

## WHAT DOES THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE MEAN TO A 'BROWNER' AMERICA?

MIMI YANG

ORCID: [0000-0003-4070-5323](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4070-5323)

[myang@carthage.edu](mailto:myang@carthage.edu)

Mimi Yang focuses on cultural studies theories in research and writing. She has published on a wide range of themes related to race and gender in the U.S.—Americanism, women's suffrage movement, horizontal democracy, Chinese Americans, and Hispanic Americans among others. Her publications have gained traction in the U.S. and internationally. She is the author of the book *Tri-Cultural Personality (Chinese, English and Hispanic): a Paradigm Connecting Cultures* (2014). Mimi Yang is Professor Emerita at Carthage College and a regular contributor to the Commentary Column in the *Kenosha News*.

### KEYWORDS

American 'color', 'browner' America, critical race theory, multicultural democracy, multiracial patriotism, WASP

### PUBLICATION DATE

Issue 15, October 31, 2023

### HOW TO CITE

Mimi Yang. "What Does the 250th Anniversary of the Independence Mean to a 'Browner' America?" *On Culture: The Open Journal for the Study of Culture* 15 (2023). <<https://doi.org/10.22029/oc.2023.1349>>.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22029/oc.2023.1349>



## What Does the 250th Anniversary of the Independence Mean to a ‘Browner’ America?

### Abstract

Frederick Douglass’ 1852 address “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July” poignantly called attention to the Black people who were still unfree slaves when the Republic joyfully celebrated freedom and independence on its 76th anniversary. Echoing Douglass, this paper searches for the meaning of the 250th anniversary in a deeply fractured and divided America by focusing on the historical and current ‘color scheme.’ An in-depth examination of America’s history and cultural history, represented by the paradigms White, Black, Brown, Yellow, and Browner opens space for analysis and arguments on the formation of national character, the cultivation of cultural identity, and the definition of Americanism. This essay tackles the core of Whiteness in relation to Blackness (African Americans), Brownness (Native Americans), and Yellowness (Chinese/Asian Americans) to unpack a heated and culturally charged topic of race relations and capture the significance of the ‘Browner’ in ‘Browner America’ in anticipation of the 250th anniversary.

North America was originally ‘Brown,’ home to Native Americans for thousands of years before Europeans stepped foot on it. The ‘Brown’ natives were the earliest dwellers and owners of the land and the first ones to give meaning and purpose to the surroundings. Then, by the 1500s, after the voyages of Christopher Columbus in 1492 and the naming of America after Amerigo Vespucci in the 1505 Soderini letter, the White color began to lurk in the continent with Spain and France establishing settlements along the coastal areas. On May 14, 1607, the English founded their first permanent settlement in present-day America at Jamestown in the Virginia Colony.<sup>1</sup> Jamestown meant the first undeletable brush stroke of the White color by the Anglo-Saxons on North American canvas. In the European competition or the White competition for the Brown New World, the competitors from the origin of the White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant—the WASPs—emerged as unchallenged winners. They replaced the Spanish Catholic domination in North America. Thus, the WASPs saw themselves on a swift ‘Whitening’ mission. Indians and African slaves were the initial targets of the ‘White Agenda’ of colonizing and appropriating North America. Then, successive immigrants who are not WASP and not White have been the subjects of filtration, exclusion, or rejection; because they add and highlight the undesirable ‘Brown’ color. With subsequent legislative amendments and institutional implementations, the Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, and Black Lives Matter, among other racially charged historical landmarks, confront White power and

challenge the ‘White Agenda.’ As we approach the 250th anniversary of independence, the nation finds itself more rapidly becoming Brown, or more pointedly recovering ‘Brownness,’ rather than being ‘Whitened’ as designed and anticipated. According to the governmental census data on April 1, 2020,<sup>2</sup> Black or African Americans alone represent 13.6% of the population, Hispanics/Latinos 19.1%, Asians 6.3%, American Indians and natives 13.6%, and White alone (not Hispanic/Latino) 58.9%. A cursory look at the historical ‘color’ of America brings up a color scheme from original Brown to unconditionally pure White, ‘unwittingly’ Black presence, new Brown, mixed Brown, and the mosaic coexistence of White, Black, and Brown with White in a preeminent position. One thing is certain, the American ‘color’ was never monochromatic, and is no longer pure White but Browner by the day; it is like a pallet holding its multi-colored paint yet to be mixed organically on a canvas without missing any.

To evoke the title of Frederick Douglass’ 1852 address “What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?” this essay is titled “What Does the 250th Anniversary of the Independence Mean to a ‘Browner’ America?” Douglass’s address took place on July 5, 1852. On that antebellum day to celebrate the nation’s 76th birthday, he spoke to the Rochester Ladies’ Anti-Slavery Society in Rochester, New York. The African American cultural thinker poignantly highlighted the Black people who were still unfree slaves when the Republic jubilantly celebrated freedom and independence. The 13th Amendment to forever abolish the slavery institution was not introduced until 1865, eighty-nine years after the White people’s liberation from the British Monarch. How to explain the co-existence of the most inhuman slavery institution and the loftiest democracy, the co-existence of freedom and bondage in a nation that is a beacon to the world? Douglass did not point out any ‘color’ associated with the paradox of the Fourth of July. Nonetheless, his unvarnished depictions of ‘the slave’ sufficed to highlight an impassable line between the White and the Black in an America that was beginning to march on the path to the Civil War.

When the nation approaches its 250th anniversary of independence in 2026, the discourses and practices revolving around diversity, equity, and inclusion are underway as an irreversible force for social changes and cultural shifting. As early as 2016, the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development Office of the Under Secretary U.S. Department of Education compiled key data highlighting race and

ethnicity focused practices in education. While the data indicated the existing racial disparity in education, it gave an idea of how students of color grew in percentages over the decades. In bachelor's degree attainment, Black students had only 4% in 1964 graduation year, and grew to 22% in 2014. Hispanic students occupied 6% in 1974, and jumped to 15% in 2014. Asians grew from 49% in 2004 to 52% in 2014.<sup>3</sup> The 'Browner' platform of education reflected the social and cultural trends of gradual inclusion and diversity since the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

Outside education, 21st-century multiculturalism and multiracialism have also added considerable shades to 'White' America. The unending Southern border crisis and influx, the massive immigration from Africa and Asia in the last three decades has altered the demographic landscape. A 2021 *The Guardian* article by editor Betsy Reed "US's White Population Declines for the First Time Ever, 2020 Census finds" reports:

