fans and banners and tall Chinese lilies” demonstrated the colorful language he used to describe Chinese customs.¹³⁸ To outsiders, Chinese immigrants signified intrigue and mystery and the paper hoped to present the captivating aspects of Chinese customs to the general public. The paper presented these exotic images to readers as a way to explore a foreign culture.

The Times showed its consistent interest in the habits and customs of Chinese with its coverage of Chinese New Year throughout the decade.¹³⁹ Attempting to convey to its readers the meaning of Chinese New Year, it described the event almost every year. For instance, on February 18, 1882, the New York Times reported on the events of Chinatown’s New Year celebrations.¹⁴⁰ A writer noted that, “All well- meaning”

¹³⁸ “The Chinese New Year”: 3.

¹³⁹ For additional articles that detail Chinese New Years between 1880 and 1892, please refer to Appendix. Although, during these twelve years, the New York Times did not always include articles solely devoted to coverage of Chinese New Years.

¹⁴⁰ “The Chinaman’s New Year’s,” New York Times 18 Feb. 1882: 2.

Chinese had closed their shops on this special holiday “out of respect to the day” and donned “holiday attire.” He also mentioned the “gaily” decorated “clubhouses” of “Mott, Park, and Water Streets,” and tried to discern the significance of the celebrations. The newspaper revealed the meaning of the closing as the “first duty of a Chinaman on New-Year’s Day, and one in which he does not expect to find imitators among his Caucasian brothers is that of paying all his debts, and wiping out feuds.” The author went on to discuss other implications of Chinese New Year such as a Chinese person’s duty to “have pledged himself to lead a life of uprightness and usefulness during the coming year.” The reporter discovered that on this special day, Chinese people closed their shops to visit the clubhouses and residences of “their countrymen.”¹⁴¹ Through these descriptions, he ascribed a level of morality to Chinese who closed their shops and pledged rectitude.

The New York Times covered Chinatown’s more saddening events as well as joyous events like Chinese New Year. These more depressing events included occasions such as the deaths and funerals of notable Chinese figures. The stories of various funerals not only showcased special Chinese customs they also showed the potential for Chinese to adopt American customs. On September 6, 1880, for example, the newspaper described the funeral of Lee Wan.¹⁴² The occupant of No. 4 Mott-street, Lee Wan was a grocer who had died from heart disease. Wan’s funeral, held at Evergreen Cemetery, was “regarded with curiosity and interest by hundreds of people on the sidewalk.”¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ “The Chinaman’s New Year’s”: 2.

¹⁴² “Lee Wan’s Funeral—Burial of a Chinaman in Brooklyn—Tea and a Bonfire,” New York Times 6 Sept. 1880: 5. Please refer to Appendix C for a list of other articles that detailed deaths and funeral customs of Chinese.

¹⁴³ “Lee Wan’s Funeral”: 5.

To the journalist, the integration of Chinese and American funerary customs served as the most “curious part of the ceremony.”¹⁴⁴ Demonstrating traditional Chinese funerary practices, Wan’s mourners burnt matches in a basin of ashes that ignited and released a “fragrant smoke.” Part of the Chinese customs of the ceremony involved individual mourners who separately approached the casket and paid reverence to the deceased Lee Wan. The reporter described the mourning custom of “clasping the hands, lifting them to the chin, and letting them drop, repeating the operation three times.” After this act, “mourners dropped upon their hands and knees upon the mat, and made a triple salaam, bowing their foreheads close to the earth.” The reporter also included that “mourners tossed in few handfuls of earth, just as Christians do.”¹⁴⁵ Here, the Chinese mourners seemed to take on Christian traditions. This integration of both cultures suggested that Chinese had the potential for Americanization, but did not yet fully possess the abilities to transform.

Among stories of exotic Chinese celebrations and interesting funerals the paper also commented upon the different foods of Chinese immigrants. The Times took particular interest in the traditional ingredients of Chinese dishes and the markets of Chinatown. Reporters’ descriptions of Chinese markets emphasized their notions of the differences and similarities between Chinese and Americans. On June 13, 1880, the paper ran a story highlighting the unique raw materials of Chinese cuisine.¹⁴⁶ During a particular adventure into Chinese markets the supply of foreign foods amazed one Times

¹⁴⁴ “Lee Wan’s Funeral”: 5.

¹⁴⁵ “Lee Wan’s Funeral”: 5.

¹⁴⁶ “Ichthyophagous Matters- Some Chinese Raw Materials- Certain Culinary Problems,” New York Times 13 June 1880: 9. Please refer to Appendix C for a list of articles that mentioned customary foods of Chinese in New York.

reporter. His requests for foods as “shark fins” caused no surprise among Chinese grocers because the reporter noted, the “peculiar squaloid dorsal appendage was as common and in ‘usual demand’ as pigs’ trotters at a pork-butcher’s.”¹⁴⁷ The reporter attempted to make a connection between the commonness of two distinct foods, comparing shark fins to the presumably more familiar pigs’ feet.

While the journalist surveyed the groceries, a Chinese grocer happily provided some foods in the most “obliging and polite” manner asking if a “‘Chinaman’” was to “‘go to eat dinner with’” the reporter.¹⁴⁸ The reporter replied “‘no’” to the grocer adding, “‘Americans want it.’”¹⁴⁹ Through his response, the reporter showed that Chinese had the ability to successfully converse with Americans, using the English language. The grocer’s question to the reporter signaled the possibility of successful interaction and conversation between a Chinese man and an American man, although demonstrated here by serving the American customer.

Among the supply of distinctive Chinatown foods, Chinatown grocers supplied birds’ nests, dried squid, and dried cabbage. The variety of foods, as well as their smell, amazed and repulsed the reporter. The dried cabbage shocked the reporter as he commented on the “rank disagreeable odor, slightly recalling the smell of a bad Connecticut tobacco cigar.”¹⁵⁰ He questioned how anybody could prepare the vegetable in such a way. The utter amazement in which “‘Chinese cook[s]’” prepared cabbage, caused the reporter to ask how “‘some ethnologist [could] be good enough to trace from

¹⁴⁷ “Ichthyophagous Matters”: 9.

¹⁴⁸ “Ichthyophagous Matters”: 9.

¹⁴⁹ “Ichthyophagous Matters”: 9.

¹⁵⁰ “Ichthyophagous Matters”: 9.

this strange cruelty of an innocent vegetable the connection between the Teuton with his sauerkraut and the Chinese with his dreadful cabbage.” He further asked, “Why should two distinct people pervert the cabbage?” and commented that the choice “cannot arise from simple chance; the cause of it lies deeper, in race affinities.”¹⁵¹ Race, in this case, meant habits and affinities that could be found in cooking practices. Attempting to understand the place of Chinese immigrants, the Times again looked to cultural traits and habits.

Along with stories about intriguing Chinese foods and preparation habits, the Times also commented on the character traits of foreign-born Chinese people. One New York Times’ author covered a story about a Chinese cook, Sam Li, whom he had known.¹⁵² The author had met Li “quite a number of years ago” in San Francisco where Li worked in the kitchen in a kind of temporary boarding house of a railroad company that had opened. The author reported that through Li’s efforts the entire state of the boarding house had changed. Li had only been on the job for “two months, one day” and “he made me [author] understand that he would like to run the whole machine. It had taken Sam only two months to be perfectly familiar with our money, the cost of food, and other details of housekeeper,” wrote the reporter. The Times’ writer further contended that Li was also the “most careful purchaser I ever saw, and if he bought pair of chickens or a bit of beef, his fingers and nose inspected it closely.” Further, Li served in the establishment for over 18 months, and in the reporter’s words, “was the most orderly and discreet servant I ever came across.” The author and Li went their separate ways, but

¹⁵¹ “Ichthyophagous Matters”: 9.

