

Black Orientalism: Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Race and U.S. Citizenship

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But now observe the practical superiority of slavery over Chinese immigration, as an impelling force for good. Slavery compelled the heathen to give up idolatry, and they did it. The Chinese have no such compulsion and they do not do it . . . Slavery compelled the adoption of Christian forms of worship, resulting in universal Christianization. The Chinese have no such influence tending to their conversion, and rarely—one or two in a thousand—become Christian. . . . Slavery took the heathens and by force made them Americans in feeling, tastes, habits, language, sympathy, religion and spirit; *first* fitting them for citizenship, and then giving them the vote. The Chinese feel no such force, but remaining in character and life the same as they were in Old China, unprepared for citizenship and adverse in spirit to our institutions.

—Reverend Blakeslee, Special Report to
the Senate on Chinese Immigration, 1877¹

In his testimony before the senate in 1877, a white minister makes an argument for Chinese exclusion in which his Orientalist construction of the Chinese alien generates its contrasting other in the figure of the properly developed, black, Christianized former slave. Reverend Blakeslee's rather predictable and ubiquitous discourse of the unassimilable Oriental is particularly disturbing in that chattel slavery is figured as a necessary civilizing institution that "successfully" transforms African heathens into modern American citizens. Twenty years later, Supreme Court Justice Harlan also deploys this black/Chinese racial tandem in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), when he challenges the Court's majority ruling by constructing the Chinese immigrant as the negative instance of national belonging.

There is a race so different from our own that we do not permit those belonging to it to become citizens of the United States . . . But by the statute in question, a Chinaman can ride in the same passenger coach with white citizens of the United States, while citizens of the black race in Louisiana, many of whom perhaps risked their lives for the preservation of the Union, who are entitled by law, to participate in the political control of the state and

nation, who are not excluded, by law or by reason of their race, from public stations of any kind, and who have all the legal rights that belong to white citizens, are yet to be declared criminals, liable to imprisonment, if they ride in a public coach occupied by citizens of the white race.²

Harlan's attempt to dramatize the injustice of Jim Crow segregation works by imagining privileges unfairly enjoyed by Chinese aliens in order to powerfully illustrate what was being wrongfully denied to black citizens.³ In other words, Harlan's rhetoric deploys Orientalist difference in order to assimilate U.S. blacks into a universalized American national identity.

Both Blakeslee's and Harlan's statements surprisingly suggest that in the late nineteenth century, the juxtaposition of Chinese immigrants and the black community could somehow generate a naturalized, commonsensical recognition of the deeply American character of black domestic subjects.⁴ This discourse of provisional black inclusion/Chinese exclusion is initially counterintuitive given the manner in which today we often observe how in the nineteenth century, blacks and Chinese were represented as *similarly* loathsome, or degraded in terms of the "other," that is, the "Negroization of the Chinese" or the "Asianization of blacks." Of course, Harlan's and Blakeslee's public statements on race and citizenship spoke to radically different questions and motivations—one endorsing Chinese exclusion and the other arguing against the legality of black/white racial segregation. The differences, however, behind such similar Orientalist figurations within these narratives of black domestication are all the more suggestive of the significance of Chinese exclusion and American Orientalism within nineteenth-century discourses of black citizenship.

This article examines how the nineteenth-century black press waged struggles for political inclusion within this dominant discursive context of racialized citizenship, as the anti-Chinese movement critically defined the racial, cultural, and political boundaries of the United States. An analysis of black newspapers across the country reveals how Orientalist discourses of Asian cultural difference ambiguously facilitated the assimilation of black Americans to ideologies of political modernity and consolidated black identification as U.S. national subjects. Nineteenth-century discourses of "black Orientalism" can be best understood as a specific formation of racial uplift, generating narratives of black moral, political, and cultural development, which in turn reified the Orientalist logic of the anti-Chinese movement. This argument deemphasizes notions of black "intentions," "perceptions," or "attitudes" in order to foreground the narrative demands on U.S. black subjects to constitute their humanity and citizenship

through racialized and gendered Enlightenment discourses of morality, ethicality, and rationality. In other words, this essay foregrounds how the institution of citizenship produces an imperative for racialized subjects to tell particular stories about themselves and others in the struggle for inclusion. Such a focus suggests that racist or antiracist principles are not the most relevant terms for interpreting nineteenth-century black press representations of the Chinese, but rather that the institution of citizenship constitutes a narrow discursive field within which differentially racialized groups are forced to negotiate their exclusion in relationship to others.

Differential Racializations

Although Orientalism has been discussed primarily within the historical context of European colonialism, the discursive production of an utterly foreign, premodern, alien Oriental in opposition to a rational, modern Western subject has also been operative within the United States, albeit in different ways.⁵ In the context of mid-nineteenth-century America, Orientalism constitutes an Oriental other through exclusionary U.S. state policies on Asian immigration, and regulates racialized Asian labor through the institution of citizenship.⁶ Historian John Tchen also points out that prior to the 1850s, there was another Orientalist formation not organized solely around immigration.⁷ Rather, Tchen observes that during this earlier period, increased trade with China and a growing port culture situated the Chinese as an exotic, curious spectacle for consumption within an emergent industry of urban popular entertainment.⁸ Broadly then, we can understand nineteenth-century American Orientalism as a set of discursive formations that are determined by and determining of U.S. economic and political engagements with East Asia and the Pacific, and that provide the ideological structure for domestic processes that produce and manage Asian racial difference within the United States. These processes, which involve “instances” of Asian incorporation (as circus exhibits, as coolie labor, as U.S. colony) and “instances” of Asian exclusion (from immigration, citizenship, and U.S. national culture), are definitive of an American genealogy of Asian racialization that variously produces the Oriental as alien to the United States.⁹

My objective is not to produce an overview of the various forms through which American Orientalism has manifested itself throughout U.S. history, but rather to isolate particular instances of how Orientalism has been engaged to negotiate black racialization. I refer to this contradictory process of negotiation as “black Orientalism” in an attempt to name the critical dilemma that

the struggle for black citizenship (or black political modernity) embodies. We see the contours of this dilemma, for instance, in Blakeslee's observation that slavery "did wonderfully elevate the slave and prepare him for citizenship" with the "one exception" that "it legally denied human rights to the slave"¹⁰ This paradox, in which the systematic dehumanization of racialized populations is the condition of their entry into the "civilized world" to become modern subjects of democratic freedom, is the contradiction endemic to the project of modernity itself.¹¹ Racialized subjects, therefore, in their struggle to challenge their conditions of exploitation and oppression, must negotiate these epistemological contradictions that structure modern institutions and liberal narratives of freedom and liberation. Put another way, racially excluded populations must somehow manage to reconcile liberatory promises of enlightenment and civilization with processes of brutalization that are deemed historically necessary.¹²

