

Document A: *The New York Daily Times* (Modified)

This document is an excerpt from an article that appeared in the New York Daily Times on June 6, 1854 reporting on a riot involving Irish immigrants and nativists.

The Brooklyn Riot

We must confess the frequent occurrence of such disturbances as the riot in Brooklyn, has an **ominous** aspect to our mind. A Sunday rarely passes that our quiet streets are not disturbed by some collision between natives and foreigners.

The results are commonly broken heads, numerous cases for the police courts, and a more bitter feeling between the Irish Catholics and the Americans. It is a significant fact, that the former **rowdies** of the city—the lower fight-loving Irish—have for the last two years been uniformly beaten in these street **rows**.

In this disturbance in Brooklyn there were other factors than mere love of fighting, and there was a desperation and **peril** in the affair which entirely puts it out of the category of common city brawls. The fearful element of race and religion was **aroused**, and for that blood was shed.

The report spread among the ignorant Irish that the New York “Know-Nothings” were preparing an assault on the Catholic Church. It did not take long, of course, for some drunken Irishman to become upset, and a riot occurred.

It was the old hatred of the Saxon and the Celt; the bitter and undying hostility of opposing race and religion.

Source: *New York Daily Times*, New York, June 6, 1864.

Vocabulary

ominous: gloomy, threatening

rowdies: people acting in a disorderly, disruptive manner

rows: noisy disturbances, fights

peril: danger

aroused: provoked, prompted

Document B: Cartoon in *Puck*, 1883

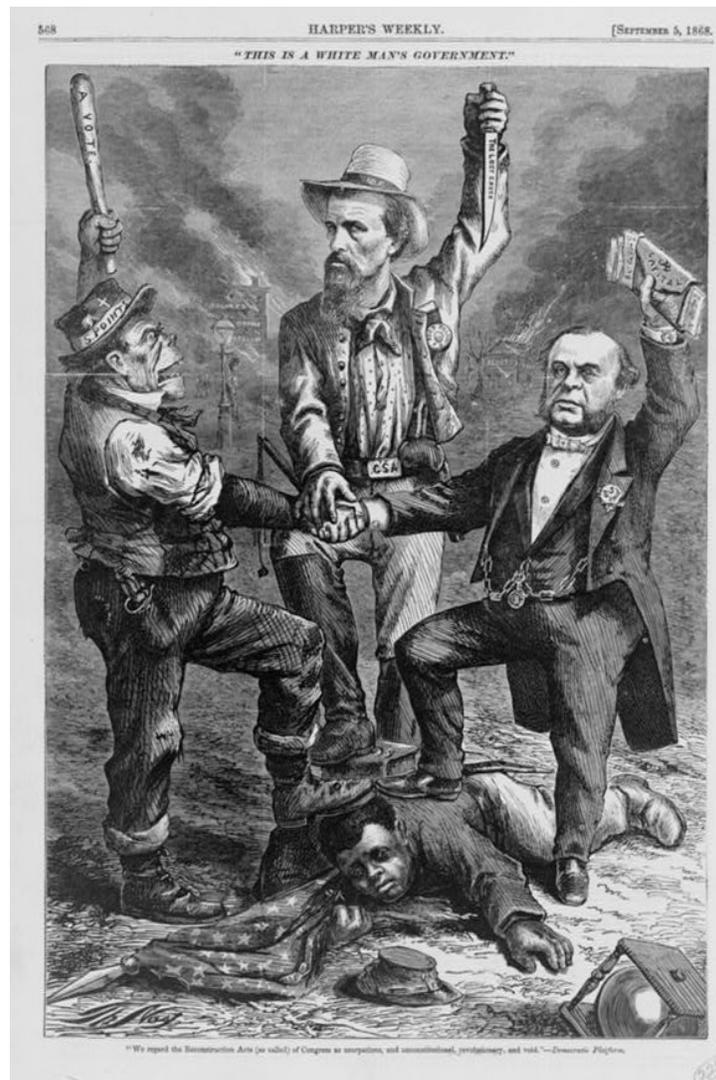
This illustration by Frederick Burr Opper was published in the magazine *Puck* on May 9, 1883. The figure on the right depicts an Irish woman, who is working as a domestic servant. Images like this, portraying the Irish as ape-like, were common at the time. The text at the bottom reads, "The Irish declaration of independence that we are all familiar with."