Overall, the white-alone population fell by 8.6% since 2010, the bureau said on Thursday. Non-Hispanic whites now account for around 58% of America's population, a drop from 2010 when they made up 63.7% of the population. It was the first time that the non-Hispanic white population has fallen below 60% since the census began.<sup>4</sup>

The newly updated racial makeup and statistics in the U.S. set the backdrop for a new 21st-century cultural character, national identity, and political ideologies to play out. Since the mid-20th century, immigrants of color and Non-Christians have significantly 'Browner' America. The 'American color' has gone from more than 80% predominantly White in a 2.5 million population in 1776<sup>5</sup> to about 59.3% White in a population of 331,893,745 in 2021.<sup>6</sup> Dudley Poston and Rogelio Sáenz give a more progressive count of the White population:

When the U.S. was established as a country in 1776, whites comprised roughly 80 percent of the population. The white share rose to 90 percent in 1920, and where it stayed until 1950.<sup>7</sup>

"The US population is much more multiracial and much more racially and ethnically diverse than we have measured in the past," said Nicholas Jones, a Census Bureau official, to *The Guardian* editor Betsy Reed.<sup>8</sup> As early as in 1999, Stuart Foster had already announced, "[t]oday the United States houses the most diverse ethnic, cultural and linguistic school population on earth."<sup>9</sup> On a national scale, our society continues to find itself increasingly 'Browning' and 'Browner.' Diversity, equity, and inclusion question the core of the Anglo-based American identity—White Anglo-Saxon,

Christian/Protestant, and English-monolingual. Having been the standard of Americanism, the norm of being an American, and the authority of excluding Non-WASPs, and the personification of liberation, now in a 'Browner' America, the White exclusive claims and sole ownership of freedom, equality, and democracy pose questions and doubts. Identifying the United States with a pure White color is no longer sufficient and clearly proves inadequate and incongruent with the current unfolding demographic landscape. The 'White Agenda' feels less than comfortable and even threatened by an increased population of color and Non-Christians. The WASPs' cultural monopoly of America, Americanness, and Americanism are under scrutiny. On the other side, we hear a louder voice of Non-White Americans of multicultural, multilingual, and multi-faith backgrounds fighting against systemic and historical racism and claiming their rightful place in power structures and race relations. The White fear of their diminished power and weakened preeminent position feels more real than ever, while the Non-White dream of an equal place in politics, culture, and history has turned out to be a vociferous and unneglectable demand for justice and equity.

The 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence is a landmark, yet the question remains whether we have a shared patriotism and a cohesive American identity to celebrate? The truth is that beliefs of freedom, democracy, and equality never bonded Americans together across economic interests, political spectrums, and color schemes. In the present day, these very beliefs, in fact, divide Americans and pit one group against another. At times, with siloed interpretations, these beliefs fuel vitriol and hatred towards fellow citizens who look different, have a different faith and come from different ancestry. Searching for a shared sense of history, common purposes, and reciprocated cultural values can easily spark cultural wars or cancel culture. Under the Star-Spangled Banner, there is a full range of colors and stripes of America—White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Muslim, LGBTQI, and so on and so forth. Each 'color' or 'stripe' overarches many sub-groups of similar colors and natures. There is far more than just one single American branch on the continent. Visceral divides, unbridgeable 'Not Knowing,' psychological silos, historical wounds, and current injuries slip into the gaps between these Americas. One hundred seventy years ago, Douglass protested the legalized exclusion and rejection of slaves on the 76th birthday of the nation and

winned at a White-exclusive and ‘democratic’ America. Today, in a ‘Browner’ America, dizzily intersected and culturally ‘threatened,’ these questions remain: on the 250th Anniversary of Independence, who is celebrating freedom, equality, and democracy? Who is still fighting for these American values?

To address these enduring questions, let us take a closer look at the word ‘Browner.’ It suggests a color change, from a previously lighter or White color to a color tinged, stained, and darkened by something muddy and impure. A ‘Browner’ America, as indicated previously, deals with color changes in a racial context and a cultural milieu. Only with historical knowledge and an in-depth cultural understanding of the White color, can we capture the significance of the ‘Browner’ and the meaning of the 250th anniversary of the nation. In the U.S. context, since the inception of the nation, the core of ‘Whiteness’ has dislodged constitutional power, legal rights, and executive implementations to remove any color that is not convenient to the White domination from any sector of society including from research and educational institutions. As intertwined as the American colors are, the U.S. culture has been molded on a White foundation and within a robust White structure; the White color has never ceased to dominate and rule, although facing gradually intensified challenges by other colors in recent years. To capture the cultural significance and historical meanings of ‘Brown’ or ‘Browner,’ let us zoom into the ‘logic’ and reasons behind the White removal, elimination, and Whitening of the ‘impure’ colors in history. Thus, focusing on White gives a deconstructive and comprehensive insight into the cultural significance of Non-White colors. In the following sections, this essay examines the core of ‘Whiteness’ integrally in relation to Blackness and Brownness in the making of America. We discern and deconstruct a consistent White pattern in relation to different ‘color’ groups—African Americans, Native Americans, and Asian/Chinese Americans.

### **1\_A Whitened Foundation of the Nation in Relation to African Slaves**

How was a ‘White’ cultural agenda designed to eliminate or Whiten other colors? How has the agenda been carried out consistently under different administrations and at various historical moments when Non-White colors are perceived as undesirable, un-American, and threatening? In deconstructing White/Non-White, there is a dual effect of making something new from the bits and pieces of what is dismantled; the

same actor performs the dual act; destructive and constructive occur undistinguishably in one action. This already happened at the birth moment of the nation. When the foundation was built for the new Republic, the Founding Fathers laid out a blueprint of a color scheme that would be cemented and embraced for the next 250 years and likely beyond. The Declaration of Independence gave birth to a new nation but also encapsulated a hidden design that would give shape, texture, and structure to race relations in the U.S. The process of finalizing the text of the Declaration shows a tactfully constructed race relation that would secure a color scheme with White on the top unchallenged. That was done, ironically, in pursuit of the noblest ideals of liberty, equality, and happiness, claiming these unalienable rights from the tyrannical and abusive British Monarch.

The Declaration of Independence is arguably one of the most soaring, precious, and lofty documents that the human race has ever produced. Its rhetoric about all men (and women) being ‘created equal’ has sustained timeless hope for those deprived of human rights and dignity. The American ideal of freedom and equality was born from the hemorrhage of the American Revolution with the goal of eliminating power hierarchy and bringing about a just and democratic society previously unknown in human history. Unlike many other revolutions, overthrowing an old regime and starting a new one was not the only outcome of the American Revolution. It created cultural DNA for a nation to be born, grow, and thrive. The Declaration was also one of the founding and guiding documents for a collective character to emerge, and for a set of institutions and systems to take root. At this glorious and history-making moment, the hidden design of race relations also planted seeds for future institutional application and structural development.

