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Deeper Impressions of Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler: Analyzing the Role of Political Cartoons in the Development and Perceptions of Late Nineteenth Century Group Images

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DEEPER IMPRESSIONS OF THOMAS NAST AND JOSEPH KEPPLER: ANALYZING THE ROLE OF POLITICAL CARTOONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PERCEPTIONS OF LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY GROUP IMAGES

by

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes political cartoons from Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler from the late 1860s through the mid-1880s. It argues that through use of effective symbolism and memorable illustrations, these cartoonists created and popularized caricatures of politicians, laborers, Irish Catholics, African Americans, and women that validated stereotypical views of the late nineteenth century and influenced later historical interpretations of the era. Analyzing the Nast and Keppler cartoons as significant historical resources rather than as interesting illustrations for historical monographs reveals the layers of literacy, social and political thought present in the drawings that the readers of the day would have readily understood. Caricatures deeply grounded in English and German literature as well as the most offensive stereotypes demonstrate the complexity of 19th century American views in a nation emerging from civil war and entering modernity. An analysis of more than a thousand cartoons within the cultural, and literary contexts in which they were produced suggests the need for greater attention to these underutilized data sources. The 19th century political cartoons should be viewed as a shaping factor when studying popular images of people in the late 19th century, their memorable depictions of contentious political and social issues, and their role in the struggle for rights and status in a rapidly changing country. This study uses increased critical analysis of political cartoons which allows them to become a more central source in supporting historical hypotheses.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Political cartoons can make clear visual points about current events and try to persuade readers to view the subject in a specific way. This caricature and symbolism, however, extends beyond individual use, and through repeated depictions makes larger commentary on social issues and people's status in the United States society. A cursory glance at Thomas Nast's 1868 cartoon, "This is a white man's government" reveals Democratic opposition to the Reconstruction Acts, with three white men standing on the back of an African American (Figure 1). With just that much information, the cartoon can make its intended point, but with further examination of the symbols used many more interpretations emerge about people, their beliefs, and how cartoonists viewed their status in society. Nast shows the three white men as united, but not equal. The barbaric Irishman, the Southerner with Confederate sympathies, and the elite New York capitalist all have unique images crafted through many cartoon representations, which together showed what the cartoonist viewed as their role and status in society. Similarly, the downtrodden but not unfavorable depiction of the African American man as well as the props around him had a specific purpose. He longingly reaches for the ballot box, as his Union army cap and the United States flag sit in the mud.[1] Also in the background lynched men hang and a school and orphanage burn. The way the man and the props come together tell a story and allude to the broader feelings of the cartoonist and Americans. These visuals not only shaped contemporary politics, but their recognizable images and tropes had a lasting impact on how

[1] Thomas Nast, "This is a white man's government," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 5, 1868, 568.

people and historians remember the era. Elements from caricature, although often inaccurate, helped shape many Americans' understanding of their history. Political cartoon analysis stands as a useful resource in examining late nineteenth century depictions of people and invites exploration of the way some remained constant over time, while others changed significantly.

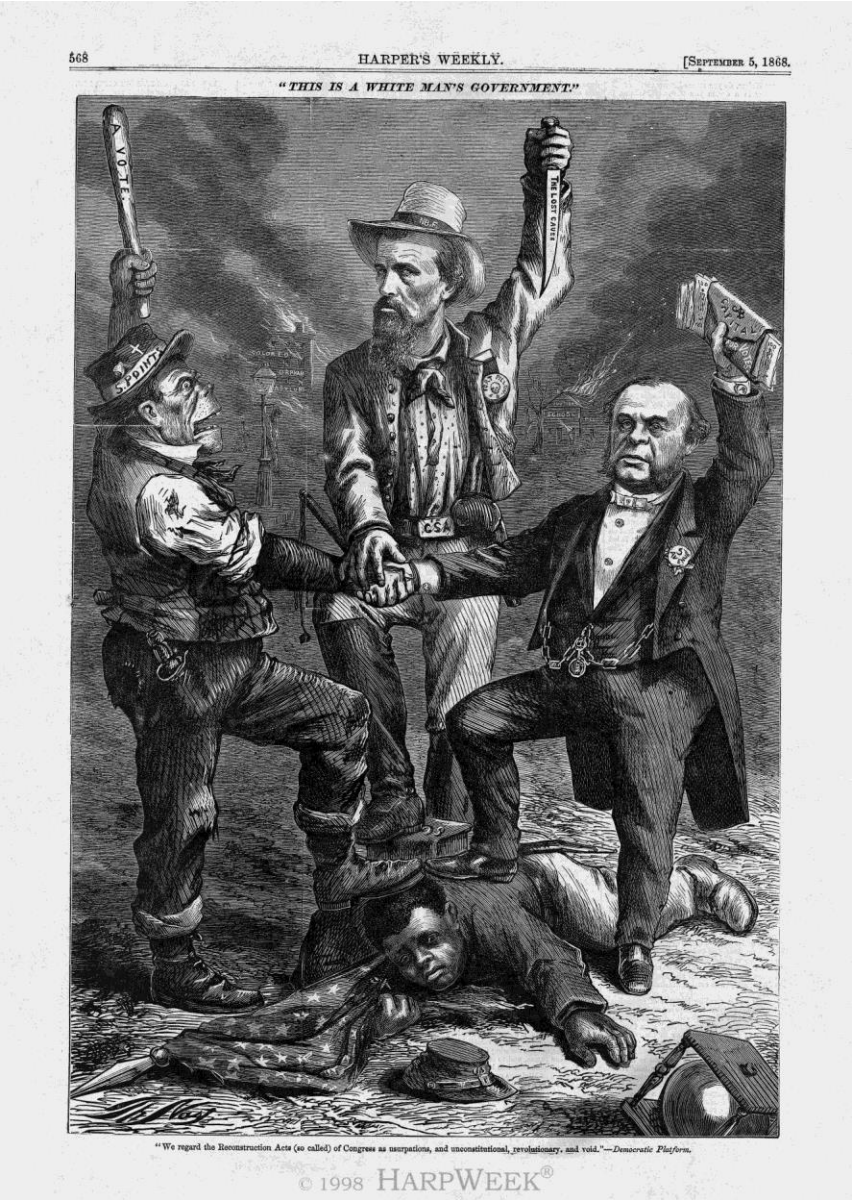

Figure 1: Nast cartoon from September 5, 1868 titled "This is a white man's government."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1868&issueId=0905&page=568

During Reconstruction and the Progressive Era, famous political cartoonists such as Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler used their cartoons to bring attention to corruption as well as other political, social, and moral issues. Although they had differing points of view about politics and reform, they often employed similar strategies designed to sway public opinion on a variety of subjects.

Cartoon analysis shows that Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler employed symbolism and caricature in their political cartoons to effectively connect with readers and shape commonly held images of groups of people, as well as political and social issues from the late 1860s through the mid-1880s. They used both existing as well as new visuals to depict some people as un-American, for instance continuing a depiction of Irish Catholics as dangerous simian brutes with allegiance to a foreign church, and creating images of "un-honest" laborers who did not fit into, and often undermined, American society. Nast and Keppler also drew distinctions between groups they which they believed deserved equal treatment as citizens, and those incapable of comprehending or using full rights such as African Americans and women. This thesis argues that political cartoon visuals actively reinforced and shaped widespread group images used during, as well as after, the late nineteenth century, and their deeper analysis can benefit historian's conclusions about that era.

This study goes beyond the reform aspects present in political cartoons, during the late 1860s through the mid-1880s, to show the deeper ways this popular art form influenced how many Americans viewed different groups of people. Although some historians equate these political cartoons with the positive elements of their reform agendas, such as campaigning against powerful monopolies or corrupt political machines like Boss Tweed's Tammany Hall, the illustrations did not always argue for increased equality or protection for all Americans. The

illustrations also developed and disseminated negative viewpoints of people that helped shape and cement perspectives of inequality.

Political cartoons exerted significant influence in the later decades of the nineteenth century, however the inclusion and role of political cartoons as sources in broader historical narratives has changed over time. A few historians in the late 1800s and early 1900s noted the importance of cartoons through their creation of collections as well as biographic coverage of the illustrators. These histories noted the broad circulation and popularity of political cartoons as well as their reform agendas, gathering famous works and information on the creators. A key example about the life of Thomas Nast comes from Alfred Bigelow Paine's 1904 book, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*.[2] Paine's personal relationship with Nast gave him unique insight into the era and access to stories, which helped his book become a go-to for historians of Nast. However, his limited citations and retelling of tales led historians to question the validity of some assertions. Questions prominent in this era dealt with telling the story of Nast, and the historical importance of his cartoons, as well as his pursuit of reform from a Progressive Era lens.

After the end of the Progressive Era, political cartoonists and their work received limited coverage historically, until a resurgence in the late 1960s. This renewed interest accompanied an increased focus on marginalized groups, and more attention paid to non-traditional sources. Authors asked how cartoons could outline the initial optimism of the illustrators about the ability to reform society, and often divided the works of cartoonists into campaigns. In the late 1960s to the 1970s, several authors compiled large volumes of selected cartoon collections. These works briefly discussed the lives of the cartoonist, as well as adding more to the analysis of the context

[2] Albert Bigelow Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1904).

of cartoons, organizing them into topical sections. They usually focused on a single cartoonist rather than a comparison of many contemporaries. A few examples of important books from this time include, Morton Keller's *The Arts and Politics of Thomas Nast*, Thomas Nast St. Hill's *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*, and Richard Samuel West's *Satire on Stone: The Political Cartoons of Joseph Keppler*.[3] These authors argued for a positive perception of the cartoonist and the reforming nature of their work. Common sections include concentration on the corruption of Boss Tweed, resistance to Catholic overreach, influence over elections and political decision making, as well as economic issues. When it comes to the representation of marginalized groups in the cartoons, the coverage centers around minorities and civil rights, however the main conclusions focused more on the support of extended rights, and make little mention of representations of African Americans, women, Native Americans, or immigrants.

The topical approach of categorizing and analyzing cartoons expanded by the 1990s and 2000s. Historians began to examine the eras from which the cartoons came, as well as trends in cartoon usage over time, rather than selecting the work of one illustrator. A broader overview of political cartoons through American history, looking at larger trends, shows in Roger A. Fischer's *Them Damned Pictures: Explorations in American Political Cartoon Art*, Steven Hess and Sandy *Northrup's American Political Cartoons: the Evolution of a National Identity, 1754-2010*, and Donald Dewey's *The Art of Ill Will: The Story of American Political Cartoons*.[4] These authors asked about the general purpose and influences of cartoons in given eras, and

[3] Morton Keller, *The Arts and Politics of Thomas Nast* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); Thomas Nast St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations* (New York: Dover Publications Inc, 1974); Richard Samuel West, *Satire on Stone: The Political Cartoons of Joseph Keppler* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

[4] Roger A. Fischer, *Them Damned Pictures: Explorations in American Political Cartoon Art* (North Haven, Conn: Archon Books, 1996); Stephen Hess and Sandy Northrup, *American Political Cartoons: the Evolution of a National Identity, 1754-2010* (Montgomery: Elliott & Clark Publishers, 1996); Donald Dewey, *The Art of Ill Will: The Story of American Political Cartoons* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).

explored how contemporary cartoonists used similar or different methods to reach the public. This style of analysis helped the authors draw conclusions about how cartoonists fit into, as well as used, existing culture, created images of what, or who, worked for or against reform, and made representations of those considered to be alien to the mainstream culture.

The most recent historiographical trends, during the 2010s, have extended questions to include analysis of race and gender. Instead of merely recognizing that Native Americans or women had cartoons drawn about them, these authors ask how such portrayals shaped their images as well as detailing their contributions to the era. John Coward creates an in-depth look at portrayals of Native Americans in his *Indians Illustrated: The Image of Native Americans in the Pictorial Press*.[5] He concludes that illustrators categorized Native Americans into two groups, savages and noble Indians, but both pictures entailed a subordinate status. This brings up the idea that although cartoonists may have used caricatures of Native Americans, or women, or the Irish to help make a completely different point, their simplified portrayal also had further unexpected consequences on public perception. Martha H. Kennedy included the underrepresented story of women illustrators in her 2018 book, *Drawn to Purpose: American Women Illustrators and Cartoonists*.[6] Her work offers the point of view and the contributions of women, rather than merely using them as a tool to prove another point. This trend aligns with recent Progressive Era historiography, which also expands the focus to marginalized and under studied groups. The culmination of political cartoon historiography leads towards a more nuanced study of the reform efforts and strategies employed by Nast and Keppler, which begs further exploration.

[5] John M. Coward, *Indians Illustrated: The Image of Native Americans in the Pictorial Press* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016).
[6] Martha H. Kennedy, *Drawn to Purpose: American Women Illustrators and Cartoonists* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2018).

Over the last century and a half, the place of political cartoons as sources in histories usually remained in a supplementary position, to support a point the writer had already made using other sources. The cartoon stood as a visual example, but the historians often did not take into account the deeper meaning and commentary of the illustration, its creator, and the role of political cartoons in a broader sense. Like other literary sources, deeper analysis and contextualization of political cartoons can increase their usefulness as sources. This study asks: How did the way Nast and Keppler portrayed groups, such as African Americans, the Irish, laborers, and women, play into positive and negative Progressive Era perceptions of those people? And in what ways did these perceptions carry on to later eras?

Nast and Keppler both immigrated to the United States in their youths and used their caricature ability and political wit to become two of the most recognizable political cartoonists in the nation. Nast began sketching for the illustrated newspaper *Harper's Weekly* during the Civil War but found his knack for political commentary in the early years of Reconstruction. In his weekly cartoons, he supported the causes of Radical Reconstruction, President Grant, and civil service reform, while pointing out issues with corruption, unsound monetary policy, and Democrats. Nast stood as the foremost political cartoonist from the early 1870s and remained influential through the mid-1880s. He continued to draw cartoons after his departure from *Harper's Weekly* in 1886, but never again had the same impact. [7]

Keppler worked with a couple of partners to establish a few new newspapers such as *Die Vehme* (1869) and *Puck* (1871 edition in St. Louis). When these failed, he contributed to other papers like *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* until reestablishing *Puck* with his partner Adolph Schwarzmann in September of 1876. The German language newspaper became a

[7] Keller, *The Arts and Politics of Thomas Nast*, 326.

success, and in March of 1877 they also began an English version of *Puck*. Keppler had less of a political affiliation to one party, however campaigned against President Grant, corruption, and unwise policies. He supported reforms for political parties, civil service, and day to day life for people.[8] Keppler's influence mounted during the late 1870s and peaked in the 1880s, although he continued to illustrate for Puck until his death in 1894.

Neither of the cartoonists lived long enough to see or comment on the later aspects of the Progressive Era, like the progressive presidents or the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Consequently this paper looks at stances from issues debated through a long Reconstruction era, but does not follow them to their Progressive Era conclusions. For example, this examines illustrations of women's struggles while not including cartoons about suffrage from the second decade of the twentieth century. Extending the scope of the project could also include important shifts towards increasing acceptance of Irish Catholics, government policies becoming slightly less anti-union, and further codification of Jim Crow laws, but since they extend beyond the careers of Nast and Keppler, such connections can be made in a later study.

Many political cartoons in the late nineteenth century utilized racist imagery and while this study notes several examples of this, it is important to recognize that not all negative portrayals used "othering" or unequal depictions solely as a call for white supremacy. They also used undesirable illustrations to support political arguments as well as reinforce existing social hierarchies. Examples often played one group off of another as a way of making a political point, and imbued one side with positive traits while vilifying the other. At times Nast used similar methods to criticize white southern democrats as he did when depicting Irish Catholics or African Americans. Unattractive images could denigrate any group in the eyes of the readers,

[8] West, *Satire on Stone*, 396.

and although these images likely had different public reception and long term implications dependent on race, the cartoonist's reasons for using specific illustrations came about due to reasons beyond just race.

Several caricatured groups also received negative coverage due to their struggles to improve their status in the hierarchy of American society. For instance, African Americans and women both fought for better social status during Reconstruction, but opponents pushed narratives which aimed to justify lower status. As an example, women had to contend with depictions purporting their inability to understand or take part in politics, as well as cartoons suggesting they only belonged in domestic roles.

The most popular campaigns of both artists centered on political elections and lampooning politicians for unsound policies or corruption, however their social commentary also divulges important information about points of view and arguments made during that time. Analyzing how Nast and Keppler represented people and ideas in cartoons uncovers the opinions of the cartoonists and the newspapers that shaped the way that many Americans stayed current with political and social issues.

Far from objective journalism, political cartoons had an agenda, and used many written or visual methods to make their point in a memorable way. To do so the most effectively, the illustrators deftly utilized flattened stereotypes, either building upon existing ideas or adding new elements themselves. These images did more than make a point for an individual cartoon, and became influential sources in the shaping of how groups of Americans saw each other.

The second chapter highlights how Nast and Keppler consistently used elements of caricature and symbolism to assist their audiences in connecting to and remembering specific points about the topic. They did so by alluding to popular stories and cultural references, as well

as repetitive use of cartoon strategies developed to shape reader's opinions by showing a specifically crafted image of a person, group, or idea again and again. The chapter outlines some of the basic approaches that cartoonists used to gain the most influence out of simple cartoon representations. The following chapters build upon this foundation, citing specific groups, and the ways that political cartoons helped shape their public image.

The third chapter showcases how exaggerated and caricatured illustrations of groups of people assisted in defining their place in American society. Cartoons from Nast and Keppler played up differences between "Americans" and "outsiders" to cement their ideas about positive traits to emulate and negative traits to avoid. For example, they lauded honest laborers for their work ethic, smart monetary choices, and reasonable expectations, depicting these people with positive "American" images often reflecting white Protestant ideals. On the other hand, dishonest laborers received treatment as harmful and dangerous outsiders. Union members, socialists, and Chinese laborers all appeared in cartoons as distinct from, and detrimental to, American society. Similarly, one of the most frequently portrayed groups, the Irish Catholics, had a stereotypical image in cartoons which accentuated apelike features, violence, drunkenness, and loyalty to a foreign religion. These traits all worked to differentiate between the public perception of Irish Catholics and other Americans.

The fourth chapter examines how Nast and Keppler's depictions of African Americans and women helped to spread a public image of the status those groups deserved within American society. Both groups sought the extension of their rights and equal treatment as citizens during this time but had to contend with ideas of their incapacity to utilize such rights. Although several political cartoons supported extending rights to African Americans in the earlier years of Reconstruction, over time representations became more stereotypical and less supportive of

equal treatment. Cartoons also pushed an image that women did not have the capability to partake in politics, and should focus on domestic issues. The visuals repeated these inaccurate depictions and helped steer public sentiment on the topic.

CHAPTER 2: CARTOON STRATEGIES AND CONNECTION TO THE PUBLIC

Although Thomas Nast and Joseph Keppler drew cartoons for newspapers often supporting different political parties, the strategies of their cartoon campaigns had many similarities. For instance, the cartoonists used recurring symbols and caricature that helped the audience more easily recall and relate to the subject, while showing it in a light favorable to their arguments. They often used popular references found in classic literature, famous tales, or cultural references to merge contemporary topics with the stories or morals from Shakespeare, the Bible, or Aesop's Fables. Many references aimed for a general audience, which would have known popular literature or grown up hearing the stories, but they also did cater their subjects to their audiences as well. Keppler and Nast both included many German references, based on their own background and that of their readers. *Faust*, "Der Erlkonig," and "Der Ring Des Niebelungen" all make several appearances, and like other references do not require explanation for the public to understand.

This chapter examines some of the strategies used by Nast and Keppler to effectively connect with and influence their audience and public sentiment. These foundational elements will come into play in later chapters which look at the images of specific groups (such as Irish Catholics, Women, and African Americans) that these cartoonists developed and used in order to define their places within American society. Before arguing these connections, a background study of common political cartoon tactics shows how the cartoonists related effectively with the public, and used their medium to assert pointed images of protagonists and antagonists.

The later part of this chapter explores how the images used in political cartoons led to historical memories aligned with depictions from caricatures. In prominent cartoon targets, such as William "Boss" Tweed, the way that cartoonists represented him still actively shapes the way the public and historians understand and remember him. Repetitive depictions of people or groups created memorable images, which although of questionable reliability, demonstrated popularity and staying power.

To make stronger connections with weekly readers, the cartoonists created recurring characters, settings, and symbols to assist in telling stories over time. Nast and Keppler often portrayed their favorite, as well as their least favorite, politicians, figures, and groups of people. To do so more efficiently, they tied simple and easy to remember symbols to their subjects. For example, Keppler reused symbols to deride social elements; like the preaching style of the minister Thomas De Witt Talmage, as well as political ones such as the monetary policy of political candidate Peter Cooper. The symbols and strategies used to lampoon an individual also effectively worked with stereotypes of broader groups in American society.

