1944: Rabbi Albert Hirschel, a Jewish-American rabbi, wrote an essay on the Jewish experience in America, focusing on the issues faced by Jews in the country.

The American nation was founded and developed by the American Revolution, which brought an end to British rule and established a new nation. The Revolution was fought to ensure the rights of all Americans, including the Jewish community. The Constitution of the United States guarantees equal rights and protection for all citizens, regardless of their religion. However, the process of assimilation and integration into American society was not always smooth, and Jewish Americans faced discrimination and prejudice.

The Establishment of Israel was a significant event in the history of the Jewish people. The country was established in 1948 after years of struggle and hardship. The establishment of Israel was a source of hope and inspiration for Jews around the world. It provided a safe haven for Jews who had been forced to leave their homes due to persecution and discrimination.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in anti-Semitism, both in the United States and around the world. The rise of social media and the spread of misinformation have contributed to this increase. It is important to remember the history of anti-Semitism and work towards creating a more inclusive and accepting society.

How Did Jews Become White Folks?

by KAREN BRODY

Sacks
of native-born workers was blamed on foreign agitators. The Red Scare was fueled by economic depression, a massive postwar strike wave, the Russian revolution, and a new wave of postwar immigration. Strikers in steel, and the garment and textile workers in New York and New England, were mainly new immigrants. "As part of a fierce counteroffensive, employers inflamed the historic identification of class conflict with immigrant radicalism." Anticommunism and anti-immigrant sentiment came together in the Palmer raids and deportation of immigrant working-class activists. There was real fear of revolution. One of President Wilson's aides feared it was "the first appearance of the soviet in this country" (Higham 1955:226).

Not surprisingly, the belief in European races took root most deeply among the wealthy U.S.-born Protestant elite, who feared a hostile and seemingly assimilable working class. By the end of the nineteenth century, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge pressed Congress to cut off immigration to the United States; Teddy Roosevelt raised the alarm of "race suicide" and took Anglo-Saxon women to task for allowing "native" stock to be outbred by inferior immigrants. In the twentieth century, these fears gained a great deal of social legitimacy thanks to the efforts of an influential network of aristocrats and scientists who developed theories of eugenics—breeding for a "better" humanity—and scientific racism. Key to these efforts was Madison Grant's influential Passing of the Great Race, in which he shared his discovery that there were three or four major European races ranging from the superior Nordics of northwestern Europe to the inferior southern and eastern races of Alpines, Mediterraneans, and, worst of all, Jews, who seemed to be everywhere in his native New York City. Grant's nightmare was race mixing among Europeans. For him, "the cross between any of the three European races and a Jew is a Jew" (qtd. in Higham 1955:156). He didn't have good things to say about Alpine or Mediterranean "races" either. For Grant, race and class were interwoven: the upper class was racially pure Nordic, and the lower classes came from the lower races.

Far from being on the fringe, Grant's views resonated with those of the nonimmigrant middle class. A New York Times reporter wrote of his visit to the Lower East Side:

This neighborhood, peopled almost entirely by the people who claim to have been driven from Poland and Russia, is the eyesore of New York and perhaps the filthiest place on the western continent. It is impossible for a Christian to live there because he will be driven out, either by blows or the dirt and stench. Cleanliness is an unknown quantity to these people. They cannot be lifted up to a higher plane because they do not want to be. If the cholera should ever

get among these people, they would scatter its germs as a sower does grain.
(qtd. in Schoen 1967:58)

Such views were well within the mainstream of the early-twentieth-century scientific community. Grant and eugenist Charles B. Davenport organized the Galton Society in 1918 in order to foster research and to otherwise promote eugenics and immigration restriction. Lewis Terman, Henry Goddard, and Robert Yerkes, developers of the so-called intelligence test, believed firmly that southeastern European immigrants, African Americans, American Indians, and Mexicans were "feebieminded." And indeed, more than 80 percent of the immigrants whom Goddard tested at Ellis Island in 1912 turned out to be just that. Racism fused with eugenics in scientific circles, and the eugenics circles overlapped with the nativism of WASP aristocrats. During World War I, racism shaped the army's development of a mass intelligence test. Psychologist Robert Yerkes, who developed the test, became an even stronger advocate of eugenics after the war. Writing in the Atlantic Monthly in 1923, he noted:

If we may safely judge by the army measurements of intelligence, races are quite as significantly different as individuals. . . . [and] almost as great as the intellectual difference between negro and white in the army are the differences between white racial groups. . . .