As one of the new Republic’s rationales for independence from Britain, anti-slavery sentiments were eloquently articulated in the original draft of the Declaration by Thomas Jefferson. The original draft is still labeled as controversial and divisive in the present day, and especially in the national debate of the 1776 project vs the 1619 project.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, it provides a fundamental understanding of race relations. In the spring of 1776, more and more colonies stood up for free and independent states to eventually cut ties to King George III and Britain. June of that year saw a series of routine businesses and events in the Second Congress but turned out to be a period of gestation and deliberation for uniting the colonies together and carrying out the

audacious act of declaring independence. First, Congress voted to form a committee to draft an official declaration. Five committee members, including Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, were elected to draft the declaration. Jefferson was the primary author. When he submitted the ‘rough draft’ to Congress on June 28, it contained a passage of 168-words condemning slavery “as one of many evils foisted upon the colonies by the British crown.”<sup>11</sup> Part of the removed passage reads:

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither.<sup>12</sup>

It must have stirred up mixed powerful feelings in Jefferson, a slave owner himself when he penned these words. Not surprisingly, Jeffersonian anti-slavery sentiments would not sit well with both southern and northern slave owners who were profiting from the slave trade and a slave-dependent economy. Both had livelihood and financial stakes in slavery. Tobacco, cotton, and sugar cane in southern plantations fueled the colonial economy, and the orderly managed chattel slavery was its engine and driving force. Northern shipping depended on the triangle trade between Europe, Africa, and the Americas; trafficking enslaved Africans from the British West Indies was a vital and lucrative line for business. To remind the world that such a livelihood and such a way of life are ‘a cruel war against human nature itself’ would pull the rug out from under the feet of a system that was beneficial and productive for both the North and the South. To further deconstruct the White core in relation to the Black, while the nation in its embryonic form, a slavery-based economic system and infrastructure allured southern planters and northern merchants with an ambitious and irresistible American Dream to grow, thrive, and prosper in a land full of opportunities. In other words, slaves’ labor and existence made their owners’ American Dream profitable, and gave the colonies the possibility of economic independence. Politically, slaves at the bottom of the racial hierarchy would conveniently ‘help’ maintain the status quo of the White order and further develop the White power structure.

Nonetheless, when deconstructing the other side of the Whiteness, the untold sufferings of African slaves evidently indicate that this slavery system violates “its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never

offended”<sup>13</sup> any White owners or authorities. White owners and institutions did not regard slaves as humans, had no regard for Black human rights, and disposed of Black individuals as possessions or property. What the White core did is a gross failure of human rights—the objectives of the American Revolution. In fighting for the sovereignty of a new nation and the liberation of those subjugated to an oppressive imperial power, keeping and defending slavery institutions was a slap in the face of the very American ideals of freedom, human rights, and equality, highlighted in the Declaration of Independence. The White core fought for White freedom in a time of widespread abuse of the human rights of Black individuals. By removing the 168 word-passage, does the Declaration of Independence send a message that we are not all created equal? Thus, what was debated in Congress was the paradox of the need for liberation in the need for subjugation, and the liberators in their behavior as oppressors.

After much deliberation, the pro-slavery force won the day. The anti-slavery passage was struck out in order to avoid lengthy and difficult debates and avoid losing votes to pass the Declaration. Procedurally speaking, had Jefferson’s anti-slavery passage remained struck out, there would not likely have been a timely and imminent declaration of independence on July 4, 1776, and the birth of a new nation would have been delayed and complicated. It was a congressional victory and a once-a-generation history-making moment, but it was that moment when the lofty American ideals and the American Dream bifurcated into opposite and irreconcilable directions with the color line in between.

A fledgling American mindset was deconstructed by the color line on day one, as shown during the voting process in Congress. Delegate John Dickinson of Pennsylvania did not sign the document although known as the “Penman of the Revolution.” Dickinson came from a family whose generations had owned large and profitable tobacco plantations, in the Province of Maryland, labored by slaves. Then, the three delegates of New York brought the political divide into an already heated and intense process. James Duane of NY neither voted nor signed the Declaration due to his absence. Robert Livingston of NY was recalled by his state before he could sign the document. John Jay of NY was a supporter of reconciliation rather than revolution, upholding his opposition to American independence from Britain. He ended up resigning from the Second Congress before putting his signature on the

document. The signing also met resistance from Edward Rutledge of South Carolina—a deep slave colony. As the youngest signer of the document, he was instructed to oppose the draft; but he signed it nevertheless.

The removal of the passage blatantly denied the rights and humanity of enslaved Black individuals in the Republic. Only by securing the slavery institutions, was the majority support for independence secured. Only by depriving Black individuals of freedom, equality, and happiness, were votes in Congress reached to declare White men's unalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and Happiness. The removal of the passage was strategic in order to achieve consensus, at the same time, it Whitened the foundation of the nation by erasing the Black color. Thus, a White foundation was laid on which to build a culture and society. The removal of the passage planted the seeds for racial injustice that would evolve to be systemic racism as the absence of the passage splits the American ideals into a series of pernicious dualities of “all men are created equal” vs “all men are created unequal,” freedom vs bondage, unalienable vs alienable. To African Americans, what was not declared in the Declaration of Independence spoke louder than what was declared. The absence of those 168 anti-slavery words in the Declaration sealed African Americans' fate in the Republic—a fate of unconditional subjugation to the White power and its racial hierarchy. To the world, the message was clear that Blacks were not created equal but inferior to Whites, and the nation had to be born with an inherent racial hierarchy. The process of producing the nation-defining Declaration of Independence brought to light a White and Whitened foundation of the Republic and set the agenda to build a robust structure to Whiten the new nation.

The American lofty ideals of freedom, equality, and democracy sprouted from a sense of being wronged, as Douglass acknowledged the wisdom and bravery of the Founding Fathers:

Oppression makes a wise man mad. Your fathers [the Founding Fathers] were wise men, and if he did not go mad, they became restive under this treatment. They felt themselves the victims of grievous wrongs, wholly incurable in their colonial capacity. With brave men there is always a remedy for oppression. Just here, the idea of a total separation of the colonies from the crown was born!<sup>14</sup>

Revisiting the Declaration of Independence, and in view of slavery institutions run by the descendants of the wise and courageous Founding Fathers, Douglass cries out the failure of these American ideals:

My subject, [...] is AMERICAN SLAVERY of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declaration of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future.<sup>15</sup>

After 76 years of independence, Black slaves continued being wronged, and yet no individual, no institution, and no system had the wisdom and courage to correct the wrong in the same way that Founding Fathers did to the British Monarch. If the foundation is Whitened, how can one expect the institutions and systems designed by the foundation to be a different color? Douglass had full awareness of the irresolvable paradox of the Declaration of Independence and predicted the effect of its flawed narrative into the present day. After 250 years, no one has ever systemically questioned the foundational flaws yet.