Nast similarly tied politicians and the issues they supported to symbolic representations. He had a particular knack for simplifying people into inanimate objects to the point that the target no longer had to appear in the cartoon. Examples of this included his treatment of newspaper editor and presidential candidate Horace Greeley, Greeley's running mate Benjamin Gratz Brown, and the pro-silver congressman Thomas Matthews. This style of representing a person, stance, or group with a simple symbol worked rather effectively, and repetitively pushed a flattened image designed to equate the antagonist with one or a few bad traits. In the case of political issues which continually came up, cartoonists began to call out others on their overuse and oversimplifications.

As two of the most popular political cartoonists of the late nineteenth century, Nast and Keppler used many similar strategies to help their readers remember the points of their cartoons. They built upon previous popular knowledge, repeated effective symbols and campaigns, and created definitions of roles different people should take in society that had short term as well as long term influences.

To help the audiences understand and remember the points of the cartoons, both illustrators utilized popular references. These often came from Shakespeare, classical literature, religious texts, and traditional stories. Popular references today have a broad base, coming from films, images, books, video games, and online trends. Most people in America know and understand the meaning, due to either a formal or informal education, social groups, or mere proximity to discussions about them. Although the late 19th century did have some new references, many examples repeated in political cartoons came from centuries old stories. The work of other historians can help support the widespread nature of this knowledge by looking into its inclusion in school curriculums, prevalence of printed or acted media, and number of mentions in period sources.

Stories from Classical Greece and Rome often appear in political cartoons, and their prominent place in educational curriculum helps to show that many people had great exposure to the subjects. In *School(house) Design and Curriculum in Nineteenth Century America*, Joseph da Silva notes that from the beginning of the United States through the 19th century, Americans had a "love of classical education," and many believed that educational curricula "should teach the sciences, classical languages, and the arts."[9]

[9] Joseph da Silva, *School(house) Design and Curriculum in Nineteenth Century America* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 168.

In a 1996 article, Kim Tolley pointed out the prominence of classics specifically in boy's education through the middle of the 19th century. She notes, "While a girl's education commonly included doses of scientific subjects, a boy's education more often centered around Latin and Greek." In advertisements during the early to mid-1800s, she noted, "91 percent of boys' schools advertised Latin," while "only 18 percent of girl's schools advertised Latin."[10] She also argued, "The durability of the classical curriculum was the social prestige of classical study in American nineteenth century culture. Although the great majority of academic students may not have gone on into college, the attainment of classical knowledge conferred a gentlemanly polish on boys."[11] This reflects the readers of illustrated weekly magazines, assuming that most did not have college educations, but a working knowledge of the classics. Cartoonists also likely catered some of their political cartoons towards the male audience due to their ability to vote.

Other than classical stories, the works of Shakespeare also had eminence in the 19th century. In Gail Marshall's edited collection *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*, several historians support the commonality of Shakespeare knowledge in the English speaking world. They cite the popularity of reprints in books and periodicals, political references, as well as live performances. Marshall stated, "Shakespeare's was a lambent presence in the nineteenth century, available throughout the world in a variety of forms that exceed particular interests and embrace rather than exclude."[12] In addition to printed media, "he was also acted, spoken by theater professionals and ordinary citizens, quoted, painted and endlessly referred to."[13] This and

[10] Kim Tolley, "Science for Ladies, Classics for Gentlemen: A Comparative Analysis of Scientific Subjects in the Curricula of Boys' and Girls' Secondary Schools in the United States, 1794-1850," *History of Education Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (Summer, 1996), 143.
[11] Tolley, "Science for Ladies, Classics for Gentlemen," 149.
[12] Gail Marshall ed., *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-2.
[13] Marshall, *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*, 1.

similar studies support the view that not only the college educated, but a broad population of people understood these references.

The online database "Chronicling America" shows the presence of Shakespeare another way. It contains millions of pages of American newspapers uploaded in searchable forms. Using the keyword of Shakespeare, this produced over 27,000 hits between the years of 1865 and 1885. Even the casual newspaper reader would have encountered mentions of Shakespeare and his works relatively frequently.[14]

Although Aesop's Fables originated in the Classical time, they catered to a younger audience, teaching morals, which one could remember and retell throughout ones life. John E. Keller and L. Clark Keating note in their book, *Aesop's Fables: With a Life of Aesop*, that the fable's lessons stand as ever-present across the centuries. They contend that, "These lessons are universal and are at home in any age and any culture."[15] From an early age, parents and teachers often taught children about these stories, and they remain recognizable through today.

One of the easiest ways to assure readers understood references and symbols allowing them to decipher the main argument of a cartoon begins with using subject matter they already knew. For this reason, representations of popular Shakespeare works, as well as quotes from his plays, often appear in political cartoons during the 1870s and 1880s. Simpler references sometimes used a cartoon about a current topic, and connected it with a famous quote that made a point about the situation. An example from Nast comments on the Civil Rights Bill in April of 1875. The cartoon consists of Miss Columbia's hands giving the Civil Rights Bill to the hand of an African American, but a famous quote adds weight to the point. The words "This above all:

[14] "Chronicling America," The Library of Congress, accessed June 18, 2020, https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/.
[15] John E. Keller and L. Clark Keating, *Aesop's Fables: With a Life of Aesop* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1993), 5.

to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man," caption the illustration.[16] The Hamlet quote lends credence to Nast's perspective.

Sometimes the cartoonists changed a few words or added names in the quote to clarify the connection. Keppler used an example to comment on the relationship of England and Turkey in May of 1877. John Bull, the personification of England, brushes off a lady standing for Turkey in a cartoon labeled "A new rendering of 'Hamlet'." Keppler assumed the audience knew the plot of the play but added names to the quote to assist with clarification. He used the quote, "Hamlet (John Bull): 'I did love you once' – Ophelia (Turkey): 'Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.' – Hamlet: 'I loved you not – at any rate. I can't afford to do anything so unpopular now'."[17] This summarized the diplomatic relations of the two nations.

In several other illustrations, the target of the cartoon represented Shakespeare characters. In April of 1870, Nast drew Jefferson Davis, the ex-president of the Confederacy and former senator from Mississippi as Iago from *Othello*. The public readily recognized Iago as a deceptive and scheming villain who set up a secretive plot to claim a position of power at the expense of his trusting companions. In the cartoon, Jefferson Davis, dressed as Iago, slinks around a corner of the Senate building where Hiram Revels, the first African American senator who recently filled the open seat from Mississippi, talks with other senators from his Senate desk (Figure 2). In a quote from the play, Nast tried to capture the feelings of Davis. The caption read, "For that I do suspect the lusty moor hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof doth like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards."[18] Nast used a known character to show the position

[16] Thomas Nast, "These Few Precepts in Thy Memory," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 24, 1875, 336. The quote comes from *Hamlet* Act 1, Scene 3.
[17] Joseph Keppler, "A New Rendering of Hamlet," cartoon *Puck*, May 1877, no. 12, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=178
[18] Thomas Nast, "Time Works Wonders," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 9, 1870, 232. Nast gave Andrew Johnson a similarly representation as Iago in another cartoon: Thomas Nast, "Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 1, 1866, 552-553.

of, and his dislike for, Jefferson Davis, while at the same time making social and political commentary in a way that the common reader understood.

Figure 2: Nast cartoon from April 9, 1870 titled "Time works wonders."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1870&issueId=0409&page=232

Nast represented James B. Weaver, the Greenback Party nominee for president in 1880, as a character from "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream." In several cartoons during 1880 Weaver

symbolized Nick Bottom, who in the play had his head turned into a donkey's. The transformed character scared his friends away, but assuming it was a joke, sang while he walked. Nast turned this into Weaver, who with the head of an ass, continuing to talk about inflation in congress to the chagrin of the other Representatives. As another aspect of Nast's joke, Bottom held the profession of a weaver in the play, leading to the name "Greenback the Weaver" in three cartoons.[19] Other than the provided quotes and characters, the reader had to fill in the rest of the context.

In "A Mid-Summer Night's Dream," the character who turned Nick Bottom's head into that of a donkey's, Puck, became the namesake and mascot of Keppler's *Puck Humoristisches Wochenblatt* and later English version of *Puck.* Puck embodied the characteristics Keppler aimed for his paper to represent. Described as a "shrewd and knavish sprite," the trickster liked practical jokes and raising mischief.[20] One of his lines "What fools these mortals be" became the slogan for the paper. Depicted usually as a cherub with a top hat, coat, and a large lithocrayon, Puck stood next to the newspaper's title on the cover, and often showed up in cartoons. Although sometimes taking part in mischief, Puck also represented the reform potential of the newspaper. A Keppler illustration published on February 22, 1888 showed a mischievous Puck shaking hands with James G. Blaine shortly after the Republican candidate withdrew his name from the national convention consideration. Never a supporter of Blaine, Keppler wanted to show mistrust about the statement. He drew Blaine whispering "He thinks I mean it!" with a smirk, while Puck with a similar sneer exclaims "He thinks I believe it!"[21] The newspaper also

[19] Thomas Nast, "Let him roar Mr. Speaker," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 6, 1880, 149; Thomas Nast, "Woah! – Greenback the Weaver," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 24, 1880, 272; Thomas Nast, "Another Fool's Errand," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 28, 1880, 545.
[20] William Shakespeare, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" Act 2 Scene 1.
[21] Joseph Keppler, "The Best of Friends Must Part," cartoon, *Puck*, February 22, 1888, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014703642&view=2up&seq=460

depicted Puck as a reformer who tried to steer people onto the correct path. An 1886 cartoon portrays Puck suggesting a solution to a dispute between capital and labor. The capitalist and the worker both try to move the hands of a clock representing business, while Puck, standing on a book labeled "common sense" hangs a new pendulum, captioned arbitration, on the clock. Puck represents the logical and amiable solution to the problem that Keppler believed would assist both sides if they listened to his reform plans.[22]

Another common reference used by Nast and Keppler includes Aesop's fables. The short stories with moral lessons worked efficiently to relate the actions of people and politicians with a well-known tale. Often using animals, the fables situated the actions of their targets as wise or foolish, honorable or immoral. The popular stories, likely known since childhood, allowed the audience to easily connect with the events and understand the positive or negative connotations assigned to the object.

Nast used the lion and the eagle as an example. The eagle stood for the United States, while the Lion represented England. These symbols had already been used in many cartoons to represent the two nations, so it made the analogy that much easier to understand.[23] The lion did not want to enter into a deal with the eagle because it could fly away at any time without honoring their agreement. This suggested that England would not want to make financial deals with the United States because the uncertainty of their fiscal decisions and their use of silver to repay debts.

Two years later Nast used another of Aesop's fables to critique unsound fiscal policies while stressing the moral of fulfilling ones promises. He used the example of the wolf and the

[22] Joseph Keppler, "Arbitration is the true balance of power," cartoon, *Puck*, March 17, 1886, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101074880574&view=2up&seq=140&size=125
[23] Thomas Nast, "A Financial Lesson," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 19, 1876, 672.

crane, in which a wolf with a bone, labeled "debt," lodged in his throat hired a Crane to stick her head down the wolf's mouth to remove it. When done, the crane wanted the agreed upon payment, and the wolf responded that the payment was being able to pull her head out of the wolf's jaws.[24] This posited a point against continually making unsound monetary decisions, such as continued post-Civil War deficit spending, and assuming someone will bail out the government. Nast wanted people to think about how shortsighted and greedy decisions may lead to deteriorations of future confidence in the government system.

Keppler used a fable to make a point about the quality of presidential candidates in April of 1888. He included the quote, "There was a great stir made among the Beasts, which could boast of the largest family, So they came to the lioness. 'And how many,' said they, 'do you have at a birth?' 'One,' said she, grimly; but that one is a Lion!"[25] The Lioness represented the Democratic Party, and her one child, the lion Grover Cleveland imposingly sat above all others. Other parties such as the Republicans, Labor Party, and Prohibitionists, portrayed as cats, kangaroos, and dogs, all have many children as candidates, however they lack the leadership ability of the democratic lion (Figure 3). The straight-forward and clear morals of Aesop's fables allowed cartoonists reach a broad audience with a simple point, which built upon prior contextual knowledge, and created a memorable way to show their feelings towards politicians, people, and governmental decisions.

[24] Thomas Nast, "Fulfill your promises," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 30, 1878. 245.
[25] Joseph Keppler, "Quality Counts," cartoon, *Puck*, April 11, 1888, 8-9.
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015049269775&view=2up&seq=118

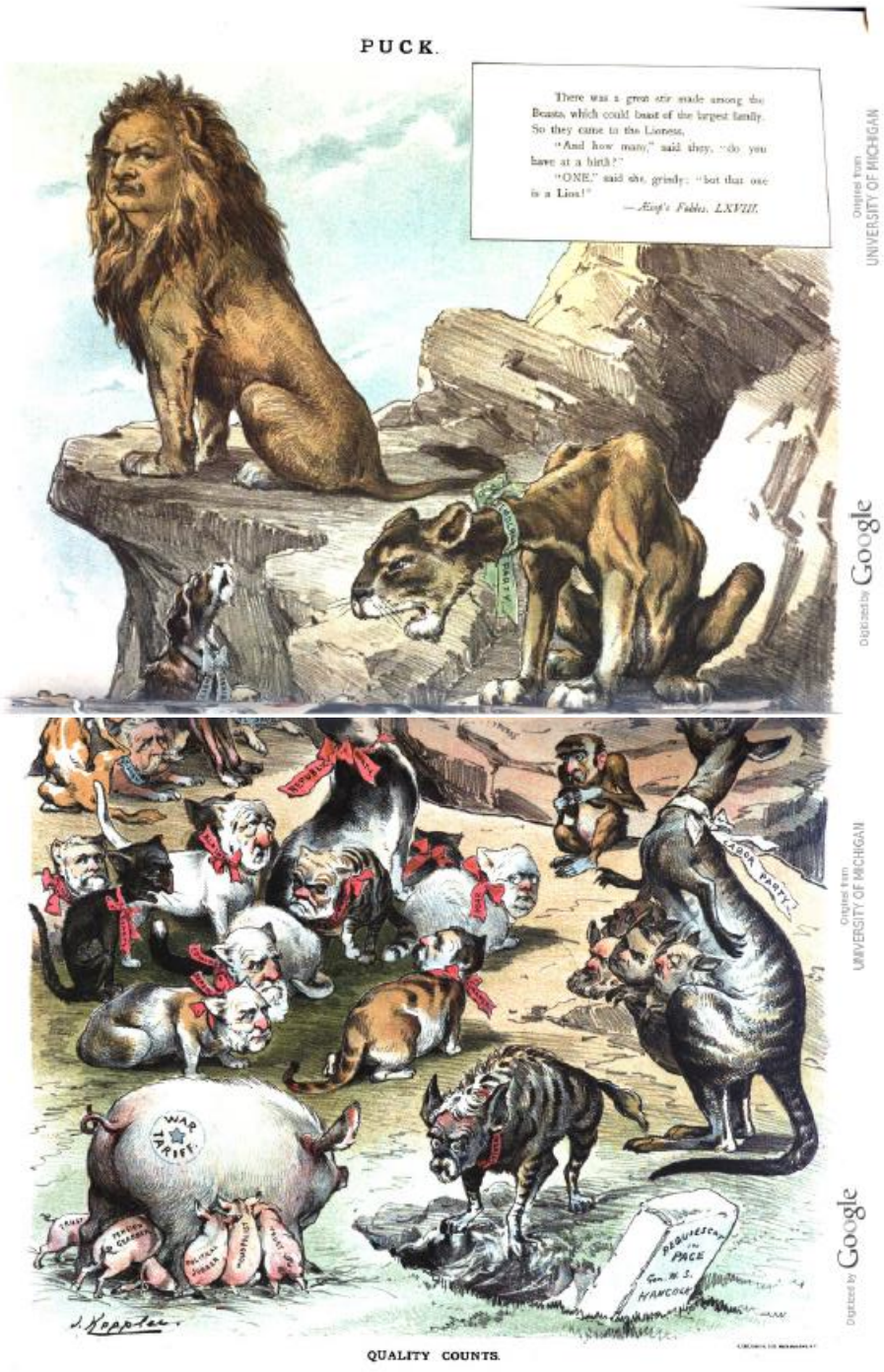

Figure 3: Keppler cartoon from April 11, 1888 titled "Quality Counts."
Source: *Puck*, photo from HathiTrust,
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015049269775&view=2up&seq=118

The previous examples stand as evidence that Nast and Keppler used well known images to help impart the meaning of their arguments on the readers by including ties to characters and morals from popular stories. These made sense to a broad section of the public and clearly positioned the positive qualities of the protagonists and the negative qualities of the foils. This use of previous knowledge helped the cartoonists develop memorable definitions of people and groups.

Along with references which the vast majority of Americans understood, the cartoonists also relied on some examples more aimed at specific audiences. They recognized their audiences and used examples which catered to them. Both born in German speaking countries, and creating papers for audiences with significant German populations, Keppler and Nast included several traditional German tales in with their popular references. *Puck* started as a German language newspaper and later added an English edition, so the inclusion of German stories seems logical. Keppler cited the story of the Erlkönig, a famous tale in Germany turned into a poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1782. In the poem, a father races through the woods to town to get medical attention for his young son. The child believes that he heard whispers from the Erlkönig to join him, while the father tries to give the boy rational explanations for what he heard. The Erlkönig says he will take the boy, and upon their arrival, the boy has died. Keppler used this tale without any background explanation, assuming its familiarity to the audience. He showed Rutherford B. Hayes as the father on horseback racing to the Whitehouse with a rolled up paper labeled "civil service reform" on his lap. He tries to make it through the forest trees, which have the faces of politicians blocking his efforts, such as Conkling, Blaine, Morton, and Tilden. Ghostly newspapers, critical of his efforts float in the air above him. Keppler accompanied the cartoon with the quote, "The father groaneth, he rideth

wild. He holds in his arms the sobbing child. Arrived at the 'White House', with fear and dread, Close in his arms, the child lay dead."[26] Keppler used the story to suggest that the valiant effort of Hayes to make civil service reform met its end because the resistance of congressmen and newspapers. The following year, Keppler used this reference again. He praised the work of Karl Schurz, depicted as a forester, leading some reluctant Republicans, James Blaine and Roscoe Conkling, in cutting down the haunted woods. He portrayed Schurz as removing obstacles to future reforms.[27]

Examples from Goethe's work *Faust* also make their way into political cartoons. Keppler utilized an opera interpretation of Faust in an illustration. It depicted Rutherford B. Hayes, who had recently taken office as president, as Faust trying to win the affection of Marguerite, representing Miss Columbia. In an altered quote she asks of him, "Indeed, yours is a noble heart, my dear; but tell me to which party you adhere- Which side you claim, whose politics you choose?"[28] The scene's setting tied politics to a well-known scene of courtship. A few months later Keppler used Faust again, this time showing Hayes, as Faust, walking away with a woman, labeled "the Solid South." In the foreground Roscoe Conkling, as Mephistopheles, stands accompanied by the quote "Unto the Power he doth belong Which only doeth Right while ever willing Wrong."[29]

Both Nast and Keppler referenced "Der Ring des Niebelungen" or "The Ring of the Niebelungs" a four part musical play by Richard Wagner based upon the traditional German epic

[26] Joseph Keppler, "Der Erlkönig neue Version," cartoon, *Puck* (German), October 31, 1877, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379450&view=2up&seq=98
[27] Joseph Keppler, "Forrester Schurz at his post," cartoon, *Puck*, March 20, 1878, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=20
[28] Joseph Keppler, "Scene from 'Faust' – slightly altered," cartoon, *Puck*, May 1877, no. 12, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=202
[29] Joseph Keppler, "Conkling as Mephistopheles," cartoon, *Puck*, October 3, 1877, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=482

the *Niebelungenlied.* The last parts of the epic appeared in Germany in August of 1876, and the cartoonists used the settings shortly thereafter. Nast mentioned the plays just as they premiered in Germany, using the name of the play as a joke in which Samuel Tilden takes credit for breaking the Canal Ring and the Tammany Ring as well as the Ring of the Niebelungs.[30] A few months later, Keppler made a set of full page illustrations which, without political motivation, showed important scenes from the plays.[31]

Several years later, Keppler depicted a scene from the third play of *Der Ring des Niebelungen.* The hero Siegfried, portrayed as Grover Cleveland, slays the dragon Fafner, captioned War Tariffs, with the sword Nothung, labeled sound policy. The bottom of the cartoon had the quote "Siegfried the fearless in the political 'Dismal Swamp,'" comparing the fiscal policy of Cleveland to the play's fearless adventuring hero.[32]

These examples of German stories and culture reflect a large German-American audience, and views sympathetic to those people. The cartoonists rarely demeaned vital demographics to their newspapers, and showed support for specific nationalities, ethnicities, and political parties. How Nast and Keppler depicted the culture, lifestyle, and appearance of groups changed significantly based on the cartoonists feelings towards them.