¹⁵² “An Intelligent Chinaman—An Improvised Tea Party in New-York—Sam Li’s Efforts,” New York Times 26 Sept. 1880: 9. Please refer to Appendix C for a list of similar articles.

“some two weeks ago” the writer “renewed my [his] acquaintance with Sam [Li] in New York.” Noting Li’s intelligence and increasing assimilation into American culture, the author asserted that Li’s “English had sensibly improved.” During their conversation, Li offered to cook for the author’s child’s birthday party. The reporter agreed and the evening came when Li was supposed to cook a magnificent meal. Li provided a wonderful meal for the family cooking “sweet cakes,” “confectionary delights” and also supplied entertainment in the form of firecrackers. The reporter wrote, “The festivities were kept up until 10 o’clock, Sam [Li] and Han [another worker] working like beavers. It was 11 o’clock before they bid us good-bye.”¹⁵³

This view of an intelligent, hardworking man contradicted other notions of dirty Chinese people. The writer showed a Chinese man who became successful through honest hard-work and determination. In addition, Li demonstrated intelligence to the writer in as much as he had learned the English language. Although complimentary, these adjectives would only apply to Chinese who diligently served whites and to those who could speak the English language, the language of American citizens. The reporter praised Li’s acumen and diligence only after Li proved himself capable of serving whites.

In the context of labor, images of Chinese as intelligent people often appeared in the newspaper. These descriptions added to the model of an industrious Chinese worker, one who would serve the country well if employed by whites. On April 4, 1880, the paper printed a letter from a San Francisco reader attesting to the diligence of Chinese workers.¹⁵⁴ The writer reported his experience with a worker named “Ching” who had

¹⁵³ “An Intelligent Chinaman”: 9.

¹⁵⁴ California, letter, “The Chinese as Servants-- What Happened when Bridget and Maggie Retired and Ching Took Charge of the House,” New York Times (4 Apr. 1880): 5.

served in his house after he had discharged two other servants, “Bridget and Maggie.” The writer’s wife was “prejudiced against Chinese servants” and was “told they were dirty.” However, after his wife had discharged their two previous servants they decided to “try John Chinaman.” After some hesitation the couple were relieved to see that “peace and quietness have reigned” after they hired “a [Chinese] cook and a [Chinese] boy.” The two Chinese workers quickly adapted to the home. “Soon the boy—for they are quick to learn—picked up sufficient knowledge to become a fair cook.” The boy, “Ching”, whom the couple christened “Tom,” also “did very well.”¹⁵⁵

Since the moment that the couple had employed the Chinese workers “6 years” ago, they had “no other servants in the house.”¹⁵⁶ The two Chinese workers had learned and performed all necessary duties. The author especially noted Tom’s industriousness, writing, “Tom does the washing, cooking, marketing, keeps all the accounts, sweeps the house, washes the windows, does the chamber-work, waits on table, and [still] has time to go visiting his Chinese friends.” Furthermore, the couples’ “kitchen floor, tables &c.. are as white as snow, and as for himself [Tom], no buck in Fifth-avenue can beat him in neatness.”¹⁵⁷ These representations of the neatness of Chinese contradicted the images of New York’s dirty Chinatown and other spaces where Chinese lived and worked.

In addition to the cleanliness of the house and the way that Chinese quietly completed their work the writer also commented again upon the potential for Americanization. The author’s “daughter taught Tom to read and write, and at the same

¹⁵⁵ California: 5.

¹⁵⁶ California: 5.

¹⁵⁷ California: 5.

time acquired a fair knowledge of the Chinese language herself.”¹⁵⁸ The writer noted that his daughter learned Chinese to help her give orders to the servant stating, “And at table, when company is present, it comes in handy to give him any directions.”¹⁵⁹ The author praised the intelligence of “Ching” specifically when he followed orders. “Ching” demonstrated that Chinese could learn English and assimilate to American customs. This letter, and other Times’ articles attesting to the industriousness of Chinese, presented yet another image to the array of depictions in the newspaper. They also showed the requirements for citizenship through the potential for assimilability. The newspaper’s dual images—sinful Chinese and successful Chinese—mirrored the debates in Congress and suggest an ambivalence regarding the place of Chinese immigrants during the age of exclusion.

The New York Times’ descriptions of work, celebrations and funerals characterized the Chinese as a distinct race of respectable employees, wondrous individuals and followers of multiple deities, who mourned death by leaving food next to gravesides. The newspaper also captured images of Chinese as consumers of curious food and listeners to strange music. To outsiders to Chinatown and other Chinese-inhabited areas, Chinese practiced different beliefs and customs totally foreign to a presumed mainstream society. Vivid depictions of cultural events attracted readers while coverage of funerals attempted to encase Chinese in elements of foreignness. The Times’ multiple descriptions of food, traditional beliefs and work serve as examples of presumed differences and similarities between American customs and Chinese customs. These

¹⁵⁸ California: 5.

¹⁵⁹ California: 5.

depictions of Chinese customs and habits revealed that an adherence to American customs equaled intelligence and industriousness.

The newspaper's images of Chinese and Chinese spaces, such as Chinatown, alluded to the overarching question of citizenship and continued immigration. Juxtaposed against Congressional debates on questions of immigration, descriptions of Chinese and other Chinese-inhabited areas demonstrated the nation's ambivalence concerning Chinese in their midst. Images showed Chinese' capability of assimilating to American customs. Exotic customs and industriousness garnered favor in the Times and suggested the Chinese potential for assimilation. The Times thus placed larger political conflicts over citizenship and immigration in terms of cultural habits.

The New York Times' discussion over the conflict of Chinese' assimilability or non-assimilability was also exemplified through its various stories of Chinese attempts for American naturalization. Through the newspapers descriptions of court cases of Chinese emerged the ideals for republican citizenship.¹⁶⁰ While the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act clearly stated that Chinese were no longer eligible for American citizenship, the newspaper's reporters believed that many Chinese demonstrated their ability to assimilate into society, or to become Americanized. The Times again stressed Chinese' attempts to assimilate based on replications of the perceived characteristics of American people.

While inconsistent, the articles demonstrated a set of requirements for citizenship such as adherence to Christianity, American clothing styles, ability to read and write

¹⁶⁰ At this time, I cannot find official court records that substantiate the verdict of courts cases included in the New York Times, so I have rested my opinions based on descriptions of the Times' articles. Please refer to Appendix C for articles that reviewed other citizenship and naturalization events.

English, and extended residence in the country. For example, one Chinese man who applied for citizenship, well after the passage of the first Chinese Exclusion Act, was a Philadelphia resident named Frank Wanne, who clearly demonstrated to a New York Times' reporter his ability to assimilate into society. On August 16, 1883, a reporter covered Wanne's formal declaration of intention to become a United States citizen in Philadelphia's Common Pleas Court.¹⁶¹ The paper described him as an "Americanized Chinaman;" one who demonstrated cleanliness and an aura of success because he was "neatly dressed in the prevailing mode... had a coat which was a fashionable prince Albert, and in the folds of his fine silk necktie a large diamond sparkled." Wanne also wore "a high silk hat and carried a slender cane." The writer noted that Wanne's queue had been cut off and his hair was permitted to "grow all over his head." The severance of the traditional Chinese queue signaled that Wanne had departed from Chinese traditions and had attempted to appear more like Americans even through his hairstyle. Only one factor seemed to signal the tension between "Americanized Chinaman" and a non-Americanized Chinaman. Wanne "retained one queer notion suggestive of the superstitions of the Celestial Land. He wore for good luck a bright penny stuck in the open space of his right ear."¹⁶²

Almost every other feature signaled Wanne's assimilation into and success in American society. The paper further described Wanne's mastery of the English language evidenced by the fact the he acted as interpreter in the courts.¹⁶³ The paper also

¹⁶¹ "An Americanized Chinaman—Declaring his Intention to Become a Citizen of the United States," New York Times, 17 Aug. 1883: 5.

¹⁶² "An Americanized Chinaman": 5.