It should thus be clear that black Orientalism is *not* employed as an accusatory and reductive condemnation that functions to chastise black individuals or institutions for being imperialist, racist, or Orientalist. Black Orientalism is a heterogeneous and historically variable discourse in which the contradictions of black citizenship engage with the logic of American Orientalism. In other words, black Orientalism has no singular meaning or manifestation but encompasses an entire range of black imaginings of Asia that are in fact negotiations with the limits and disappointments of black citizenship.¹³ This would include, for example, DuBois's fascination with China as a utopic site of revolutionary possibility, black admiration for Japanese empire in the World War II period, or even signifiers of the "Orient" within hip-hop culture.¹⁴ In these instances, one can see how the dichotomous otherness of the "Orient" is precisely what makes it so appealing to disidentified black subjects who are attempting to imagine liberatory possibilities, identifications, and historical futures in spaces that have been defined as *not* the United States, or defined in opposition to the West.

In the nineteenth century, black Orientalism emerges out of the historical conditions of black racialization and the Chinese exclusion movement as a heterogeneous discourse of black citizenship and national identity. In the interest of pursuing a broader critique of citizenship, this article analyzes what might be deemed liberal discourses of black national identity rather than oft-cited oppositional positions taken by figures such as Frederick Douglass, a well-known, highly vocal opponent to the anti-Chinese movement since the 1850s. However, as I demonstrate in the following section, liberal black discourses on citizenship and immigration are in themselves highly complex

negotiations, and cannot be simplistically regarded as unfortunate and “prejudicial” black attitudes toward the Chinese. Comparative race scholarship may miss important opportunities to critically discuss liberal discourses of racialized citizenship due to a teleological investment in “interracial solidarity”—a notion that relies heavily on the premise of identification. The following analysis of the nineteenth-century black press considers black Orientalism to be a form of cultural politics that does not illuminate the ideological limits or shortcomings of those who engaged it, but rather reveals the various contradictions of citizenship and modern subjecthood that it ultimately failed to resolve for black national identity.

The Heathen Chinese

Black press representations of Chinese alterity engaged with a discursive field of American Orientalist ideologies that found expression as the anti-Chinese movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Anti-Chinese political agitation emerged in the mid-1850s along the West Coast, fueled by competing white immigrant workers who racially defined free labor in antagonism to blacks and the Chinese.¹⁵ Initially a regional and class-based formation, anti-Chinese legislation became part of the national political platform that ultimately culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first and only time a specific ethnic group was legally barred from immigrating to the United States. White labor, clergymen, and nativists generally constructed Chinese immigrants as an invasive yellow peril that posed a grave moral and economic threat to the survival of the white working man and the American family; “Can we compete with a barbarous race, devoid of energy and careless of the State’s weal? Sunk in their own debasement, having no voice in government, how long would it be ere ruin would swamp the capitalist and poor man together?”¹⁶ Anti-Chinese sentiments were not merely racialized expressions of a white working-class ideology, however, but were tied to a larger discourse of American Orientalism that cut across class lines.¹⁷

In his study of disease and racial classification in San Francisco’s Chinatown, Nayan Shah points to how journalists, politicians, and health officials worked in tandem to produce “a way of knowing” Chinatown as an alien space of filth, disease, and contamination. As Shah argues, “the cartography of Chinatown that was developed in government investigations, newspaper reports, and travelogues, both established ‘knowledge’ of the Chinese race and aided in the making and remaking of Chinatown.”¹⁸ Hence, white public health officials “scientifically” corroborated the dominant press’s sensational descriptions of

Chinatown as “ankle-deep in loathsome slush, with ceilings dripping with percolations of other nastiness above, [and] with walls slimy with the clamminess of Asiatic diseases.”¹⁹ The overwhelmingly male composition of the Chinese immigrant community, secured through exclusionary legislation prohibiting the immigration of Chinese women, was central to the discourse of moral panic in areas surrounding Chinatown ghettos. Images of Chinese men as depraved opium addicts and lascivious sexual predators of innocent young white girls dominated an American Orientalist discourse that constituted Chinatown and its residents as alien contaminations of the white national body.

Black press representations of Chinatown ghettos and its inhabitants also consistently constructed these spaces and persons as embodiments of pre-modern, alien difference.²⁰ The number and frequency of articles about the Chinese is noteworthy, in that the vast majority of U.S. blacks never directly encountered the Chinese who began immigrating in significant numbers in the 1850s and who were geographically concentrated in the West.²¹ Much of the coverage in the black press prior to 1882 concerned legislative/political matters, although most stories were sensationalist, such as those in the *New Orleans Tribune*, which described an exotic Chinatown temple where priests “shout, yell, groan, spin around amid the racket of gongs, orums, and fiddlers, and smoke opium until they are quite drunk.”²² The *Topeka Tribune* reprinted an article that described the moral depravity of an opium den in Chicago’s Chinese quarter, “where some were sprawling on a filthy floor, and others had rolled into dirty bunks, and all were contemplating a glorious orgie [*sic*],”²³ while the *Washington Bee* gave front-page coverage to “The Chinese in New York: Peculiarities of the Orientals Described.”²⁴ In his study of the black press, historian Arnold Shankman observes that “from 1880–1935 almost every time the Chinese were mentioned in the black press, it was in connection with intrigue, prostitution, murder, the sale of opium or children for money . . . superstitious practices, shootings or tong wars.”²⁵