The cartoonists also repeatedly used effective topics and symbols, allowing the readers to recall and make connections with past illustrations. This helped Nast and Keppler simplify cartoons which already had set up a premise, as well as add elements of one cartoon into others in order to help the readers remember specific points, and draw connections between topics.

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[30] Thomas Nast, "The Ring Breaker," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 16, 1876, 764.
[31] Joseph Keppler, "Der Ring Des Niebelungs," cartoon, *Puck* (German), November 1876, no. 11, 12; and December 1876 no. 12, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=134 https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=150
[32] Joseph Keppler, "Siegfried the fearless in the political 'Dismal Swamp'," cartoon, *Puck*, December 28, 1887, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014703642&view=2up&seq=332

This repetitive representation assisted in lampooning individuals, but the same strategies allowed for the codification of group images.

Historians of political cartoons over the last century differed in how they covered the subject, but most of them have identified or examined how cartoonists like Nast and Keppler repeated used images to more easily reach their audiences, as well as utilized similar symbolism and campaigns to back up their arguments. In his 1904 book, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*, Albert Bigelow Paine wrote in a bibliographic form, but noted the repeated symbolism and distinct campaigns over Nast's career. He pointed out several examples of works about Tweed and Tammany Hall, Horace Greeley, the underfunding of the military, monetary policy, symbols of political parties, and individual campaigns for or against presidential candidates.[33]

Later historians created collections that included some explanations of Nast's cartoons, such as Morton Keller in his 1968 book *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast*, as well as Thomas Nast St. Hill's 1974 book *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*. These authors included recurrent themes, often breaking up chapters into topical campaigns. They identify repetition in how Nast depicted Tweed, presidential campaigns, economic policies, the Catholic Church, and the coverage of civil rights.[34] Richard West who wrote *Satire on Stone: the Political Cartoons of Joseph Keppler* (1988) added more biographical details, but still divided the chapters into similar categories of symbols and campaigns.[35]

The previous historians mainly looked at the role of a single cartoonist, however, others like Steven Hess and Milton Kaplan in *The Ungentlemanly Art*, introduced broader comparisons

[33] Albert Bigelow Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1904).
[34] Morton Keller, *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); Thomas Nast St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1974).
[35] Richard Samuel West, *Satire on Stone: The Political Cartoons of Joseph Keppler* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988).

between cartoonists by era.[36] This view helps to situate the works of individual cartoonists into the trends of the time, and adds more cartoonist comparisons. These books often point out when cartoonists covered events in the same way, used each other's ideas, or directly disagreed with one another. They noted how Nast and Keppler used similar images when uncovering Boss Tweed's corruption, however they also note differences in the intensity of the work.

More recent works like Fiona Deans Halloran's, *Thomas Nast: the Father of Modern Political Cartoons,* placed the use and study of political cartoons into a broader context, suggesting that research into the life and ideas of the cartoonist can produce more insight into the points they argued and the strategies they employed. This analysis suggests the utilization of political cartoons as a more serious source that can offer explanations about social and political tendencies as well as public sentiments.[37]

Nast's works represent some of the most effective and commonly used examples of repetition and symbolism, but Keppler developed many samples of his own. Thomas De Witt Talmage, a famous Presbyterian preacher, became a common subject of Keppler's cartoons in the late 1870s, appearing in no less than nineteen cartoons between 1878 through 1880. Talmage drew large crowds to his energetic New York City based sermons, but Keppler denigrated his ploys to fill church seats. As described by Morton Keller, his "propensity for showmanship and sensationalism" was "offensive to Keppler."[38] Talmage appeared in cartoons with his characteristic sideburns, as well as an exaggerated large nose, and mouth. Due to the frequency of portrayals, Keppler often reduced his target using symbolism, or adorned him with a prop

[36] Steven Hess and Milton Kaplan, *The Ungentlemanly Art: A History of American Political Cartoons* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 102.
[37] Fiona Deans Halloran, *Thomas Nast: the Father of Modern Political Cartoons* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
[38] West, *Satire on Stone*, 117.

which could appear easily in many illustrations. Several examples exist in a *Puck* cartoon, with multiple depictions of Talmage, published on the tenth of April in 1878. Keppler depicted his subject as a child's climbing monkey toy, with thin wooden appendages and moving joints, which allowed it to climb on the top of a stick. This lampooned the way Talmage moved around his elevated pulpit, and had the caption "His acrobatic style of preaching is founded upon the model of a toy dear to childhood."[39] The same cartoon also showed Talmage as a large mouthed creature with many arms and legs. The caption, describing his preaching style, explained, "In fact in his more impassioned movements he resembles a Devil fish – all mouth and arms."[40] Cartoonists rarely used three symbolic caricatures of the same person in one cartoon, however, all of these depictions returned in multiple editions of *Puck*.

Keppler drew a cartoon for the December 10th 1879 edition of *Puck* captioned "Talmage cuts himself adrift, and - everyone is satisfied." The pastor, in a wooden tub, has cut himself from a larger tub containing the Presbyterian Synod, and attempts to row away. The other Presbyterian ministers, stand in a large tub which "can stand on its own bottom," while Talmage, anchored by weights labeled "debts" and "mortgage," lists in the shallow water.[41] The ministers do not show any negative effects from losing Talmage, whose tub includes the toy monkey, the organ grinder, the tabernacle, and the large mortgage weight. The audience, having seen all these symbols before, already know what Keppler aimed to make fun of, even without further explanation.

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[39] Joseph Keppler, "Talmage," cartoon, *Puck*, April 10, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=84

[40] Joseph Keppler, "Talmage," cartoon, *Puck*, April 10, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=84

[41] Joseph Keppler, "Brother Talmage cuts himself adrift, and - everyone is satisfied," cartoon, *Puck*, December 10, 1879, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435082757600&view=2up&seq=654

Although a good example of a cartoonist creating unique representations of a person or an idea, Talmage stands as an unusual case. Keppler's propensity to show Talmage multiple times in the same cartoon allowed him to create several symbols for different aspects of his persona. More commonly, a single element embodied a person or an idea.

Illustrations of Peter Cooper, the Greenback Party candidate for president in 1876, exemplify this. The elderly candidate supported Greenbacks, or printed money not backed by gold. Keppler disliked this, viewing it as unsound monetary policy and likely to cause inflation. Even when portraying Cooper for another reason, an inflated tube, used for floatation when swimming, often accompanied him to make the viewer continually draw the connection between candidate and the inflation his policies would cause. Keppler suggested that only inflation kept his monetary policy afloat. Through the latter half of 1878, this tube accompanied Cooper in most political cartoons, such as when he represented Atlas trying to hold up the world, when he sat on the ring while visiting his friend Allen in prison, as well as when it hung on his arm as he watered the dying tree of sound monetary policy repudiation.[42]

Keppler recognized the influence of repetitive symbols in the public perception of a person or group, and he aimed to create examples to use during political elections. As mentioned by Hess and Kaplan, "It was Keppler's design to introduce a recurring symbol or theme to each Presidential contest- Hancock as Samson in 1880, Blaine as the Tattooed Man in 1884. And in 1888, when Benjamin Harrison, a man of modest stature and the grandson of 'Old Tippecanoe,' was the Republican nominee, the Puck cartoonist invented his most amusing device – grandpa's

[42] Joseph Keppler, "Old Grandfather Cooper as Atlas," cartoon, *Puck*, August 7, 1878, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=348; Joseph Keppler, "'The' Allen – der Greenback-Apostel," cartoon, *Puck* (German), September 25, 1878, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379013&view=2up&seq=10; Joseph Keppler, "Der giftige Upasbaum des Greenbackschwindels," cartoon, *Puck* (German), October 9, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379013&view=2up&seq=66

hat."[43] This allowed the audience, at a glance, to equate the target with a memorable positive or negative trait.

Although memorable, most of Keppler's symbols in cartoons lacked the simple efficiency seen in Nast's work. Keppler often showed the person he lampooned, and added a representation of something they stood for, however through repetitive use, Nast had the ability to reduce the subject and their stances to an inanimate object with limited personification of the target.

An example of Nast's use of symbolism exists in his coverage of Horace Greeley and Benjamin Gratz Brown. Greeley, a long time editor of the popular newspaper *The New York Tribune*, caught the attention of Nast occasionally, but once selected as the Liberal Republican candidate in 1872, he became a main target. Nast disagreed with Greeley's plan of reconciling with the South, and even though he stepped down as editor of the Tribune, Greeley still received criticism about his connections with the paper. In a unique political decision, he also won the Democratic nomination. This placed Greeley against the Republican Grant, who Nast consistently supported. Gratz Brown became the nominee for vice president under Greeley.

By the summer of 1872, Horace Greeley emerged as a mainstay of *Harper's Weekly* cartoons, almost always appearing with a signature long white coat and matching top hat. An example from January of 1872, before his campaign nomination and still in his role as editor of the *Tribune*, shows Greeley in a two panel cartoon as a "traitor", setting bail for Jefferson Davis, and as a "patriot" preparing to sling mud at Grant. In both parts, his white coat and hat stand out prominently. Another reoccurring element, a newspaper with "what I know about…" written upon it sticks out of his pocket.[44] After a few cartoons, Greeley's clothes or his "what I know about" phrase, easily stand in for his caricature.

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[43] Hess and Kaplan, *The Ungentlemanly Art*, 109.
[44] Thomas Nast, "What I know about Horace Greeley," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 20, 1872, 52.

A few illustrations show Greeley's back to the audience, but his clothes identify him. In October, Nast depicted the hat and coattails of Greeley in the water after a "tidal wave" overturned the Liberal Republican Party boat (Figure 4). The faces of many other Liberal Republicans and Democrats stick out of the water, but only a few articles of clothing stand in for the presidential nominee.[45]

Figure 4: Nast cartoon from October 26, 1872 titled "That tidal wave."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1872&issueId=1026&page=832

A few other instances of this Greeley symbolism show him as a monkey, adorned in the same coat and hat, dancing to an organ grinder. Whitelaw Reid, the new editor of the *New York*

[45] Thomas Nast, "That Tidal Wave," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 26, 1872, 832-833.

Tribune, stood as the organ grinder for whom the monkey danced and tried to collect votes.[46] Similarly, a wolf wearing the same outfit stands in for Greeley, in a cartoon titled "the wolf in sheep's clothing." Uncle Sam and Lady Liberty fend off the wolf from attacking sheep their sheep.[47]

Eventually the signature outfit on its own could get Nast's points across. The white hat and coat, along with the folded newspaper, appeared on a pole without Greeley in two cartoons. They suggest that the ideas of Greeley will blow over, and that Grant should not bow to Greeley.[48] Even the simplified representation of Greeley pales in comparison to the treatment of the Democratic vice presidential candidate Benjamin Gratz Brown. If one looked at the bottom of Greeley's coattail during the election season, most of the time a tag reading "Gratz Brown" hung from the end. Instead of depicting the candidate, Nast reduced him to a small piece of paper. The *Harper's* staff did not having a reference picture of Brown to draw his likeness, so Nast found different ways to represent him. Once Nast drew Brown sitting with his back to the audience, once as a small mouse, and every other time he became an index card size piece of paper. This helped to undermine the popularity and credibility of the candidate.[49] The symbolism remained memorable, because three years later, a cartoon brought up Brown, still as a tag, being cut from the coat tail by the *New York Tribune*. Nast used this depiction again to illustrate a quote from the *New York Evening Post*, questioning Brown's stance on currency, as well as pointing out relief that he remained in obscurity rather than becoming vice president.[50]

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[46] Thomas Nast, "The New Organ-ization," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, June 8, 1872, 448.
[47] Thomas Nast, "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 14, 1872, 716.
[48] Thomas Nast, "William Tell will not surrender or bow to the old hat," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, May 25, 1872, 408.
[49] St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*, 31.
[50] Thomas Nast, "This was the most unkindest cut of all," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 31, 1875, 628.

Another example of Nast's ability to reduce a person and his ideas to a simple symbol comes through in his treatment of Thomas Stanley Matthews, a new Republican Senator from Ohio. According to Albert Bigelow Paine, Nast and Matthews met at the "Compromise Dinner" in 1877, and Matthews noted, "I don't suppose you could caricature a man with regular features like mine." To which Nast responded with a laugh, stating, "Don't give me too good a chance to try."[51]

Within a few months, the Matthews Resolution, which laid out the payment of government bonds by using silver dollars set at 412.5 grains, became Nast's chance. Ever the opponent to silver as unsound monetary policy, Nast jumped on this as an opportunity to show Matthews as setting up the nation's finances to fall into a trap. He drew Matthews once as a pawn shop owner, with a wide face and prominent beard, who received a golden watch and returns a silver one to the customer.[52] After this, Matthews quickly gained a caricature as an inanimate object. On February 16th 1878, Nast used the "regular" features of Matthews to show him as a large bear trap which had snapped on the leg of Uncle Sam. The teeth of the trap made the line of the Senator's mouth between his full mustache and beard, and his features showed rather accurately along the top arching pieces of the trap (Figure 5).[53] After this cartoon, the features of Matthews receded from the bear trap, but its connection to the Senator and his resolution remained.

[51] Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*, 378.
[52] Thomas Nast, "The Tweed-ization of Silver," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 19, 1878, 45.
[53] Thomas Nast, "The First Step Toward National Bankruptcy," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 16, 1878, 125.

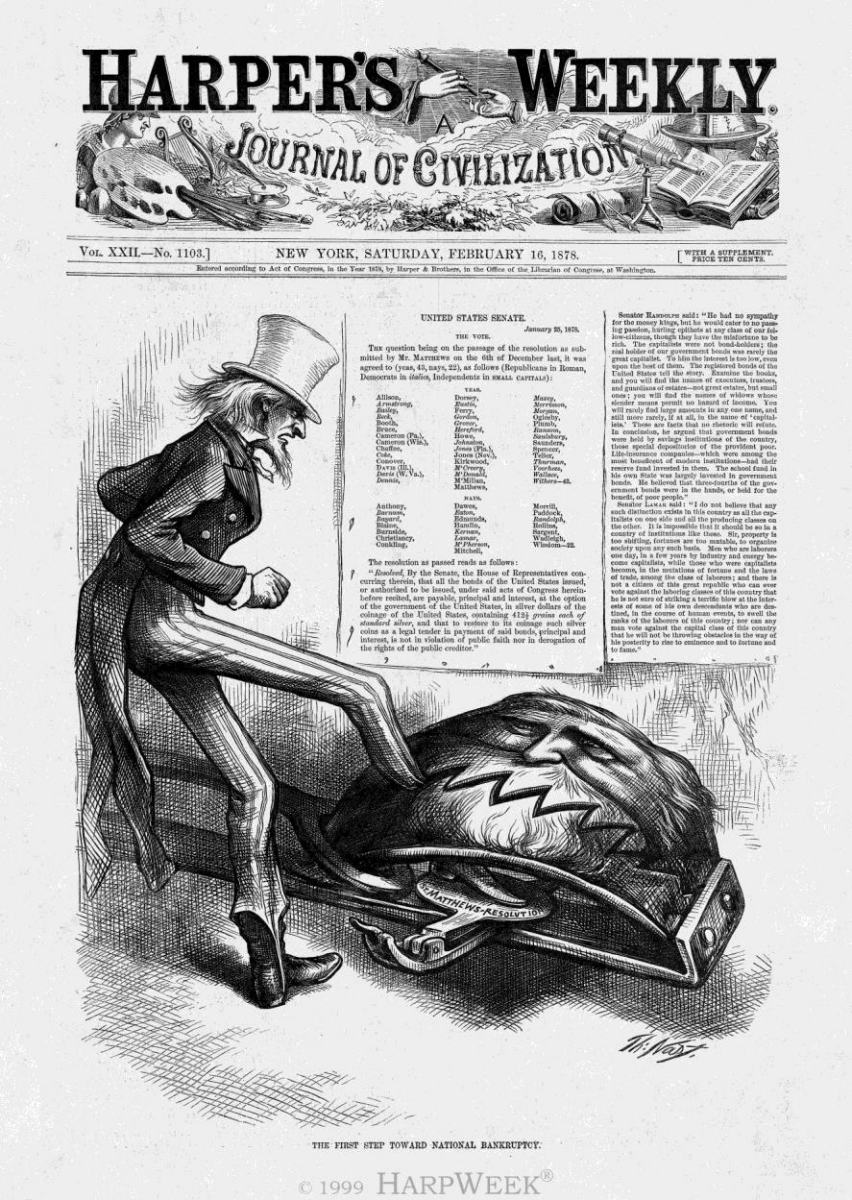

Figure 5: Nast cartoon from February 16, 1878 titled "The First Step Toward National Bankruptcy." Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1878&issueId=0216&page=125

For the remainder of the year, hardly any cartoons that portrayed Uncle Sam did not have the trap affixed to his leg. Two illustrations of Uncle Sam, from the 23rd of February, depict traps on his legs. They no longer have the features of Matthews, but the point of the trap, its link

to the senator, and its financial problems still shine through.[54] During 1878, Nast made about twenty illustrations which showed Uncle Sam with a trap on his leg. Even though many of the cartoons dealt with financial issues, Nast also included the trap in cartoons dealing with different issues. An illustration from April 6th provides an example of Uncle Sam with the trap, but the drawing dealt with social issues about African and Chinese Americans.[55] Although reduced to a small and peripheral role in this example, with no other captions or symbols the reader still makes the connection with Matthews and unsound monetary policy.

Nast and Keppler showed a great ability to flatten people and ideas into a simplified and memorable visual representation. The examples used here display the way that the cartoonists drew individual people with recurring symbols to assist with political points, however, the strategies easily extended to developing images of larger groups of people as well. Later chapters will examine how Nast and Keppler used their cartoons to help shape American's perspectives about laborers, Irish Catholics, African Americans, and women.

Cartoonists often used symbols to bash their opponents, however some also expressed discontent when cartoonists with differing political points of view utilized these often inaccurate simplifications. They wanted to undercut the effectiveness of illustrations detrimental to their own preferred narratives. This led to cartoonists sometimes calling out each other's use of simplistic symbols that had gained traction against their preferred perspective.

Especially when covering reoccurring issues, for instance; corruption, Tammany Hall, or political parties, cartoonists like Nast and Keppler created an arsenal of visuals to stand for elements of ideas or people. Some commonly used examples include rings to stand for rings of

[54] Thomas Nast, "What is sauce for the goose," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 23, 1878, 160; Thomas Nast, "The blessings we have we do not make use of," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 23, 1878, 160.
[55] Thomas Nast, "Hard to Please the 'White Trash'," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 6, 1878, 280.

corruption such as the Erie Rail Road Ring and the Whiskey Ring, or prison jumpsuits, large gems, and slogans like "what are you going to do about it," to depict Tammany Hall. Due to many years of near constant coverage in the newspapers, cartoonists developed a vast collection of stand-ins to represent the political parties. Republican newspapers created a variety of negative images to stand for unpopular or contested stances within the Democratic Party, so they could easily keep them fresh in the minds of voters. Democrats did the same to the Republican Party.

Frederick Opper worked for *Puck* in 1880, and he lampooned the "outrages" that Republican newspapers like *The New York Tribune* as well as *Harper's Weekly* often used to depict the Democratic Party. Although pointing mainly at the *Tribune* editor Whitelaw Reid, he showcased many of the same examples used by Nast. The illustration depicted the "bankrupt outrage mill," which showed a toy collection of oft used anti-Democratic stories and images. The gathering includes several scaled down bloody shirts hanging up on a line, to represent Republican tendencies to draw connections to the Democratic party's role in Civil War violence, as well as a toy KKK member about to burn down a house, a toy KKK member forcing an African-American to vote as told, and a lynched African American doll. Some of these have captions such as "Our patented house burning outrage" and "our patented lynching outrage," to show how the cartoonist considered the strategies overused, played out, and creating outrage out of nothing in order to rally political support.[56]

A similar example from Keppler in November of 1876, shows Tilden on a stage receiving the support of states after the election of 1876, and backstage Republican politicians and newspapermen packed up their props. The caption states "Die Schlussvorstellung im

[56] Frederick Opper, "The Bankrupt Outrage Mill," cartoon, *Puck*, July 14, 1880, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=356

Nationaltheater am 7. November 1876," or, the final performance in the national theater on the 7th of November.[57] This suggested that they no longer needed the cartoon symbolic stand-ins for the election, and they should pack them up. The visuals of strategies in the crowded backstage area include a bloody shirt, a KKK skull, a newspaper organ to grind, a rag baby, a Tammany prison jumpsuit, a donkey mask, and Nast's Republican elephant. Most of the symbols saw heavy use leading up to the election, however due to the uncertainty of the results, their use continued well into 1877 when Hayes took office.