¹⁶³ "An Americanized Chinaman": 5

commented that he spoke “English fluently and with hardly a trace of a foreign accent.” Wanne also read “easily” and clearly had the ability to write in English as demonstrated when he “signed his name to the papers in an excellent round hand, ending with a long flourish.” The paper further reflected its perceived image of a dutiful citizen through Wanne, asserting that his work “made an excellent income” and “turns many an honest dollar by procuring the services of lawyers for those of his countrymen who may require legal aid.” Thus, Wanne’s line of work differed from other Chinese gamblers and opium dealer who operated in the centers of vice in Chinatown and other Chinese areas in New York. Through his work, Wanne earned “honest dollar[s]” and was “said to be moderately rich and to own considerable real estate.” Lastly, the Times intimated that Wanne was a Christian, Chinese individual, not a sinner because he “swore on the Bible.”¹⁶⁴

An untitled editorial in the paper the very next day about Wanne’s situation further underscored the tension between the potential for citizenship and the prohibitions thereof already set forth in laws. The unnamed editorialist asserted that “it [was] a pity to throw a damper on the generous enthusiasm of those of our fellow-citizens who have contemplated with admiration the spectacle of Frank Wanne.”¹⁶⁵ He believed that Wanne symbolized “an American Chinaman” and through his modern American dress and the fact that he swore on the bible, he “convince[d] us” that he was a “Christian gentleman,” like many American citizens. However, the editorialist noted that the Naturalization Law of 1790 applied only to free “white” persons, and even after the 1875 extension it

¹⁶⁴ “An Americanized Chinaman”: 5.

¹⁶⁵ Untitled, editorial, New York Times 18 Aug. 1883: 4.

further applied only to “aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.”¹⁶⁶ As much as Wanne had demonstrated his ability to become Americanized, the editorialist argued that Wanne could not have been lawfully naturalized. The U.S. government offered citizenship to only certain groups and Chinese did not qualify because they were neither white nor of African nativity or descent.¹⁶⁷

Although the editorialist covering Wanne’s case alluded that Wanne did not gain the opportunity for naturalization, other Times’ reporters covering Chinese’ attempts for citizenship revealed that some judges granted citizenship papers to a few Chinese petitioners. What are important about these cases are not the particular individuals who were able to gain citizenship, but the ways in which reporters described those Chinese who attempted to do so. Like the two writers’ who discussed Wanne, other writers judged Chinese’ assimilability and potential for citizenship through the ways in which they acted and behaved like Americans. New York Times showed favor and predicted success for those Chinese who could act, dress, read, and write like American citizens. They also responded well to Chinese who attained knowledge of Christian customs and resided in the U.S. for an extended period of time.

The court case detailing Frank Wanne’s attempt to gain citizenship, as well as articles that appeared complimentary, demonstrated the newspaper’s ambivalence towards Chinese residents of the United States. To the newspaper, some Chinese appeared to show signs of adjustment into American society, but at the same time

¹⁶⁶ Editorial: 4.

¹⁶⁷ This particular unnamed editorialist referred to the 1790 Naturalization Law, but the Times showed that judges deferred to other laws such as the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and also previous citizenship rulings to justify their rulings. For a list of other Times’ articles that covered Chinese attempts for citizenship please refer to Appendix C.

demonstrated their inclinations towards Chinese culture and customs. The New York Times tried to frame these supportive images to fit the prevailing notions of Chinese. Yet, in doing so, the newspaper helped to support more stereotypes of Chinese such as their intelligence and industriousness, which were valued only in so far as they measured up to whites' expectations. Even these seemingly encouraging images followed the rhetoric of the day, demonstrating that only a limited set of character traits were associated with Chinese residents and even those were defined in relation to American beliefs and customs.

Conclusion

With the passage of the "15 Passenger Bill," Congress debated over enacting a series of laws restricting Chinese immigration. Senators and Presidents sought different measures to benefit various desires. President Rutherford Hayes and President Chester Arthur looked to restrict Chinese immigration, but also to sustain positive trading relations with China. Other politicians such as Republican senator James Blaine sought different measures and rallied for harsh restrictive measures against the importation of Chinese laborers to garnish Western workingmen's votes. Still other Republican senators such as George Hoar and Joseph Hawley, added other opinions to the Chinese exclusion debates. Hoar, one of the most adamant supporters of Chinese immigration, denounced the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act on the premise that it violated previous treaties with China and purported Constitutional ideals.

During the era, Congress was forced, more than once, to make explicit laws so that the nation could enforce restrictions to control the nation's population of Chinese laborers. Government representatives needed to show their concern for the nation's economy as well as gain support for election or re-election, so they leaned towards stereotypes of Chinese to support their opinions. The enactment of certain restrictions laws were influenced by economic and political concerns, leading to conflicting images of the dangers and evils of Chinese labor versus those images of productive Chinese workers. Each side of the debate spoke in terms of Chinese laborers' ability to live up to the ideals of America's republican citizens, who displayed the qualities of self-government and adherence to a good moral code.

As politicians debated the terms of immigration restriction, the New York Times catalogued the habits of New York's Chinese residents. Through depictions of gambling houses, opium dens, and the violence and danger that appeared to encase Chinatown and surrounding areas, the newspaper judged the conduct and character of Chinese residents and workers. Similar to the nation's legislators, The New York Times tried to use these images to measure Chinese assimilability or non-assimilability, to republican ideals.

The numerous Times' articles concerning the dirtiness, drugs, and dangers of Chinese and Chinatown clearly illustrated that the newspaper believed Chinese produced a danger to New York society and to the nation. The seemingly positive articles also showed that Chinese were still holding onto what were considered un-American traits. Even those articles highlighting the intelligence and assiduousness of Chinese suggested that Chinese showed their industriousness primarily when they served whites. Although not as explicitly apparent as other newspapers and some politician's words, even articles such as those of the more moderately based New York Times contributed to anti-Chinese sentiment of the era between 1880 and 1892. Small wonder, then, that Congress passed restrictive legislation against Chinese in 1882, 1888, and 1892.

Appendix A

Map of New York's Chinatown in Manhattan, 1895



Figure 1. Manhattan's Fifth Ward in 1895. According to Bonner, Manhattan's Chinatown was located between Mott, Pell, Park Row and the Bowery, with Doyer Street winding from Pell to the southern tip of the Bowery (not indicated on map). Chinatown did not extend to Bayard Street until about 1890 and not to Canal Street until the 1930s. The Five Points, at the junction of Baxter, Worth, and Pearl, vanished when slums between Mulberry and Baxter were demolished to open Columbus Park as breathing space.

Arthur Bonner, *Alas! What Brought Thee Hither? The Chinese in New York 1800-1950* (Cransbury, New Jersey: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1997) frontispiece.

Appendix B

Text of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act

Forty-Seventh Congress, Session I, 1882

Chapter 126.-An act to execute certain treaty stipulations relating to Chinese.

Preamble:

Whereas, in the opinion of the Government of the United States the coming of Chinese laborers to this country endangers the good order of certain localities within the territory thereof: Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and until the expiration of ten years next after the passage of this act, the coming of Chinese laborers to the United States be, and the same is hereby, suspended: and during such suspension it shall not be lawful for any Chinese laborer to come, or, having so come after the expiration of said ninety days, to remain within the United States.

SEC. 2. That the master of any vessel who shall knowingly bring within the United States on such vessel, and land or permit to be landed, and Chinese laborer, from any foreign port of place, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars for each and every such Chinese laborer so brought, and may be also imprisoned for a term not exceeding one year.