For the past ten years or so the intellectual status of immigrants has been disquietingly low. Perhaps this is because of the dominance of the Mediterranean races, as contrasted with the Nordic and Alpine. (qtd. in Carlson and Colburn 1972:333–334)

By the 1920s, scientific racism sanctified the notion that real Americans were white and real whites came from northwest Europe. Racism animated laws excluding and expelling Chinese in 1882, and then closing the door to immigration by virtually all Asians and most Europeans in 1924 (Saxton 1971, 1990). Northwestern European ancestry as a requisite for whiteness was set in legal concrete when the Supreme Court denied Bhagat Singh Thind the right to become a naturalized citizen under a 1790 federal law that allowed whites the right to become naturalized citizens. Thind argued that Asian Indians were the real Aryans and Caucasians, and therefore white. The Court countered that the United States only wanted blond Aryans and Caucasians, "that the blond Scandinavian and the brown Hindu have a common ancestor in the dim reaches of antiquity, but the average man knows perfectly well that there are unmistakable and profound differences between them today" (Takaki 1989:298–299). A narrowly defined white, Christian race was
also built into the 1705 Virginia "Act concerning servants and slaves." This statute stated "that no negroes, mulattoes and Indians or other infidels or Jews, Moors, Mahometans or other infidels shall, at any time, purchase any christian servant, nor any other except of their own complexion" (Martyn 1979:111). 5

The 1930 census added its voice, distinguishing not only immigrant from "native" whites, but also native whites of native white parentage, and native whites of immigrant (or mixed) parentage. In distinguishing immigrant (southern and eastern Europeans) from "native" (northwestern Europeans), the census reflected the racial distinctions of the eugenist-inspired intelligence tests. 6

Racism and anti-immigrant sentiment in general and anti-Semitism in particular flourished in higher education. Jews were the first of the Euroimmigrant groups to enter colleges in significant numbers, so it wasn't surprising that they faced the brunt of discrimination there. The Protestant elite complained that Jews were unwashed, uncouth, unrefined, loud, and pushy. Harvard University President A. Lawrence Lowell, who was also a vice president of the Immigration Restriction League, was openly opposed to Jews at Harvard. The Seven Sisters schools had a reputation for "flagrant discrimination." M. Carey Thomas, Bryn Mawr president, may have been a feminist of a kind, but she also was an admirer of scientific racism and an advocate of immigration restriction. She "blocked both the admission of black students and the promotion of Jewish instructors" (Synott 1986:233, 238–239, 249–250).

Anti-Semitic patterns set by these elite schools influenced standards of other schools, made anti-Semitism acceptable, and "made the aura of exclusivity a desirable commodity for the college-seeking clientele" (Synott 1986:250; and see Karabel 1984; Silberman 1985; Steinberg 1989: chaps. 5, 9). Fear that colleges "might soon be overrun by Jews" were publicly expressed at a 1918 meeting of the Association of New England Deans. In 1919 Columbia University took steps to decrease the number of entering Jews by a set of practices that soon came to be widely adopted. The school developed a psychological test based on the World War I army intelligence tests to measure "innate ability—and middle-class home environment" and redesigned the admission application to ask for religion, father's name and birthplace, a photo, and a personal interview (Synott 1986:239–240). Other techniques for excluding Jews, like a fixed class size, a chapel requirement, and preference for children of alumni were less obvious. Sociologist Jerome Karabel (1984) has argued that these exclusionary efforts provided the basis for contemporary criteria for college admission that mix grades and test scores with criteria for well-roundedness and character, as well as affirmative action for athletes and children of alumni, which allowed schools to select more affluent Protestants. Their proliferation in the 1920s caused the intended drop in the number of Jewish students in law, dental, and medical schools and also saw the imposition of quotas in engineering, pharmacy, and veterinary schools. 6