Nast also called out the repeated use of strategies by other newspapers. In the Christmas day edition of *Harper's Weekly* of 1875, he drew James Gordon Bennett Jr., the head of the *New York Herald*, sitting and playing with his toys. These included a broken hobby horse, which stood for his claims of Grant trying to serve a third term, a pull toy that related Grant to a Caesar, and several toy "dogs of war," such as Spain and the United States, which he made fight over a bone labeled "Cuba."[58]

Cartoonists called out other papers for overuse of visual campaigns, often in an attempt to undermine the effectiveness of the cartoons by belittling the approaches they used calling them worn out or childish exaggerations. Even if the opposing points of view made a reasonable point, such as disagreeing with Democratic acceptance of KKK violence, or Republicans overlooking patronage and corruption within their administrations, the papers depicted the use of the symbols as low partisan politics. This showed that cartoonists recognized the effectiveness of cartoon symbols, and sometimes even tried to counter their opponent's campaigns. Inaccurate

[57] Joseph Keppler, "Die Schlussvorstellung im Nationaltheater," cartoon, *Puck* (German), November 1876, no. 8, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=110
[58] Thomas Nast, "J.G.B. Jun., In his property room," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, December 25, 1875, 1040.

representations gained as much power as realistic ones, and when unchecked, this helped the American public stereotype large groups of people.

Long after the time of Nast and Keppler, their symbols and images continue to have an impact on the ways people perceive individuals and groups. The cartoonists created a historical memory that the public, and even historians, accept without questioning too deeply. For example, newspapers such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Puck* played a large role in the creation of William "Boss" Tweed's image that became commonly accepted.

Nast's work against Tweed, especially starting in the early 1870s, saw him as a powerful leader heading a ring of corruption. Along with his cronies, he stole money, controlled politics, and used his power to evade justice. In many cartoons Tweed appeared as very large and rotund in order to make him stand out and poke fun at his weight, as well as to signify his power. For instance, in January of 1872 Nast drew Tweed towering over a police officer who, although able to arrest other offenders, did not have the power to arrest him. The caption questioned, "Can the law reach him?" and Nast suggested they could not (Figure 6).[59] In most of the earlier illustrations Tweed wore an expensive three piece suit and often had an immense shining gem pinned upon his chest. This suggested that he lived luxuriously off the people's stolen tax money.[60] A cartoon in October of 1872 depicted Tweed by using the recognizable suit and glimmering gem, even though a sack of money stood in for his head.[61] Later cartoons swapped out the three piece suit for a striped prison suit.[62]

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[59] Thomas Nast, "Can the Law Reach Him?," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 6, 1872, 8; Thomas Nast, "Stop Thief," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 7, 1871, 940; Thomas Nast, "That's what's the matter," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 7, 1871, 944.
[60] Thomas Nast, "Two Great Questions," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 19, 1871, 764; Thomas Nast, "The 'Brains'," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 21, 1871, 992; Thomas Nast, "The City Treasury," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 14, 1871, 960.
[61] Thomas Nast, "The 'Brains'," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 21, 1871, 992.
[62] Thomas Nast, "Tweed-le Dee and Tilden-dum," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 1, 1876, 525. The same cartoon reappeared on November 7, 1876 after after the arrest of Tweed.

Figure 6: Nast cartoon from January 6, 1872 titled "Can the Law Reach Him?"
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1872&issueId=0106&page=8

Keppler expressed similar views of Tweed in his first iteration of *Puck*, showing him and his pals in prison suits strung up on posts.[63] Even though Keppler's New York based version of

[63] Joseph Keppler, "The fate which they deserve," cartoon, *Puck* (St. Louis), October 8, 1871. Found in West, *Satire On Stone* page 47.

Puck began publishing around the time of Tweed's arrest, the cartoonist continued to use the political boss as a villain and a cautionary tale.

Even after the arrest of Tweed, Tammany Hall did not fade into obscurity. The political organization remained powerful, and backed other powerful men such as John Kelly and John Morrissey. To show the danger present, the cartoonists used the well-known image of Tweed as a way to transfer the people's distrust to other bosses. Keppler drew Tweed, in his signature prison suit, as a teacher to Kelly. He instructed the little Kelly in Tammany math, and had a textbook titles "Addition, Division, and Silence." The subtraction problem on the board led to the following dialog: "Kerlychen: Drei von Eins kann ich nicht, borg' ich mir Zehn und behalte Acht." "Lehrer: Brav, mein Junge!" Kelly mentioned that he cannot take three from one, so he borrowed ten, and then keeps the remaining eight for himself, at this Tweed gives his adulations.[64] This showed the crooked politics and stolen money would continue even under different leadership, and used Tweed as a tool to help readers recognize it.

Similarly, in a Nast cartoon from 1877, a dead spider with Tweed's head, hangs nailed to the wall as a specimen in the side of the cartoon, and a large Morrissey spider waits in a large and well-formed web. Nast suggested that Morrissey controlled the same rings as Tweed, and as "the Boss Spider" beckons to the "New York Fly," "Come into my Parlor."[65] Even after the arrest and death of Tweed, the cartoonists still found usefulness in his image, and these continued references helped to cement the way people perceived and remembered him.

Historians who have written about Tweed have sometimes struggled to get past the version of "Boss" Tweed created by political cartoons. They sometimes reflect the newspaper

[64] Joseph Keppler, "In der Schule," cartoon *Puck* (German), December 1876, no. 13, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=150
[65] Thomas Nast, "The Web of Ruin," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, November 10, 1877, 881.

image more closely than the one which emerges from studying less politically biased sources. Two of the prime examples include Denis Tilden Lynch's 1927 book, *"Boss" Tweed: the Story of a Grim Generation*, and Kenneth Ackerman's 2005 book, *Boss Tweed: The Rise and Fall of the Corrupt Pol. Who Conceived the Soul of Modern New York*.[66] Lynch's account covers many stories about Tweed, but lacks supporting documents and analysis of the man and his situation. The book mirrors the stories told about Tweed in the newspapers more than it works to clarify a genuine representation of the man through a variety of sources. Ackerman, on the other hand, worked to break out from the shadow cast by the notorious caricature of Tweed, and covers some different parts of Tweed's story including his stances on immigration, social services, and infrastructure in New York City. The scholarship of Ackerman about Tweed does not carry over to most other historians, who merely mention Tweed as an example within a larger topic, and more often use the illustrated image rather than accurate accounts.

Along with the caricatured image of Tweed, historical memory of him draws significantly from Alfred Bigelow Paine's 1904 book *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures.* Paine, a personal friend of Nast, conducted interviews, and included Nast's recollections of stories from throughout his life in the biographical history. He included several chapters dedicated to how Nast took on Tweed and Tammany Hall, in which he codified many stories. A popular one contended that Tweed offered Nast $500,000 to take an extended trip to Europe so that he would "stop them damned pictures" which uncovered Tweed's corrupt actions.[67] Another story suggests that after Tweed's prison escape, flight to Spain, and subsequent recapture (because someone recognized him from a cartoon), his luggage contained

[66] Denis Tilden Lynch, *"Boss" Tweed: the Story of a Grim Generation* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927); Kenneth D. Ackerman, *Boss Tweed: The Rise and Fall of the Corrupt Pol Who Conceived the Soul of Modern New York* (New York: Caroll and Graf, 2005).
[67] Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*, 179-182.

copies of nearly all Nast's caricatures of him.[68] Although based on elements of truth, little evidence exists to separate Nast's storytelling from factual evidence – Paine's book uses both extensively. Tweed's name even stands as another example of political cartoon influence. William Tweed had the middle name Magear, however for the purpose of a cartoon Nast attributed Marcy as his middle name. Based on this, Paine and many subsequent historians wrote about Tweed without getting his name correct.[69] This shows that popular images help shape how historians study, and how people remember, figures as well as their actions.

Extensive newspaper campaigns aimed at combatting the corruption of Tweed had a justified and necessary place to help foster reform, but the ease with which these cartoons campaigns shaped the long term perception of Tweed begs the question: how much influence did political cartoons have on popularly held images of groups of people?

Keppler and Nast had different political allegiances but shared a significant common ground when it came to the strategies they used while cartooning. Both cartoonists made sure to make their works easily understood and remembered by their audience by building upon popular knowledge, as well as using simplified symbolism to repeat important points in many illustrations. Although Nast and Keppler were not the only political cartoonist at the time to make popular references and symbolism, the scale and effectiveness of their campaigns stand out. They found elements of American life that they disagreed with, and worked to create definitions of who or what helped or hindered that movement, as well as the role those people should take in society. Far beyond a cheap joke, Nast and Keppler helped put lasting images to ideas of reform and to groups of people.

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[68] Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*, 336.
[69] Examples of this exist in works including: Paine, *Thomas Nast: His Period and His Pictures*, 140; Hess, *Them Damned Pictures*, 13-15; St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*, 17; Keller, *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast*, 177.

CHAPTER 3: DEFINING UN-AMERICAN TRAITS

By caricaturing personal attributes in order to push social and political agendas as well as shape public sentiment, political cartoons became one of the foremost media for showing a crafted image of different groups of people during the late nineteenth century. Nast noted the influence of cartoons in a transcript of a lecture he gave on caricature. He stated, "A good caricature brings out the peculiarities of a person so positively, that it is much stronger than an ordinary likeness, we are more impressed by it, and the effect lasts longer."[70] He continued, "Now if you should meet me at some future time, you could recognize me much sooner by my own caricature of myself, than by the flattering portrait drawn by the idealist."[71] These quotes highlight the power of caricature in creating a strong and lasting image of a person or a group of people. Nast also argued that viewers remember the exaggerations more than the realities. This worked as effectively for large populations as it did for individual people, and by studying political cartoons, one can see how images of groups helped to define their place in American society. The illustrations of Nast and Keppler assisted in shaping definitions of who was "American" and the role that various groups of people should play.

This chapter covers a few examples found in the works of Nast and Keppler which assisted in the creation or proliferation of images differentiating between "Americans" and "outsiders." Although the place of immigrants stands central in this debate, a more nuanced

[70] Thomas Nast, "Caricature" box 1, folder "Articles in hand of Mrs. Th. Nast probably dictated by Th. Nast" document 4, page 2, Thomas Nast Collection, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library, Freemont Ohio.
[71] Thomas Nast, "Caricature" box 1, folder "Articles in hand of Mrs. Th. Nast probably dictated by Th. Nast" document 4, page 4, Thomas Nast Collection, Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Library, Freemont Ohio.

perspective shows the importance of meeting cultural and ethnic standards before gaining full "American" status in political cartoons regardless of birth place. Nast and Keppler often commented on labor and capital, forming their own definitions of workers who benefited or caused detriments to industry. This distinguished between "American" traits of honest work for honest pay, diligence, and thrift, and "outsider" traits including excessive demands, involvement in powerful or violent unions, Communist sympathies, and cheap labor. A correlation exists between "American" workers and white Protestants in many political cartoons, with Anglo protagonists often in opposition to cheap Chinese labor, or violent Irish protestors. This chapter also examines Nast and Keppler's use of Irish Catholics as examples of non-Americans. They use images suggesting violence, drunkenness, inability to save money, and allegiance to a foreign church rather than to the United States, as well as an accentuation of stereotypical physical differences to distance Irish Catholics from other Americans.

Through many cartoons, Nast and Keppler created similar definitions of what they saw as good labor and bad labor, in accordance with their own points of view. The artists defined a role they believed labor and capital should fill. On a more individual level, they made distinctions between people they considered good or bad laborers, based on their honesty, work ethic, race, as well as openness to unions, strikes, use of violence, or sympathy to communism. These points came together to develop a positive picture of an ideal American worker and contrasted them with outsiders.

Along with land owning farmers, property owning males who maintained their own business, enjoyed high regard in the earlier part of the nineteenth century due to their independence; they did not rely on an employer for their livelihood. By the later part of the century, permanent wage work became more common, and some newer definitions of good labor

formed. Several historians have looked into inclusion and exclusion in definitions of American labor.

Shortly after the time of the cartoon examples used in this chapter, the authors George McNeill, W. W. Stone, and William W. Morrow wrote "The Chinese and the Labor Question," and reflected many similar ideas to those of Nast and Keppler. The writers noted that due to Chinese competition, "white labor was crowded down to its lowest ebb," citing reasons such as, "The Chinaman could live as he lived in China, while the emigrant from other lands was soon brought up to American habits and customs."[72] They posited some distinctive difference between "American" and Chinese labor making them unable to compete, perhaps aiming to justify discriminatory legislation towards Chinese immigration at the time.

By the 1960s, coverage of labor had changed significantly, and historians looked for deeper reasons behind inclusive or exclusive definitions of labor. David Montgomery wrote a good overview of labor conditions in his book *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862–1872*, but he focused more on political divisions of people rather than social or ethnic explanations.[73] He did not offer a definition of Americanness.

Many historians use the Chinese worker's experience to comment on the relationship of labor and ideas about Americanness. Alexander Saxton for example in his book, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* examined the relationship between the labor movement in California and the anti-Chinese movement, using more than just the cheap labor argument to contextualize unequal treatment of the Chinese.[74]

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[72] George McNeill, W. W. Stone, and William W. Morrow, "The Chinese and the Labor Question," in *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, ed. George McNeill (1887; New York: Kelley, 1971), 430.
[73] David Montgomery, *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862–1872* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967).
[74] Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

Saxton's work brought up additional questions about why the Chinese received the status of an "enemy" to America, an idea which this study aims to examine using cartoon visuals.

Introducing a different angle in *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850–1920*, Daniel Rodgers did not look into the different groups of people, but brought up the importance of work ethic as a core tenant of American labor.[75] Expanding upon ideas from this book may help to connect work ethic as an aspect of acceptance into the category of good labor.

Recent studies have incorporated a multi-faceted viewpoint when examining the assignment of inside and outside labor groups. The comparison of different groups within America, such as African Americans and Chinese, who aimed to show themselves as more desirable laborers than others comes up in Helen H. Jun's article "Black Orientalism: Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Race and U.S. Citizenship." She notes that African Americans used negative perspectives about the Chinese in order to contrast their own responsibility and ability to fit in society on an equal footing.[76] Often present in political cartoons, this article highlights the importance of public images in shaping a group's mainstream reception. The question of why sources focused on differences rather than similarities comes up in Rosanne Currarino's book *The Labor Question in America : Economic Democracy in the Gilded Age* when she asks why the Chinese often stood as outsiders even though they showed many characteristics of the ideal worker. [77] This idea stands as an important aspect of this chapter which looks at the images and roles of groups printed by cartoonists.

[75] Daniel Rodgers, *The Work Ethic in Industrial America, 1850–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).
[76] Helen H. Jun, "Black Orientalism: Nineteenth-Century Narratives of Race and U.S. Citizenship," *American Quarterly* 58, (December 2006): 1047-66.
[77] Rosanne Currarino, *The Labor Question in America: Economic Democracy in the Gilded Age* (Champaign Il: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

Defining the Roles of Good vs Bad Labor

Nast and Keppler believed that representatives of labor and capital had specific roles to play, and if either strayed away from its path, industry would suffer. They believed that without much government intervention the combination of hardworking laborers and fair owners insured more stable economic growth and prosperity. They suggested that some groups fill those roles more effectively than others, and positively portrayed hard working, nonunion, white Protestant workers as epitomized Americans, while casting unions, strikers, some immigrants, and cheap labor as outsiders.

The cartoonists liked to depict sober and industrious workers in a positive light, and alluded to their vital place in the nation. Nast showed this in an 1881 cartoon in which he depicted the North and the South as men walking together, arm in arm, because of business. The laborer led the two halves of the nation towards prosperity, as the "real connecting link" between the North and South.[78] The heroic portrayal used often seen elements when depicting workers including, a square paper hat, an apron, rolled up sleeves showing muscular arms, a hammer, and in this case he also carried an olive branch. To keep this gallant illustrated portrayal, Nast and Keppler expected continued diligent work for what they considered fair wages, and without upheaval or violence. They also always showed this idealized worker as a white Protestant, while imbuing others with foreign features and stereotypes regardless of their birthplace.

Like the worker, the wealthy capitalist also had a role to play. Business owners in the middle to late nineteenth century had few restrictions and regulations mandating levels of pay or work conditions, but the cartoonists expected that the owner treat workers fairly. The stingy millionaire or monopolist often stood as the antagonist in political cartoons, but the honest

[78] Thomas Nast, "The Real Connecting Link – This Looks Like Business," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 26, 1881, 193.

capitalist received depictions as honored Americans. Although sometimes better dressed, the capitalist retained many of the idealized characteristics given to honest workers. If either the capitalist or the laborer strayed too far from their expected roles, Keppler and Nast clearly showed how they disagreed with the actions.[79]

The cartoonists supported open competition, assuming that it would create a balance between honest workingmen and fair capitalists. The ability of monopolists to eliminate competition and grow their own wealth at the expense of the workers and consumers undermined the relationship between labor and capital. Cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* and *Puck* praised those who operated within prescribed boundaries, but just like the monopolist, the laborer who broke with the set program received scornful treatment. Capitalists received several positive portrayals in cartoons, which situated them as model Americans contested by the problems of antagonistic workers.

Keppler made a negative portrayal of labor in an August 1879 cartoon titled, "Has Capital any rights that Labor is bound to respect." In this illustration, a capitalist stands struggling at the bottom of a tall stack of workers sitting upon his shoulders. These workers represent demands of laborers, such as "no apprentices," "no deductions," "shares of profit," higher wages, and eight hour work days. The capitalist also fights against the added weight of debts, mortgages, and "keeping up with appearances." Around this scene are depictions of life for the laborers and the capitalists. On one side, a Saturday night shows workers collecting pay, while the owner toils away late into the night at his desk facing debts and ruin. Sarcastic labels accompany the illustrations such as "the poor workman's Saturday night" and "the happy Saturday night of the bloated capitalist." On the other side of the cartoon, a Sunday scene shows

[79] West, *Satire on Stone*, 90, 170, 262.

the worker out a Coney Island with his family, while further work precludes the capitalist from the same pleasure.[80] Keppler lambasted laborers for demanding what he saw as too much, while showing how it hurt the hard working Anglo owner.

Nast brought up a similar theme in a cartoon in March of 1871. It contained two frames side by side, one showing labor and the other capital. The caption stated, "Put yourself in his place" at the bottom, with the subtitles "Content is Happiness" under the workingman, and "all is not gold that glitters" beneath the owner. It portrayed a happy scene of a workingman going home to his children and wife at the end of the day, where the capitalist still slaved away at a desk due to "wages to pay," contracts to fulfill, money at stake, and all the "rules of trade unions."[81] Nast showed the capital side as working hard for the money and as victimized by greedy unions. Both the examples of Keppler and Nast depicted an Anglo capitalist trying to build his business but getting overworked by laborers who had a nice American lifestyle however continued to demand more.

Nast and Keppler created a definition of good, honest laborers and troublesome ones. In a cartoon published on March 2, 1878, Nast outlined his views on the issues of government involvement and tax, while also drawing a distinction between honest, deserving workers, and those who sought to take advantage of any government assistance. In this illustration, Nast asks, "Will he dare do it?" as Uncle Sam stands between two men attempting to chain a weight, representing income tax, around the neck of the industrious worker. The weight's label reads, "the more you work the more taxes you must pay." Behind the laborer, a poster states, "Industry, self-denial, thrift, knowledge, labor, and capital taxed." On the other side, Uncle Sam

[80] Keppler, "Has capital any rights that labor is bound to respect," cartoon, *Puck*, August 13, 1879, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnfj2b&view=2up&seq=112
[81] Thomas Nast, "Put yourself in his place," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 4, 1871, 201.

hands a drunken man with a communist button a bottle labeled "Free Whiskey," representing the government not taxing the spirit. The poster behind him opposes rewarding, "Idleness, vice, shiftlessness," and "ignorance."[82] Nast disagreed with the government making what he saw as bad tax decisions, not taxing alcohol while making workers pay part of their income (Figure 7). He saw this as burdening good laborers and reinforcing the unindustrious actions of loafers. Nast backed up his political point by using recognizable positive and negative social depictions to contrast between the two sides.

Figure 7: Nast cartoon from March 2, 1878 titled "Will he dare do it?"
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1878&issueId=0302&page=176

[82] Thomas Nast, "Will He Dare Do It?," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 2, 1878, 176.