Stories on Chinese cultural difference even predated the arrival of Chinese immigrants to the United States. As early as 1827, the first issue of *Freedom’s Journal* printed an article titled “Chinese Fashions” that described Chinese foot binding as a “well-known” and “ridiculous” custom in China.²⁶ The description includes a good amount of empirical detail, as in the following: “The length was only two inches and three-fourths; the breadth of the base of the heel seven-eighths of an inch; the breadth of the broadest part of the foot, one and one-fourth of an inch; and the diameter of the ankle three inches above the heel, one and seven-eighths of an inch.”²⁷ The highly empiricist, scientific language of ethnographic observation sharply contrasts with the incomprehen-

sible, primitive Oriental practice that the article describes. *Freedom's Journal*, the first black newspaper to be published in the United States, was a relatively short-lived, but historically significant, press that was dedicated to the defense of free blacks and to the abolition of slavery by disseminating “useful knowledge among our brethren, and to their moral and religious improvement . . . and to vindicate our brethren, when oppressed.” Other stories in this inaugural issue are more clearly related to the paper’s stated commitments. For instance, “Memoirs of Capt. Paul Cuffe,” “People of Colour,” “Cure For Drunkenness,” and “Advantages of Choosing a Wife by Proxy,” work to emphasize male leadership, racial solidarity, temperance, and family—crucial elements in narrating black aptitude for citizenship. Hence, the seemingly random, peripheral article on a backward “Oriental” practice works to underscore the story of black modern development in which “useful knowledge” and “moral and religious improvement” are indelibly tied to the paper’s commitment to the rights of free blacks and the abolition of slavery.

Producing Black Citizens

As a cultural institution, the black press had a highly significant role in defining black national identity, and nineteenth-century black newspapers were particularly invested in narratives of racial uplift and development. Benedict Anderson has linked the emergence of print capitalism to the production of nationalist consciousness, arguing that the newspaper produced an experience of simultaneity that enabled imagined “horizontal” identification among strangers across broad geographical areas.²⁸ Larger, national black presses regularly received news from “correspondents” across the country and reprinted articles from both black and dominant white media considered relevant to a black national population. This production and consumption of print media not only created an arena for black public discourse but also was constitutive of the very experience of identifying as a subject of a black national community.

The discourses of development, progress, and self-improvement that are so central in *Freedom's Journal* are absolutely key throughout the nineteenth-century black press, which was a particularly effective institution for the production and dissemination of ideologies of racial uplift.²⁹ Most black newspapers and periodicals aspired to produce narratives of black racial progress while attacking racist legislation and policies that threatened to impede the development of the race. If we understand the black press as the technical means for “re-presenting” the *kind* of imagined community that defines black racial identity, then the process by which that identity is defined is always a contestation among

competing and heterogeneous interests that are homogenized under the unifying rubric of “race.” The nineteenth-century black press cannot be understood as a monolithic institution possessing a cohesive racial or class ideology; however, the material reality that the majority of editors were educated black men with sufficient financial resources critically informs how black national identity was narrated through print media. As African Americanist historians such as Kevin Gaines and Jane Rhodes have noted, these editors, by and large “promoted the virtues of education, individual progress, and racial uplift as the means for African Americans to transcend the debilitating legacy of slavery and racial oppression.”³⁰ Therefore, while the institutional formation of the nineteenth-century black press is characterized by competing interests and conflicts, ideologies of racial uplift constituted the discursive terrain where such differences were articulated and debated.³¹

Kevin Gaines has discussed how educated blacks engaged in a cultural politics of citizenship that promoted a developmental ideology of racial progress emphasizing black moral and cultural propriety. Negotiating the political, cultural, and social violence of white supremacy, ideologies of racial uplift encouraged the emulation of what Gaines tentatively calls “middle class” values and ideals, which were the authoritative signifiers of respectability and humanity.³² While racist discourses, therefore, constructed blacks as immoral, irrational, and violent savages incapable of self-regulation, the educated black community responded by embracing values of temperance, thrift, chastity, and patriarchal domesticity as a means of proving their worthiness and entitlement to citizenship. Embracing Victorian morality, or performing heteronormativity enabled black communities to move as far away from the stereotypes as they could, to provide their tormentors with no evidence for their charges, and to strategically claim a moral superiority.³³ What is most useful about Gaines’s analysis is the theorization of how the violent denial of black political and economic enfranchisement facilitates the formation of a *cultural* politics that symbolically embodies citizenship. While Gaines’s study begins at the end of Radical Reconstruction, his theorization of racial uplift provides insight into black Orientalism as a related form of nineteenth-century cultural politics. Tropes of Chinese underdevelopment enabled the discursive production of black modern subjects who were capable of incorporation into a narrative of Western historical progress, even in the face of brutal material contradictions that countered the very notion of “Western civilization.”

The material history of white supremacist violence that saturated the political, economic, and social spheres of nineteenth-century America constitutes the “contradictions of black citizenship” to which I continually refer. The aboli-

tion of slavery did not resolve these contradictions, nor did the institution of citizenship, which was formally granted to black persons with the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment (1866). Immediately after the ratification of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, almost all of the former Confederate states quickly instituted black codes that criminalized blacks in ways that served as substitutes for slavery.³⁴ Hence, various state laws required that these recently “freed” subjects sign work contracts with plantations (often the same ones they worked as slaves) and to have these papers with them at all times. Black persons could be stopped and questioned at any time, and the absence of a work contract was criminalized as “vagrancy,” at which point one was arrested and put to work through the convict lease system. Numerous studies have shown how systematic economic and political disenfranchisement left many of the “freedmen” as vulnerable to exploitation and violence as they were during slavery.³⁵ These postbellum political, economic, and social relations were enforced through campaigns of racial terror that maintained the privilege of whiteness through the brutal regulation of black bodies. The well-known work of Ida B. Wells, for instance, has demonstrated how the widespread practice of lynching in the South was a crucial means of maintaining the economic, political, and social authority of white supremacist patriarchy.³⁶ African American feminist critic Hazel Carby notes that, in addition to the practice of lynching, “the institutionalized rape of black women” was also “an instrument of political terror . . . in the South.”³⁷ From the end of the Civil War to the turn of the century, there were countless acts of violence against black persons, in addition to the hundreds of documented lynchings enacted as public rituals of torture that used the imagined violations of white women to reconstitute the patriarchal and capitalist authority of white men.³⁸ It is within this context of racial terrorism that ideologies of racial uplift emerged as strategies of survival against intense dehumanization.