SEC. 3. That the two foregoing sections shall not apply to Chinese laborers who were in the United States on the seventeenth day of November, eighteen hundred and eighty, or who shall have come into the same before the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and who shall produce to such master before going on board such vessel, and shall produce to the collector of the port in the United States at which such vessel shall arrive, the evidence hereinafter in this act required of his being one of the laborers in this section mentioned: nor shall the two foregoing sections apply to the case of any master whose vessel, being bound to a port not within the United States by reason of being in distress or in stress of weather, or touching at any port of the United States on its voyage to any foreign port of place: *Provided,* That all Chinese laborers brought on such vessel shall depart with the vessel on leaving port.

SEC. 4. That for the purpose of properly identifying Chinese laborers who were in the United States on the seventeenth day of November, eighteen hundred and eighty, or who shall have come into the same before the expiration of ninety days next after the passage of this act, and in order to furnish them with the proper evidence of their right to

go from and come to the United States of their free will and accord, as provided by the treaty between the United States and China dated November seventeenth, eighteen hundred and eighty, the collector of customs of the district from which any such Chinese laborer shall depart from the United States shall, in person or by deputy, go on board each vessel having on board any such Chinese laborer and cleared or about to sail from his district for a foreign port, and on such vessel make a list of all such Chinese laborers, which shall be entered in registry-books to be kept for that purpose, in which shall be stated the name, age, occupation, last place of residence, physical marks or peculiarities, and all facts necessary for the identification of each of such Chinese laborers, which books shall be safely kept in the custom-house; and every such Chinese laborer so departing from the United States shall be entitled to, and shall receive, free of any charge or cost upon application therefore, from the collector or his deputy, at the time such list is taken, a certificate, signed by the collector or his deputy and attested by his seal of office, in such form as the Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe, which certificate shall contain a statement of the name, age, occupation, last place of residence, personal description, and fact of identification of the Chinese laborer to whom the certificate is issued, corresponding with the said list and registry in all particulars. In case any Chinese laborer after having received such certificate shall leave such vessel before her departure he shall deliver his certificate to the master of the vessel, and if such Chinese laborer shall fail to return to such vessel before her departure from port the certificate shall be delivered by the master to the collector of customs for cancellation. The certificate herein provided for shall entitle the Chinese laborer to whom the same is issued to return to and re-enter the United States upon producing and delivering the same to the collector of customs of the district at which such Chinese laborer shall seek to re-enter; and upon delivery of such certificate by such Chinese laborer to the collector of customs at the time of re-entry in the United States, said collector shall cause the same to be filed in the custom house and duly canceled.

SEC. 5. That any Chinese laborer mentioned in section four of this act being in the United States, and desiring to depart from the United States by land, shall have the right to demand and receive, free of charge or cost, a certificate of identification similar to that provided for in section four of this act to be issued to such Chinese laborers as may desire to leave the United States by water; and it is hereby made the duty of the collector of customs of the district next adjoining the foreign country to which said Chinese laborer desires to go to issue such certificate, free of charge or cost, upon application by such Chinese laborer, and to enter the same upon registry-books to be kept by him for the purpose, as provided for in section four of this act.

SEC. 6. That in order to the faithful execution of articles one and two of the treaty in this act before mentioned, every Chinese person other than a laborer who may be entitled by said treaty and this act to come within the United States, and who shall be about to come to the United States, shall be identified as so entitled by the Chinese Government in each case, such identity to be evidenced by a certificate issued under the authority of said government, which certificate shall be in the English language or (if not in the English language) accompanied by a translation into English, stating such right to come, and which certificate shall state the name, title, or official rank, if any, the age,

height, and all physical peculiarities, former and present occupation or profession, and place of residence in China of the person to whom the certificate is issued and that such person is entitled conformably to the treaty in this act mentioned to come within the United States. Such certificate shall be prima-facie evidence of the fact set forth therein, and shall be produced to the collector of customs, or his deputy, of the port in the district in the United States at which the person named therein shall arrive.

SEC. 7. That any person who shall knowingly and falsely alter or substitute any name for the name written in such certificate or forge any such certificate, or knowingly utter any forged or fraudulent certificate, or falsely personate any person named in any such certificate, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor; and upon conviction thereof shall be fined in a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars, and imprisoned in a penitentiary for a term of not more than five years.

SEC. 8. That the master of any vessel arriving in the United States from any foreign port or place shall, at the same time he delivers a manifest of the cargo, and if there be no cargo, then at the time of making a report of the entry of vessel pursuant to the law, in addition to the other matter required to be reported, and before landing, or permitting to land, any Chinese passengers, deliver and report to the collector of customs of the district in which such vessels shall have arrived a separate list of all Chinese passengers taken on board his vessel at any foreign port or place, and all such passengers on board the vessel at that time. Such list shall show the names of such passengers (and if accredited officers of the Chinese Government traveling on the business of that government, or their servants, with a note of such facts), and the name and other particulars, as shown by their respective certificates; and such list shall be sworn to by the master in the manner required by law in relation to the manifest of the cargo. Any willful refusal or neglect of any such master to comply with the provisions of this section shall incur the same penalties and forfeiture as are provided for a refusal or neglect to report and deliver a manifest of cargo.

SEC. 9. That before any Chinese passengers are landed from any such vessel, the collector, or his deputy, shall proceed to examine such passengers, comparing the certificates with the list and with the passengers; and no passenger shall be allowed to land in the United States from such vessel in violation of law.

SEC. 10. That every vessel whose master shall knowingly violate any of the provisions of this act shall be deemed forfeited to the United States, and shall be liable to seizure and condemnation on any district of the United States into which such vessel may enter or in which she may be found.

SEC. 11. That any person who shall knowingly bring into or cause to be brought into the United States by land, or who shall knowingly aid or abet the same, or aid or abet the landing in the United States from any vessel of any Chinese person not lawfully entitled to enter the United States, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall, on conviction thereof, be fined in a sum not exceeding one thousand dollars, and imprisoned for a term not exceeding one year.

SEC. 12. That no Chinese person shall be permitted to enter the United States by land without producing to the proper officer of customs the certificate in this act required of Chinese persons seeking to land from a vessel. And any Chinese person found unlawfully within the United States shall be caused to be removed therefrom to the country from whence he came, by direction of the United States, after being brought before some justice, judge, or commissioner of a court of the United States and found to be one not lawfully entitled to be or remain in the United States.

SEC. 13. That this act shall not apply to diplomatic and other officers of the Chinese Government traveling upon the business of that government, whose credentials shall be taken as equivalent to the certificate in this act mentioned, and shall exempt them and their body and household servants from the provisions of this act as to other Chinese persons.

SEC. 14. That hereafter no State court or court of the United States shall admit Chinese to citizenship; and all laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 15. That the words "Chinese laborers", whenever used in this act, shall be construed to mean both skilled and unskilled laborers and Chinese employed in mining.

Approved, May 6, 1882.

Appendix C

*Selected List of New York Times' articles (1880-1892) featuring Chinese.

Arranged chronologically by category

* Selected Articles from a survey of over 600 New York Times articles discussing Chinese who worked and lived in and around New York City between 1880 and 1892.

