

Race Relations Within Western Expansion

Alan Levine



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This bold and controversial book takes a hard look at an old subject—race relations in the Western world. Using history as a backdrop, the author illustrates how racism and ethnic chauvinism are, sadly, common. The author warns against the harm of colorthink—an excessive obsession with race and racism—and explores the impact of such thinking on race relations today. He gives no comfort to either racists or more fashionable contemporaries obsessed with the supposedly unique evils of the Western past.

Racial issues, and misconceptions about race and race relations, are among the most divisive and confusing features of contemporary society. *Race Relations Within Western Expansion* is designed to provide an overall account of the development of the issues involved, relating them to global history and putting them squarely within the framework of the expansion of the Western world, an expansion that began much earlier than is generally realized, far back in the Middle Ages. Levine analyzes the reasons for that expansion and how it took different forms and brought many different peoples into several different sorts of contact with the West, and how these contacts, and conceptions about other peoples, changed, or remained fixed over time. He also shows the impact within Europe of pseudo-scientific racial ideologies, and criticizes contemporary misconceptions about the history of relations between European settlers and native peoples, slavery, and the age of imperial rule in Asia and Africa. It stresses the complexity and variety of those relationships rather than attempting, as is currently fashionable, to pigeonhole more and more data into fewer and fewer ideological categories.

This is a necessarily controversial book, one that collides with many cherished beliefs, both traditional and contemporary, and exposes how bizarre they really are. It acidly exposes both traditional racist myths, and more recently fashionable postures that often prove little more factually based.

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