Religious ideologies of Christian morality were absolutely central to discourses of racial uplift that sought to contest the historical violence that denied U.S. blacks their humanity and citizenship. As Reverend Blakeslee’s statements implied, Christianity was critically linked to nineteenth-century discourses of black citizenship, in that the Christian conversion of the African heathen was understood as the foundation of moral development and ethical citizenship.³⁹ Subsequently, ideologies of racial uplift seeking to produce a “civilized” black subject emphatically promoted Christian propriety and moral self-improvement in an effort to refute dominant characterizations of blacks as depraved and immoral savages.⁴⁰ Racial uplift constituted black Christian subjects, therefore, as part of a larger effort to represent the modern development of blacks under

Western civilization.⁴¹ The developmental ideologies of American modernity demanded Christian morality as the precondition for the transformation of the primitive slave into the modern political subject. This imperative would subsequently have profound implications for black understandings of Chinese racial difference.

The heathenism that the Chinese came to signify in nineteenth-century America was a powerful Orientalist trope for black Americans, whose assertions of humanity and claims to citizenship had been largely predicated on negotiating discourses of Christian morality. Appeals to Christian ideologies have been crucial to black critiques of white supremacy since the eighteenth century, becoming an important means of refuting their object status in black struggles for recognition as legal subjects of the state. Abolitionist discourse relied predominantly on religious ideology, arguing that slavery violated fundamental principles of Christianity and engendered sinful and immoral relations among both slaves and their masters. Additionally, the American school of ethnology created damaging, hierarchical classifications of racial groups, which they claimed had emerged from various and unequal origins, subsequently undermining the theological basis of a universal humanity, which had provided U.S. blacks with a fragile, yet important legitimating discourse in their struggle against racialized exploitation. After the formal abolition of U.S. slavery, Christian doctrine and monogenesis posed the greatest theoretical challenge to scientific racism as various disciplines sought to provide a scientific basis for white supremacy and manifest destiny.⁴² Religious discourses, therefore, continued to be relevant for U.S. blacks in relation to citizenship and to modern institutions such as the university.

The following news story delineates fundamental connections between black Christian morality and political aptitude in the nineteenth century and underscores how racialized groups have been differentially located in relation to religious and other cultural institutions of the U.S. state. This article from the *Pacific Appeal*, a black newspaper in San Francisco, makes an explicit argument for black rights of testimony and deploys an antiracist critique that distances black development from the heathen Chinese and Indian:

In the same oppressive spirit they deprived the Indian and Mongolian of their right of oath . . . they oppressed them and reduced them to the same social and political level of the Negro. This was inhumane, barbarous, and unjust, but a more plausible excuse might be offered for depriving the Indian and the Chinese of their oaths than the Colored American: they being heathens and not comprehending the nature and obligation of our oath or affirmation . . . The Negro is a Christian: there is a strong religious sentiment in his nature, a feeling of awe and reverence for the sanctity of an oath which renders his judicial testimony sacred to him . . . perjury is abhorrent to his soul; —he looks upon it as the unforgiven sin.⁴³

The Indian and Chinese immigrant are represented as atavistic yet wrongfully oppressed subjects of discrimination, and are empathetically characterized as underdeveloped heathens who are nonetheless entitled to recognition by the courts. While the article harshly condemns the “inhumane” treatment of “uncomprehending” Native Americans and the Chinese, it consolidates the legitimacy of black male rights to citizenship by describing, in contrast, the proper ethical formation of the black subject who *has* developed the modern capacity to appropriately engage state institutions. This discursive disidentification must not be interpreted as some kind of hypocritical inconsistency that contradicts the article’s critique of racist exclusion. Emphasizing the Christian formation of the black national subject is an ideological imperative in narrating black aptitude for citizenship, which, by consequence, *Orientalizes*, or discursively disciplines the Chinese and Indian as inadequate to political modernity.

Recalling Gaines’s analysis, black Orientalism is operative as a cultural politics of citizenship even in the absence of an explicitly “political” discourse, such as the case of *Freedom’s Journal* and its seemingly “apolitical” article on Chinese foot-binding. This next article, from *Frederick Douglass’ Paper*, is submitted by a San Francisco “correspondent” and chronicles the “progress made by the colored people in this city,” describing the three black churches, the school, and the literary association that have “given tone and character to Society.”⁴⁴ The emphasis on black religious, educational, and cultural institutions in this article reflects their crucial ideological significance in the ethical formation of proper subjectivities that the article attempts to demonstrate. The narrator shifts abruptly from the black community’s “large number of respectable ladies and their influence” to conclude its correspondence with an ethnographic description of Chinese immigrants.

San Francisco presents many features that no city in the Union presents. Its population is composed of almost every nation under heaven. Here is to be seen at a single glance every nation in miniature [*sic*]. —The Chinese form about one-eighth of the population. They exhibit a most grotesque appearance. Their “unmentionables” are either exceedingly roomy or very close fitting. The heads of the males are shaved, with the exception of the top, the hair from which is formed into a plaited tail, resembling “pig tail tobacco.” Their habits are filthy, and their features totally devoid of expression. The whites are greatly alarmed at their rapid increase. They are very badly treated here. Every boy considers them lawful prey for his boyish pranks. They have no friends, unless it is the colored people, who treat everybody well, even their enemies. But I must close this already too long letter.⁴⁵

The representation of the Chinese immigrant’s “grotesque” and “filthy” appearance, undergarments, and habits are in sharp juxtaposition with the proper formation of the black community’s “intelligent audiences,” “handsome”

churches, “respectable ladies,” and “eminently qualified . . . gentlemen” who speak with “eloquence” and “chaste and elegant” language. Once again, these polarized representations cannot be reductively interpreted as an instance of racism or anti-Chinese sentiments, which the article strongly criticizes and disavows, even asserting that the Chinese are befriended by only “the colored people.”⁴⁶ As in the *Pacific Appeal*, this article expresses clear empathy toward the “persecuted” Chinese, even as it simultaneously objectifies Chinese immigrants through an anthropological gaze that methodically recounts their foreign signs of bodily and cultural difference.⁴⁷ This Orientalist account generates neither a “negative or positive” representation, but narrates the alien cultural formation of the Chinese immigrant to negotiate black exclusion, which the article previously addressed in an otherwise celebratory testimonial: “We suffer many deprivations, however. We have no oath against any white man or Chinaman. We are debarred from the polls. The Legislature refused to accept our petition for the right to testify in courts of justice against the whites; but not withstanding all these drawbacks, we are steadily progressing in all that pertains to our welfare.”⁴⁸ In response to the degradation of black disenfranchisement, the article’s Orientalist gaze is constitutive of a modern black subject of the West just as the refined churches, school, and literary association stand in as markers of black development and civilization.

