

The Invention of the White Race

Theodore W. Allen

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Theodore W. Allen : The Invention of the White Race before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Invention of the White Race:

25 of 26 people found the following review helpful. A Work of Major Importance in Understanding American History By William Hull This two-volume set presents a lot of history of England and its multi-century conquest of Ireland, and shows how methods of subjugation of the Irish by the English upper classes laid the groundwork for the eventual use of racial oppression against various people in the Americas, along with the irony that the racially-oppressed Irish generally became strong supporters of racial oppression once in the United States. The early history of slavery in colonial Virginia and Maryland occupies much of the second volume, and most of this history records methods used by the upper class plantation owners and their investors back in England to obtain limited-term slave labor from the multitudes of poor people from England, Ireland, Scotland, other European countries, Africa, and American Indians. The author presents evidence that those who survived their term of bondage became free (with all rights to property, etc.), regardless of ethnic origin, up until Bacon's Rebellion in the 1670s. He portrays part of this rebellion as the working-class rising up against the plantation owners, and makes the case that this threat against the social order prompted the upper classes to "divide and conquer" the lower classes by limiting slavery to Africans and "inventing the white race" in order to supply a social buffer group that would work to oppress the slave group as long as they had special privileges (even though they were still poor and struggling themselves). This also allowed the imposition of lifetime, hereditary bondage on the African-Americans, which had been another goal of the upper class,

regardless of ethnicity of the slaves. The author also shows how things developed differently in the Caribbean, partly due to the differences of a sugar economy there as opposed to a tobacco economy on the mainland; the greater ability for slaves to run away on the mainland; and the excess of poor Europeans in Virginia and Maryland compared to the Caribbean. Overall, these two volumes present a very different view of our history than what we have learned in school, and give us a good starting point for understanding when trying to heal our common wounds. 8 of 12 people found the following review helpful. very accurate review is real history presented correctly and with style. By George Baker it was a historical work that gave a correct view of western civilizations demonization of non white races of the human family. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Kindle it, maybe? By MO If you're interested in this era and this history, this 2 volume set is for you. its worth the money. Very small print and pretty heavy to hold are the downsides.

The Invention of the White Race is a groundbreaking analysis of the birth of racism in America. When the first Africans arrived in Virginia in 1619, there were no “white” people, nor, according to colonial records, would there be for another sixty years. In his seminal two-volume work, Theodore W. Allen details the creation of the “white race” by the ruling class as a method of social control in response to labor unrest precipitated by Bacon’s Rebellion. By distinguishing European Americans from African Americans within the laboring class, white privileges enforced the myth of the white race through the years and has been central to maintaining ruling-class domination over the entire working class. Since its publication in the midnineties, *The Invention of the White Race* has become indispensable in debates on the origins of racial oppression in America. Volume One examines Irish history to show the relativity of race and racial oppression as a form of social control. Volume Two details the development of racial oppression and racial slavery in colonial Virginia and, more broadly, Anglo-America. An introduction by Jeffrey B. Perry discusses Allen’s contributions, critical reception, and continuing importance.