Celebrations and Food

- "The Chinese New Year—Celestial Students Celebrating the Event in the City," 10 Feb. 1880: 3.
- "Ichthyophagous Matters—Some Chinese Raw Materials-Certain Culinary Problems." 13 Jun 1880: 9.
- "A Chinese Feast—Members of a Sunday-School Entertain Their Friends," 1 Feb. 1881: 8.
- "A Chinese Clam-Bake—The Natives of the Celestial Empire Going on a Frolic," 15 Sept. 1881: 8.
- "The Chinaman's New Year's," 18 Feb. 1882: 2.
- "Tin Pans and Gunpowder—Celebrating the Chinese New Year at Belleville," 19 Feb. 1882: 10.
- "A Chinese Christening," 2 Apr. 1882: 2.
- "The Chinese New Year—How the Anniversary Will Be Celebrated in this City," 7 Feb. 1883: 3.
- "Chinese New Year Festivity—Spending the Day in Social Calls-Devotions in the Joss House," 8 Feb. 1883: 10.
- "The Chinese Spring Feast—Paying Respect to the Dead and Concluding with a Festival," 2 Apr. 1883: 8.
- "A Chinese National Holiday," 29 July 1883: 12.
- "The Chinese Leap Year," 20 Jan. 1884: 10.
- "The Chinese New Year—How a Mott-Street Merchant Feasted and Celebrated," 27 Jan. 1884.
- "The Chinese All Agog—Their New Year's Celebrated with Much Enthusiasm," 28 Jan. 1884.
- "The Chinese Feast of the Dead." 15 Sept. 1884.
- "Christmas for the Chinese." 21 Dec. 1884: 14.
- "An Heir to the House of Cham—Mott-Street Celebrates the Birth of a Chinese Child," 1 Feb. 1885: 5.
- "Honors to Ah Cham's Baby," 4 Feb. 1885: 2.
- "Sallow Faces and Smiles—The Chinese Celebration at Belleville." 16 Feb. 1885: 2.
- "A Chinese Reception," 17 Feb. 1885: 1.
- "Moon-Cake Day at Hand," 10 Sept. 1886: 8.
- "The Chinese New Year," 22 Jan. 1887: 8.
- "In Honor of Quon Dai—The Chinese Quarter in a Festal State," 4 July 1887: 8.
- "Harvest Moon Festival," 6 Sept. 1887: 8.

- “Guests at Tom Lee’s,” 14 Sept. 1888: 5.
- “Joss in New Quarters,” 18 June 1888: 8.
- “Mott Street’s Moon Feast,” 28 Sept. 1890: 9.

Citizenship and Naturalization (events that occurred within New York State and throughout the U.S.)

- “Naturalizing Chinamen,” 18 Feb. 1881: 2.
- “Chinamen Cannot Be Citizens,” 1 Mar. 1881: 1.
- “General Notes,” 26 Mar. 1881: 4.
- “A Chinaman Wants to be a Citizen,” 10 Mar. 1882.
- “An Americanized Chinaman,” 17 Aug. 1883: 5.
- Editorial. Untitled. 18 Aug. 1883: 4.
- “Chinese Becoming Citizens—Three Chinamen in Philadelphia Seek Naturalization,” 2 Sept. 1883: 1.
- “Naturalizing a Chinaman—How a Timid Celestial was Made a United States Citizen,” 5 Oct. 1883: 2.
- Editorial. Untitled. 7 Oct. 1883.
- Editorial. Untitled. 9 Nov. 1883: 4.
- “City and Suburban News,” 10 Nov. 1883: 8.
- “The Chinamen Organizing—Wong Chin Foo Arousing Them to a Sense of Their Duty as Citizens,” 30 July 1884: 3.
- “She Settles the Chinese Question,” 3 Sept. 1884: 4.
- “Naturalizing the Chinese,” 19 Dec. 1885: 2.
- “No Chinese Need Apply,” 19 Oct. 1886: 5.
- “City and Suburban News,” 9 Nov. 1886: 8.
- “In and About the City—Naturalizing a Chinaman, Hong Yen Chang’s Struggles to be Admitted to the Bar,” 19 Nov. 1887: 8.
- “A Naturalized Chinaman,” 7 Dec. 1887: 3.
- “A Chinese Lawyer,” 18 May 1888: 1.
- “The Benighted Chinese—Social and Political Conditions in the Empire,” 7 Oct. 1888: 2.
- “Advised to Go Home,” 22 Nov. 1888: 5.
- “New Jersey Has a Chinese Citizen,” 9 May 1890: 2.
- “Chinamen Ruled Out,” 25 May 1890: 12.
- “A Chinaman Seeks Citizenship,” 14 June 1890: 3.
- “A Chinaman Naturalized,” 15 June 1892: 9.

Conversion to Christianity

- “The Pagan and the Church,” 7 May 1880: 8.
- “Missions For City Chinamen,” 23 June 1884: 5.
- “Chinese in Calvary Chapel,” 16 Dec. 1884: 3.
- “To Convert the Chinese,” 30 Jan. 1885: 8.
- “Work Among the Chinese—What Has Been Accomplished by the Sunday School Union,” 16 Mar. 1885: 2.

- “The Chinese Sunday Schools—Exercises at their Second Anniversary Meeting,” 19 May 1885: 2.
- “The Chinese in Church—Singing Hymns and Listening to the Rev. J. B. Hartwell,” 8 June 1885: 3.
- “Baptizing a Chinaman,” 26 Apr. 1886: 5.
- “Chinese From the Sunday Schools,” 18 May 1886: 1.
- “Chinamen at Church,” 27 Dec. 1886: 8.
- “Sunday-School Chinamen,” 5 Apr. 1887: 8.
- “Laboring Among Chinese,” 25 Apr. 1887.
- “A Chinese Sunday School Marriage,” 17 June 1892: 3.

Dangerous

- “Still Leading a Criminal Life,” 31 Mar. 1882: 2.
- “Plundering Chinese Laundries—Arrests of Ruffians Who Have Robbed the Celestial Washermen,” 30 Oct. 1882: 1.
- “Fifteen Years in State Prison,” 2 Nov. 1882: 3.
- “A Much Cut Up Chinaman,” 29 May 1883: 3.
- “Wong Chin Foo Assaulted—A Fellow-Countryman Attacks the Editor of the ‘Chinese American,’” 10 June 1883: 9.
- “Sam Wah Uses a Knife,” 22 July 1883: 9.
- “Sam Wing’s Revolver,” 27 July 1883: 8.
- “Robbing a Chinaman,” 13 Aug. 1883: 5.
- “A Half-Breed Chinaman’s Crimes,” 3 Nov. 1883: 8.
- “Two Fighting Chinamen—Proving Too Much for Belligerent Customers,” 31 May 1884: 8.
- “Emptying Tom Lee’s Till,” 26 Oct. 1884: 3.
- “Swindler’s in Chinatown,” 27 Oct. 1886: 10.
- “Vengeful Chin Ah Yin—Two Years in Prison Do Not Weaken His Memory of Wrong,” 18 July 1887: 8.
- “A Mad Chinaman’s Delusion,” 19 July 1887: 8.
- “Beware the Highbinder—A Bad and Insane Chinaman Free in the Streets,” 26 July 1887: 8.
- Editorial. “Our Chinese Criminals,” 3 Sept. 1887: 4.
- “Trio of Chinese Burglars,” 7 Oct. 1889: 5.

Danger to White Women

- “City and Suburban News,” 20 July 1881: 8.
- “Charges Against the Chinese,” 9 May 1883: 8.
- “City and Suburban News,” 23 June 1883: 8.
- “A Chinaman Assaults a Girl,” 10 July 1883: 5.
- “Pretty But Depraved—Sixteen Years of Age and Confirmed Opium Smoker,” 12 Nov. 1884: 8.
- “Lee Gun Had to Leave,” 13 Jan 1888: 8.