While papers such as the *Pacific Appeal* and *Frederick Douglass’ Paper* had expressed earlier sympathetic positions regarding the Chinese, by 1873 the black press in California emphasized the negative impact of Chinese immigrants on the black community and the nation as a whole. These papers consistently narrated the cultural and moral underdevelopment of the Chinese in an effort to distance blacks from the dangerous implications of anti-Chinese legislation that occupied the political discourse of California.⁴⁹ One telling article published in 1867 denied any link between the black and Chinese situations, arguing that “there is no analogy between the cases” since “the negro is a native American, loyal to the Government . . . American in all his ideas . . . and a believer of the truths of Christianity” who “ask[s] for the rights of citizenship as [his] just due.”⁵⁰ Discourses of the Chinese as a racial problem were not just confined to California as evidenced by the *New Orleans Lousianian* which stated that “the Negro question was being replaced by that of the Chinese”⁵¹ As the anti-Chinese movement gained political momentum throughout the nation, it became increasingly necessary and commonplace that black claims to citizenship articulate Orientalist disidentification with Chinese immigrants.⁵² The formulaic narration of black military service, Christian morality, and nationalist identification that constructed blacks as American subjects would

become a repetitive and frequent articulation with respect to discourses of Chinese exclusion.

Black Orientalist discourses of disidentification were not merely nativist ideologies, since they were deployed to demonstrate the assimilability of black immigrants. One article rhetorically dismissed the notion of Chinese immigration as a “problem” in the context of discussing the modification of naturalization laws that would allow immigrants of African descent to become naturalized citizens. Arguing that such legislative changes had little relevance with respect to the Chinese, the article characterized West Indian immigrants as “already Americans; their habits, customs, and associations are identical with ours . . . They have practically renounced their allegiance to their original government and are truly Americanized . . . the same advantages should be extended to the colored alien as are enjoyed by white foreigners.”⁵³ The article contrasts the Chinese as foreigner with black immigrants from the West Indies whose formation under European colonialism has made their “habits, customs, and associations . . . identical with ours” and therefore easily assimilable into the U.S. national body. It is particularly striking that the allegiance of West Indies black immigrants “to their *original* government” is linked to a colonial state whose importation of African slave labor has produced a “Western” black colonial subject, who is “known for . . . adherence to our customs and institutions.” The suppressed ambiguity surrounding the black immigrant’s national identification is an index of how the history of the African slave trade and Euro-American colonialism positioned blacks in the Americas in a radically different relationship to the institution of citizenship from the Chinese, who were not incorporated as cultural or political subjects of the West during the nineteenth century.

Although black Orientalism was a means of narrating the development of black subjects into American modernity, the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 did not consolidate black national identity, but rather exposed the tenuous status of black citizenship itself. Hence, when the anti-Chinese movement garnered national support for federal legislation to prohibit Chinese immigration, the black press voiced almost unanimous opposition to this unprecedented form of race-based immigration exclusion.⁵⁴ As the *Christian Observer* stated, “one of the most hopeful signs of the times is the unanimity of the press, especially the religious, in opposition to the Chinese bill.”⁵⁵ While the San Francisco *Elevator* was one of the few exceptions and was chastised in the black press for having “failed to stand up for equal rights,” other black papers on the West Coast condemned Chinese exclusion.⁵⁶ Historians who have studied black press representations of Chinese immigrants have found

this pervasive opposition either surprisingly anomalous or a commendable sign of the black community's alliance with another racially oppressed group.⁵⁷ If we understand the ideological relationship of black Orientalism to discourses of black modernity and citizenship, black press opposition to the Chinese Exclusion Act is neither a "curious" aberration nor transparent evidence of the black community's "dedication to the image of America as a composite nation of diverse peoples."⁵⁸ The discursive limits of black Orientalism as a means of narrating the modern development of the black American subject were exceeded when the Chinese Exclusion Act unequivocally signified the racial reification of U.S. citizenship that undermined aspirations of black national incorporation. In other words, while an Orientalist discourse on Chinese alien difference was a form of cultural politics that could underscore the Americanness of black citizens, the Chinese Exclusion Act was itself a clear threat to the circumscribed legal rights already undermining black citizenship. Hence, black Americans rightly felt threatened by the notion that federal legislation employing racially exclusionary language with respect to Chinese immigrants would be aimed at them next.

Frederick Douglass waged the most prominent and vocal critiques of the anti-Chinese movement, recognizing the dangerous consequences of race-based exclusion for liberal principles of American democracy.⁵⁹ Douglass's *New Era* criticized both Republican and Democratic politicians for supporting the anti-Chinese movement in an effort to garner the political support of trade unions.⁶⁰ Douglass was hardly alone, however, and the religious and secular black press alike strongly condemned the Chinese Exclusion Act and recognized its racist implications for blacks whose recent political gains had been violently contested by white ethnics:

Only a few years ago the cry was, not "The Chinese must go," but "The niggers must go;" and it comes from the same strata of society. There is not a man to-day who rails out against the yellow man from China but would equally rail out against the black man if opportunity only afforded. Nor have they given up all hope of that opportunity coming in the near future.⁶¹

The "same strata of society" is a clear reference to the white working class and its political institutions, which not only exercised considerable power within the Democratic Party, but also practiced racist union policies that culminated in violent hate-strikes and riots targeting black laborers.⁶² Black Americans were particularly antagonized by Irish immigrants, whose political, economic, and cultural incorporation were often at the expense of black displacement.⁶³ Therefore, the proponents of Chinese exclusion—the white ethnic working

class—were largely regarded as the enemies of black workers throughout the country. Black critiques of the Chinese Exclusion Act did not necessarily oppose the general idea of immigration restrictions, which were often advocated within the black press, but rather criticized the political power of white labor to mobilize federal legislation that was racially exclusive. Hence, several papers urged creative solutions to slowing Chinese immigration, such as prohibiting the common practice of sending the deceased back to China, which would not require federal legislation that employed exclusionary race-based language and yet might achieve the same desired results.⁶⁴

