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The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth Century America, New Edition

By Alexander Saxton



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In this acclaimed historical study, Alexander Saxton establishes the centrality of white racism to American politics and culture. Examining images of race at a popular level – from blackface minstrelsy to the construction of the Western hero, from grassroots political culture to dime novels – as well as the philosophical constructions of the political elite, it is a powerful and comprehensive account of the ideological forces at work in the formation of modern America.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Saxton, a professor of history at UCLA, examines the history of the idea of Euro-American racial domination in the U.S. as evinced in political and mass culture--the newspapers, drama and fiction of the 19th century. Saxton's thesis--that white racism was strategic to do you mean `in the interest'? `a concern'?aa both the ruling and working classes and was reinforced by the media and literature--is supported by his analysis of Jacksonian democracy, which promoted the removal of Indians from Western lands and the continuance of slavery as a means of achieving equality among whites. Although white racism served the interests of cut to tighten long sentence. aa/ landowners and industrialists, Saxton shows howok?aa/ok/pk lower-class Americans also benefited economically, and used racism to cross the chasm that separated them from or, for clarity: `ally themselves with'? aa/stet what we have/pk the upper class. Saxton's (*The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California*) writing often is dense and convoluted, but his account of racist politics and those who strove for cultural pluralism, including ``exquisite moralists" such as John Quincy Adams, will be illuminating to scholars in this field.

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Review

"No other book offers us such a richly detailed and elegantly written illumination of the relationship between race and the labyrinth of American party politics in the nineteenth century."—Ron Takaki

"This is grand history ... an extraordinary book packed with detail and argument ... destined to provoke deep self-searching among its sensitive readers—and probably also wounded cries from the old-line historical establishment."—Paul Buhle, *The Nation*

About the Author

Alexander Saxton, a professor emeritus of history at the University of California, Los Angeles, is also the author of *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and Anti-Chinese Movement in California* as well as several novels. He spent nearly twenty years as a merchant seaman and carpenter before launching a distinguished academic career.

David Roediger is Kendrick Babcock Chair of History at the University of Illinois. Among his books are *Our Own Time: A History of American Labor and the Working Day* (with Philip S. Foner), *How Race Survived US History: From Settlement and Slavery to the Obama Phenomenon*, and *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. He is the editor of *Fellow Worker: The Life of Fred Thompson*, *The North and Slavery* and *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White* as well as a new edition of Covington Hall's *Labor Struggles in the Deep South*. His articles have appeared in *New Left Review*, *Against the Current*, *Radical History Review*, *History Workshop Journal*, *The Progressive* and *Tennis*.

Mike Davis is the author of several books including *Planet of Slums*, *City of Quartz*, *Ecology of Fear*, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, and *Magical Urbanism*. He was recently awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. He lives in Papa'aloa, Hawaii.

Michael Sprinker was Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. His *Imaginary Relations: Aesthetics and Ideology in the History of Historical Materialism* and *History and Ideology in Proust* are also published by Verso. Together with Mike Davis, he founded Verso's Haymarket Series and guided it until his death in 1999.

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