As well as commenting on the federal government's unwise decision, Nast also made a clear difference between the honest laborer and the loafer. The laborer's depiction showed a somber, fit, and respectably dressed Anglo-Saxon, standing by a hammer, anvil, and plow, while the overweight, boorish, dirty, drunk, and stereotypical Irish loafer teetered among bottles and barrels of rum, with I.O.U.s spilling from his hat. Although the main aim of the cartoon made a statement about the government's taxes, the depictions of the two men tell a lot about Nast's view of efficient and inefficient workers and their places in American society.

Keppler and Nast used a variety of distinctions to contrast good and bad laborers. These examples included negative connotations of union members, especially if they condoned the use of violence, as well as supporters of Communism or Socialism. They criticized greed, and unwillingness to work, along with too lofty expectations. In many ways, they equated elements of foreignness with inefficient workers, and distanced these people from honest American laborers. The cartoonists painted the picture that with hard work and thrift, the laborer could reach a comfortable standard of living, and praised this image of an ideal worker, but a majority of cartoons focused on those people outside of the definition of an honest laborer. Aside from solid work ethic and contentment with their place, race and ethnicity also played into the definition of respectable labor. Chinese immigrants, who in the minds of many undercut wages by working for less money, became common targets, as well as the Irish, who received stereotypes of combativeness, wastefulness and drunkenness.

One may assume that reform minded papers would support the worker in their struggles for more wages and better treatment, but consistent with their economically conservative viewpoints, Nast and Keppler backed capitalism with open competition and railed against those demanding too much and those seeking large changes within the economic system. Many

readers of *Harper's Weekly* and *Puck* likely fell into the category of people who would have benefited from economic changes, however throughout the 1870s and 1880s Nast and Keppler developed definitions of good labor which praised those for working without lofty demands, and for staying in their place. Those not fitting in this categorization appeared over and over again in cartoons as lazy, foolish, or dangerous.

In a cartoon from March of 1879, Nast clarified a definition of who he considered to be a good worker, and contrasted it with the bad type of laborer. The cartoon started off with the subject of "Protecting White Labor." Although this cartoon did not aim to disparage the Chinese, it alluded to the necessity of whiteness and citizenship to embody good labor. Blaine stands in the middle, with a ripped up paper representing The Burlingame Treaty. The treaty, ratified in 1868, allowed more immigration from China, however economic difficulties during the 1870s caused this to come under fire. In the cartoon, Blaine had ripped up the treaty at the behest of a group of workers, labeled hoodlums, who strike in the background, riled up by claims that they required an Anti-Chinese bill in order to protect their jobs, and the safety of Chinese immigrants. An upstanding man, donning a laborer's hat and apron, talks with Blaine and has the caption "intelligent workman." He explains to Blaine, "You need not plead my cause and my children's. I am able, and always have been, to take care of myself and mine; and no large military force is needed to keep the peace, for real working men are not rioters, strikers and blowers."[83] He suggested that the good laborer did not require the government to step in, because intelligent workers have the diligence and the thrift to provide for their families, and know better than to strike, riot, or blame immigrants for their lack of work (Figure 8). This cartoon used the strategy of making the reader think about which side they wanted to represent,

[83] Thomas Nast, "Protecting White Labor," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 22, 1879, 221.

one who works and provides without conflict, or one who acts as a rowdy hoodlum. In reality, this debate did not have two clear sides as shown in the simplified illustration, but the cartoon did set an upstanding white Protestant representing good labor and the American way, against outsiders who caused problems.

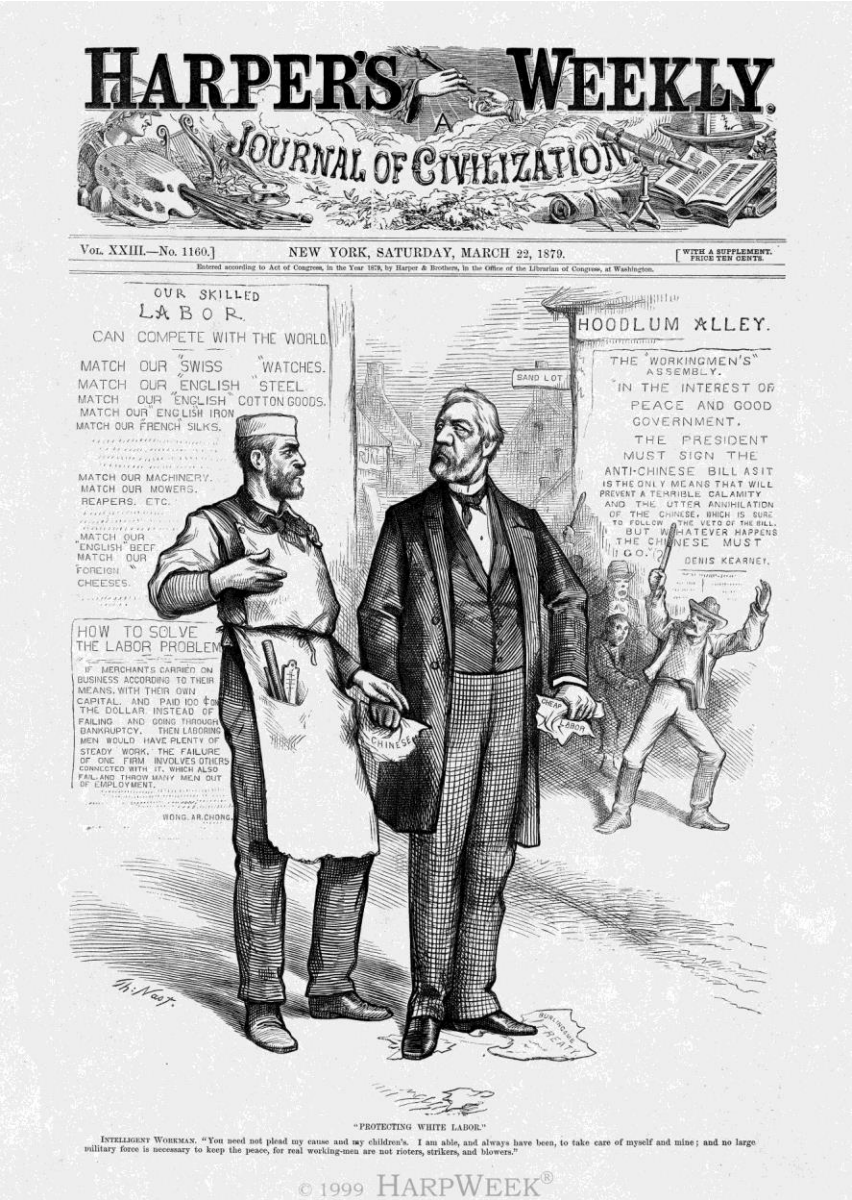

Figure 8: Nast cartoon from March 22, 1879 titled "Protecting White Labor."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1879&issueId=0322&page=221

The acceptance of Chinese workers brought up in the previous cartoon stood as a political tool to use against James Blaine and unsavory workers, but Nast, as well as Keppler, did not always treat Chinese immigrants with respect, regularly excluding them from the definition of good labor. A common reason for omitting the Chinese related to their willingness to work for low wages. Some saw this as a way of undermining the honest laborer, who could not survive on such low income. The cartoonists accentuated differences between the foreign workers and honest American labor.

Nast made this point in a pair of cartoons in 1870. In the first one, an American laborer sits at his work bench making shoes, while two Chinese laborers sneak up behind him with swords labeled "cheap labor." A halo floats over the head of the laborer, and the caption reads "the martyrdom of St. Crispin." In a religious reference, Nast equated Chinese workers coming for American jobs to the beheading of Crispin by Romans in the third century. He even went so far as to use a cobbler as the profession of the worker, as Crispin held the same trade. This small cartoon utilized lots of symbolism, suggesting the danger that Chinese laborers represented, as well as the threat of an outside religion to Christianity. The part of the cartoon seen in several other examples raised the cheap labor of Chinese immigrants as the "Chinese-American question," suggesting that their addition would undercut the livelihoods of hardworking Americans.[84] The next month, a follow-up cartoon showed the Chinese man, who replaced the previous American worker, sitting at the same bench with his own cheap shoes and cheap labor.[85]

In the same issue of *Harper's Weekly*, Nast had another cartoon which brought up the public debate about feelings of Chinese labor. An enthralled crowd including capitalists, the

[84] Thomas Nast, "The Martyrdom of St. Crispin," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 16, 1870, 464.
[85] Thomas Nast, "The Latest Edition of 'Shoo Fly!'," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 6, 1870, 512.

press, politicians, and workingmen, looks to the sky where a comet streaked past. The comet consisted of the smiling head of a Chinese man, and a queue followed behind as the tail. The words "cheap labor" adorned the comet, and the people debated the merits and detriments of allowing in Chinese labor.[86] The Chinese workers came across as voiceless outsiders about whom the other "Americans" had to make a decision.

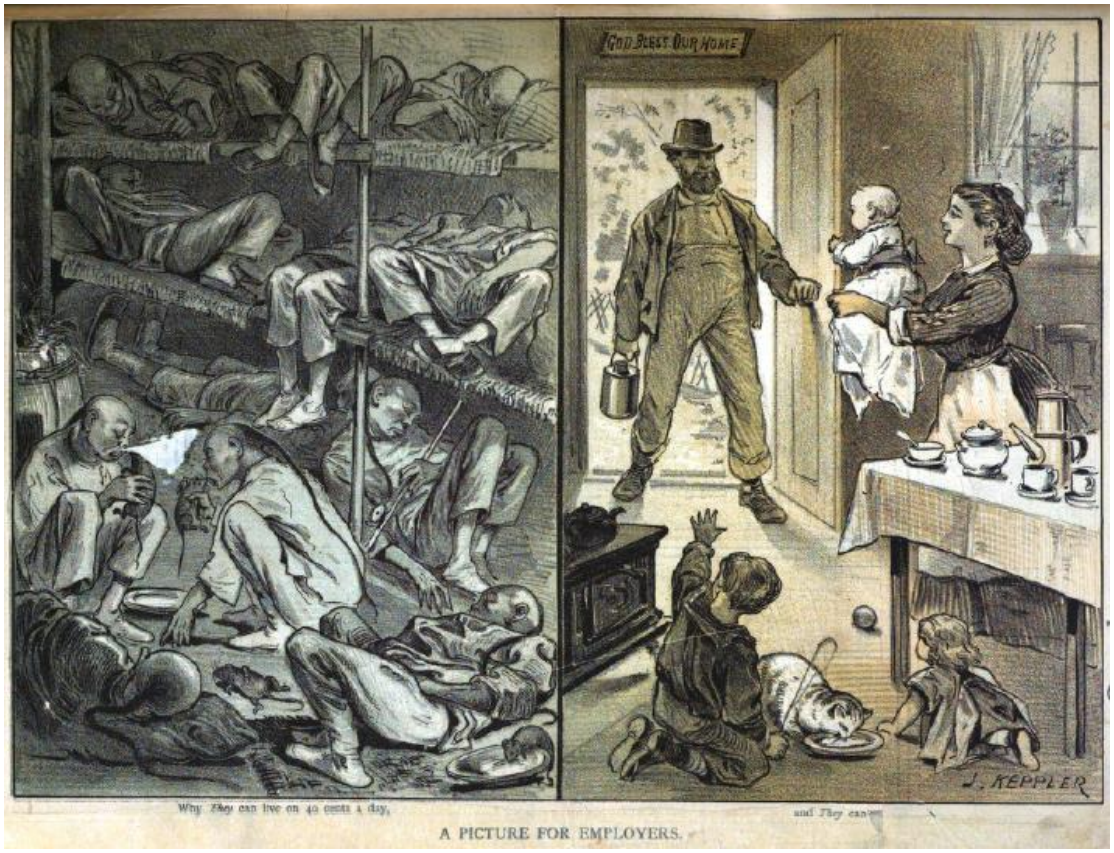

Figure 9: Keppler cartoon from August 21, 1878 titled "A Picture for Employers."
Source: *Puck*, photo from HathiTrust,
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=388

Keppler also pointed out differences between good American laborers, and Chinese laborers, suggesting that the Chinese could work for less money due the substandard living

[86] Thomas Nast, "The New Comet," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 6, 1870, 505.

conditions and lifestyle they accepted. His cartoon titled "A picture for Employers" made an illustration of why he believed American workers needed more money (Figure 9). On the left half, many Chinese men lay on the floor or in rows of bunkbeds in a cramped, undecorated, and rat infested room, while on the right, a white worker comes home to an idyllic family scene. His wife and three children happily welcome him back into their tastefully furnished house. The caption notes, "Why they can live on 40 cents a day, and why they can't." Keppler highlighted that the white worker required enough money to support a family and a home, while the Chinese did not.[87] This again used an oversimplification to define workers, and develop a reason as to why an outside group did not fit in.

Another aspect in the definition of honest labor shown in Keppler and Nast's cartoons include the condemnation of workers who demand too much or use violence. Neither cartoonist showed benefits of trade unions or strikes, with Nast depicting them as an extra expense that workers could not afford, while Keppler saw them as a gateway to violence. They both argued that unions and expectations of greatly improving the positions of workers actually hurt the honest laborer.

Keppler made several cartoons taking issue with laborers using strikes during July and August of 1877, coinciding with the Great Railroad Strike. In July of 1877, Keppler drew laborers "digging their own graves" with a pick labeled violence, and a shovel standing for lawlessness. The pile of dirt they overturned spells out "ruin" and "starvation," and one of the graves behind them memorializes "Belligerent Strikers who defied the law."[88] This clearly blamed strikers for the violence, and did not mention anything about worker pay cuts which led

[87] Joseph Keppler, "A picture for employees," cartoon, *Puck*, August 21, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=388
[88] Joseph Keppler, "Digging their own graves," cartoon, *Puck*, July 25, 1877, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=314

to the strike, or the quick calling in of militias and then federal troops to put down the strike. Keppler held a negative view of laborers using violence and strikes, and contended that they brought the violence upon themselves in a way that honest workers would not.

The following week, Keppler did not hold back his opinion on strikers and rioters. He depicted a violent labor strike as a skeleton train pulling a car full of laborers captioned "terror." The ominous locomotive crushes people under its wheels, including families, and women standing for law and industry. The train heads straight for an unfinished bridge, with the accompanying quote, "The Rioter's railroad to ruin."[89] Again Keppler placed blame for all violence squarely on the strikers, as well as its detrimental effects on business. In the next edition, another Keppler cartoon depicted the greed of workers. Using one of Aesop's fables, Keppler portrayed a laborer demanding more wages as a dog with food in its mouth. The dog, who saw its reflection in the water, dropped its food in an attempt to get more. The cartoon shows a dog with the square paper hat, often used for laborers, about to drop its food, labeled "$1.00 per day wages."[90] The moral of the story scorns greed, which Keppler posited as the reason for the laborer's demands. Unsightly greed or the use of violence fell in the cartoonist's definition of un-American.

In 1879, Nast made a statement against workers taking their strikes too far with an anti-riot cartoon. The cartoon titled "Riots are expensive luxuries" sees a workingman explaining to a tramp, "You see we that have families must suffer." This situation came about because a strike in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which caused four million dollars in damages. Those who participated in the riots did not get any compensation. Nast pointed out that the people will have

[89] Joseph Keppler, "The Rioter's Railroad to Ruin," cartoon, *Puck*, August 1, 1877, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=338
[90] Joseph Keppler, "The fable of the dog and the shadow," cartoon, *Puck*, August 8, 1877, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=362

to pay for the damages with taxes, higher rents, food, and coal costs. He suggested that the violent action of strikers cost everyone money to the detriment of honest workers.[91]

Even years earlier, Nast held a negative view about unions. In a cartoon titled "The Workingman's Mite," he showed a laborer giving away his family's money, much to the chagrin of his wife, to the Trade Union instead of taking it to the bank. The wall included several negative quotes about the effects of unions, such as, "Strike for your homes, never mind that your family does starve," "We must be the boss, because we outnumber you," and "The avenues to capital must be closed." Meanwhile a non-union worker takes his money to the bank, which has signs reading quotes such as "Be master of your own savings," "Labor is the workingman's capital," and "don't support drunken and lazy workmen or demagogues."[92] Nast did not mention any of the reasons why workers joined unions, or the benefits offered to them, pushing instead that only negative effects existed. The cartoon did suggest that unions hurt men's ability to fulfill their masculine role of a family provider lauded by many as ideal for order in American society at that time.

The two cartoonists may have focused on the negative impacts of strikes and unions because they worried about the dangerous implications if large violent strikes succeeded in fundamentally changing the relationship between capital and labor. Nast and Keppler had concerns that making the wrong decisions with monetary policy or labor relations could lead the nation to ruin, and they actively worked against the spread of the distinctly un-American socialism and communism.

The cartoonists posited what they saw as more realistic solutions than large revolution. Neither one supported Communists and saw calls for fundamental changes to society as

[91] Thomas Nast, "Riots are expensive luxuries," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 8, 1879, 196.
[92] Thomas Nast, "The Workingman's Mite," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, May 20, 1871, 468.

disastrous to everything "good Americans" held dear, such as family and the ability to accrue property and wealth through hard work. Nast represented Communists in a negative way, depicting them sometimes as a skeleton dressed as a man. In an 1874 cartoon he drew this skeleton with a large communist sash, reaching out towards a family who recoiled in fear. The sarcastic caption stated, "The Emancipator of Labor and the Honest Working-People."[93] Four years later, Nast used the same skeleton, this time in a working family's home, declaring "Home ties are nothing. Family ties are nothing. Everything that is – is nothing."[94] This worked to show Communism not just as a bad financial decision, but as one which would also destroy homes and families. Nast pointed out negative effects that following radical change could lead to, and contrasted the tenants of communism with those of honest American workers.

In a similar manner, Keppler drew the promises versus the realities of socialism for the workers. He wanted to show his readers that although the promises seemed alluring, they would not come to fruition. In the cartoon, the devil stands behind a workingman, creating a vision in front of his eyes while preparing him to sign a contract in blood. In this vision, Henry George, a Socialist candidate for New York mayor, stands upon monopolist Jay Gould, pouring out money and promises of getting everything for free, from a seemingly never-ending cornucopia. The caption states, "The Mephistopheles of Today – Honest Labor's Temptation." Keppler warned laborers against the beguiling promises of socialism, which he depicted as making a deal with the devil.[95] He suggested that socialists wanted everything handed to them for free and without any

[93] Thomas Nast, "The Emancipation of Labor and the Honest Working-People," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 7, 1874, 121.
[94] Thomas Nast, "Home Sweet Home," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, June 22, 1878, 496.
[95] Joseph Keppler, "The Mephistopheles of to-day – honest labor's temptation," cartoon, *Puck*, October 20, 1886, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015014703634&view=2up&seq=130

work on their part. Keppler saw this as rewarding the lazy and loafers while hurting those who drove economic growth.

Using a less extreme example, Nast suggested that improvements for workers required neither revolutionary change nor large government overstep. He believed that effective work could solve many of the issues facing society, and that proper leadership and work ethic, rather than fundamental changes best served the nation. He showed this in a cartoon that portrayed a policeman cleaning the streets. He sweeps away snails and bottles of alcohol from the road, accompanied by the caption, "Captain Williams says, 'The appropriation is ample to enable him to keep all of the city streets perfectly clean, if the Police Board will give him power to discharge inefficient workmen.'"[96] Nast suggests that the money given to the sanitation services should prove enough to clean all the streets if only the workers did their jobs efficiently. Laziness and interferences, like alcohol, kept workers from doing their duties, and they needed oversight to enforce productivity. Through self-control, and control of laborer efficiency, a common goal in the Progressive Era, work could get done. He trusted honest American workers to do their part, but suggested that others needed governmental controls.

A Nast cartoon helps to situate the definition of "American" and "outsider" labor into a broader context. This illustration from August of 1881 showed the capitalist in a positive light. The capitalist kneels, with a paper stating "men wanted," before two tramps who decline his offer for work. The tramp responds, "What! Leave my country seat in the park, and work on a railroad? No! I would rather see you starve first."[97] Nast depicted the tramps as unwilling to work and relying on other people to provide for them as they sit idly on a park bench. He portrayed these outsiders as a stress on the American workers, owners, and the economy.

[96] Thomas Nast, "The First Clean Sweep," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 31, 1880, 80.
[97] Thomas Nast, "Serving the Capitalist – Right," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 20, 1881, 576.

Although not caricatured in a way which decisively showed the tramps as foreign born, they fit in the categorization of "un-American" based on their negative effects to the economy and an unwillingness to fit within social norms.