Columbia's quota against Jews was well known in my parents' community. My father was very proud of having beaten it and of being admitted to Columbia Dental School on the basis of his sculpting skill. In addition to demonstrating academic qualifications, he was asked to carve a soap ball, which he did so well and fast that his Protestant interviewer was willing to accept him. Although he became a teacher instead because the dental school tuition was too high, he took me to the dentist every week of my childhood and prolonged the agony by discussing the finer points of tooth filling and dental care. My father also almost failed the speech test required for his teaching license because he didn't speak "standard"—that is, nonimmigrant, nonaccented—English. For my parents and most of their friends, English was a second language learned when they went to school, since their home language was Yiddish. They saw the speech test as designed to keep all ethnic, not just Jews, out of teaching. There is an ironic twist to this story. My mother was always urging me to speak well and correctly, like her friend Ruth Saronson, who was a speech teacher. Ruth remained my model for perfect diction until I went away to college. When I talked to her on one of my visits home, I heard just how New York—accented my version of "standard" English was now that I had met the Boston academic version.

My parents' conclusion is that Jewish success, like their own, was the result of hard work and of placing a high value on education. They went to Brooklyn College during the depression. My mother worked days and started school at night, and my father went during the day. Both their families encouraged them. More accurately, their families expected this effort from them. Everyone they knew was in the same boat, and their world was made up of Jews who advanced as they did. The picture of New York—where most Jews lived—seems to back them up. In 1920, Jews made up 80 percent of the students at New York's City College, 90 percent of Hunter College, and before World War I, 40 percent of private Columbia University. By 1934, Jews made up almost 24 percent of all law students nationally, and 56 percent of those in New York City. Still, more Jews became public school teachers, like my parents and their friends, than doctors or lawyers (Steinberg 1989:137, 227). Steinberg has debunked the myth that Jews advanced because of the cultural value placed on education. This is not to say that Jews did not advance. They did. "Jewish success in America was a matter of
historical timing. . . . [T]here was a fortuitous match between the experience and skills of Jewish immigrants, on the one hand, and the manpower needs and opportunity structures, on the other" (1989:103). Jews were the only ones among the southern and eastern European immigrants who came from urban, commercial, craft, and manufacturing backgrounds, not least of which was garment manufacturing. They entered the United States in New York, center of the nation's booming garment industry, soon to dominate its skilled (male) and "unskilled" (female) jobs, and found it an industry amenable to low-capital entrepreneurship. As a result, Jews were the first of the new European immigrants to create a middle class of small businesspersons early in the twentieth century. Jewish educational advances followed this business success and depended upon it, rather than creating it (see also Bodnar 1985 for a similar argument about mobility).

In the early twentieth century, Jewish college students entered a contested terrain in which the elite social mission was under challenge by a newer professional training mission. Pressure for change had begun to transform the curriculum and reorient college from a gentleman's bastion to a training ground for the middle-class professionals needed by an industrial economy. "The curriculum was overhauled to prepare students for careers in business, engineering, scientific farming, and the arts, and a variety of new professions such as accounting and pharmacy that were making their appearance in American colleges for the first time" (Steinberg 1989:229). Occupational training was precisely what drew Jews to college. In a setting where disparagement of intellectual pursuits and the gentleman's C were badges of distinction, it was not hard for Jews to excel.

How we interpret Jewish social mobility in this milieu depends on whom we compare Jews to. Compared with other immigrants, Jews were upwardly mobile. But compared with that of nonimmigrant whites, their mobility was very limited and circumscribed. Anti-immigrant racist and anti-Semitic barriers kept the Jewish middle class confined to a small number of occupations. Jews were excluded from mainstream corporate management and corporately employed professions, except in the garment and movie industries, which they built. Jews were almost totally excluded from university faculties (and the few that made it had powerful patrons). Jews were concentrated in small businesses, and in professions where they served a largely Jewish clientele (Davis 1990:146 n. 25; Silberman 1985:88–117; Sklare 1971:63–67).

