

The Creation of Race

There is only one race: the human race.

The idea that there are separate races is a human invention. Skin color or place of origin do not indicate real biological categories or show innate traits by birth. Instead, race is a set of social categories created by elites who profited and ruled by doing so.

European and American elites wanted slave labor to help them accumulate further wealth, so they kidnapped millions of people from Africa. To justify mass abduction and enslavement and the horrifying brutality that went with it, they claimed that Africans were a subspecies and biologically inferior to Europeans.

“Race” is a set of social categories created by elites for their own profit and ruling power.

Similarly, claiming that indigenous “American Indians,” were a separate and inferior subspecies justified exterminating them while grabbing land and resources.

Slaveholders and the rest of the 1% of their day protected their economic interests by creating a racial hierarchy to divide slaves and White workers from one another.

“Race Science”

In the late 1800’s, a pseudoscience developed around the idea that race is a biological category. They claimed that race biology determines how smart we are and what we are capable of doing. In the early 20th century, even the Federal government used “race science” to rank groups who could emigrate to the U.S. At the time, nationalities and religions like Southern Italian and Jewish were also assumed to be biological races (and quite “inferior” to White Europeans).

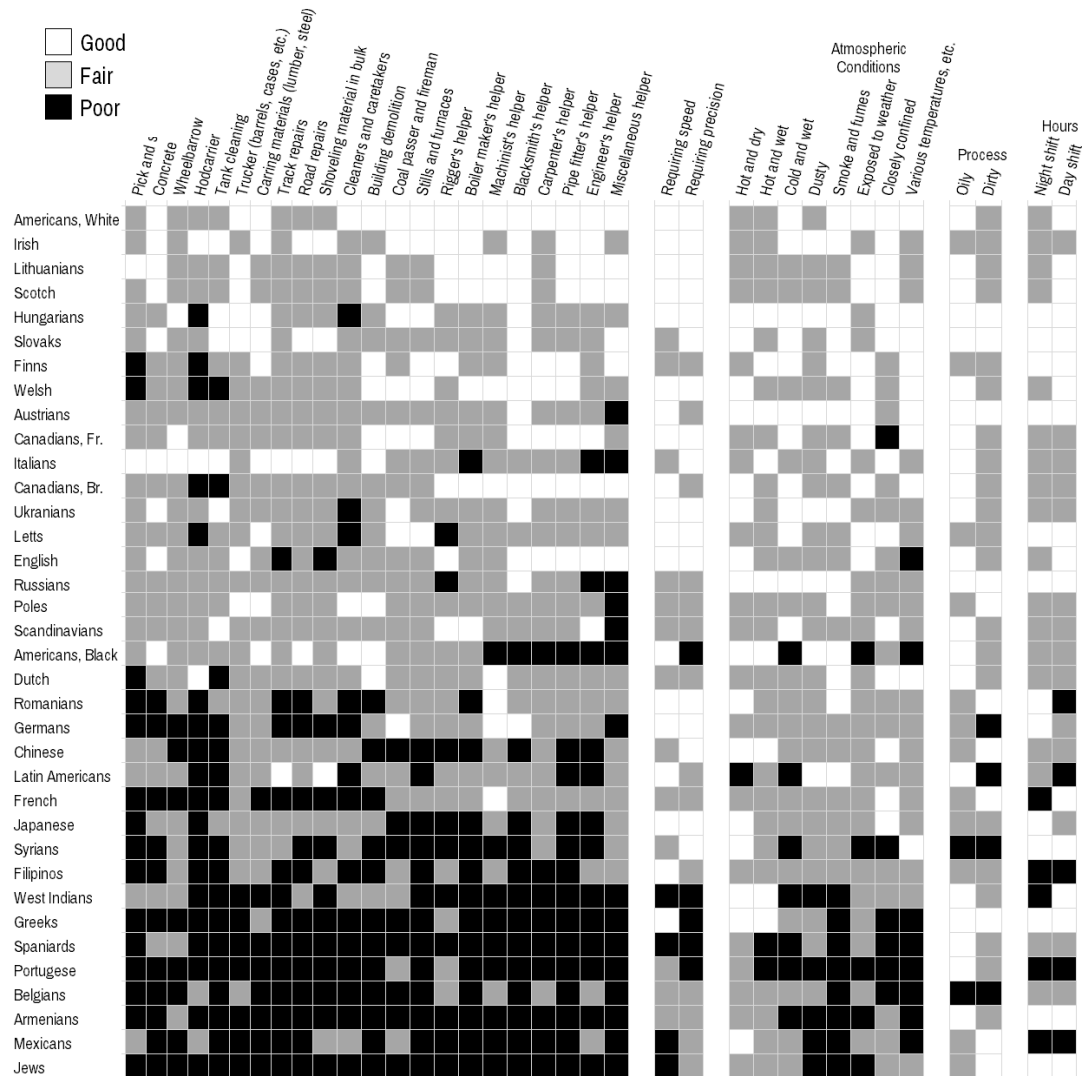
Corporate managers also used “race science” to carve up the workforce into who was qualified to do what. Of course, their goal was to prevent union organizing by dividing the workforce. The fact sheet on the next page shows the result of one such effort.

Sources: “Race is a Social Concept, Not a Scientific One,” Michael Hadjiargyrou, Chair of the Department of Life Sciences, New York Institute of Technology, 8/29/14, www.livescience.com/47627-race-is-not-a-science-concept.html; Merlin Chowkwanyun, “Race Is Not Biology,” *The Atlantic*, 5/23/13, www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/05/race-is-not-biology/276174; Michael Yudell, Dorothy Roberts, Rob DeSalle, Sarah Tishkoff, “Taking Race Out of Human Genetics,” *Science*, 2/5/2016, sciencemag.org

An Example of “Race Science” Run Wild

Employment Fact Sheet of the Central Tube Company, Pittsburgh, 1925: “Racial Adaptability to Various Types of Plant Work”

Racial Adaptability
to Various Types
of Plant Work



Source: Image from Pittsburgh Urban League Archive, 1925. Reprinted in John Bodnar, Roger Simon, and Michael Weber, *Lives of Their Own: Blacks, Italians, and 1900-1960* (University of Illinois Press, 1983). Misspellings in original.