Nast and Keppler used many illustrations to develop a definition of good workers and bad workers and tied these images to ideas of Americanness and foreignness. Even if born and raised in the United States, people with ideologies against the cartoonist's ideas had elements of outsiders imposed upon them in order to distance them from the image of honest American workers. So far this chapter has discussed broad examples of cartoonists utilizing their pictures to forward a group image which cuts across many nationalities and ethnicities. This does show a general difference between a positive and a negative depiction of a population, however narrowing this down to the study of a specific group will help examine the implementation of an outsider definition. Irish Catholics stand as one of the largest and most frequently lampooned groups that cartoonist like Keppler and Nast made sure to cast as un-American whenever possible.

Defining Irish Catholics

Nast and Keppler often used a negative portrayal of the Irish to distinguish them from other Americans. They did not so much create a new image, rather copied existing images and stereotypes. The depictions of the Irish showed them as outsiders who took the blame for many of society's problems. Today in the United States, people of Irish descent fit within the definition of "white" and most people do not distinguish them from other Western European ethnicities. Through the nineteenth century, cartoons, literature, and rhetoric depicted the Irish as vastly different and inferior to other "white" people, and distinctly un-American. In the cartoons of Nast and Keppler, the Irish often came across as pawns of Tammany Hall and

political parties which used their votes to stymie reform, as well as a low class of people who used violence, spent their money wastefully, and had more commitment to the foreign Catholic Church than to the United States.

Since the 1960s, several historians have examined the extents to which Irish-Americans showed distinct nationalism as well as attempts to gain social acceptance and status. In his 1966 book *Irish-American Nationalism*, Thomas Brown focused on the Irish in America trying to fit into the mainstream culture as equals.[98] He suggested that they tied the lack of Irish sovereignty from England to prejudiced treatment in the United States. In 1988 Kirby Miller published his book *Emigrants and Exiles* in which he argued that the Irish in America often saw themselves as exiles from their homeland, whose rural culture made success in the United States difficult.[99] This suggests Irish immigrants hanging onto their culture more than assimilating, an idea often ridiculed by Nast and Keppler.

By the 1990s a debate emerged dealing with the shift of Irish, initially seen as outsiders, to gaining acceptance in United States society. This coincided with the whiteness theory, popularized by David Roediger in his 1991 book *Wages of Whiteness*. Noel Ignatiev built upon this with his book *How the Irish Became White* (1995), suggesting that having the ability to vote and becoming an important voting bloc helped led to their mainstream acceptance.[100] The Irish standing took an opposite trajectory as that of African Americans. Nast and Keppler did not reflect the late nineteenth century acceptance of the Irish, which made strides during the

[98] Thomas Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism: 1870-1890* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott Company, 1966).
[99] Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
[100] David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

Progressive Era. They still portrayed the Irish as seeking foreign interests and voting how political powers dictated, similar to their depictions of African Americans votes.

Spurred on by studies in the 1990s, historians like Timothy Maegher studied the Irish experience by including more context of other groups of people. His book *Inventing Irish America* (2001) looked into how some Irish worked together with Polish and Italian immigrants in order to support their common Catholic identity.[101] If noted by political cartoonists, such organization came across as foreign schemes if they did not fit with the politics of the cartoonist, and when cartoonists connected more than one group of people in an illustration, it usually pitted the two against each other to satirize at least one side.

Most recently, transnational studies of Irish heritage have again shifted historical views. David Brundage's book, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798–1998*, suggests that Irish nationalists "exerted considerable influence on political and social developments in the United States."[102] This posits that many Irish tried not to assimilate, but to assist Irish causes. This aligns significantly with the Irish identity shown in Nast and Keppler's political cartoons, but where Brundage portrays the positives of the Irish national involvement the cartoonists focused on the negatives and dangers.

Although very common in late nineteenth century political cartoons, the Irish image already existed. English stereotypes in common parlance, and political cartoons such as examples from *Punch*, persisted for nearly a century. Liz Curtis shows this long term tradition of anti-Irish feeling in her book *Nothing But the Same Old Story*.[103] One of the reasons she

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[101] Timothy Maeghar, *Inventing Irish America: generation, class, and ethnic identity in a New England city, 1880-1928* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001).
[102] David Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798–1998* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.
[103] Liz Curtis, *Nothing But the Same Old Story: The Roots of Anti-Irish Racism* (Ann Arbor: Information on Ireland, 1984), 16.

mentioned for the use of the stereotypes showed the Irish as inferior to help defend colonizing them. Also if they fought back in any way, this bolstered the violence stereotype.

As early as 1798, during the Irish rebellion against England, James Gillray drew buffoonish and ape-like Irishmen. By the middle of the nineteenth century Punch contributors such as John Leech and John Tenniel showed the lower status of the Irish with simian features. Roger Fischer also supports this assertion in his 1996 book, *Them Damned Pictures*. He notes, "The Irish image in American cartooning during the period owed much to a wholesale expropriation of British stereotypes and caricature, especially the art of John Tenniel in Punch, key to the transformation of Paddy into a simian terrorist…"[104] An example of this borrowing appears when comparing the December 28, 1867 work of John Tenniel with the Nast cartoon, "The usual Irish way of doing things" from September 2, 1871. Both show ragged, long faced Irishmen brandishing a torch while seated upon a powder keg. They use the same symbols to tell matching stories they viewed as inferior outsiders.[105]

This same Irish image occurred often in the pages of *Puck*. They noted the prejudice of Nast's depictions, but used the same strategy in proving their points. As Fisher mentioned, "Although a Puck commentary derided Nast's creation as 'the orang-outang Celt, all jaw and no brain,' Keppler plagiarized it shamelessly in myriad Puck centerfolds and covers decrying Irish fanaticism and bloodlust that menaces hallowed Anglo-American verities and social institutions."[106] This stereotype persisted due to its usefulness in accentuating differences between Irish and American aims.

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[104] Fischer, *Them Damned Pictures*, 75.
[105] Thomas Nast, "The Usual Irish Way of Doing Things," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 2, 1871, 824. He copies from John Tenniel's work from December 28, 1867; "Irish Stereotype," Thomas Nast Cartoons, accessed on June, 16 2020, https://thomasnastcartoons.com/irish-catholic-cartoons/irish-stereotype/.
[106] Fischer, *Them Damned Pictures*, 75.

Other than the physical or biological differences assigned to the Irish, another category of stereotyping came about due to the Catholic religious practices of many Irish people. As pointed out in Perry Curtis's *Apes and Angels,* many people during the nineteenth century held the common belief that Irish Catholics "could never be properly civilized or Anglicized."[107] This allowed them to cast Catholics as outsiders, while also using existing Irish stereotypes. "Paddy" often became a stooge for Catholic power, and allowed it to seep into American society.

Looking specifically at Anti-Catholic rhetoric in the United States, starting in the early 19th century, according to Jody Roy, suspicions of them grew due to, "increased immigration and the emergence of theories of conspiracies."[108] Similar points of contention come up in many of Keppler and Nast cartoons. Two of the most common cartoon tropes fall within the outline mentioned by Roy which notes how anti-Catholic discourse suggested, "that the largely poor and immigrant Catholic community was a threat to the very existence of liberty in America." as well as the need to uncover a Vatican plot to take power in the United States.[109] The cartoonists wanted their readers to see danger to the American way of life associated with Catholics in the United States.

A few historians have noted irony in the way the cartoonists ridiculed bigots, while showing a consistent prejudice towards Catholics. Nast St. Hill stated in his book *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations,* "His prejudice against Catholicism was based on not a difference of faith, but on a matter of principle."[110] Rather than a mere dislike of the Catholic Church, he

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[107] Perry L. Curtis Jr., *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971), 94. Although Catholics with many different national origins lived in the United States, cartoonists most often represented stereotypes of Irish Catholics in their works.
[108] Jody M. Roy *Rhetorical Campaigns of the 19th Century Anti-Catholics and Catholics in America* (Lewistown, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000, ii.
[109] Jody M. Roy *Rhetorical Campaigns of the 19th Century Anti-Catholics and Catholics in America*, 2, 14.
[110] St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*, 70.

centered his dislike around the issues of the church trying to intrude into the realm of the state, and the church trying to use public money for their own benefit.

In *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast,* Morton Keller noted a similar fear of foreign threat and ending of the separation of church and state, but also mentioned how Nast's negative Catholic image also served to support a political image. Keller stated, that Nast's anti-Catholic cartoons "had an intimate relationship to his Radical Republican point of view," and that "The good society of the Radical Republicans was liberal, progressive, nationalistic- and Protestant."[111] Nast used this image of Irish-Catholics as a political tool to lump together their negative viewpoints with those of the Democrats.

In a similar fashion to Nast, Keppler also made frequent and negative portrayals of the Irish and Catholics. His depictions also included political reasoning, such as a distrust of powerful religious leaders, as well as institutions using people like the Irish as a way to stay in power. Richard Samuel West stated in his book *Satire on Stone* that, "Keppler's problems with the Irish went beyond simple prejudice. He viewed them as pawns in a power game being played by Tammany Hall and the Catholic Church."[112]

Through the use of cartoons, Nast and Keppler pushed an image of dangerous Irish Catholics, making them stand out for un-American and violent tendencies as well as allowing large political and religious powers use them for goals detrimental to political reform and individual freedoms in the United States. In many cartoons, people of Irish descent came across as outsiders and as inferiors. Their physical appearance as well as cultural ways became stereotypes that cast them as aliens in United States culture. As seen in the earlier English cartoons, the Irish continued to receive depictions with ape-like faces, usually with a long

[111] Keller, *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast*, 159.
[112] West, *Satire on Stone*, 343.

philtrum and oversized protruding jaw. This often accompanied a smaller cranium when compared with others of Anglo-Saxon descent. Their clothing stood out as tattered and dirty, and suggested the inability to save money, which went to drinking or the Catholic Church. The cartoonists used violence, drunkenness, loyalty to another country and religion, and their pawn-like political status to cast them as un-American outsiders.

Keppler printed a prime example portraying the Irish as outsiders in June of 1882. The cartoon labeled "Uncle Sam's Lodging House" showed laborers and immigrants from many different nations, including Germany, England, Italy, France, Spain, Russia, Japan, China, as well as an African-American. These people all slept peacefully in their bunks, until roused by an angry and boisterous Irishman. Accompanied by a bottle of whiskey, he has thrown bricks labeled "Irish Independence" and "Chinese Must Go" and yells in an animated way at the landlord Uncle Sam. Uncle Sam states, "Look here, you, everybody else is quiet and peaceable, and you're all the time a kicking up a row." This aims to show how the people from all other nationalities had the ability to work together, while the Irish alone caused trouble and acted combatively.[113]

The Irish also assumed the image of drunkards, a stereotype not exclusive to cartoons, but used effectively by them to show inability to make responsible decisions required of citizens and family members in the United States. Although excessive drinking affected many Americans at the time, the way cartoons portrayed this, the largest problems came from "outsider" groups of people not controlling their consumption. Nast supported some ideas of prohibition, and many times used the bottles of alcohol as a scorned prop, but more interestingly, Keppler, a consistent supporter of allowing drinking, also used alcohol as a way to single out people like the Irish.

[113] Joseph Keppler, "Uncle Sam's Lodging-House," cartoon, *Puck*, June 7, 1882, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015038641521&view=2up&seq=230

In a cartoon from March 1878, Keppler drew O'Donovan Rossa, an Irish Republican Brotherhood leader, as "a rival to St. Patrick" posing drunkenly, while surrounded by bottles containing labels such as, "Riot Rum" and "Skirmish Whiskey."[114] He proposed that alcohol fueled the Irish unruliness. Nast shared similar sentiment with his cartoon showing the Irishman with a bottle of whiskey sitting on the powder keg discussed earlier in the chapter.

Violence became another Irish stereotype common in political cartoons to help define Irish as outsiders. The illustrators drew distinctions, suggesting that real Americans would not resort to such violence, and that inferior people with foreign motivations perpetrated it. A few weeks after Saint Patrick's Day in 1876 Nast made a cartoon of a riot which occurred. The image showed many Irishmen, with simian faces, viciously attacking the police with an assortment of clubs, blades, and other weapons, as the police lay bloody on the ground. Across the bottom of the cartoon ran the caption, "Brutal attack on the police. 'The Day We Celebrate.' Irish Riot" with the words "Rum" and "Blood" printed large in the corners. The cartoon accentuates the unruly violence of the Irish, and clearly depicts significant physiological differences between the Irish rioters and the Anglo cops.[115]

In January of 1880, Nast made a cartoon which took several jabs at the Irish. He first titled the man pictured "Pat Riot" which suggested Irish violence, at the same time as arguing that the Irish put their homeland before the United States. He also wrote the caption to sound as if someone with a strong accent had spoken. Pat Riot stated, "Ah! You innercent Bridget, darlint, sure it's not a starvation of food that throubles us, but it's money were afther."[116] Nast

[114] Joseph Keppler, "sic skirmish tyrannis," cartoon, *Puck*, March 27, 1878, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=36
[115] Thomas Nast, "The Day We Celebrate," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 6, 1867, 212.
[116] Thomas Nast, "Beware of Foreign Tramps," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 24, 1880, 49.

argued that the "foreign tramp" wanted money instead of food aid from the United States. He accentuated the foreignness of the goals, methods, and culture of the Irish.

A cartoon from a decade earlier shows that Nast's portrayal of the Irish changed little over time. In a multi-tiled cartoon Nast pointed out the involvement of Irishmen in ballot box stuffing, using violence, hurting the public schools, and assisting the Catholic Church. This centered on the willingness of the Irish to use violence against other American citizens in order to assist Tammany Hall.[117]

In Nast's and Keppler's efforts to spur political and social reform, they often portrayed people who helped foster the change they sought as heroes, while they painted corrupt or backward groups and institutions as villains. For instance, the cartoonists despised Tammany Hall, and because they seemed to stay in power due to Irish votes, the Irishman became a pawn of the corrupt group. Nast used this same idea to depict many Democratic voters as unsavory Irishmen, and both cartoonists frequently showed the Irish as peons used to extend the power of the Catholic Church.

Nast depicted the Irish as slaves to Tammany Hall in an April 1870 illustration. In a few panels he showed Tammany members giving "inducements to leave the old country," and then showed them "landed and branded" as slaves to the Tammany masters when arriving in America. Next the masters drove them to the polls as slaves, and forced them to vote for the Democrats. The largest middle picture showed an Irishman chained, with chains labeled Tammany, to a post, representing the Democratic Party. It included bottles of rum and whiskey, and Tammany leader Pete Sweeney stood guard (Figure 10).[118] Nast argued that they did not make the choices beneficial to the United States or the people, but helped prop up Tammany Hall.

[117] Thomas Nast, "Shadows of Forthcoming Events," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 22, 1870, 56-57.
[118] Thomas Nast, "The Greek Slave," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 16, 1870, 248.

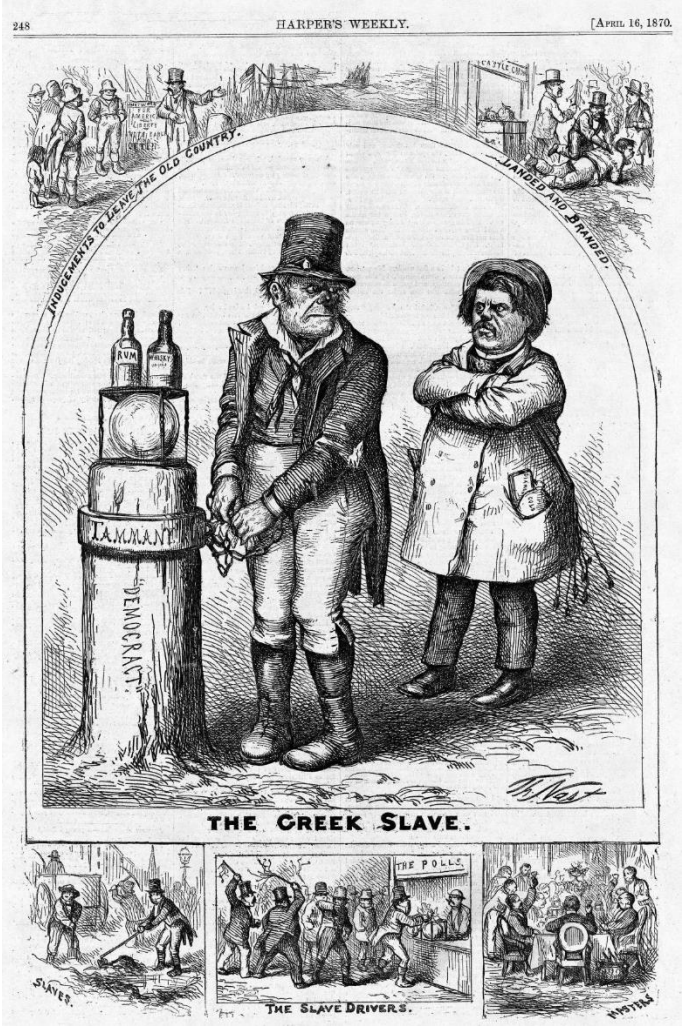

Figure 10: Nast cartoon from April 16, 1870 titled "The Greek Slave."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1870&issueId=0416&page=248

Later in 1870, Nast made additional cartoons which showed how corrupt institutions used the Irish to stay in power. One depicting "The Tammany Kingdom" situated the crooked leaders of New York, John Hoffman, Peter Sweeney, and Boss Tweed around a throne, dressed in regal attire, as an Irishman, dressed as a soldier, stands guard. Nast portrayed the Irish vote as a vital role in keeping Tammany Hall in power.[119] The next edition of *Harper's Weekly* contained a

[119] Thomas Nast, "The Tammany Ring-dom," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 29, 1870, 697.

similar cartoon. In this one Boss Tweed, as Falstaff from the Shakespeare plays "King Henry IV" and "King Henry V", reviews his troops. Tweed's troops are nearly all Irish, and depicted as the lower sorts of people, including prisoners, who have armed themselves with guns and clubs.[120] Several years later, Nast still used the strategy, this time portraying how Charles Adams Sr. used the Irish to get elected to political office. The cartoon showed Adams stepping on the heads of Irishmen along his path. The caption repurposed a quote from *The Irish World*, stating, "…Consequently they are what they are – useful yet despised; stepping stones over which shrewd men walk into office." Seen neither as equals nor making their own decisions, Nast depicted the Irish as used by powerful people.[121]

The Irish also came across as pawns of the Catholic Church. Nast and Keppler noted that the Irish helped the foreign Church hierarchy assert power in the United States. The cartoonists both frequently lampooned the Catholic Church for reasons such as overstepping the boundaries between church and state, demanding funding, trying to take power in public schools, and establish foreign powers in the United States. The Irish stood as the most visible group of Catholics in the United States, and for that reason, anti-Catholic cartoons usually included stereotypical Irish antagonists. Nast's cartoons focused most often on keeping a separation between church and state, as well as on protecting schools from Catholic influence. Keppler's works concentrated on the protection of schools, but he also made many dealing with the misuse of peoples' money by the Church.

The idea of the government and the schools remaining free of Church influence stood as justification of several anti-Catholic and anti-Irish cartoons. The image created of the Irish saw

[120] Thomas Nast, "Our Modern Falstaff Reviewing his Army," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, November 5, 1870, 713.
[121] Thomas Nast, "Croppies Lie Down," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 7, 1876, 805. Adams failed to become the governor of Maryland and supported the Democrats in 1876 election.

them as peons working for the church in order to allow its spread within the United States. Nast drew an illustration which remarked on the separation of church and state, showing the heads of European states tearing the two apart to the dismay of the Catholic clergy. Below this, another tile depicted the Unites States where an Irish woman sews the church and the state back together, as delighted clergy watches. Beside this, Irishmen hand "state money" and "public school money" to the Catholics, and a chained Lady Liberty gives a disgusted look.[122] Nast depicted an alignment of Irish and Catholic goals both proving detrimental to the United States.

This way of thinking remained, as shown in a Nast cartoon five years later. He portrayed Grant stepping on the Pope's toe as he tried to cross the line of church and state. Public school students cheer on this intervention from the background.[123] Such an example also demonstrated how issues about Catholics worked together with other political points in cartoons. Nast used Grant in this illustration as a point to laud Republican work in protecting the United States school system, and stressed the dangers associated with Democratic rule.

In two more cartoons in October of 1875, Nast furthered his argument about Republicans helping to protect schools from Catholics. On the 16th he published one portraying the Democratic platform missing a plank for protecting public schools, which Samuel Tilden held behind his back. From the gap a snake emerged with a head drawn as a papal tiara, coiled around the public school system.[124] The following week, Nast made a related cartoon, this one showing Grant nailing down the plank labeled "the public school system must and shall be preserved" squeezing out the Catholic snake and allowing freedom of schools, thought, speech, and press.[125] The cartoonist again pitted the American lifestyle against Catholic objectives.