We shouldn't forget Jews' success in organized crime in the 1920s and 1930s as an aspect of upward mobility. Arnold Rothstein "transformed crime from a haphazard, small-scale activity into a well-organized and well-financed business operation." There was also Detroit's Purple Gang, Murder Incorporated in New York, and a host of other big-city Jewish gangs in organized crime, and of course Meyer Lansky (Silberman 1985:127–130).

Although Jews were the Euroethnic vanguard in college and became well-established in public school teaching, as well as being visible in law, medicine, pharmacy, and librarianship before the postwar boom, these professions should be understood in the context of their times (Gerber 1986a:26). In the 1930s they lacked the corporate context they have today, and Jews in these professions were certainly not corporation based. Most lawyers, doctors, dentists, and pharmacists were solo practitioners and were considerably less affluent than their postwar counterparts.

Compared to Jewish progress after the war, Jews' prewar mobility was also very limited. It was the children of Jewish businessmen, not those of Jewish workers, who flocked to college. Indeed, in 1905 New York, the children of Jewish workers had as little schooling as children of other immigrant workers. My family was quite modal in this respect. My grandparents did not go to college, but they did have a modicum of small-business success. My father's family owned a pharmacy. Although my mother's father was a skilled garment worker, her mother's family was large and always had one or another grocery or deli in which my grandmother participated. It was the relatively privileged children of upwardly mobile Jewish immigrants like my grandparents who began to push on the doors to higher education even before my parents were born. Especially in New York City—which had almost 1.25 million Jews by 1910 and remained the biggest concentration of the nation's 4 million Jews in 1924 (Steinberg 1989:225)—Jews built a small-business-based middle class and began to develop a second-generation professional class in the interwar years. Still, despite the high percentages of Jews in eastern colleges, most Jews were not middle class, and fewer than 3 percent were professionals, compared to somewhere between 20 and 32 percent in the 1960s (Sklare 1971:63).

My parents' generation believed that Jews overcame anti-Semitic barriers because Jews are special. My belief is that the Jews who were upwardly mobile were special among Jews (and were also well placed to write the story). My generation might well counter our parents' story of pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps with, "But think what you might have been without the racism and with some affirmative action!" And that is precisely what the postwar boom, the decline of systematic, public anti-immigrant racism and anti-Semitism, and governmental affirmative action extended to white males.
Euroethnics Into Whites

By the time I was an adolescent, Jews were just as white as the next white person. Until I was eight, I was a Jew in a world of Jews. Everyone on Avenue Z in Sheepshead Bay was Jewish. I spent my days playing and going to school on three blocks of Avenue Z, and visiting my grandparents in the nearby Jewish neighborhoods of Brighton Beach and Coney Island. There were plenty of Italians in my neighborhood, but they lived around the corner. They were a kind of Jew, but on the margins of my social horizons. Portuguese were even more distant, at the end of the bus ride, at Sheepshead Bay. The shul, or temple, was on Avenue Z, and I begged my father to take me like all the other fathers took their kids, but religion wasn’t part of my family’s Judaism. Just how Jewish my neighborhood was hit me in first grade when I was one of two kids in my class to go to school on Rosh Hashanah. My teacher was shocked—she was Jewish too—and I was embarrassed to tears when she sent me home. I was never again sent to school on Jewish holidays. We left that world in 1949 when we moved to Valley Stream, Long Island, which was Protestant, Republican, and even had farms until Irish, Italian, and Jewish exurbanites like us gave it a more suburban and Democratic flavor. Neither religion nor ethnicity separated us at school or in the neighborhood. Except temporarily. In elementary school years, I remember a fair number of dirt-bomb (a good suburban weapon) wars on the block. Periodically one of the Catholic boys would accuse me or my brother of killing his God, to which we would reply, “Did not” and start lobbing dirt-bombs. Sometimes he would get his friends from Catholic school, and I would get mine from public school kids on the block, some of whom were Catholic. Hostilities lasted no more than a couple of hours and punctuated an otherwise friendly relationship. They ended by junior high years, when other things became more important.