## **2\_Structural Whiteness—The Indian Removal Act**

The Declaration of Independence codified a blueprint of a Whitened foundation of the country. Throughout U.S. history, the blueprint proliferates countless deconstructive acts of inclusion and exclusion of racial groups to form national character, cultural values, and power structures. The preeminent position of White was secured not only upon the foundation but also on each layer of the robust structure. Once the U.S. declared independence and the foundation of the nation was laid, it was immediately clear that the color of the new Republic must be unequivocally White. The ‘problem’ was that the original dwellers and owners of America were not White, they were Brown and America as we know was Brown by its origin. Nonetheless, America must be fashioned to be White in its origin, foundation, and structures because of the White need for power and White appetite for control. The Declaration of Independence had no regard for African Americans and effectively ruled out the prospect of a multi-colored new Republic to be unveiled. Like African Americans, Native Americans could not escape the ‘manifest destiny’ of being ‘cleaned away’ from White America.

The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 doubled the size of U.S. territory. This created much-desired room for the expansion and reconfiguration of the country. Many eager settlers of European descent had already been hungry for the Southwest Indian land and “pressuring the federal government to remove the Indians”<sup>16</sup> so that White Americans could carry out their American Dream in the expanded new land for a life of freedom and happiness. Accompanying the economic interest, there was a notion

that Indians were cruel, treacherous, and savage, and their removal was presented as a benefit to civilization. In establishing a White framework beyond the foundation, Whites were portrayed as civilized beings with a higher morality and more knowledge and skills. Stuart J. Foster reiterates:

Throughout American history the contents of textbooks principally have been determined by a white, male, Protestant, middle or upper class, which has often sought to construct an idealized image of American values and American character.<sup>17</sup>

The Bible says, “[t]he wilderness and the land will be glad; the desert will rejoice and blossom like a rose.”<sup>18</sup> The biblical version went well with the Protestants’ belief of their manifest destiny, that is, the superior White needed to take the Indian’s land away for better management and more benefits. Native Americans were not considered citizens of the Republic by the U.S. government but subservient to the White. The government, the pinnacle of Whiteness, was fickle with policies regarding Native Americans, alternating between condescending, paternalistic, and patronizing. On May 28, 1830, as his top legislative priority, President Andrew Jackson signed the ‘Indian Removal Act’ into law. With the goal to open millions of acres of rich land east of the Mississippi to White settlers, the Act legalized a process that would bestow authority on the president to force Indian tribes to give up their ancestral land in the Southwest and threaten them into signing removal treaties. This was done in the name of civilization, progress, and nationalism. Jackson did not hide his interest in drawing a White frontier in the Southwest:

At the time, Jackson said the removal would ‘incalculably strengthen the southwestern frontier,’ and would enable new states like Alabama and Mississippi to ‘advance rapidly in population, wealth and power.’<sup>19</sup>

As a result,

[b]y the end of his presidency in 1837, his administration negotiated almost 70 removal treaties that led to the relocation of 50,000 eastern Native Americans to the Indian Territory. Twenty-five million acres of the land were now freed up for white settlement in the east and as a result used for the expansion of slavery.<sup>20</sup>

Between 1830 to 1850, the U.S. government forcibly displaced “approximately 60,000 of the Five Civilized Tribes,”<sup>21</sup> as part of the Indian removal. The Act ultimately enacted the infamous Trail of Tears. Members of “the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Cherokee, and Seminole”<sup>22</sup> were uprooted from the Southwest by force, and their titles to land claims were extinguished by law. The relocated Indians

suffered a myriad of misery from exposure to starvation and disease. Among the Indians who died on the way to their designated reserve west of the Mississippi River, one-quarter were Cherokee people. Many contemporary historians attributed the Trail of Tears to genocide and Andrew Jackson to the title of “Killer of Indians.”

The Whitening act did not stop just Whitening the land; it went deeper with the Whitening of mind and culture. In a 2011 study on the row and brutal Jacksonian removal, Megan Dearth analyzes governmental policies of assimilation,

[t]hroughout history, federal Indian policy has vacillated between separation and assimilation. Sometimes federal and state governments recognize and promote tribal sovereignty, while other times, the policy favors assimilation into the dominant culture over individualism.<sup>23</sup>

While separation means removing them out of sight and/or leaving them isolated, assimilation is no less controversial. Institutionalized assimilation often means government-sponsored boarding schools. In the 19th and 20th centuries, specifically between 1790 and 1920,<sup>24</sup> the U.S. government used boarding schools to forcibly separate young Indian children from their families to becoming educated by White nuns. The idea was to erase Native Americans’ cultural memories and languages so that they could get assimilated into ‘civilization.’ Only by inculcating them with the English language, and teachings of Christianity, and by controlling their education, religion, traditions, and customs, can the government ‘civilize’ and ‘Americanize’ the ‘savage’ Indians. ‘Make the Indians an apple’—Brown outside and White inside—as the goal of assimilation. At this point, it is not hard to correlate what the U.S. religious and educational institutions have done to the African Americans—‘make them an Oreo’ with Black outside but White inside.

Moreover, the American values dictated by the White settlers and usurpers were another brainwashing step to ‘Americanize’ Native Americans. When the Indians of the Five Tribes arrived in the designated Indian Territory, as Alaina E. Roberts points out, they were programmed to embrace the “[W]hiteness by the physical appropriation of ‘Plains Indians’ land with an erasure of their predecessors’ history.”<sup>25</sup> To appeal to White Americans’ ‘pioneer spirit,’ in other words, to Whiten Indians’ minds, they were made to believe that the White people had found an undeveloped wilderness and their colonial process was civilizing this land and bringing progress and prosperity. The Indians participated in the Whitening endeavor to become culturally White. More tragically, they were also made to believe that only

Whites were true Americans and Native Americans were not but savage and lost souls to be redeemed. Ironically, the White Agenda and Whitening mechanisms were paddled by freedom, democracy, and equality, but only in the White version.

