

LP² STUDY GROUP PROPOSAL FOR SPRING 2023

***THE INVENTION OF THE WHITE RACE: THE ORIGINS OF RACIAL OPPRESSION* BY THEODORE ALLEN**

Coordinator: Ted Auerbach

The Invention of the White Race is one of the most important and influential books ever written on racism and its historical development in the U.S. It deals with the idea of “whiteness”. One of the crucial ideas it traces is the social construction of identifying as “white”. It integrates both class and race into its analysis from the first introduction of slaves and indentured servants (1619) to the present. It asks crucial questions. How was the idea of whiteness invented? Whose interests did it serve? What relevance does it have to understanding U.S history? How has it shaped our own Identities and conceptions of ourselves? Does it help us understand the present historical moment we are in?

Ted has coordinated classes on James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, Montaigne and MLK Jr. He is also a political activist.

Type of Study Group: Presentation followed by discussion

Readings and other Materials/Online Services:

The Invention of the White Race: The Origin of Racial Oppression by Theodore Allen, which was in two volumes and has recently been consolidated into one volume. Please buy this ONE book and not separately.

(Verso Press 2022, ISBN-13:978-1-83976-3922, \$20.96, also Amazon \$26.49)

NB: We will not read all 800 pages. We will read as much as the class interest and discussion dictates.

******* SYLLABUS - A WORK IN PROGRESS *******

WEEK 1

TOPIC: "Introduction" and "The Anatomy of Racial Oppression"

READING: pp. 1-56

QUESTIONS:

What are the origins of the debate on the causes of racial oppression? What

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are some of the alternative views that Allen critiques? What is the socio-economic argument? Why is the term "race" misleading?

WEEK 2

TOPIC: "The Anatomy of Racial Oppression"

READING: pp. 57-70

QUESTIONS:

See WEEK 1 Questions

WEEK 3

TOPIC: The Irish analogy

READING: pp. 71-90

QUESTIONS:

What was the role of England in Ireland? How were the same strategies used in U.S?

WEEK 4

TOPIC: "Social Control: From Racial to National Oppression"

READING: pp. 91-135

WEEK 5: "Anglo-America: Ulster Writ Large"

WEEK 6: "The Sea-change"

WEEK 7: "How the Sea-change was Wrought"

WEEK 8: "The Labor Supply Problem: England a Special Case"

WEEK 9: "Euro-Indian Relations and the Problem of Social Control"

WEEK 10: "The Plantation of Bondage"

WEEK 11: "Bond-labor: Enduring ..."

WEEK 12: The relevance to ourselves

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