It would be imprecise, therefore, to understand black press opposition to the Chinese Exclusion Act as evidence of black subjective identification with the Chinese, whose alien and immigrant formations were in cultural, linguistic, and religious contradiction to black national identity. Many articles opposing Chinese exclusion were careful to simultaneously narrate black Orientalist disidentification, stating, “we honestly confess that we have no sympathy for the Chinese. Their habits, customs, modes of living, manner of worship . . . is an abhorrence to us.”⁶⁵ Despite the overwhelming evidence of black opposition to Chinese exclusionary legislation, black press fascination with Chinese immigrants and Chinatown ghettos as grotesque sites of immorality, filth, and alien difference was a discourse that consistently shaped black “ways of knowing” Chinese racial difference from the 1850s well into the twentieth century. The Chinese Exclusion Act’s interruption of black Orientalism suggests that while the possibilities for black and Asian identification were often highly constrained (or even formed in mutual exclusion) due to specific historical processes of racialization, such identification was not a necessary condition for nineteenth-century black opposition to the Chinese Exclusion Act. Race emerged as the contradiction to the promise of equality as “universal citizens,” underscoring the utter vulnerability of the status of black Americans as subjects of the state.

Hence, it should be neither surprising nor disappointing that after the ratification of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, black press Orientalism persisted and even intensified, with a particularly strong emphasis on Chinatowns as depraved sites of criminality and sexual vice.⁶⁶ While nineteenth-century black Orientalism might have been an effective means of provisionally underscoring the deeply “American” character of blacks in the United States, this discourse of inclusion had stark limitations. Black press concerns that the Chinese Exclusion Act would be followed by more race-based legislation were dramatically substantiated less than a decade later by the Supreme Court’s decision that racial segregation was an entitlement of white citizenship. If the Chinese Exclusion

Act defined the U.S. citizen against the Oriental alien, the constitutionality of *Plessy v. Ferguson* suggested that although U.S. blacks were not Orientalized immigrants, the reification of black racial difference would remain at the very core of American national identity.

Notes

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1. *Chinese Immigration: Its Social, Moral, and Political Effect*, Report to the California Senate of Its Special Committee on Chinese Immigration (Sacramento: State Printing Office, 1978), 247.
2. Brook Thomas, *Plessy v. Ferguson: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1997), 36–37.
3. The *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* case determined that the Chinese were Mongolian and not white and thus subject to racial segregation. See Charles J. McClain, *In Search of Equality: The Chinese Struggle against Discrimination in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 115–19.
4. The particular racial tandem that I isolate and track in this essay is clearly not “representative” or exhaustive of the meanings generated when blacks and Chinese immigrants were juxtaposed in nineteenth-century America. See Aarim-Heriot’s outstanding study of the relationship between the “Negro question” and the “Chinese question,” in which she examines the similar degrading traits and characteristics attributed to both groups: Najia Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States, 1848–82* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).
5. On the specificity of U.S. Orientalism, see Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996), 178n7; and John Tchen, *New York Before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776–1882* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
6. Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 19.
7. Tchen, *New York Before Chinatown*.
8. Tchen terms this “commercial Orientalism”; see *New York Before Chinatown*, 63–124.
9. Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 5.
10. *Chinese Immigration*, Report to the California Senate, 247.
11. See David Goldberg, *Racial Subjects: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993); and Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
12. For example, we can see this negotiation in Booker T. Washington’s statement that “notwithstanding the cruelty and moral wrong of slavery, the ten million Negroes inhabiting this country who themselves or whose ancestors went through the school of American slavery are in a stronger and more hopeful condition, materially, intellectually, morally, and religiously, than is true of an equal number of black people in any other portion of the globe.” See Booker T. Washington, *Three Negro Classics* (New York: Avon Books, 1965), 37. Washington’s striking image of U.S. slavery as a “school” that produced the moral, intellectual, and economic development of blacks in America constructs slavery not as a contradiction to modern ideologies of civilization or democracy, but rather as an institution that enabled black historical progress. Washington’s liberal narrative, in which black emancipation is achieved through hard work, humility, and the American ethos of self-help, produces a developmental resolution of this constitutive paradox between enslavement and enlightenment.
13. The heterogeneity of black Orientalism is underscored by recent projects such as Bill Mullen’s *Afro-Orientalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004). Mullen builds on such work as

- Gary Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994); Vijay Prashad, *Everybody Was Kung-Fu Fighting: Afro-Asian Connections and the Myth of Cultural Purity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001); and Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). All these authors delineate a long-standing and global history of black and Asian peoples in “mutual struggle against Western empires” (Mullen, *AfroOrientalism*, xviii). Also see the special issue of *positions: the afro-asian century* (2003).
14. See Mullen and Prashad. For specific articles focusing on black discourses around Japanese imperialism and empire, see George Lipsitz, “Frantic to Join . . . the Japanese Army: The Asia Pacific War in the Lives of African American Soldiers and Civilians,” in *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital*, ed. Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997), 324–53. Also see Ernest Allen, “When Japan Was ‘Champion of the Darker Races’: Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism,” *The Black Scholar* 24.1 (1995); and Daniel Widener, “‘Perhaps the Japanese Are to Be Thanked?’ Asia, Asian Americans, and the Construction of Black California,” in the special issue of *positions: the afro-asian century* (2003).
 15. See Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
 16. Saxton, in *The Indispensable Enemy*, 59, is quoting “an address to the working men of Nevada,” reprinted in the *Daily Alta*, June 17, 1869.
 17. Aarim-Heriot’s study does an excellent job of showing how Republicans in the 1870s consistently attempted to disarticulate the Chinese from legislation that enfranchised black Americans (*Chinese Immigrants*, 140–55).
 18. Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco’s Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 19.
 19. Shah, *Contagious Divides*, 17.
 20. In my analysis, the black press refers primarily to newspapers and does not include periodicals or the many newsletters that were circulated by black churches in the nineteenth century. My secondary sources regarding black press representations of Chinese immigrants also almost exclusively examine black newspapers in their studies. See David Hellwig, “The Afro-American and the Immigrant, 1889–1930: A Study of Black Social Thought” (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1974); and Arnold Shankman, “Black on Yellow: Afro-Americans View Chinese-Americans, 1850–1935,” *Phylon* 49.1 (Spring 1978): 1–17. I regard any press material that was directed at a black readership and that was edited and managed by black workers as a “black newspaper.”
 21. Southern planters expressed considerable interest in importing Chinese labor to replace black sharecroppers during the Reconstruction period, however their efforts resulted in only a “trickle of migrants” and by 1880, there were only fifty-one Chinese reported in the Mississippi census. See James Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese: Between Black and White* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1988), 22–26. The few cases in which Chinese immigrants were used in an attempt to displace black workers in the postbellum South ultimately failed due to a number of factors, including unanticipated transportation costs, poor productivity, and decreased political necessity (Loewen, *The Mississippi Chinese*, 26).
 22. *The New Orleans Tribune*, November, 12, 1864, quoted by David Hellwig, “The Afro-American and the Immigrant,” 112. For an account of the paper’s history, see Roland Wolesey, *The Black Press, U.S.A.* (Ames: Iowa State University, 1990), 111.
 23. “Opium Eating in Chicago,” *Topeka Tribune*, October 23, 1880.
 24. “The Chinese in New York: Peculiarities of the Orientals Described,” *Washington Bee*, November 22, 1884.
 25. Shankman, *Black on Yellow*, 10.
 26. “Chinese Fashions,” *Freedoms Journal*, March 16, 1827. I thank Dr. Francis Foster for referring me to this source.
 27. *Ibid.*
 28. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1994). During and after the Civil War, hundreds of local black newspapers not only emerged in the larger cities of the North and South but were also moving westward, where they were produced and consumed by small black communities in Kansas, California, and throughout the Northwest. See Penelope Bullock, *The Afro-Americans Periodical Press, 1838–1909* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