### **3\_An Ironclad Whiteness—The Chinese Exclusion Act**

The Indian Removal Act consolidates the inner Whiteness in the nation. As an immigrant country, prior to 1880, Europeans were the primary immigrants flooding into this land to avoid religious and political persecution, survive crop disasters, join the frontier expansion in the U.S. and play a role in the U.S. industrial revolution.<sup>26</sup> From the early 17th century and throughout the 18th century,<sup>27</sup> the Black color also came to the scene with the arrival of enslaved people from Africa and the Caribbean. Then, gold was found at Sutter’s Mill, California in early 1848, the U.S. borders were inundated with fortune seekers. Gold Rush spurred the Chinese to journey to the Golden Mountain—a Chinese way referring to the Gold Rush and the American Dream. Later in the 1860s, the Chinese were also brought to the U.S. as second or third-class citizens, for the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad. The ‘Brown’ or ‘Yellow’ subjects arrived in large numbers. Now, the White Agenda had to be expanded externally towards external ‘Brownness,’ and the Whitening mechanism needed enhanced layers. Once Whiteness is exclusively identified as the standard definition of America—freedom, democracy, and equality, European immigrants, especially those from an Anglo and Protestant heritage, had the upper hand in infiltrating the White core and becoming American, because they had the ‘correct’ skin color and were privileged with a transferable cultural affinity. However, the inbound influx of ‘Non-Whiteness’ was an issue for the U.S. government to deal with, because it presented the ‘Yellow Peril,’ threatening American values and contaminating the purity of Whiteness. The influx of ‘Brownness’ had to be blocked. Warren J. Blumenfeld states in his essay “United States Immigration Laws & Procedures as ‘Racial’ Policies”:

Beginning the first day Europeans stepped foot on what has come to be known as ‘the Americas’ up until this very day, decisions over who can enter the United States and who can eventually gain citizenship status has generally depended on issues of ‘race.’ U.S. immigration systems have reflected and have served as this country’s official ‘racial’ policies at any given time.<sup>28</sup>

Over the 250 years of U.S. history, “as host to more immigrants than any other country, the United States has been shaped and reshaped by immigration over the

centuries demographically, economically, culturally, socially, and politically.”<sup>29</sup> However, the color of America and being American must be White, which does not allow any variations and other colors to interfere. To tint or mix the White with Brown/Yellow by immigrants is deemed as un-American or anti-American at best and a threat to alter and replace American cultural values at worst. In the 19th century, the identification of Whiteness with Americanness was unquestionable and absolute. The Declaration of Independence erased the Black color, what ensued was a consistent agenda and an unflinching exercise to secure and maintain ‘Whiteness’ throughout the past, the present, and the future of the Republic. The arrival of the Chinese, by choice and by force, stirred up racial hatred previously unseen in U.S. history. In 1875, for the first time, “the U.S. government began to restrict immigration; until that time, virtually all arrivals were admitted.”<sup>30</sup> It is known as the Page Act, which had a target at Asians, Chinese women in particular, and barred their admission to the country.

To fuel the engine of American economy, in the mid-1860s, the Chinese were brought to these shores as coolies (hard labor) for the Transcontinental Railway project. The Chinese took the brunt of the Central Pacific Railroad—the western portion of the first transcontinental railroad, covering the harshest terrain from Sacramento, California to Promontory, Utah.<sup>31</sup> The Chinese coolies were an essential part in building and connecting the lifeline of the US economy—the Transcontinental Railroad. While becoming irreplaceable, cheap, quiet, obedient, and unusually hard-working labor and contributing to the engineering miracle in the making of a world superpower, the Chinese coolies’s physical attributes and linguistic/cultural distance to the ‘Whiteness’ alienated them from the ‘mainstream’ and situated them at the bottom in the U.S. racial hierarchy. The then San Francisco mayor Frank McCoppin could not help but uttered these unvarnished words, “The Chinese immigrants were a distinct people [...] whom nature has marked as inferior.” The Chinese immigration “was described as an invasion.”<sup>32</sup> Despite their undeletable contributions to the building of the American nation, the Chinese were disparaged as aliens, the inscrutable, the filthy, the immoral, the exotic whore, and the ‘Yellow Peril;’ they were unassimilable social dregs, worse than Native Americans because there was no governmental interest in ‘civilizing’ or ‘Americanizing’ them. Thus, they were found to be incompatible with American ideals of freedom, individualism, democracy, and equality. Thus, they

posed danger to 'Brown' the Whiteness and stain the WASP's 'pure' path to the manifest destiny. So much so that the images and traces of the Chinese had to be erased from history book.

In my book "Tracing the Roots of Anti-Chinese Sentiments in U.S. History," I describe the historical day when the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific joined to complete the Transcontinental Railroad:

On May 10, 1869, the inauguration of the first Transcontinental Railroad in Promontory, Utah should have been a seminal and redeeming page in the history of the Chinese immigrants, but it turned out to be a historical moment of humiliation for the Chinese. When the authorities of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads came together to celebrate the joining the tracks, [...] many of the workers who had built the railroad were all but invisible at the ceremony, and in its retelling for many years afterward. They included about 15,000 Chinese immigrants—up to 90 percent of the work force on the Central Pacific line—who were openly discriminated against, vilified and forgotten.<sup>33</sup>

Stanford University Archives keep the pictures of the workforce, taken by Andrew J. Russell, at the 'Golden Spike' Ceremony on May 10, 1869 at Promontory Summit, Utah, when the Central Pacific Railroad joined with the Union Pacific Railroad. The picture of Stanford University's founder Leland Stanford, a major financier for the Transcontinental Railroad, holds a sledgehammer to drive the ceremonial gold spike, the cheerful scene when the leaders of the Central Pacific and Union Pacific meet and shake hands at the connecting moment of the two sections, all symbolizing the final completion of the lifeline of the nation. There are crowds of construction workers on both sides—the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific, but not a single Chinese face can be spotted on the Central Pacific side—their labor of blood, sweat, and tears. The Chinese workers were sent away from the history-making 'Golden Spike' ceremony. In their place, Caucasian White faces conveniently replaced the 'Yellow' ones. Literally, the history page was Whitened on that day and the Brown and Yellow impure colors were 'cleaned' up.