Deaths and Funerary Customs

- “Lee Wan’s Funeral—Burial of a Chinaman in Brooklyn—Tea and a Bonfire,” 6 Sept. 1880: 5.
- “Funeral of a Chinaman—Services for Ley Teep in a Presbyterian Church,” 7 May 1881: 8.
- “Funeral of a Chinaman,” 26 July 1881: 8.
- “A Chinese Funeral,” 3 Oct. 1882: 8.
- “Burying a Chinaman’s Irish Wife,” 10 July 1883: 5.
- “Death of a Chinese Student,” 19 Nov. 1883: 2.
- “Chung Chong’s Christian Burial,” 7 July 1884: 2.
- “The Funeral of Wee Kee,” 10 Aug. 1884: 7.
- “The Burial of Ah Mon,” 10 June 1885: 8.
- “Ah Tigh Buried in Celestial Hill,” 11 Feb. 1886: 8.
- “Funeral Baked Meats,” 11 Aug. 1886: 8.
- “Only Three Left,” 25 Nov. 1886: 2.
- “Mai’s Quaint Funeral—She Goes to Heaven Accompanied by Various Earthly Necessities,” 26 Nov. 1886: 8.
- “A Chinaman’s Christian Burial,” 4 May 1888: 9.
- “To Remove Dead Chinamen’s Bones,” 25 June 1888: 8.
- “A Chinese Veteran’s Death,” 4 July 1888: 8.
- “Chinese Bones,” 10 July 1888: 3.
- “Their Bones Sent Home,” 14 July 1888: 8.
- “The Only Chinese Tramp—Sudden Death of a Distinguished Foreigner,” 25 Aug. 1888: 8.
- “He was a Good Chinaman—And He Tried to be Just As Good A Christian,” 25 Sept. 1888: 8.
- “Lo You’s Funeral,” 26 Sept. 1888: 8.
- “Funeral of a Chinese General,” 28 Oct. 1888: 10.
- “Gen. Lee Yu Doo Buried—Roast Pig and Confections at the Grave,” 30 Oct. 1888: 3.
- “Celestials in Mourning,” 6 May 1890: 9.

Dirty and Diseased

- “With the Opium Smokers—A Walk Through the Chinese Quarter,” 22 Mar. 1880.
- “Fire at Night in ‘The Big Flat,’” 21 Jan. 1881: 8.
- “The ‘Leprous Heathen,’” 10 May 1883: 4.
- “Sam Sing’s Complaint,” 31 Oct. 1888: 8.
- “There Are Lepers in New-York—One of Them is a Chinese Laundryman in Fifth Street,” 18 June 1891: 8.
- “The Leper to be Secluded,” 23 July 1891: 1.
- “Sam Sing a Leper,” 24 July 1891: 8.
- “The Chinese Lepers Secluded—They Will Be Temporarily Quartered on North Brother Island,” 16 Aug. 1891: 13.

Drugs and Opium

- "An Opium Den—A Place Which Should Have Been Closed Up Long Ago," 10 Aug. 1882: 8.
- "An Opium Den Reopened and Closed," 21 Aug. 1882: 1.
- "Held For Opium-Smoking," 13 May 1883: 14.
- "The Opium Smokers Set Free," 19 May 1883: 2.
- "Descent on an Opium Joint," 1 June 1883: 2.
- "An Opium Den Closed," 25 Nov. 1883: 2.
- "Opium-Smokers Locked Up," 29 Feb. 1884.
- "Twenty Opium Smokers Arrested," 1 Mar. 1884: 2.
- "Betrayed by Their Countryman," 7 July 1884: 5.
- "The Big Flat Raided—The Police Capture Twenty-Nine Opium Smokers with their Pipes," 8 Dec. 1884: 2.
- "Opium Smokers Arrested—Only Four of Them Held on a Female Detective's Evidence," 9 Dec. 1884: 3.
- "Closing Up an Opium Joint," 5 Jan. 1885: 2.
- "The Dude Smoked Opium—He Explains That He Was 'Full.' but the Court Is Relentless," 7 Mar. 1885: 8.
- "A 'Corporation' of Opium Smokers," 28 Apr. 1885: 8.
- "Killed By Opium Fumes—A Young Cab Driver Found Dying in a Joint," 2 July 1885: 5.
- "Closing an Opium Den—A Chinese Joint in Mulberry-Street Entered By the Police," 25 July 1886: 1.
- "An Opium Joint Closed," 21 Mar. 1887: 1.
- "A Chinese Deal in Opium—Mr. Fong and Mr. Long Enter into a Little Scheme," 15 Dec. 1887: 2.
- "Children in the 'Joint,'" 17 July 1888: 5.
- "Opium Smugglers Caught—Three Chinamen and Two White Men Arrested—A Profitable Traffic," 19 Nov. 1888: 1.
- "Died From Opium Poisoning," 27 Apr. 1889: 8.

Gambling

- "A Chinese Gambling Hell," 2 Oct. 1883: 8.
- "A Chinese Gambling House Closed," 6 Oct. 1883: 8.
- "Chinese Gamblers," 7 Oct. 1883: 8.
- "Three Hundred Chinese Dudes—A Glance into and Around the Gambling Dens in Mott-Street," 21 Jan. 1884: 8.
- "A Chinese Gambler's Mistake," 18 Feb. 1884: 8.
- "Truthful Wah-Kee—A Successful Raid on His Prosperous Gambling House," 19 Jan. 1886: 5.
- "Chinese Gamblers Arrest," 16 Aug. 1886: 8.
- "Three Captains on Trial—Chinese Gambling Illustrated Before the Police Board," 21 Dec. 1886: 3.

- “Trying Capt. McCullagh—The Case Against Him Apparently a Weak One,” 29 Dec. 1886: 8.
- “Chinese Gamblers Raided,” 31 Jan. 1887: 5.
- “Wealthy Chinese Gamblers,” 1 Feb. 1887: 8.
- “Twenty-Two Chinamen Fined,” 19 Apr. 1887: 1.
- “Raid on a Chinese Den—Sixty-Eight Prisoners Captured in Stifling Basement,” 14 Mar. 1887: 5.
- “Chinese Gamblers Fined,” 30 Nov. 1887: 8.
- “Raiding Chinese Gamblers,” 8 Dec. 1887: 6.
- “A Gambling House Surprised,” 16 Jan. 1888: 2.

Violence

- “Riotous Chinamen Subdued,” 7 Apr. 1881: 2.
- “Dead From His Injuries,” 4 May 1881: 5.
- “Protection for the Chinese,” 19 May 1881: 10.
- “The Murder of Lee Teep,” 30 June 1881: 2.
- “The Murder of Lee Teep,” 1 July 1881: 8.
- “The Murder of Lee Tee—A Lawyer Employed by the Chinese Government to Watch the Trial,” 2 July 1881: 8.
- “A Row in an Opium Den,” 6 Feb. 1882: 8.
- “A Chinamen Stabbed,” 12 Nov. 1882: 2.
- “Chinatown in an Uproar—Threats of Violent Deeds by the Opponents of the Sing Ching Party,” 24 Apr. 1883: 8.
- “Hop Lee Murdered in His Shop,” 8 Jan. 1884: 5.
- “The Murder of Hop Lee—Loo Foon Locked Up, But the Other Two Chinamen Discharged,” 9 Jan. 1884: 8.
- “The Murdered Hop Lee—The Coroner Finding Difficulty in Obtaining Any Light Upon the Crime,” 16 Jan. 1884: 8.
- “The Murdered Chinaman—The Mystery Not Solved by the Inquest and the Prisoners Discharged,” 18 Jan. 1884: 8.
- “A Chinaman’s Patience Gone—Bearing His Wife’s Abuse for Years and then Trying to Kill Her and Himself,” 22 June 1884: 2.
- “Shot by a Fellow Chinaman,” 13 Aug. 1884: 3.
- “Chinaman Tried for Murder,” 11 Nov. 1884: 1.
- “Convicted of Manslaughter,” 12 Nov. 1884: 1.
- “Three Chinese Criminals,” 29 Dec. 1884: 2.
- “Hong Chung’s Assailants—Arrest of a Chinese Desperado, Tong Sing, in the City,” 30 Dec. 1884: 8.
- “Chinese Wantonly Shot—David Quinn Kills One and Wounds Two of Them,” 8 June 1885: 1.
- “The Murdered Chinaman—Though to Have Been Killed by Some of His Countrymen for His Money,” 4 Nov. 1885: 8.
- “Tracing a Chinese Murder,” 15 Mar. 1886: 5.
- “Stabbing His Partner,” 27 Aug. 1886: 5.