29. Hence, this study's focus on the nineteenth-century black press as a site of textual evidence in no way regards these discourses of black citizenship as "representative" of black imaginings of freedom and justice in the nineteenth century. In my attempt to critically interrogate the limits of citizenship, I look to a cultural institution that has a disproportionately significant role in producing discourses of black national identity.
30. See Jane Rhodes, *Mary Ann Shadd Cary: The Black Press and Protest in the Nineteenth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 100; and Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).
31. The types of articles that these papers and magazines offered ranged from religious teachings to local community events, sensationalism and gossip, black success stories, politics, and accounts of racial violence, depending more or less on the interests of the press itself. See Bullock, *The Afro-Americans Periodical Press*, 3.
32. As Gaines notes, it is difficult to categorize the educated black community during this period as "middle-class" given that their economic status was often not considerably different from less privileged blacks. It is precisely this lack of a concrete material distinction between the educated black community and blacks who lacked such "cultural capital," Gaines argues, that made uplift ideology so appealing.
33. The relationship between heteronormative performance and the rehabilitation/development of racialized citizenship has been well theorized by Shah, *Contagious Divides*.
34. See Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 125–63, for an extensive discussion of black codes and the range of postemancipation practices that produced an "indebted" black subject. Also, for discussion of black codes and the convict lease system, see Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2003), 22–39.
35. See W. E. B. Dubois, *Black Reconstruction in America: 1860–1880* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995); and Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*.
36. Ida B. Wells, *On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, a Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans* (New York: Arno Press, 1969). Also Angela Davis, *Women, Race, and Class* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983).
37. Hazel Carby, *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 18.
38. Also see Davis, *Women Race and Class*, 172–201.
39. Slave narratives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as the religious discourse of the abolitionist movement, clearly reveal how the enslaved and free black community relied heavily on the discursive terms and narratives of Christianity as a means of repudiating their relegation to property and to critique systematic exploitation. See Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy*, 227–41, and Francis Smith Foster, *Witnessing Slavery: The Development of Ante-bellum Slave Narratives* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979), 42. The strong emphasis on the religious formation of the enslaved was crucial to asserting their humanity as "children of God," but also demonstrated their superior fitness as Christian subjects who survived and escaped the barbarism of slavery through divine intervention and salvation.
40. Pointing to the structural significance of Christianity within developmental narratives of Western modernity is in no way intended to render the importance of religious ideologies within African American history as a sign of "colonized consciousness" or black capitulation to Euro-American hegemony. See Gayraud S. Wilmore, *Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of African Americans* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1998); and Eric Lincoln, *The Black Experience in Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1974). Also see Karen Baker-Fletcher, *A Singing Something: Womanist Reflections on Anna Julia Cooper* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).
41. See Wilmore's chap. 3, "Black Religion and Black Nationalism," for a provocative and thoughtful account of the missionary ideologies that underscored the discourses of prominent black nationalist leaders and organizations. Wilmore, *Black Religion*, 125–62.
42. See Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Verso, 1990); and George Frederickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). Baker-Fletcher also discusses the use of religious discourse to negotiate scientific racism in the work of Anna Julia Cooper.