Source: "Irish Declaration of Independence," *Puck*, May 9, 1883.

Document C: Cartoon in *Harper's Weekly*, 1868

This illustration is titled "This is a white man's government" and the text on the bottom of the page reads "We regard the Reconstruction Acts (so called) of Congress as usurpations, and unconstitutional, revolutionary, and void. -Democratic Platform." The Reconstruction Acts of 1867-68 dealt with the reorganization of the South after the end of the Civil War and with protecting freedmen's citizenship and voting rights. The acts faced strong opposition from Democrats. The U.S. presidential election of 1868, the year this cartoon was published, was the first election during Reconstruction.



Source: Thomas Nast, "This is a White Man's Government," *Harper's Weekly*, September 5, 1868.

Document D: *Gold Hill Daily News*

This document is an excerpt from an article that ran in a Nevada newspaper on April 19, 1867, reporting on opposition to Chinese immigration. In the late 19th century, hostility towards Chinese immigrants was high, particularly on the West Coast. Irish Americans were often involved in anti-Chinese violence and many pushed for exclusion of Chinese immigrants.

What have the Irish to do with this question any more than the native American, the German, the French or the Italian laborer? It is a question which comes home to every white man who has become or has declared his intention to become a citizen of this country. The question is whether we will prefer white laborers from Europe who comprise different branches of the great Caucasian race, or shall we encourage Chinese immigrants, a people whose morals, habits, language and religion are so dissimilar to our own and **repugnant** to our taste, that we can never can and never ought to **amalgamate** with them.

Source: *Gold Hill Daily News*, Gold Hill, Nevada, April 19, 1867.

Vocabulary

repugnant: repulsive
amalgamate: mix, join

Document A Guiding Questions

1. According to the article, who was the fight between? What caused the fight?
2. What elements made it different from other city riots? (paragraph 3)
3. How are the Irish described in the document? Provide 2 examples.
4. What do these descriptions suggest about how the Irish were thought of at the time?
5. What does this article suggest about the Know-Nothing party?
6. What are possible reasons that they targeted Catholics?

Document B Guiding Questions

1. The woman on the right is supposed to be Irish. Describe what she looks like and how she is acting. What job does she hold?
2. Based on this cartoon, what were stereotypes about Irish women at the time? Consider both the text and the image.

Document C Guiding Questions

1. How does the Irish figure in this cartoon compare to Document B?
2. How does the Irish figure compare to the other figures?
3. What are the figures in the picture doing?
4. What do the image, title, and text of the cartoon suggest about the racial hierarchy at the time?

Document D Guiding Questions

1. Where was this article published?

How does its place of publication make it different from Documents A-C?

2. According to the article, which group of immigrants is considered different or “dissimilar?”
3. Read through the article once more. Circle key words and phrases you think are used to describe the Irish in terms of race. How do the racial distinctions in this document compare to those in Document A? (Are they more broad? Or more narrow?)
4. What do you think might account for this difference? Who might have been this article’s intended audience?

Irish in 19th-Century America Graphic Organizer

Round One

	<i>Were the Irish considered "white" in the United States in the 19th Century?</i>	<i>What evidence does this document provide to answer the question?</i>
Document A		
Document B		
Hypothesis 1: <i>Were the Irish considered "white" in the United States in the 19th century?</i>		

Round Two

	<i>Were the Irish considered “white” in the United States in the 19th Century?</i>	<i>What evidence does this document provide to answer the question?</i>
<p>Document C</p>		
<p>Document D</p>		
<p>Hypothesis 2: <i>Were the Irish considered “white” in the United States in the 19th century?</i> (Revise your hypothesis from Documents A-B based on the information from Documents C-D).</p>		