- “Charlie Jim’s Victim—A Chinese Laundryman Retaliates on His Tormentors,” 19 Aug. 1887: 8.
- “Assaulted by a Chinaman,” 2 Aug. 1887: 8.
- “Is it Suicide or Murder? A Chinaman’s Through Cut with a Razor,” 26 Oct. 1887: 5.
- “Two Chinamen Quarrel—Lum Gay Fatally Wounded and Ah Sam Locked Up,” 8 Jan 1886: 6.
- “Shot by a Chinaman,” 20 Aug. 1888: 8.
- “A Chinaman Murdered,” 6 July 1889: 1.
- “A Chinaman’s Skull Fractured,” 6 Aug. 1889: 5.

Industrious and Intelligent

- Letter. “The Chinese As Servants—What Happened When Bridget and Maggie Retired and Ching Took Charge of the House,” 4 Apr. 1880: 5.
- “An Intelligent Chinaman—An Improvised Tea Party in New-York—Sam Li’s Efforts,” 26 Sept. 1880.
- “One Year for Assaulting a Chinaman,” 4 May 1882: 8.
- “Chinese Helping the Police,” 14 May 1883: 5.
- “Wong Chin Foo Assaulted,” 15 July 1884: 5.
- “Nonsense About Chinese,” 28 Dec. 1885: 5.

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How have historians thought about Chinese migration to the US? How were Chinese immigrants defined in the political and cultural arena? What political contradictions did Chinese migrants embody in the era following the Exclusion Act?

Historians who focus on the history of Chinese migration to the United States have generally analyzed the experiences of Chinese immigrants on the West Coast, specifically California, the area in which most nineteenth century Chinese immigrants settled. The history of Chinese immigration to America begins in this state at the end of the 1840s. Spurred by the gold rush beginning in 1849, nearly 300,000 Chinese people, mostly men, traveled to the United States from 1849-1882.¹ These men voluntarily traveled to America looking for economic opportunities unavailable to them.

Most scholars have characterized the mindset of these early Chinese immigrants as having a “sojourner mentality.” Chinese believed that they could work in California for a couple years, make money and return home to support their families. The immigrants assumed that their stay was temporary and their larger goal was to profit economically. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, most Chinese voyaged from the Chinese province of Guangdong, hoping to escape a province plagued by agricultural disaster and political unrest.² Chinese followed their dreams to California’s “Gold Mountain”, the area rumored to house an abundance of gold in its mines. Unfortunately for most Chinese men, they soon discovered that gold was not in profusion

¹ Lyman, Stanford. Chinese Americans. New York: Random House, 1974, p. 5.

² Ibid.

and that they would have to work in the fields, factories and railroads of California to earn money for their families back in China.

Most scholars agree that Chinese faced considerable racism and prejudice during the nineteenth century after a short initial welcoming period. During the early 1850s, plenty of jobs were available to both Chinese and other ethnic and racial groups. The residents of western states, especially California welcomed Chinese laborers.³ Chinese men helped to work the underdeveloped agricultural regions of California by performing such duties as draining swamplands, picking crops and canning goods.⁴ However, during the beginning of the 1860's and escalating in the 1870s and 1880s, tension and violence against Chinese showed that national sentiment and specifically regional sentiment of the West coast had rapidly changed. Chinese were attacked during these decades both vocally and physically. For example, on October 24, 1871, nineteen Chinese were either shot, hanged or stabbed to death in Los Angeles' Negro Alley, an area known as a Chinese quarter.⁵ Also, on September 2, 1885, a band of 150 white workers suddenly attacked other Chinese miners in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Whites had brutally killed twenty-eight Chinese miners, wounded fifteen others and chased several hundred out of town.⁶ The Rock Springs incident became one of the most notable examples of anti-Chinese hatred during the period.

Violence and prejudice as well as economic opportunities pushed groups of Chinese immigrants towards the East. Beginning in the late 1870s and into the 1880s,

³ Saxton, Alexander. The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California. Los Angeles: University of California, 1971, p. 80.

⁴ Ibid, p. 418.

⁵ Tsai, Shih-Shan Henry. The Chinese Experience in America. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 1986, p. 67.

⁶ Ibid, p. 69.

Chinese immigrants traveled from the Western regions to the Eastern regions to look for work and in big cities such as New York.⁷ Although most Chinese immigrants continued to reside in California, the metropolitan atmosphere and burgeoning Chinatown in New York attracted many other Chinese immigrants. The Chinese in New York found new economic opportunities and a chance to escape the intense hostility of various groups of whites. Chinese men were able to create businesses of their own such as medicine shops, restaurants and laundries. However, Chinese in the East as well as those small groups who had dispersed to regions such as the Midwest and South could not escape the prejudice and racism of white Americans.

Hatred and opposition towards continued Chinese immigration still remained and Chinese all over the United States had to deal with it. Recently different scholars have suggested various reasons for the pervasive, harsh opposition to Chinese immigration. Scholarship concerning this area of history has proceeded from descriptions of Chinese immigration to analysis of the effects of Chinese labor upon American society. Although all historians acknowledge that racism and prejudice shaped the experiences of these Chinese immigrants, they debate over the power of different forces and the ways in which they shaped the early experiences of early Chinese. Lately scholars have chosen to highlight the ways in which white workers, politicians or the American media dealt with the presence of Chinese immigrants. Scholars have provided the motives for each group as well as the ways in which they depicted and described Chinese immigrants.

⁷ In 1880, nearly 748 Chinese immigrants either worked or lived in New York's Chinatown. By 1890, the number had risen to 2,048 making New York's Chinatown the second largest Chinatown next to San Francisco. Lee, Rose Hum. The Chinese in the United States of America. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960, p. 34 and Wang, Xinyang. Surviving the City: The Chinese Immigrant Experience in New York City, 1890-1970. Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2001, p. 19.

Historians such as Saxton and Takaki have contributed to the ways in which white workers handled Chinese immigration. These scholars attribute economic downturns as the reason for white workers resistance to Chinese immigration and residence. Saxton and Takaki explain the change in national sentiment as result of economic depression, especially evident in the 1870s.⁸ The economic downturn of this decade, characterized by events such as a stock market panic in 1873 and a railroad strike in 1877, caused fear and alarm within the white workers and laborers of the United States, especially white laborers in California because of the decrease in jobs and wages for all workers.⁹ “Chinese became targets of white-labor resentment, especially during hard times” because whites had to compete with Chinese for jobs and wages.¹⁰ White workers, especially those belonging to labor unions no longer welcomed Chinese laborers and united to protest against them.

In response to economic depressions, white workers and union members attempted to rid themselves of Chinese competition through the use of stereotypes and images that purported the dangers of incoming immigrants. They attacked Chinese calling them “nagurs”, probably in an attempt to associated African Americans and Chinese who worked for slave wages and “ruined” white labor in America.¹¹ White workers even went so far as to claim that the large numbers of Chinese were not only taking away their jobs, but even their country.¹² Poems, plays and songs expressed these fears and beliefs while degrading Chinese workers and creating stereotypes of the

⁸ Takaki, Ronald. Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans. Boston: Back Bay Books, 1998.

⁹ Takaki, p. 111.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 92.

¹¹ Ibid, pgs. 101 and 105.

¹² Ibid, p. 104.

dangers of Chinese cheap labor. Chinese were considered a threat to free labor because of the overarching idea that they were employed in groups and controlled by employers, who determined wages, regardless of skill level or expertise.¹³ A popular 1870s song, sung by white workers provides just one example of the ways in which whites thought of Chinese labor:

*O workingmen dear, and did you hear
The news that 's goin' around?
Another China steamer
Has been landed here in town.
Today I read the papers,
And it grieved my heart full sore
To see upon the title page,
"O, just 'Twelve Hundred More!"*

*O, California's comind down,
As you can plainly see.
They are hiring all the Chinamen
And discharging you and me;
But strife will be in every town
Throughout the Pacific shore,
And the cry of old and young shall be,
"O, damn, 'Twelve Hundred More."¹⁴*

This song and other forms of cultural media depicted Chinese as a growing body of strangers infiltrating the country, attempting to force white workers into poverty.