Cultural Whitening in the case of the Chinese is both similar and different from the case of Native Americans. The anti-Chinese sentiments in the U.S. did not involve land sovereignty, natural resources ownership, and Christian boarding schools. In the mid-19th century, the Know Nothing Party waged anti-immigration movements with deeply seated nativist ideologies. Catholic Irish and Italians, although racially White, were targeted, because culturally they were not considered White enough compared to Anglo-Saxons and Protestants. In the face of the Chinese presence, all of a sudden,

the Euro-immigrants magically became cohesive and united because of the similarity of their racial Whiteness. The shared Whiteness was too akin to be shattered once a drastically different presence irrupted on the scene—the distant Chinese alien embodying the Yellow Peril and contaminating the American landscape.<sup>34</sup> Erica Lee quotes the statements made at the San Francisco meeting on the Chinese immigration, recorded in *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 17, 1876: “Instead, the Chinese ‘are of a distinct race, of a different and particular civilization,’ one anti-Chinese resolution proclaimed at the San Francisco meeting. ‘They do not speak our language, do not adopt our manners, customs or habits, are Pagan in belief.’ The Chinese immigration, the organization committee, concluded, was ‘an evil of great present magnitude.’”<sup>35</sup>

By enacting a series of race-based and national-origin-determined immigration laws, the U.S. government indeed established a racial hierarchy with the White at the top not only in legal systems and structured institutions but also in the mind and the psyche of the nation.<sup>36</sup> By 1882, the anti-Chinese sentiments were so high that the fear of ‘Browning’ by the ‘Yellow Peril’ became ‘The Chinese Question’ at the national level and drove the White citizens in California to open and pronounce the demand on the U.S. government for a resolution in the name of protecting American values and culture. As a result, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act passed in Congress and from that point on, xenophobia and discrimination against the Chinese were legalized and ‘protected’ by single-race-targeted federal law. The Act was designed to curb the influx of Chinese immigrants to the U.S. Ten years later in 1892, California congressman Thomas J. Geary proposed the Geary Act to reinforce and extend the Chinese Exclusion Act for an additional ten years. In fact, the Act was only repealed in 1943. In 1902, Chinese immigration was made permanently illegal by the government. During the Exclusion era, all Chinese residents already in the U.S. were required to carry certificates of residence to prove their legal status in order not to be deported. As a chain reaction, the Chinese Exclusion Act spurred future immigration restrictions against other ‘undesirable’ and ‘inferior’ Non-Christian groups and Non-White races, such as Japanese, Middle Easterners, and those from the Indian subcontinent. This culminated with the Immigration Act of 1924, which includes the Asian Exclusion Act and the National Origin Act. By enacting a series of race-based and national-origin-determined immigration laws, the U.S. government indeed

established a racial hierarchy with the White at the top not only in legal systems and structured institutions but also in the mind and the psyche of the nation.

The passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act was reminiscent of the passage of the 1830 Indian Removal Act. White greed, White settlers' desire for the land in the southeastern U.S., and Whites' intolerance of the presence of 'savage' Indians propelled the Act to be put in place. The Chinese Exclusion Act was motivated by Whites' intolerance of the 'Yellow Peril,' the coexistence with an 'inferior' race, and the 'threat' to American culture, aka, the White values. In the name of nationalism, in defense of American values and culture, and in advancing American interests, both acts created systemic racism, legalized race-targeted discrimination, and effectively erected an explicit racial hierarchy "in descending order of racial worth—the Caucasians at the top, followed by Mongolian, the Malaysian, the Negro and the American Indian."<sup>37</sup> The two acts are a double implementation of Whiteness to remove the inner 'Brown color' of Native Americans and to fence off the Yellow Peril brought in from outside by the Chinese/Asian immigrants. The two acts highlighted a consistent and ironclad White Agenda, before and after the Civil War.

#### **4 Conclusion: The Meaning of the 250th Anniversary to a 'Browner' America**

By dismissing Black the nation's foundation was built, by removing Brown the nation's structures were developed, and by excluding Yellow the nation's borders were secured. The mindset that the WASPs were chosen by God and destined to prevail over others with their model 'city upon a hill' is the core of Whiteness. As Cultural Studies theories advance into race relations, Whitening practices and exercises in specific contexts tend to be examined and critiqued more routinely than the White Agenda and the White mindset. Fundamentally, the White mindset cannot accept Americans of African descent as equal human beings, cannot treat Native Americans as equal adults and partners, and cannot deal with the Chinese as equal minds and souls. In the 1980s, there was an educational effort to correct cultural bias but stopped short of tackling the White mindset and systemic racism perpetuated not only by White but at times by other colors too:

Native Americans were dispossessed of their land, 'because they did not understand the concept of private land ownership'; Asian workers received low wages because they were willing to 'work for very little', Blacks could not be given urban jobs because they 'were unskilled and uneducated,' Chicanos face problems because 'they are not fluent in English.'<sup>38</sup>

Equality as well as equity make the White mind uncomfortable, because of the inability to overcome the sense of racial superiority and the belief that the WASPs are the chosen ones. As the U.S. approaches its 250th anniversary of independence, the White Agenda may not appear as crude and immediately recognizable as it was in the past. Whiteness now trickles down to political tribalism, ideological divisions, and cultural wars. When racism and hate crimes rear their ugly heads during the COVID-19 pandemic and spark the Black Lives Matter movement, once again, historical wounds reopen and racial injuries bleed. After 250 years to ‘build a more perfect union,’ society is still fractured, culture is still not cohesive, and people are still frightened. Shared hate and animosity unite individuals more tightly than shared notions of freedom, democracy, and equality.

While pondering the meaning of the 250th anniversary in a ‘Browner’ America, the subject of race relations brings us back to what the Fourth of July means to Frederick Douglass on the nation’s 76th birthday and in a Black-and-White America. As a Black cultural thinker and writer, Douglass deliberately distanced himself from the country—the United States—where he was born. He wincingly addressed America and his American audience as ‘your National Independence,’ ‘your nation,’ and ‘you:’

This, for the purpose of this celebration, is the 4th of July. It is the birthday of your National Independence, and of your political freedom. This, to you, is what the Passover was to the emancipated people of God. It carries your minds back to the day, and to the act of your great deliverance; [...] This celebration also marks the beginning of another year of your national life; and reminds you that the Republic of America is now 76 years old. I am glad, fellow-citizens, that your nation is so young.<sup>39</sup>

The striking use of ‘you’ and ‘your’ establishes two dialogical entities—the world of the speaker and the world of the audience. We might ask, while both Douglass and his audience are Americans, what exactly has created such an emotional distance that makes Douglass feel irrelevant to the Fourth of July and even unidentifiable with his own country? At one point of his life, Bernard R. Boxill points out, Douglass believed that the Constitution was radically pro-slavery. “Douglass often repeated the Constitution did not and could not recognize him as a human being making it understandable for him to disclaim all patriotism, and all love for the U.S.”<sup>40</sup> Independence, freedom, and equality were emblazoned on the national consciousness on the Fourth of July, but what can be a crueler disregard, a bloodier reminder, and a

more alienating exclusion for those who were not free and not liberated from the hands that lit the celebratory light on the Fourth of July? Clearly, Douglass questions the emblazoned American ideals of freedom, equality, and democracy, and reveals the falsehood and the hypocrisy that these ideals convey to a Black slave. Freedom set certain Americans free from British tyranny, but freedom took away the freedom of enslaved Black individuals. The only way to come to terms with the duplicity of American ideals is to draw a color line between you (White) and us (Black), distance oneself with the use of ‘you, your country,’ and deconstruct the White core from both Black and White sides.