43. *Pacific Appeal*, May 17, 1862.
44. Nubia, "Progress of the Colored People of San Francisco," *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, September 22, 1854.
45. *Ibid.*
46. During this period, anti-Chinese sentiment in California was primarily associated with the white working class, and mainstream publications directed at a middle-class or "not working-class" readership generally condemned anti-Chinese racism and even constructed Chinese immigrants favorably vis-à-vis the Irish and other white ethnic immigrants. See Grace Hong's "Nation and Empire in Arnold Genthe's Photographs of San Francisco's Chinese Quarter." *Journal of the West* 43.4 (December 2004): 8–14. An educated black community seeking to emulate the values promoted by racial uplift, therefore, could disavow racist attacks on the Chinese and constitute themselves as more civilized than the ignorant and vulgar white working class whose racist class interests also threatened the black community. At the same time, however, Orientalist discourse functioned to consolidate a modern black national subject through the logic of cultural disidentification with Chinese, alien difference.
47. In later issues of *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, the same author reports: "The Chinese have taken the places of the colored people, as victims of oppression.—The poor Chinese are, indeed, a wretched looking set; that they are filthy, immoral, and licentious—according to our notion of things—is unquestionable. But these vices do not justify the whites in oppressing them" (April 16, 1855). Again, the author condemns anti-Chinese racism as she simultaneously recites the "vices" or cultural underdevelopment of the Chinese as "filthy, immoral, and licentious," and implicitly constructs black identification with the culture of Western civilization, which she articulates as "*our* notion of things."
48. Nubia, "Progress of the Colored People."
49. See *The Elevator* (San Francisco), May 24, 1873, December 17, 1869, March 29, 1873, and November 19, 1869. Numerous articles attempted to contrast the "Negro [who] seeks to be an integral part of the nation" with the Chinese who were "unlikely to become converted to the tenets of our religion, incapable to understand the system of our government, to appreciate our civilization, morals and manners, and persistently adhere to the doctrine of the inferiority of the races." Another typical characterization described Chinese immigrants as "people who use no common dictates of reason while among us, who are pagans in religion, inhuman in their traits, most scurrilous when their feelings are irritated, illiterate in intellectual education and of the doctrines of morality, and lastly wholly incompetent to become true citizens" (*The Elevator*, March 29, 1873). While this mode of black disidentification is clearly linked to the discourse analyzed earlier in "Letters from Nubia," the relationship between black citizenship and oriental alterity is explicitly articulated in response to the growing significance of the anti-Chinese movement in defining the national citizenry.
50. "Democratic Logic," *The Elevator*, August 30, 1867. See Aarim-Heriot's analysis of congressional reconstruction debates in which proposed legislation was continually engaged in relation to its consequences for the "Chinese question," as Republicans successfully delinked black enfranchisement from the political costs of Chinese inclusion. Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants*, 85–155.
51. Quoted in Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 105.
52. However, it is clear that anti-Chinese legislation in California was also regarded as an attack on the rights of free and unfree blacks before the Civil War. See, for example, *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, April 13, 1855.
53. *The Elevator*, July 8, 1970.
54. See Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 101–18, for more than twenty-five citations from a range of black newspapers that spoke out from the 1870s to the 1880s in opposition to Chinese exclusion.
55. *Christian Recorder*, March 30 and April 6, 1882.
56. Other black papers on the West Coast, including the *Pacific Appeal* and the *Washington Bee*, also perceived Chinese immigration as a major problem, but did not condone race-based legislation as the solution, in part because of their opposition to the white nativist Workingman's Party. See Francis Lortie's *San Francisco's Black Community, 1870–1890: Dilemmas in the Struggle for Equality* (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1970); and Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (San Francisco: R&E Research Associates, 1919).
57. Because Shankman's analysis interprets black press Orientalism as black hostility toward the Chinese (which his study seeks to account for), he states that "curiously enough, there is little evidence of black newspapers being willing to support the various exclusion acts"(8–9). On the other hand, Hellwig's

analysis begins on the basis of black press opposition to Chinese exclusion, arguing that black Americans were largely supportive of Chinese immigrants, despite their admitted “revulsion at the appearance of the alien,” which Hellwig tends to naturalize and mitigate in his argument. Thus while Hellwig and Shankman’s analyses emphasize different aspects of the same body of evidence and emerge with opposite conclusions, their studies in tandem are not contradictory.

58. Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 99.
59. See Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 102.
60. *New Era*, July 14, 1870.
61. *Christian Recorder*, April 6, 1882.
62. Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 115–16; also see Herbert Hill, *Black Labor and the American Legal System: Race, Work, and the Law* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 13–21.
63. See Hellwig, *The Afro-American and the Immigrant*, 79–98; Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge Press, 1995).
64. *The Elevator*, April 26, 1873; *Savannah Tribune*, May 20, 1893.
65. “Have Chinese Any Rights Which Americans Are Bound to Respect,” *The Elevator*, May 24, 1873.
66. See “Opium Eating in Chicago,” *Topeka Tribune*, October 22, 1880; “The Chinese in New York: Peculiarities of the Orientals Described,” in the *Washington Bee*, November 22, 1884; “The Murderous Mafia” in *The Age* (New York); and “One Blessing of the San Francisco Quake,” in *Alexander’s Magazine* (Boston), May 1906. Also see Shankman, *Black on Yellow*, 10–12, for numerous other articles of similar content.

Jun, Helen H.

- *Black Orientalism: Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Race and U.S. Citizenship*
[\[Access article in HTML\]](#) [\[Access article in PDF\]](#)

Subjects:

- Chinese -- United States -- Press coverage -- History -- 19th century.
- African American press -- History -- 19th century.
- Orientalism -- United States -- History -- 19th century.
- Citizenship -- United States.

Abstract:

This article examines how U.S. Orientalism and the anti-Chinese movement ambiguously facilitated the incorporation of African Americans into developmental narratives of Western modernity. This analysis focuses particularly on how the nineteenth century black press engaged discourses of Oriental difference in an attempt to negotiate the contradictions and vulnerabilities endemic to African American citizenship.

Cheng, Cindy I-Fen.

- *Out of Chinatown and into the Suburbs: Chinese Americans and the Politics of Cultural Citizenship in Early Cold War America*
[\[Access article in HTML\]](#) [\[Access article in PDF\]](#)

Subjects:

- Chinese Americans -- Housing -- History -- 20th century.
- Suburban life -- United States -- History -- 20th century.
- United States -- Race relations -- History -- 20th century.

Abstract:

This essay underscores how Chinese residence in the suburbs crucially shaped the fluctuating image of the suburbs as a place inclusive of racial and ethnic minorities and one that excluded racialized populations with its whites-only restriction. During the early cold war years from 1946 to 1965, the onslaught of Soviet propaganda against U.S. racism made incorporating racial and ethnic minorities within society's institutions imperative to establishing the credibility of American democracy over communism. As the suburbs came to signify the U.S. national identity, the contradictory meanings of suburbanization translated into competing visions of Americanness. Suburbanization as Americanization thus alternately denoted a process of forging whiteness as the marker of legitimate citizenry and of assimilating and recognizing all racial and ethnic minorities as Americans. While many sociological studies focused on Chinese residence in the suburbs as a way to attest to the success of Cold War democracy in creating a socially equitable society, other studies drew attention to the Chinese only to construct the "failure" of blacks to assimilate properly within U.S. society, thus justifying their social and spatial separation from whites. The Chinese significantly functioned in these studies to speak to the leveling of racial stratifications and to explaining the persistence of a white/black divide in early cold war America.

This essay also explores the values and terms which shaped the Chinese into

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