Jews, Catholics, and Protestants, Italians, Irish, Poles, and “English” (I don’t remember hearing WASP as a kid) were mixed up on the block and in school. We thought of ourselves as middle class and very enlightened because our ethnic backgrounds seemed so irrelevant to high school culture. We didn’t see race (we thought), and racism was not part of our peer consciousness, nor were the immigrant or working-class histories of our families.

Like most chicken and egg problems, it’s hard to know which came first. Did Jews and other Euroethnics become white because they became middle class? That is, did money whiten? Or did being incorporated in an expanded version of whiteness open up the economic doors to a middle-class status? Clearly, both tendencies were at work. Some of the changes set in motion during the war against fascism led to a more inclusive version of whiteness. Anti-Semitism and anti-European racism lost respectability. The 1940 census no longer distinguished native whites of native parentage from those, like my parents, of immigrant parentage, so that Euroimmigrants and their children were more securely white by submersion in an expanded notion of whiteness. (This census also changed the race of Mexicans to white [U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1940: 4].) Theories of nurture and culture replaced theories of nature and biology. Instead of dirty and dangerous races who would destroy U.S. democracy, immigrants became ethnic groups whose children had successfully assimilated into the mainstream and risen to the middle class. In this new myth, Euroethnic suburbs like mine became the measure of U.S. democracy’s victory over racism. Jewish mobility became a new Horatio Alger story. In time and with hard work, every ethnic group would get a piece of the pie, and the United States would be a nation with equal opportunity for all its people to become part of a prosperous middle-class majority. And it seemed that Euroethnic immigrants and their children were delighted to join middle America.11

This is not to say that anti-Semitism disappeared after World War II, only that it fell from fashion and was driven underground. Micah Sifry’s (1993) revelations of Richard Nixon’s and George Bush’s personal anti-Semitism and its prevalence in both their administrations indicate its persistence in the Protestant elite. There has also been an alarming rise of anti-Semitic and anti–African American hate groups and hate crimes in recent years. While elites do not have a monopoly on anti-Semitism, they do have the ability to restrict Jews’ access to the top echelons of corporate America. Since the war, the remaining glass ceilings on Jewish mobility have gotten fewer and higher. Although they may still keep down the number of Jews and other Euroethnics in the upper class, it has been a long time since they could keep them out of the middle class. However, a 1987 Supreme Court ruling that Jews and Arabs could use civil rights laws to gain redress for discrimination against them did so on the grounds that they are not racial whites. As historian Barbara Jeanne Fields (1990:97) notes, “[T]he court knew no better way to rectify injustice at the end of the twentieth century than to re-enthrone the superstitious racial dogma of the nineteenth century.”12

Although changing views on who was white made it easier for Euroethnics to become middle class, it was also the case that economic prosperity played a very powerful role in the whitening process. Economic mobility of Jews and other Euroethnics rested ultimately on U.S. post war economic prosperity with its enormously expanded need for professional, technical, and managerial labor, and on government assistance
How did Jews Become White Folks?

When were production workers in the 1950s quickly
when the movement was. The National Association of
the National Association of
the National Association of

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.

workers were not included.
How Did Jews Become White Folks?

KAREN BROOKIN SACKS

1. Education and occupational discrimination felt by women and men of color was a constant feature of the American experience. This was the case regardless of whether they were white or black, native or immigrant. The discrimination was based on race, ethnicity, and gender, and it was reflected in educational and occupational opportunities. Women and men of color were often denied access to higher education and better-paying jobs, which limited their mobility and economic opportunities.

2. The historical context of the American experience is one of persistent discrimination and inequality. This discrimination was not limited to race or ethnicity, but also included gender. As a result, women and men of color have been denied equal opportunities in education, employment, and other areas of life.

3. The American experience is characterized by a history of discrimination and inequality. This discrimination has had a lasting impact on the lives of women and men of color, who have been left behind in terms of education, employment, and other opportunities.

4. The American experience is one of persistent injustice. Women and men of color have been denied equal opportunities in education, employment, and other areas of life, and this has had a significant impact on their lives and their ability to progress and achieve.

5. The American experience is a story of ongoing struggle. Women and men of color have fought against discrimination and inequality, and their efforts have been an integral part of the American experience.
How did Jews become White Folk?

KAREN BROOKIN

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.