Douglass’s 1852 address brought to light a cultural, ideological, and sociopolitical binary—the Black and the White. Cultural wars were waged because of the American binary. In 1852, Douglass’s America was brought to the brink of destruction over slavery, and the Civil War was brewing. The entire decade of the 1850s witnessed how the nation’s political institutions were stirred up by the fierce debate over slavery. The publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in 1852 called national attention to race relations and ignited a cultural war between abolitionists and defenders of slavery. William Lloyd Garrison, the leading abolitionist, was vociferously opposed to the U.S. Constitution because of its compromises with slavery and had little patience with the political process to uphold the White Agenda. Political parties, newspapers, novelists, and thinkers were realigned around the Black-and-White division as democracy vs slavery became an unresolvable American duality. They joined the cultural war over the slavery issue, which eventually lead up to the Civil War. In different ways, they responded to the soul-searching, nation-building, and culture-defining crisis. In doing so, the American cultural war unfolded in tandem with the Civil War. Since then, the Fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the American creed have never ceased to act as central pieces in cultural wars throughout U.S. history.

Today, on the eve of the 250th anniversary of independence, the same unsettled duality of American ideals and values, laid out by Douglass more than 170 years ago, is still much alive. Cultural wars on claiming one’s rightful place in the American narrative continue. The 21st ‘color scheme’ still has Black and White on two polarities, but in between them, a full range of shades of colors has been gleaned—Dark Brown, Brown, Light Brown, Yellow, Olive, Tan, etc. Previously, these in-

between colors were too ‘invisible’ to be counted as the Republic’s constituents. The Black-and-White binary remains but evolves into multidimensional and intersectional due to these in-between colors. The American canvas has been forcefully painted with White as the primary color for 250 years, although it should never have been White only. A ‘Browner’ America in the 21st century is to recover history’s original color, as the American story started with an indigenous Brown color. The 250th anniversary means the ‘American tapestry’ needs to be repainted and rewoven adding in-between colors and textures to the Black-and-White polar and prototypical configuration.

If we let Frederick Douglass’s speech be a springboard to reach the meaning of the 250th anniversary, one thing is clear, culture war no longer has to become a violent civil war like in the period of 1850s–60s. However, we are in a cultural war because of the color war that defines the nation since the inception of the country. One and a quarter of a century ago, African American cultural thinker and intellect W.E.B. Du Bois prophesized, “[t]he problem of the twentieth-century is the problem of the color-line.”<sup>41</sup> Today, scholars and researchers revisit the ‘prophecy,’ while anticipating an American future of renegotiated race relations, flattened power hierarchy, and harmoniously blended color schemes.

The truth is that America was, is, and will never be monochromatic. All colors together make us one single nation. Inevitably, we question if our common values, interests, and beliefs are strong and cohesive enough to bind us together in trust, reciprocity, tolerance, and acceptance; we quest if a shared American identity across the color scheme exists. Nonetheless, at the same time, we realize it is time to repaint the foundation, the frames, the contours, and the structures of our society with the colors that are meant to belong to this land. The landmark anniversary of the founding of freedom, democracy, and equality creates a ‘Browner’ American Dream in a present as well as futuristic version.

## **Endnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> My paraphrase from David A. Price, “Jamestown Colony,” Britannica, accessed August 23, 2023, <[www.britannica.com/place/Jamestown-Colony](http://www.britannica.com/place/Jamestown-Colony)>.
- <sup>2</sup> United States Census Bureau, “Population, Census, April 1, 2020,” accessed August 23, 2023, <<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/POP010220>>.

- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Education, “Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education: Key Data Highlights Focusing on Race and Ethnicity and Promising Practices,” November 2016, <<https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/advancing-diversity-inclusion.pdf>>, 12.
- <sup>4</sup> Betsy Reed, “US’s White Population Declines for First Time Ever, 2020 Census Finds,” in *The Guardian*, accessed August 27, 2023, <<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/aug/12/us-2020-census-white-population-declines>>.
- <sup>5</sup> Norbert Naupht indicates in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed, the country had a population of 2.5 million. See Norbert Haupt, “U.S. Population in 1776 and 1790,” Norbert Haupt: Books, Movies, Art, Paintings and General Musings (blog), January 16, 2011, <<https://norberthaupt.com/2011/01/16/u-s-population-in-1776-and-1790/>>.
- <sup>6</sup> The percentage of the White population in the U.S. 2021 comes from USA Facts, “Our Changing Population: United States,” July 2022, <[https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-population?utm\\_source=bing&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=ND-DemPop&msclkid=5cebb403f6d71764d8efd7e8231237b](https://usafacts.org/data/topics/people-society/population-and-demographics/our-changing-population?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=ND-DemPop&msclkid=5cebb403f6d71764d8efd7e8231237b)>.
- <sup>7</sup> Dudley Poston and Rogelio Sáenz, “The US White Majority Will Soon Disappear Forever,” in *The Conversation*, April 30, 2019, <<https://theconversation.com/the-us-white-majority-will-soon-disappear-forever-115894>>, (the original source), and Dudley Poston and Rogelio Sáenz, “Demographic Trends Spell the End of the White Majority in 2044,” in *MYSA*, May 25, 2019, <<https://www.mysanantonio.com/opinion/commentary/article/Demographic-trends-spell-the-end-of-the-white-13895367.php>>.
- <sup>8</sup> Reed, “US’s White Population Declines.”
- <sup>9</sup> Stuart J. Foster, “The Struggle for American Identity: Treatment of Ethnic Groups in United States Textbooks,” *History of Education* 28, no. 3 (1999): 251–278, here: 251.
- <sup>10</sup> In late August 1619, the English privateer ship White Lion with 20–30 enslaved Africans on board landed in today’s Hampton, Virginia. These slaves were traded for supplies. For original source see Jake Silverstein, “Why We Published The 1619 Project,” in *The New York Times Magazine*, December 20, 2019, <<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/20/magazine/1619-intro.html>>. Also see “The 1619 Project,” Wikipedia, accessed August 23, 2023, <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_1619\\_Project](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_1619_Project)>. This marked the first recorded African slaves to English North America. The 1619 project, developed by writer Nikole Hannah-Jones, claims 1619 was the year of the beginning of America, and reframes U.S. history by placing African Americans at the center of the narrative. The 1776 project largely refers to the 1776 commission established in September 2020 by then-President Donald Trump in support of “patriotic education,” keeping traditionally revered events, individuals, and places at the center. Therefore, the 1619 project vs the 1776 project is one of the major battlefields for the on-going racially-charged cultural wars in the U.S.
- <sup>11</sup> The phrase quoted and the paraphrase on Jefferson’s draft in the paragraph are from Yohuru Williams, “Why Thomas Jefferson’s Anti-Slavery Passage Was Removed from the Declaration of Independence,” *HISTORY*, June 26, 2023, <<https://www.history.com/news/declaration-of-independence-deleted-anti-slavery-clause-jefferson>>.
- <sup>12</sup> “Transcript of the Rough Draft of the Declaration,” Monticello, accessed May 12, 2022, <<https://www.monticello.org/thomas-jefferson/jefferson-s-three-greatest-achievements/the-declaration/transcript-of-the-rough-of-the-declaration/>>, also “(1776) The Deleted Passage of the Declaration of Independence,” BlackPast, accessed May 12, 2022,