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[122] Thomas Nast, "Church and State," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 19, 1870, 121.
[123] Thomas Nast, "The Pope's Big Toe," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 30, 1875, 873.
[124] Thomas Nast, "Pocketing the Missing Plank," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 16, 1875, 836.
[125] Thomas Nast, "The Plank – Hitting the Nail on the Head," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, October 23, 1875, 860-861.

Although many public schools had daily readings from the King James Bible, Nast vehemently opposed any state tax money going to Catholic education, depicting it as an encroachment of liberties. In response to the Tammany lead New York government setting aside money for Catholic schools, an act supported by their Irish voters, Nast published a grim assessment of future education. He captioned it "Foreshadowing of coming events in our public schools." It showed students at a Catholic run school, kneeling and learning of the pope's infallibility. The illustration had accompanying quotes from Catholic sources such as, "No gentlemen, that will not do; and there is no help but in dividing the public schools, or in abandoning the system of public schools altogether," and "We cannot use the common schools, because they answer not our end nor satisfy our consciences." This served to equate any monetary support for Catholic schools with forcing that religion upon all students.[126]

Similarly, in a February 1870 cartoon, Nast showed the divisive effect of Catholicism in education. He drew a united group of students, of many races, attending a common school all clasping hands in a circle accompanied by the quotes, "Free to All," "All hands round," "No sect," "No Caste," and "Union is Strength." At the bottom, sectarian funding of schools has led to violence and fighting. An Irish-Catholic squared up against a Jewish student, and a black student pulls the queue of a Chinese student. The middle section depicted Lady Justice's scales uneven because fraudulent votes leading the Catholics to get all the funding, while the public school children get nothing.[127] Nast aimed to state that money which went to sectarian schools meant trouble and issues between groups of people, placing much blame on the Catholics.

[126] Thomas Nast, "Foreshadowing of coming events in our public schools," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 16, 1870, 256.
[127] Thomas Nast, "Distribution of the Sectarian Fund," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 26, 1870, 140.

Keppler also saw funding of schools as an important reason to attack the Catholic Church. In a March 1878 cartoon he drew "the reductions of teachers' salaries; and the reason why they are reduced." The teacher had a horse's bit in her mouth and reigns which went back to the board of education to show control. Tammany Hall similarly controlled the board of education, and at the end of the line, the Catholic Church held the reigns and a whip. Keppler tried to show that the reduction in wages came from many levels of control, leading back to Catholic influence.[128] He did not want schools to teach Catholic doctrine, as seen in a cartoon of a priest wooing a lady standing for New York Public Schools along with the caption "Beware he's fooling thee."[129] Similar to Nast, Keppler warned of spreading Catholic education as a risk to American liberty.

One of the more common representations of Catholics from Keppler consisted of collecting money, often at the expense of the poor. He tied this directly with the image of Irish remaining stuck in poverty due to their excessive spending for the Catholic Church. Keppler insinuated that money set aside to help Americans found its way back to the Vatican. A cartoon from New Year's Day 1879 depicted Catholic Archbishop John Purcell from Cincinnati, with a mitre shaped like a pig's head, handing a million dollars "due to poor Catholics of Ohio" to the pope, while not paying back debts to poor parishioners[130]

This ideas of money for the church instead of needy people surfaced again in Keppler's cartoon "The Lion's share" of April 1880. In this, a hand standing for American charity drops money in the hat of a poor Irishman. The hat with a hole in the top allows the money to fall right

[128] Joseph Keppler, "The New York Public School System," cartoon, *Puck*, March 20, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=36
[129] Joseph Keppler, "April Fools Day," cartoon, *Puck*, March 27, 1878, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=44
[130] Joseph Keppler, "Erzbischoff Purcell von Cincinatti," cartoon, *Puck* (German), January 1, 1879, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379013&view=2up&seq=290

through it, and end up in the pope's crown, held out by Pope Leo XIII, who assumed some features of a lion. This depiction blames the Irish for using charity money designated to help them out of poverty in order to line the pockets of the church (Figure 11).[131]

Figure 11: Keppler cartoon from April 14, 1880 titled "The Lion's Share."
Source: *Puck*, photo from HathiTrust,
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=90

[131] Joseph Keppler, "The Lion's Share," cartoon, *Puck*, April 14, 1880, 1.
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=90

The cartoons forwarded the idea that the Irish did not know how to save money to help themselves and put the interests of a foreign church before the United States. Keppler outlined monetary issues with another illustration in 1880. He drew an Irishman struggling to stand upright under the weight of a yoke attached to two heavy weights, one representing high rents, and the other the Catholic Church. Keppler did not blame the Irish for the rents, but he did portray the man lifting the weight of the church higher off the ground, showing some of the responsibility of their economic position as their own fault.[132]

Whether commenting on Irish Catholics, or a variety of people who did not fit the cartoonist's definitions of honest workers, Nast and Keppler used images that distanced these groups from upstanding Americans. They did not see these people as equals, and pointed out ways that they inhibited the progress of American society. These cartoons helped to tie undesired political ideas with groups of outsiders, doubly indicating reasons for the public not to accept them and their ways. Aside from helping to define the image of Americans, Nast and Keppler's work also commented on groups seeking further rights during the mid to late nineteenth century, and helped to shape the debate of whether those groups deserved to have those rights.

[132] Joseph Keppler, "Warum Ireland sich nicht aufrichten kann," cartoon, *Puck,* December 22, 1880, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379112&view=2up&seq=218

CHAPTER 4: ILLUSTRATING PERCIEVED INEQUALIY AND INADEQUACY

Although political cartoons often pointed out aspects of American society which required reform, at the same time, the illustrators represented groups of people trying to attain and exercise equal rights as undeserving of them. Nast created a cartoon in December of 1876 which showed an Irishman and an African American man as equals, but suggested an equally low status of each. The men sat opposite ends of a large scale which balanced so that they evenly sat eye to eye. Each man represented a carefully crafted stereotypical image designed to influence public sentiment about the groups. The Irishman, with an apelike face and ragged hat, and the African American, with bare feet and a broad wry smile, represented "The ignorant vote" in the North and the South respectively, singled out for their supposedly uninformed and easily swayed votes.[133] Although given the right to vote Nast portrayed these people as incapable of acting as informed voters like other citizens. Examples like this beg the question, what images did cartoonists craft and use, as well as how and for what reason did they aim to influence people's opinions.

This chapter highlights the images used in Nast and Keppler's political cartoons when depicting African Americans and women. The analysis of these two groups fits together because during the late nineteenth century, both sought more rights, and stood central in debates about the role they should occupy in a rapidly changing American society.

[133] Thomas Nast, "The Ignorant Vote," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, December 9, 1876, 985.

Shortly after the end of the Civil War, the Reconstruction Amendments as well as civil rights laws granted African Americans unprecedented economic and political opportunities, however sub-par enforcement and active resistance obstructed the practice of those rights. Upon the passage of legislation granting full citizenship to African Americans, many women believed they deserved the same status. These women faced opposition from those who thought women belonged in a domestic role and had no serious place in politics.

Both groups had to contend with barriers, legal as well as in the minds of the people, when demanding equality, and a perceived incapability drove negative political and social decisions about them. Whether in public discourse, written media, or illustration, created images of African Americans as well as women helped to shape the way people thought about those groups. This section argues that the cartoons of Nast and Keppler often supported equal rights legislation, but did not consistently keep a positive perspective about African Americans. Although often lauded for his support of African American rights, Nast's cartoons showed a shift in African American coverage during the decades following the Civil War. Where earlier illustrations often presented African Americans in a positive light and worthy of equality, by the mid-1870s, more depicted their targets as flattened stereotypes deserving a lesser status.

The active role that women played establishing and participating in organizations as well as influencing politics did not come through in the cartoons of Nast and Keppler. The cartoonists usually covered women in a very dismissive way, suggesting their focus should remain on their role as wives and mothers while ridiculing political activity as beyond the scope of their abilities. The illustrators included symbolic women to comment on contentious issues, however more commonly they used real women only as a background reaction to the choices of men, or as silly and non-political jokes about topics like fashion. Although not the only sources

to define the domestic role of women, or question the equality of African Americans, political cartoons did spread memorable visual sources to a wide audience, and an in-depth analysis of the images they developed can benefit the study of the groups and the time period.

In recent years, historians have worked to expand their coverage of the late nineteenth century to include more perspectives of overlooked peoples. They have utilized new sources, or analyzed their sources in a deeper way, allowing them to draw more intricate conclusions covering the perspectives of people who traditionally received limited attention in histories. Long used images such as the incapable African American, the domestic female, the violent Irish, and the dishonest laborer have been debunked as simplified stereotypes, but the reason for the creation and perpetuation of those images remains a growing field of study.

Although this study does not include an analysis of Native American images, the methodologies used by John M. Coward in *Indians Illustrated: The Image of Native Americans in the Pictorial Press* demonstrate how printed drawings assisted in the shaping of a group identity in the later decades of the nineteenth century. Coward holds that illustrations stood as "an important source of visual information about Indians," and that "these pictures helped create and sustain a host of popular ideas and attitudes about Indians, especially ideas about the way Indians were supposed to look and act."[134] The pictorial press, driven by editors and illustrators, helped its readers, mainly white Americans, form and cement opinions on the subordinate status and 'otherness' of Native Americans. He mentioned how this became "part of the social and cultural machinery that produced and reinforced an enduring set of Indian stereotypes and visual tropes" in American minds.[135]

[134] John M. Coward, *Indians Illustrated: The Image of Native Americans in the Pictorial Press* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 3-4.
[135] Coward, *Illustrated Indians*, 3-4.

Coward did include several political cartoons as evidence, but relied mainly on drawings meant to portray Native Americans in a faithful and accurate way, although very few actually did. The analysis of political cartoons differs slightly based on its fictional situation, but potent agenda and argument. Due to the cartoons not requiring a lifelike situation, they allow the illustrator to make a setting idealized for highlighting perceived positive or negative traits of their characters. The analysis of political cartoons will permit the collection of much information associated with the images of groups the cartoonists and newspapers wanted the public to see.

Another example of a recent historical work adding valuable insight about the development of a group identity is Stephen K. Prince's book *Stories of the South: Race and the Reconstruction of Southern Identity 1865-1915*. He examines "competing definitions of the South that vied for cultural predominance" from the end of the Civil War and through the Progressive Era. An integral aspect of the analysis seeks to "recover and map the intellectual and cultural context in which the era's political decisions were made." [136] His methodology searches the reasons why the widely accepted image of Southerners developed and changed as it did, using sources from popular print culture for evidence, and positing that storytellers played an active role in reimagining such identities. He suggests that historians could further examine the nation's retreat from supporting African American rights in combination with "larger debates over the meaning and character of the South."[137] This study does not focus on Southern identity, rather a select set of group images, but in a similar manner situates the development,

[136] Stephen K. Prince, *Stories of the South: Race and the Reconstruction of Southern Identity 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 1.
[137] Prince, *Stories of the South*, 2, 6, 8.

continuation, or change recorded in those group images by political cartoons through the 1870s and 1880s.

Portrayals of African Americans

During the Reconstruction Era, and more broadly the late nineteenth century, a contentious debate raged over the place of African Americans in the American society, economy, and politics. Some supported legislation to ensure equal rights, and participation in government, while others actively undermined such attempts, using political means or violence. In the earlier years of Reconstruction, a broader section of the American public shared a commitment to African American rights, which dwindled over the years due to shifting goals and perspectives on failures and successes. By the mid-1870s, and the decline of the Radical Republican spirit, it became increasingly common to blame African-Americans for Reconstruction failures due to their supposed inability to understand and utilize the rights afforded them. These varied stances, as well as shifts over time appear in the works of political cartoonists. Some consistently went for cheap jokes about racial stereotypes, stressing an inferior status. As Fischer mentioned in *Them Damned Pictures*, African-Americans often came across as "artful idlers," "alien to work ethic."[138] Subjects had simple caricatures accentuating large noses and lips, as well as wooly hair, ratty or ill-suited clothes, and spoke in distinct dialects. Some cartoonists, mainly excluding Nast and Keppler, forewent direct political commentary instead focusing on tropes such as stealing chickens, watermelons, and alcohol.[139] Nast and Keppler had varied depictions ranging from supporting equal rights to stereotypical jokes.

[138] Fischer, *Them Damned Pictures*, 84.
[139] Fischer, *Them Damned Pictures*, 83-89.

Looking at the way some historians approached the image and place of African Americans in the late nineteenth century United States, their descriptions and arguments aligned significantly with negative cartoon portrayals. The journalist James S. Pike wrote many articles which became the book *The Prostrate State* in 1874, still in the middle of Reconstruction. This account focused on inferiority of African Americans and corrupt government ruining Southern life.[140] Accounts like this began, in a widespread and public manner, to blame the failures of Reconstruction on a supposed incapacity of African Americans. This idea gained more support with writings like George Washington Williams' 1883 book *History of the Negro Race in America, 1619-1880.*[141] Contemporary to Nast and Keppler's cartoons, readers likely drew influence from such perspectives. A few decades after Reconstruction, William Dunning in his 1907 book *Reconstruction, Political and Economic* painted Reconstruction as one of the worst parts of American history. He lauded legislators such as Andrew Johnson who undermined the passage and enforcement of laws, and placed significantly blame on the "incapacity" and ignorance of freedmen in the failures of Reconstruction.[142] These histories described African Americans using similar simple caricatures as seen in negative political cartoons. Although some historians, namely W.E.B. Du Bois, challenged this racially motivated viewpoint, forwarding instead extensions of democratic efforts during the time, his historical work saw little influence for several decades.[143] Even his 1903 essay "The Talented Tenth" dealt with higher standing coming to African Americans because of the efforts of educated leaders. By these

[140] James S. Pike, *The Prostrate State: South Carolina under Negro Government* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1874), 4, 12, 69.
[141] George Washington Williams, *History of the Negro Race in America, 1619-1880: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1883).
[142] William A. Dunning, *Reconstruction, Political and Economic: 1865-1877* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1907).
[143] W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America: Toward a History of the Part which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935).

leaders guiding others towards education and social development, Du Bois hoped to overcome the negative images used to categorize African Americans.[144]

By the 1960s, shifting views about race and Reconstruction as well as the Civil Rights movement helped drive a historiographic shift. The role of freedmen during Reconstruction became more central and positive, not to mention significantly different from the long popular image of incapability. This revision from this tragic portrayal of Reconstruction came through in works such as John Hope Franklin's *Reconstruction: After the Civil War* (1961), Robert Cruden's *The Negro in Reconstruction* (1969), and Kenneth M. Stampp's *The Era of Reconstruction 1865-1877* (1965).[145] Although shaped by the Civil Rights Movement to reevaluate the role of African Americans, seeing them in a more positive light, the historians made only cursory analysis into the image represented in cartoons. The changing treatment African Americans received over time, as well as their role in actively shaping their experiences, and broader race relations came forward in Eric Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution 1863-1877* (1988).[146] Many recent historians build upon his framework of Reconstruction.

The last several decades have seen continued expansion of sources and methods used to cover African Americans during Reconstruction. Studies of culture, literature, personal writings, discourse, and memory all help to contextualize varied experiences in a more meaningful way. Recently, historians have looked more into questions about reasons for the prevailing African American images created during and after Reconstruction. Although not centered on cartoons,

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[144] W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Talented Tenth" (New York: James Pott and Co., 1903).
[145] John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction: After the Civil War* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1961); Robert Cruden, *The Negro in Reconstruction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1969); Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction 1865-1877* (New York: Knopf, 1965).
[146] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution 1863-1877* (New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1988).

they seek answers for the spread and popularity of specific images which parallel this topic. For instance, Bruce Baker's 2007 book, *What Reconstruction Meant* used elements of memory studies to examine, "how people came to hold the differing views they had on what happened during Reconstruction and what they thought about it."[147] Although some of the book focused on "oral tradition at local levels" it also delved into public and private "social memories" as well as how "dominant" those social memories became.[148] Baker's study of what people said about African Americans on a day to day basis aligns with examining cartoons people viewed of them on a weekly basis. Although few sources exist from people expressing how political cartoons shaped their perspectives about group identities, examining a large sample of illustrations can show the image forwarded by cartoonists and newspapers.

Another recent book, *The Condemnation of Blackness,* by Kahlil Muhammad, looks at the creation and proliferation of a link between "blackness and criminality" starting in the late nineteenth century.[149] He studies the use of an outsider definition as a justification for "prejudicial thinking, discriminatory treatment, and/or acceptance of racial violence as an instrument of public safety."[150] Where Muhammad utilized statistical sources to examine foundations of inferior treatment and images, this study relies on trends of visual sources.

Stereotypical political cartoons helped to visualize an image of black inferiority held by a growing number of people through Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the first half of the twentieth century. During this time however, political cartoons themselves rarely played an active role in mainstream histories. The late 1960s began a new focus on the artists and their

[147] Bruce Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant: Historical Memory in the American South* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 3.
[148] Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant*, 6.
[149] Khalil Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2010), 1.
[150] Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness*, 4.

work, especially Thomas Nast. Historians detailed the elements of reform in Nast's work, but also noted a progressive beginning with an eventual wavering in his depiction of African Americans.

When compared to contemporary cartoonists, Nast usually posited a more positive image of African-Americans, but his portrayals did change over time and based on context. Nast gained prominence in the post-Civil War era, during which he strongly supported most Radical Republican stances. He consistently backed legislation granting rights, and decried Southern, Democratic, or hate group attempts to oppose them. As stated by Morton Keller in *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast*, "he looked on the mistreatment of Southern Negros with an indignation that rested on more than party considerations… He attacked the determination of the white South to preserve the social if not the legal structure of slavery, and commented bitterly on the rise of organized violence of the Ku Klux Klan and the White Leagues of the 1870s."[151] Not all of his cartoons shared such positivity. As time passed, support of Radical Republican ideas waned in the public as well as in the Republican Party. Nast stuck with his more radical stances longer than most party members, at times causing tension with more liberal Republicans, however by the later 1870s many of his portrayals of African Americans degraded. As Keller put it, "increasingly he was a minority voice; and gradually came to accept the prevailing attitudes of his time." This changing climate allowed his "optimism and openness" to give way "to a more skeptical, a less ebullient view." [152] Nast never outright stated that African Americans should not have rights, but over time his works used them more to prove political points than to foster support for equality.

[151] Morton Keller, *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 107.
[152] Keller, *The Art and Politics of Thomas Nast*, 218, 219.

In the years directly following the Civil War, Nast drew several cartoons depicting African-Americans as upstanding citizens, however more elements of stereotypical caricature, contrasting with the idea of equality entered into the cartoons as time passed. The shift in Nast's opinion seems overlooked by Nast St. Hill in *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*. The author focuses mainly on the good representations of African-Americans in Nast's work, while not commenting much on the negative stereotypes used or his later, less supportive cartoons. His book claims, "During the twenty years following the Civil War, Nast continued his fight for the recognition of Negro's rights."[153] One must analyze Nast's treatment of the subject with a more nuanced perspective. Although some cartoons did support rights, others made negative and contradictory points.

In comparison to Nast, Keppler had relatively little commentary on African Americans. He did make a few cartoons with African Americas as central characters, however, as Richard West noted in *Satire on Stone,* "On the issue of black rights, Keppler was upstaged by Nast, who had zealously adopted the cause of the freedman."[154] He continued to contextualize the cartoonist's attitude stating, "Of course, perhaps more important, the blacks' plight was no longer much interest to most northerners and was never a major concern of immigrants such as Keppler."[155] This backs up the claim that many Americans lost interest in supporting equal rights, and that some cartoonists also reflected these changing concerns. When compared to many other contemporary cartoonists, Keppler's work came across significantly more restrained, as seen in some race based black and white cartoon examples in the middle pages of *Puck* that went for some cheap laughs about race.

[153] St. Hill, *Thomas Nast Cartoons and Illustrations*, 81.
[154] West, *Satire on Stone,* 345.
[155] West, *Satire on Stone,* 345.

Shortly after the Civil War, Nast praised the work of the Union Army and painted a positive picture of the constructive changes which could occur in the United States. He supported the Radical Republican ideas of rights legislation and Reconstruction, and his cartoons at this time often showed African Americans in a positive way, suggesting the possibility of equality within society.