The war on terrorism was a development of some hidden reason. By May 1947, Laski and some heretical analysts made the unspoken admission: the war in 1947 was lost.
How Did Jews Become White Folk?

By the 1960s, African-Americans and Puerto Ricans in New York City were being pushed into the housing projects. The projects were built to house the poor, but soon became centers of crime and violence. African-Americans and Puerto Ricans were also the victims of discrimination in housing. They were denied mortgages and were forced to live in substandard housing. The government did little to help them.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 was supposed to end discrimination in housing, but it was not effective. The act did not require landlords to provide decent housing or to integrate tenants. It only prohibited discrimination in the sale or rental of housing.

The government did not enforce the act, and housing discrimination continued. Many African-Americans and Puerto Ricans were still living in substandard housing.

The government finally took action in 1972, when it passed the Comprehensive Housing Act. This act provided funding for low-income housing and required landlords to provide decent housing.

Since then, housing discrimination has declined, but it is still a problem. Many African-Americans and Puerto Ricans still face discrimination in housing.

A government official said, "Our goal is to provide decent housing for all Americans. We are making progress, but there is still work to be done."
manufacturing, commerce, and working-class neighborhoods. Manufacturing was scattered to the peripheries of the city, which were ringed and bisected by a national system of highways. Some working-class neighborhoods were bulldozed, but others remained (Greer 1965; Hartman 1975; Squires 1989). In Los Angeles, as in New York’s Bronx, the postwar period saw massive freeway construction right through the heart of old working-class neighborhoods. In East Los Angeles and Santa Monica, Chicano and African-American communities were divided in half or blasted to smithereens by the highways bringing Angelenos to the new white suburbs, or to make way for civic monuments like Dodger Stadium (Pardo 1990; Social and Public Arts Resource Center 1990:80, 1983:12–13).

Urban renewal was the other side of the process by which Jewish and other working-class Euroimmigrants became middle class. It was the push to suburbia’s seductive pull. The fortunate white survivors of urban renewal headed disproportionately for suburbia, where they could partake of prosperity and the good life. There was a reason for its attraction. It was often cheaper to buy in the suburbs than to rent in the city (Jackson 1985:206). Even Euroethnics and families who would be considered working class based on their occupations were able to buy into the emerging white suburban life style. And as Levittown indicates, they did so in increasing numbers, so that by 1966 50 percent of all workers and 75 percent of those under age forty nationwide lived in suburbs (Brody 1980:192). They too were considered middle class.

If the federal stick of urban renewal joined the FHA carrot of cheap mortgages to send masses of Euros to the suburbs, the FHA had a different kind of one-two punch for African-Americans. Segregation kept them out of the suburbs, and redlining made sure they could not buy or repair their homes in the neighborhoods where they were allowed to live. The FHA practiced systematic redlining. This was a system developed by its predecessor, the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), which in the 1930s developed an elaborate neighborhood rating system that placed the highest (green) value on all-white, middle-class neighborhoods, and the lowest (red) on racially nonwhite or mixed and working-class neighborhoods. High ratings meant high property values. The idea was that low property values in redlined neighborhoods made them bad investments. The FHA was, after all, created by and for banks and the housing industry. Redlining warned banks not to lend there, and the FHA would not insure mortgages in such neighborhoods. Redlining created a self-fulfilling prophecy. “With the assistance of local realtors and banks, it assigned one of the four ratings to every block in every city. The resulting information was then translated into the appropriate color

How Did Jews Become White Folks?

[green, blue, yellow, and red] and duly recorded on secret ‘Residential Security Maps’ in local HOLC offices. The maps themselves were placed in elaborate ‘City Survey Files,’ which consisted of reports, questionnaires, and workpapers relating to current and future values of real estate” (Jackson 1985:199).

FHA’s and VA’s refusal to guarantee loans in redlined neighborhoods made it virtually impossible for African Americans to borrow money for home improvement or purchase. Because these maps and surveys were quite secret, it took the 1960s Civil Rights movement to make these practices and their devastating consequences public. As a result, those who fought urban renewal or who sought to make a home in the urban ruins found themselves locked out of the middle class. They also faced an ideological assault that labeled their neighborhoods slums and called those who lived in them slum dwellers (Gans 1962).