In addition to analysis of workers sentiments, Takaki also shows that white workers and other white citizens discussed not only the dangers of Chinese labor, but also the dangerous traits of Chinese individuals. Not only did whites accuse Chinese as unfairly undercutting their pay they also attributed character traits to Chinese. Whites defined Chinese immigrants as less than human, a group of people who were unable to assimilate into society because of their strangeness. They were viewed as pagans,

¹³ Ibid, p. 101.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 103.

tricksters, and lustful opium addicts.¹⁵ All of these traits and more were used to separate whites from Chinese and insert the claim that Chinese were unassimilatable because they possessed traits which diverged from the ideals of a good American citizen.¹⁶ The arrival of Chinese immigrants signaled a group of people who were “‘befouled with all the social vices, with no knowledge or appreciation of free institutions or constitutional liberty, with heathenish souls and heathenish propensities... we should be prepared to bid farewell to republicanism.”¹⁷

Author, Matt Jacobsen has expanded on the idea of republicanism and its meaning in America during the late nineteenth century.¹⁸ Jacobsen asserts that groups were judged on the basis of adherence to the ideals of American republicanism which called for disciplined, virtuous, self-sacrificing, productive, farseeing, and wise individuals.¹⁹ Those who expressed these traits were deemed worthy of citizenship, while those who did not demonstrate or embody these virtues were deemed unassimilatable and unacceptable for naturalization. The ruling, American class required its citizens to be self-governing as well capable of discerning between right and wrong, “vice and virtue, reason and passion.”²⁰ The American republic demanded an extraordinary moral character from its people and it appeared that during the nineteenth century, Chinese immigrants diverged from the ideal image of a citizen.²¹ Forms of media and individuals such as writers and workers had already created and depicted images of dirty, lustful, sinful Chinese, among other damaging traits. Specifically, Chinese were seen as

¹⁵ Ibid, pgs. 101-108.

¹⁶ Ibid, pgs. 99-101, 110.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 101.

¹⁸ Jacobsen, Matthew. Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1998.

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 26.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 27.

²¹ Ibid.

incapable of restricting their passion for white women and drugs, among other non-virtuous traits. These representations were in direct opposition to the law-abiding, virtuous, American citizen. Thus, Chinese were considered inadequate and branded as members of a lower class than white citizens. The government demanded much from its citizens and deemed Chinese immigrants as unqualified and morally incapable of change.

In addition, Jacobsen notes that the American republican form of government required its body politic to demonstrate a high degree of self-possession, meaning that participants needed to demonstrate self-sufficiency and ownership of themselves.²² This ideal in fact already excluded “non-whites” or “heathens”.²³ Most whites considered Chinese as non-white and branded them as heathens because many Chinese followed different forms of religion other than Christianity. Thus, even if Chinese were to have expressed traits of a republican, their race and religion alone barred them even further. The destructive representations not only defined them as morally and physically debilitated, but also separated Chinese as a group ineligible for citizenship by birth and religious practices.

Jacobsen shows how cultural definitions helped to restrict political privileges of the nation’s residents who did not fit the ideal archetype of a true, American citizen. These republican ideals for citizenship were upheld and acknowledged by members of Congress. Author Andrew Gyory explores this facet of Chinese-American history and looks at the ways in which politicians defined Chinese immigrants based on a model for republican suitability.²⁴ Gyory ascribes enormous power and weight to politicians

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid, p. 26.

²⁴ Gyory, Andrew. Closing the Gate: Race, Politics, and the Chinese Exclusion Act. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

through the ways in which they used representations of Chinese to justify their position on Chinese exclusionary measures. Gyory asserts that politicians upheld negative representations of Chinese to secure votes for themselves. Passages from Gyory's work show that the words of most politicians mirrored the words of many writers, laborers and other citizens. Senator James Blaine, one of the period's most ardent advocates of Chinese exclusion showed that politicians used the same stereotypes as print media to slander Chinese immigrants. He called Chinese immigration "vicious, odious, abominable, dangerous and revolting" and compared Chinese to an infectious disease and a criminal class of individuals.²⁵

Like the creators of national sentiment, politicians subscribed to stereotypes to and encouraged enactment of Chinese Exclusion Acts, but these stereotypes of Chinese contradicted each other. Most politicians favored Chinese exclusion and thus purported the dangers of Chinese labor and exaggerated the negative characteristics of Chinese individuals but authors and editors. Philip S. Foner and Daniel Rosenberg show that a few politicians opposed Chinese restriction laws especially the first Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.²⁶ Foner and Rosenberg feature the words of a Massachusetts Republican Senator, George Hoar, a man who consistently supported the rights of Chinese, opposed Chinese exclusionary measures and fought to revise or reverse restrictive bills. Hoar opposed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 stating that he would not "consent to a denial by the United States of the right of every man who desires to improve his condition by honest labor – his labor being no man's property but his own."²⁷ His ideas of Chinese

²⁵ Gyory, p. 3.

²⁶ Foner, Philip S., and Daniel Rosenberg, eds. Racism, Dissent and Asian Americans from 1850 to the Present: A Documentary History. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993.

²⁷ Foner and Rosenberg, p. 49.

honest labor contradicted other beliefs such as the idea that Chinese labor undermined the free labor ideology of America. Hoar also called the work of Chinese laborers as honest, a direct contradiction to the sinfulness aspect of Chinese immigrants which was widely exaggerated by white workers and politicians in favor of exclusionary measures.

The references to honest Chinese labor showed a Chinese propensity for productiveness and a sense of discipline in terms of work. These complimentary statements showed that a monolithic anti-Chinese sentiment did not exist during this time. Moreover, the words of senators such as Hoar were echoed in a small group of *New York Times*' articles. The authors of these articles viewed Chinese as productive, industrious people. One *New York Times*' article describes an industrious California Chinese servant named Ching who was well respected by his employers for his cleanliness and hard-working efforts around their house. The author relates that Ching completes many tasks around the house and follows through impeccably. In the author's house, "the kitchen floor, tables, &c., are as white as snow, and as for himself. no buck in Fifth-avenue can beat him in neatness."²⁸ Another *New York Times*' article features the opinion of an author who befriended a Chinese cook whom he called an "intelligent Chinaman."²⁹ A couple articles also characterized Chinese men as "quiet and orderly and disinclined to quarrel", "anxious to aid the police in suppressing any forms of crime," and converts to Christianity.³⁰ These specific articles showed how Chinese were considered as holding traits that actually contradicted larger, more negative stereotypes.

²⁸ "The Chinese As Servants." *New York Times* 4 April 1880: 5.

²⁹ "An Intelligent Chinaman—An Improved Tea Party in New York—Sam Li's Efforts." *New York Times* 26 September 1880: 9.

³⁰ "One Year for Assaulting a Chinaman." *New York Times* 4 May 1882: 8, "Chinese Helping the Police," *New York Times* 14 May 1883: 5 and "Converting the Chinese," 30 July 1883: 8. Over twenty articles printed from 1880-1892 specifically noted Chinese as followers of Christianity or members of various denominations of Christian churches.

New York Times ' articles as well as other forms of media provided counterarguments to the images of sinful, deceitful, and immoral Chinese immigrants, but by and large most print media showed harsher images of Chinese. Articles, which provided more favorable images, appeared towards the beginning and middle of the 1880s and dwindled thereafter. The majority of *New York Times* 'articles rendered Chinese immigrants in a negative light. The combination of critical articles and subsequent Chinese Exclusion Acts showed that most of society viewed Chinese immigrants as a danger to labor and society. The history of nineteenth century Chinese migration to the U.S. has been characterized in exactly these terms. Historians have acknowledged that a general anti-Chinese sentiment existed in the minds of many white citizens in America. The words of politicians and print media support historians' claims, revealing the fact that Chinese, living in America during this period faced widespread resentment and hatred almost at the very moment that they stepped onto American shores.