

(Download) The History of White People

The History of White People

Nell Irvin Painter

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#23756 in Books W W Norton Company 2011-04-18Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.30 x 1.30 x 5.50l, .88 #File Name: 0393339742512 pagesW W Norton Company | File size: 50.Mb

Nell Irvin Painter : The History of White People before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The History of White People:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. We all bleed red but if one does not learn ...By Lawrence TrimblettWe all bleed red but if one does not learn about the difference in nationality and the different culture across this world that God created peace cannot be still4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Brisk, accessible and well-researchedBy Alex M. JonesIrvin-Painter's wide-angle lens, deep research and elegant though unpretentious prose illuminates a strain of American racial thought as potent as it is widely unknown.0 of 2 people found the

following review helpful. Four StarsBy K CYes it was very informative!

A New York Times bestseller: This terrific new book . . . [explores] the notion of whiteness, an idea as dangerous as it is seductive. Boston Globe Telling perhaps the most important forgotten story in American history, eminent historian Nell Irvin Painter guides us through more than two thousand years of Western civilization, illuminating not only the invention of race but also the frequent praise of whiteness for economic, scientific, and political ends. A story filled with towering historical figures, *The History of White People* closes a huge gap in literature that has long focused on the non-white and forcefully reminds us that the concept of race is an all-too-human invention whose meaning, importance, and reality have changed as it has been driven by a long and rich history of events. 70 black-and-white illustrations

From Publishers Weekly Who are white people and where did they come from? Elementary questions with elusive, contradictory, and complicated answers set historian Painter's inquiry into motion. From notions of whiteness in Greek literature to the changing nature of white identity in direct response to Malcolm X and his black power successors, Painter's wide-ranging response is a who's who of racial thinkers and a synoptic guide to their work. Her commodious history of an idea accommodates Caesar; Saint Patrick, history's most famous British slave of the early medieval period; Madame de Stal; and Emerson, the philosopher king of American white race theory. Painter (Sojourner Truth) reviews the diverse cast in their intellectual milieus, linking them to one another across time and language barriers. Conceptions of beauty (ideals of white beauty [became] firmly embedded in the science of race), social science research, and persistent North/South stereotypes prove relevant to defining whiteness. What we can see, the author observes, depends heavily on what our culture has trained us to look for. For the variable, changing, and often capricious definition of whiteness, Painter offers a kaleidoscopic lens. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist *Starred* Painter is the author of *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol* (1996) and several other scholarly works on the history of slavery and race relations in America, most recently *Creating Black Americans* (2006). Her latest selection examines the history of whiteness as a racial category and rhetorical weapon: who is considered to be white, who is not, what such distinctions mean, and how notions of whiteness have morphed over time in response to shifting demographics, aesthetic tastes, and political exigencies. After a brief look at how the ancients conceptualized the differences between European peoples, Painter focuses primarily on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. There, the artistic idealization of beautiful white slaves from the Caucasus combined with German Romantic racial theories and lots of spurious science to construct an ideology of white superiority which, picked up by Ralph Waldo Emerson and other race-obsessed American intellectuals, quickly became an essential component of the nation's uniquely racialized discourse about who could be considered an American. Presenting vivid psychological portraits of Emerson and dozens of other figures variously famous and obscure, and carefully mapping the links between them, Painter's narrative succeeds as an engaging and sophisticated intellectual history, as well as an eloquent reminder of the fluidity (and perhaps futility) of racial categories. --Brendan Driscoll Compelling, energetic, [and] highly readable.--Alan Nadel One of the most important books ever on the social construction of the notion that there is a white race. "[I]ntriguing and well researched. This is an important addition to the nascent academic field of whiteness studies, which examines the social construction of whiteness with particular attention to the American experience. It should be read by all historians and anyone with an interest in cultural studies. "Compelling, energetic, [and] highly readable. --Alan Nadel" An insightful and lively exposition from a distinguished scholar. --Linda Gordon"