The record is very clear that instead of seizing the opportunity to end institutionalized racism, the federal government did its best to shut and double seal the postwar window of opportunity in African Americans’ faces. It consistently refused to combat segregation in the social institutions that were key for upward mobility: education, housing, and employment. Moreover, federal programs that were themselves designed to assist demobilized GIs and young families systematically discriminated against African Americans. Such programs reinforced white/nonwhite racial distinctions even as intrawhite racialization was falling out of fashion. This other side of the coin, that white men of northwestern and southeastern European ancestry were treated equally in theory and in practice with regard to the benefits they received, was part of the larger postwar whitening of Jews and other eastern and southern Europeans.

The myth that Jews pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps ignores the fact that it took federal programs to create the conditions whereby the abilities of Jews and other European immigrants could be recognized and rewarded rather than denounced and denied. The GI Bill and FHA and VA mortgages were forms of affirmative action that allowed male Jews and other Euro-American men to become suburban homeowners and to get the training that allowed them—but not women vets or war workers—to become professionals, technicians, salesmen, and managers in a growing economy. Jews’ and other white ethnic’s upward mobility was the result of programs that allowed us to float on a rising economic tide. To African Americans, the government offered the cement boots of segregation, redlining, urban renewal, and discrimination.
Those racially skewed gains have been passed across the generations, so that racial inequality seems to maintain itself "naturally," even after legal segregation ended. Today, in a shrinking economy where downward mobility is the norm, the children and grandchildren of the postwar beneficiaries of the economic boom have some precious advantages. For example, having parents who own their own homes or who have decent retirement benefits can make a real difference in young people's ability to take on huge college loans or to come up with a down payment for a house. Even this simple inheritance helps perpetuate the gap between whites and nonwhites. Sure Jews needed ability, but ability was not enough to make it. The same applies even more in today's long recession.

Notes

This is a revised and expanded version of a paper published in Jewish Currents in June 1992 and delivered at the 1992 meetings of the American Anthropological Association in the session Blacks and Jews, 1992: Reaching across the Cultural Boundaries organized by Angela Gilliam. I would like to thank Emily Abel, Katya Gibel Azoulay, Edna Bonacich, Angela Gilliam, Isabelle Gunning, Valerie Matsumoto, Regina Morantz-Sanchez, Roger Sanjek, Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller, Janet Silverstein, and Eloise Klein Healy's writing group for uncovering wonderful sources and for critical readings along the way.

1. Indeed, Boasian and Du Boisian anthropology developed in active political opposition to this nativism; on Du Bois, see Harrison and Nonini 1992.

2. On immigrants as part of the industrial workforce, see Steinberg 1989: 36.

3. I thank Roger Sanjek for providing me with this source.

4. It was intended, as Davenport wrote to the president of the American Museum of Natural History, Henry Fairfield Osborne, as "an anthropological society ... with a central governing body, self-elected and self-perpetuating, and very limited in members, and also confined to native Americans who are anthropologically, socially and politically sound, no Bolshevik need apply" (Barkan 1991:67–68).

5. I thank Valerie Matsumoto for telling me about the Third case and Katya Gibel Azoulay for providing this information to me on the Virginia statute.

6. "The distinction between white and colored" has been "the only racial classification which has been carried through all the 15 censuses. " Colored" consisted of "Negroes" and "other races": Mexican, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, Korean, Hawaiian, Malay, Siamese, and Samoan. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1930:25, 26).

7. For why Jews entered colleges earlier than other immigrants, and for a challenge to views that attribute it to Jewish culture, see Steinberg 1989.

8. Although quotas on Jews persisted into the 1950s in some of the elite schools, they were much attenuated, as the postwar college-building boom gave the coup-de-grace to the gentleman's finishing school.

9. Steinberg (1989: chap. 5), challenging the belief that education was the source of Jewish mobility, cites Gutman's comparison of a working-class Jewish neighborhood on Cherry Street and a business and professional one on East Broadway in 1905, showing that children of Jewish workers did not go to college.