- <<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/declaration-independence-and-debate-over-slavery/>>.
- 13 Thomas Jefferson, “Draft of the Declaration of Independence,” ed. and introduced by Gordon Lloyd, *Teaching American History*, accessed August 23, 2023, <<https://teachingamericanhistory.org/document/rough-draft-of-the-declaration-of-independence/>>.
- 14 For Douglass’ original text, see Michael Harriot, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July? Read the Full Text of Frederick Douglass’ Iconic Speech,” in *The Root*, July 4, 2020, <<https://www.theroot.com/what-to-the-slave-is-the-fourth-of-july-1836083536>>.
- 15 Harriot, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”
- 16 John S. Lupold and Thomas L. French, Jr., *Bridging Deep South Rivers: The Life and Legend of Horace King* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 43, <[https://www.google.de/books/edition/Bridging\\_Deep\\_South\\_Rivers/QS2bDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%E2%80%9Cpressuring+the+federal+government+to+remove+the+Indians%E2%80%9D&pg=PA43&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.de/books/edition/Bridging_Deep_South_Rivers/QS2bDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=%E2%80%9Cpressuring+the+federal+government+to+remove+the+Indians%E2%80%9D&pg=PA43&printsec=frontcover)>. Also see “Trail of Tears,” Wikipedia, accessed January 23, 2023, <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail\\_of\\_Tears](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trail_of_Tears)>.
- 17 Foster, “The Struggle for American Identity,” 253.
- 18 Isaiah 35:1, Bible Hub, accessed August 23, 2023, <<https://biblehub.com/isaiah/35-1.htm>>.
- 19 “Andrew Jackson Signs the Indian Removal Act into Law,” HISTORY, accessed January 23, 2023, <<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/indian-removal-act-signed-andrew-jackson>>.
- 20 “Andrew Jackson Signs the Indian Removal Act into Law.”
- 21 Grant Foreman, *Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974), in the publisher’s abstract, <<https://www.oupres.com/9780806111728/indian-removal/>>. Also see “Trail of Tears.”
- 22 Foreman, “Indian Removal: The Emigration of the Five Civilized Tribes of Indians,” publisher’s abstract.
- 23 Megan H. Dearth, “Defending the ‘Indefensible’: Replacing Ethnocentrism with a Native American Cultural Defense,” *American Indian Law Review* 35, no. 2 (2010–2011): 621–660, here: 621. This is a quote of the quote. To see the original text, refer to Jace Weaver, “The Pendulum Swings of Indian Policy,” *E JOURNAL USA* (2009): 16–18, here: 16, (tracing the shifting federal policy toward Indians).
- 24 Historians often select this period as a “full circle” of the Native Americans’ saga. In 1791, the Treaty of Holston was signed, in which the Cherokee gave up all their land outside the borders previously established. On June 2, 1924, U.S. Congress passed the “Indian Citizenship Act,” granting citizenship to all Native Americans born in the territorial limits of the country. This is also a period known as forced and imposed “Americanization” on Native Americans. See “Native American History Timeline,” HISTORY, June 2, 2023, <<https://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/native-american-timeline>>.
- 25 For further discussion, see Alaina E. Roberts, *I’ve Been Here All The While: Black Freedom on Native Land* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021), 12–15.
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- 27 For the historical timelines of the arrival of the enslaved Africans, see “First Enslaved Africans Arrive in Jamestown, Setting the Stage for Slavery in North America,” HISTORY, August 15,

- 2023, <<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-african-slave-ship-arrives-jamestown-colony>>.
- 28 Warren J. Blumenfeld, “United States Immigration Laws & Procedures as ‘Racial’ Policies,” *Academia.edu* (2022): 1–20, here: 5, <[https://www.academia.edu/37618963/United\\_States\\_Immigration\\_Laws\\_and\\_Procedures\\_as\\_Racial\\_Policies](https://www.academia.edu/37618963/United_States_Immigration_Laws_and_Procedures_as_Racial_Policies)>.
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- 32 Yang, “Tracing the Roots of Anti-Chinese Sentiments in U.S. History,” 6. The original quote is from Erica E. Lee, *America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2019), 8, 84.
- 33 Yang, “Tracing the Roots of Anti-Chinese Sentiments in U.S. History,” 10.
- 34 See Yang, “Tracing the Roots of Anti-Chinese Sentiments in U.S. History,” 9.
- 35 All the quotes in this paragraph are from Lee, *America for Americans*, 76.
- 36 See Bolter, “Immigration Has Been A Defining, Often Contentious, Element.”
- 37 Foster, “The Struggle for American Identity,” 256.
- 38 Council on Interracial Books for Children, *Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks* (New York: 1980), 91.
- 39 “(1852) Frederick Douglass, ‘What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of July?’,” *BlackPast*, accessed January 16, 2023, <<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/speeches-african-american-history/1852-frederick-douglass-what-slave-fourth-july/>>.
- 40 Bernard R. Boxill, “Frederick Douglass’s Patriotism,” *The Journal of Ethics* 13, no. 4 (2009): 301–317, here: 303.
- 41 W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Barnes and Nobles Classics, 1903), 3.