10. Between 1900 and 1930 New York City's population grew from 3.4 million to 6.9 million, and at both times immigrants and the children of immigrants were 80 percent of all white household heads (Moore 1992:270, n. 28).

11. Indeed, Jewish social scientists were prominent in creating this ideology of the United States as a meritocracy. Most prominent of course was Nathan Glazer, but among them also were Charles Silberman and Marshall Sklare.

12. I am indebted to Katya Gibel Azoulay for bringing this to my attention.

13. The belief was widespread that "the GI Bill ... helped millions of families move into the middle class" (Nash et al. 1986:885). A study that compares mobility among veterans and nonveterans provides a kind of confirmation. In an unnamed small city in Illinois, Havighurst and his colleagues (1951) found no significant difference between veterans and nonveterans, but this was because apparently very few veterans used any of their GI benefits.

14. Interestingly, Steinberg (1989:149) shows that Jewish professionals tended to be children of small-business owners, but their Catholic counterparts tended to be children of workers.

15. None of the Jewish surveys seem to have asked what women were doing. Silberman (1985) claims that Jewish women stayed out of the labor force prior to the 1970s, but if my parents' circle is any indication, there were plenty of working professional women.

16. African Americans and Japanese Americans were the main targets of wartime racism (see Murray 1992). By contrast, there were virtually no anti-German American or anti-Italian American policies in World War II (see Takaki 1989:357–406).

17. See Eichler 1982:5 for homeownership percentages; Jackson (1985:205) found an increase in families living in owner-occupied buildings, rising from 44 percent in 1934 to 63 percent in 1972; see Monkkonen 1988 on scarcity of mortgages; and Gelland 1975, esp. chap. 6, on federal programs.

18. In the location of highway interchanges, as in the appraisal and inspection process, Eichler (1982) claims that large-scale builders often bribed and otherwise influenced the outcomes in their favor.

19. These ideas from the real estate industry were "codified and legitimated in 1930s work by University of Chicago sociologist Robert Park and real estate professor Homer Hoyt" (Jackson 1985:198–199).

References


Harrison, Faye V., and Donald Nonini, eds. 1992 Critique of Anthropology (special issue on W.E.B. Du Bois and anthropology) 12(3).


Intermarriage and the Future of Races in the United States

Race, sex, and power remain the essential ingredients of the continuing 'American dilemma' of the United States. Race, sex, and power head the agenda of the country's social and political unfinished business. Within this biracially divided social order where, until recently, all but a few at its margins were either white or black, the power of race has long been expressed and mediated through sex. Race, forced disruption of black conjugal ties and kinship networks, sexual mythology and fear, legal bars to interracial marriage, and the overriding of kinship by race are historic features of the race-sex-power equation (Jordan 1968; Spickard 1989:235-342; Washington 1970; Williamson 1980).

Through nearly four centuries, from the early 1600s, white and black Americans have lived together in this land. They did so in closer propinquity through the twenty-five decades during which this was a slave society than in the thirteen decades since, decades marked by a still deeply entrenched pattern of black-white residential segregation (Lieberson 1980:253-291; Massey and Denton 1993; O'Hare et al. 1991:9). St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton characterized the racial segregation of Chicago in the early 1940s as "a pattern of relations which reduces to a minimum any neighborly contacts, school contacts, or chance meetings in stores, taverns, and movie houses between Negros and whites" ([1945] 1962:195). In view of this history, it is hardly surprising that the prevalence of white-black intermarriage remains exceedingly low, at 3 percent for married blacks by 1990 (2 percent in 1980), and far less than 1 percent for whites (Alba 1990:12-13; Collins 1985; O'Hare and Felt 1991:12; Spickard 1989:280; Spigner 1990).

Despite the low rate of white-black intermarriage throughout U.S. history, great numbers of white males have been ready to "bed but not wed" black women (Davis et al. 1941:24-38; Drake and Cayton [1945] 1962:116-136, 556-557, 638; Powdermaker 1939; Washington 1970; Williamson 1980). This history of sexual abuse and exploitation has never inspired any mass enthusiasm by African Americans in favor of marriage with whites. And a negative attitude to interracial marriage has been