For instance, in a two page cartoon from August of 1865, Nast depicted, in the first half, an upset Lady Liberty having to accept the pardons of Confederate leaders, captioned "Pardon – I shall trust these men…" while the second page had the follow-up, "Franchise - and not this man?," showing Lady Liberty standing beside an African American soldier, who lost a leg in the war, in uniform, solemn and respectable. The cartoon admonished trusting of ex-Confederates, while showing that African-Americans, who served honorably during the war deserved equal treatments. This cartoon also lacked the exaggerated caricature elements which many later cartoons used to amplify differences between black and white people.[156]

In 1870, Nast created a cartoon depicting the first African American Congressman, Hiram Revels seated in his Senate seat and talking with other legislators.[157] The importance of this cartoon came from the positive way the drawing portrayed Revels, who had the poise and dignity of an esteemed member of government. It showed that Nast wanted the public to see Revels as an equal and capable Senator, because he portrayed him with the same accuracy as seen in the depictions of a respectable person in a cartoon.

Especially by the mid-1870s many of Nast's cartoons used a positive image of African Americans when it served a broader purpose. He often did this to show the violence of groups such as the White League, the KKK, or backward Southerners. This likely came from a desire to

[156] Thomas Nast, "Franchise – and not this man?," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 5, 1865, 488-489.
[157] Thomas Nast, "Time Works Wonders," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 9, 1870, 232. See figure 2.

influence the audience to view the threats and killings as unjust attacks on African Americans. A cartoon from February of 1875 depicted a black man surrounded by a burned schoolhouse and a few corpses while steadfastly looking down the gun barrels of White League members.[158] This illustration shifts the focus from African Americans and makes them pawns in Nast's ongoing attack against white terror.

In another cartoon the following year Nast drew the smoldering remains of schools, homes, and churches as well as a pile of murdered African Americans, attacked by the White League. In the center a disheveled but honorable black man mourns on his knees with his eyes turned towards the heavens. Nast asks, "Is this a republican form of government? Is this protecting life, liberty, or property? Is this the equal protection of the law?"[159] The purpose of the cartoon focused as much on the detrimental effects of hate groups to the nation and government as it did on the rights of African Americans, using their image to further a political point.

Images like these rarely depicted African Americans as active agents, placing them more often in the roles of victims in need of assistance. Nast used respectable images of African Americans as a way of disparaging the South and their restriction of rights. In one cartoon, he depicted Democratic Senator from Mississippi L.Q.C. Lamar conversing with an upright black man, stating, "Black question: 'whom do you mean by the people?' White answer: 'how dare you wave the bloody shirt again.'"[160] Nast weighed in on the very important question of who does the term 'the people' include, and who is an 'American,' however his own answer seemed to shift at different times and in different situations.

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[158] Thomas Nast, "The Target," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 6, 1875, 124.
[159] Thomas Nast, "Is this a Republican Government?," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, September 2, 1876, 712.
[160] Thomas Nast, "'Poor Ignorant Black man' wants to know," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, December 21, 1878, 1016.

Over time, a higher percentage of Nast's cartoons covering African Americans included negative depictions. Even though most of his works still supported equal rights, fewer of them actually showed African Americans as equals. This shift becomes apparent when comparing two cartoons commenting on African Americans in the South from nearly twenty years apart. The first cartoon, which came out in January of 1863, right after the Emancipation Proclamation, showcased "the emancipation of the negroes" with "the past and the future." Nast drew the "past" tile with whippings, brandings, slave auctions, and attack dogs, while in the "future" tile he drew scenes of African Americans living peacefully, going to school, and getting paid for their work. Only a very small sketch in the bottom showed field work, in which the workers and the overseer tip their hats at each other. The daily life scenes encircled an image of a family, well dressed, sitting together in a furnished home.[161] The family depiction differed very little from an idealistic image of any American family of the time.

Nineteen years later, in January of 1882, Nast again drew a cartoon comparing the 1860s South with a later time and commented on the place of African Americans in that society. In this illustration, he showed a scene from 1861 with a personification of King Cotton sitting upon a throne of cotton bales, pressing down an African American under his foot. The other scene, representing 1882, celebrates how much the Southern economy has grown, but contains only African Americans lifting large loads of cotton in the fields. The main part of the cartoon focuses on a lady, the "Queen of Industry or, the New South."[162] She works at a new mechanized spinning machine. Where the 1863 cartoon brought up social and economic growth as goals for the South, the second lauds progress, but places African Americans in a scene which looks little different from one depicting the pre-Civil War era.

[161] Thomas Nast, "Emancipation," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 24, 1863, 56-57.
[162] Thomas Nast, "The Queen of Industry, or, The New South," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 14, 1882, 17.

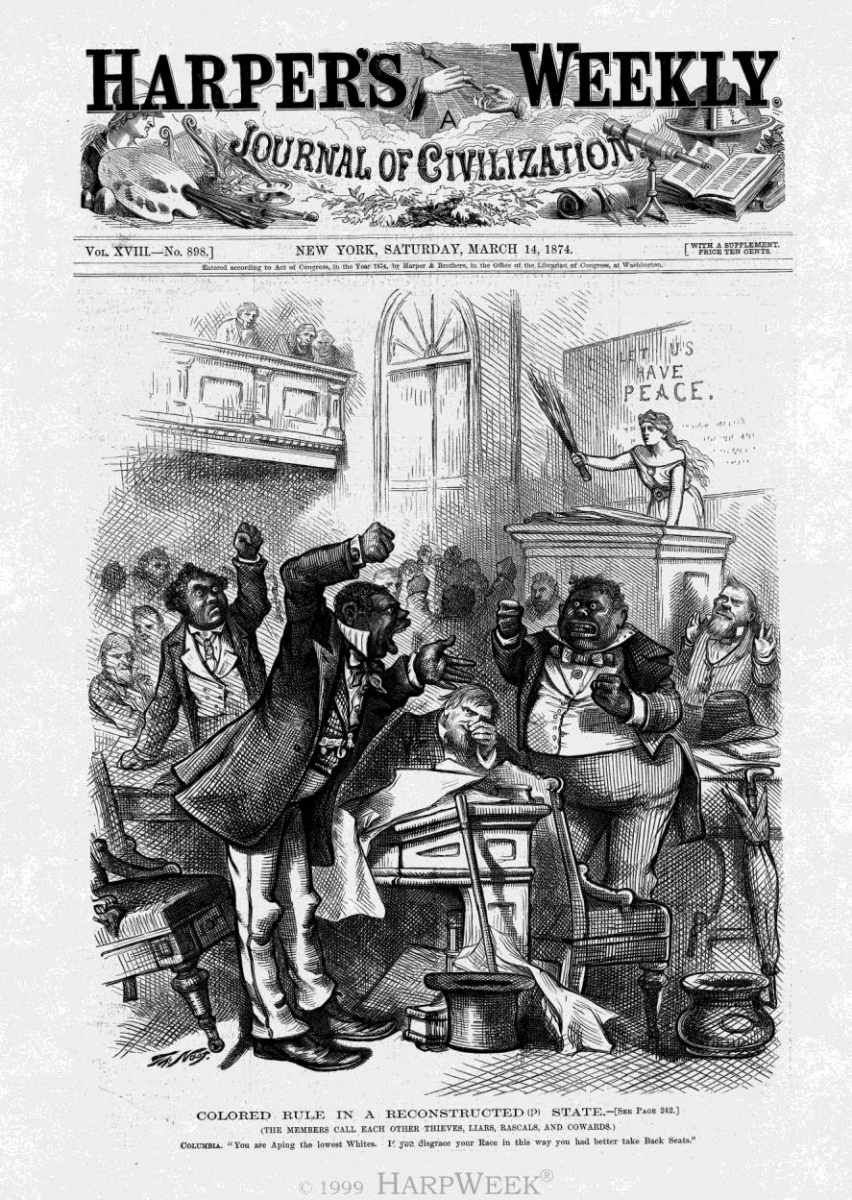

Figure 12: Nast cartoon from March 14, 1874 titled "Colored Rule in a Reconstructed(?) State." Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1874&issueId=0314&page=229

A famous Nast cartoon from March of 1874 depicts African American legislators in a very different light from his 1870 drawing of Hiram Revels (Figure 12). The cartoon "Colored Rule in a Reconstructed(?) State," focuses on black legislators (Minort, Humbert, Hurley,

Greene) arguing in an undignified manner. They raise clenched fists, and yell at each other disrupting the session. They wear formal, but exaggerated clothing, and stand out for beady eyes and cartoonish oversized mouths. The caption reads, "(The members call each other thieves, liars, rascals, and cowards.) Columbia: "You are aping the lowest whites. If you disgrace your race in this way you had better take seats."[163] Although this cartoon points out the childish actions of the legislators of both races, the focal point rests squarely on the African Americans.

This illustration even had a written explanation on a later page. The article gave a script of the supposed confrontation, prefaced by the statement, "If we may trust the following report" from the Charleston *News*. It described how such outbursts commonly happen in the South Carolina Legislature, going on to explain, "The moral to be drawn from this is indicated in Mr. Nast's cartoon on our front page, These ignorant and incompetent legislators must give place to those who will more faithfully represent the work and intelligence of the people of the State, both white and colored. But it must be confessed that the colored members of the South Carolina Legislature could point to very unsavory precedents as to manner and language among white legislators of Southern and Northern States."[164] A political cartoon requiring written clarification to suggest its meaning displays a failure to make that point and perhaps even an editorial attempt to shape the way that people interpreted Nast's work.

Historians like Bruce Baker, and Eric Foner used this cartoon as an example in their writing, neither one noting the intended "moral." In *What Reconstruction Meant*, Baker used this illustration to highlight the "declining national support for Reconstruction in South Carolina," although the depicted dispute dealt with appropriations for penitentiary funding.[165]

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[163] Thomas Nast, "Colored Rule in a Reconstructed(?) State," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 14, 1874, 229.
[164] "Aping Bad Examples," *Harper's Weekly*, March 14, 1874, 242.
[165] Baker, *What Reconstruction Meant*, 17.

Foner also utilized this cartoon in *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution.* He used it as an example to show a retreat in Northern Republican support for African American causes, describing the meaning as "black legislators as travesties of democratic government."[166] Both historians cut off the small text at the bottom of the cartoon in the image they used. Although they make fitting interpretations, their takes differ somewhat from the intended meaning of the cartoon.

In 1879, Nast printed a cartoon titled "The color line still exists in this case," showing support for an equal rights cause, but depicted it in a way that painted the characters in a negative light. It commented on the unfairly enforced literacy requirements for voting in the South. Nast drew a white southerner "Mr. Solid South" who wrote a notice on a wall, stating, "Eddikashun qualifukashun: the blakman orter be eddikated afore he kin vote with us wites."[167] This stressed the way that race rather than education stood as the real obstacle to get to the polls, but unlike earlier examples the African American is not a dignified man, but a stereotypical caricature lurking around the corner. The depiction lacked all characteristics of an honorable man used in some earlier cartoons.

Nast, who was an enthusiastic supporter of any legislation granting equal treatment of African Americans during the late 1860s and early 1870s, did not sing the praises of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1875. The act tackled a large and important issue, aiming to guarantee "the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land or water, theaters, and other places of public amusement… to citizens of every race and color, regardless of any previous condition of servitude."[168] Nast

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[166] Foner, *Reconstruction*, 378.
[167] Thomas Nast, "The Color Line Still Exists – In this Case," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 18, 1879, 52.
[168] The Civil Rights Act of 1875, March 1, 1875 s 1 <https://sharetngov.tnsosfiles.com/tsla/exhibits/blackhistory/pdfs2/1875CivilRightsAct.pdf> (June 2, 2020).

seemed to focus on criticizing negative aspects of the bill rather than supporting it as an attempt to curb segregation and enforce equality. This noticeably broke from his stance in the years directly following the Civil War.

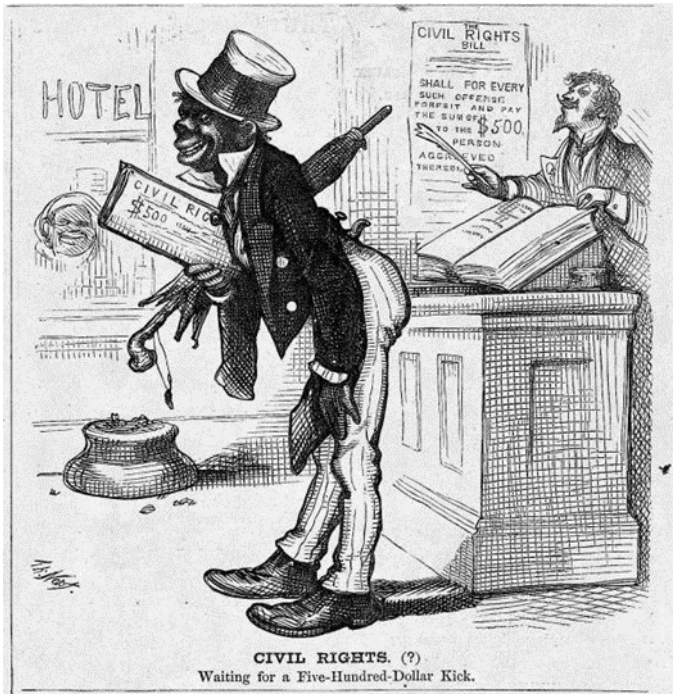

Figure 13: Nast cartoon from April 17, 1875 titled "Civil Rights.(?)"
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1875&issueId=0417&page=328

The cartoon, titled "Civil Rights (?)" shows an African American man at the registration desk of a hotel (Figure 13). He has a large sly smile and bends over slightly with his back turned to the counter, waiting to get thrown out of the establishment. The white worker, however, graciously opens the registration book and extends a pen to sign in. The bottom quotation reads "Waiting for a Five-Hundred-Dollar Kick," suggesting that he wanted to get kicked out in order

to receive money.[169] This cartoon commented on the part of the Civil Rights Act which stated that if an owner denies service based on race, he "shall, for every such offense, forfeit and pay the sum of five hundred dollars to the person aggrieved thereby."[170] This cartoon ignored any civil rights benefits afforded by the act, and instead commented on how greedy people would use this to cause problems, which, in Nast's opinion, did not actually exist, all for monetary gain.

Nast took another jab at the Civil Rights Act of 1875 by drawing an African American man standing before St. Peter, with a smile ear to ear, holding the text of the bill. He states, "Hi, Massa Peter, you can't objec' to open de gates fo' me now!" Nast used this religious analogy to make light of the anti-discrimination law.[171]

Similar to Nast and Keppler's coverage of the Irish, Nast also made depictions of African Americans as pawns used for political purposes. Even after receiving the right to vote, cartoons from the later years of Reconstruction often disregarded the agency of African Americans in making their own choices, instead showing them voting at the behest of some other group. Nast did have more positive images early on, such as his 16th of March 1867 illustration, showing a black man freely casting his ballot.[172]

By the early 1880s Nast's opinion on the African American vote shifted significantly. He drew a cartoon in July of 1881 in which two southerners, one labeled "bourbon" and the other "anti-bourbon" aim pistols at each other, while each pulling on the arm of a limp, broad faced black man with a tag captioned "a vote" stuck in his hat. This suggested that the voter had no

[169] Thomas Nast, "Civil Rights?," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 17, 1875, 328.
[170] The Civil Rights Act of 1875, March 1, 1875 s 2 <https://sharetngov.tnsosfiles.com/tsla/exhibits/blackhistory/pdfs2/1875CivilRightsAct.pdf> (June 2, 2020).
[171] Thomas Nast, "The Jubilee, 1875," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, April 3, 1875, 288.
[172] Thomas Nast, "The Georgetown election – the negro at the ballot-box," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 16, 1867, 172.

opinion, and only voted for the party that someone forced upon him.[173] (Not unsurprisingly, this shift in Nast's thinking followed the Democratic reassertion of power in the South.)

Another Nast cartoon showed African Americans as pieces used by politicians, again ignoring their agency and opinions. He called the 1885 sketch "The 'Practical' Politician's love for the Negro." The politician, looking as if going to give an African American a hug, reaches past him, in order to grab at bags of money in a safe labeled "state crib" and "US crib."[174] This alludes to politicians acting as if they wanted to assist black voters, only in reality to use them to stay in power and receive more money.

By 1885, long after many people had given up on equal rights and began to accept that expansion and enforcement of African American rights had faded, Nast drew a few cartoons which reflected this mindset. It is hard to prove if this reflected his true feelings, or if like many times before, he negatively portrayed one group to assist in attacking another, but Nast published a cartoon which posited violence against blacks as an overused trope brought up by newspapers to stir up problems. In an August 1885 illustration, he sketched a desperate *Tribune* writer clinging on the arm of a southern farmer, pleading for him to use violence against African Americans so the writer had a good story (Figure 14). The caption reads, "South: I should like to oblige you by killing a few negroes, Mr Tribune, but I am too busy."[175] This cartoon implied that the South had returned to business as usual, that issues of violence did not exist, and that newspapers wanted to suggest ongoing violence for political reasons. The title, "A dead issue" backs up this assertion that people should shift their attention on to other topics.

[173] Thomas Nast, "The Next Political Condition – South," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 9, 1881, 452.
[174] Thomas Nast, "The 'Practical' Politician's Love for the Negro," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 25, 1885, 473.
[175] Thomas Nast, "A Dead Issue," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 29, 1885, 576.

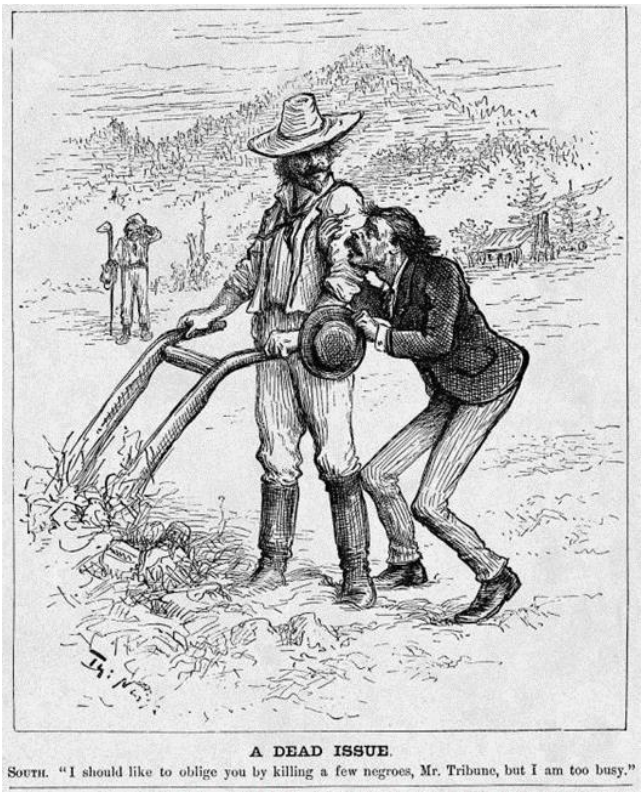

Figure 14: Nast cartoon from August 29, 1885 titled "A Dead Issue."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1885&issueId=0829&page=576

When compared to Nast, Keppler brought up African Americans quite rarely, but he had enough examples to identify trends in the group's portrayal. In 1876, while still working for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, Keppler drew a cartoon titled "Free Ballots for Freedmen." This depicted an African American at the polls, who could not vote for the candidate he wanted, because federal troops, with bayonets fixed and leveled at him, forced him to cast his ballot for the Republican presidential candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes. Signs affixed to the wall stated, "Ballots for Republicans, Bullets for Democrats" as well as "Death to Colored Democrats." The picture does not create a negative caricature, but as in Nast's cartoons, this cartoon suggests that black voters lacked agency and vote as directed. The

principal difference between the two centered on who forced the Black vote, Keppler drew Republicans as the party that forced the votes, whereas Nast thought that the Democrats did. This relates closely to the portrayal of Irish as peons to Tammany Hall and the Catholic Church.[176]

In a few cartoons, Keppler used African Americans as stereotypical stock characters who did not address any political points, but these representations still shaped the way readers perceived this group of people. One example shows an African American in a somewhat childish light, who along with an Irish boy pulls on the tail of a donkey. This aimed to suggest they acted to slow down the decision making process in the presidential election of 1876.[177] Another one, with the main purpose of making a joke about church attendance in the summer months, includes two African Americans, one serving drinks to the white attendees and one fanning church goers to keep them cool. These portrayals added nothing new to people's preconceived notions, but still helped to inforce the idea of African Americans in lower positions or servile jobs.[178]

Keppler produced a cartoon which showed a before and after image, similar to the Nast example explained earlier, comparing African Americans in 1863 and 1877. The caption referred to the Latin phrase, "Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis," meaning, times are changed, we also are changed with them. The change over time contrasted the first tile, in which an Irish mob attacked and hanged African Americans, likely portraying the 1863 Draft Riots in New York, while the second tile showed an African American in a soldier's uniform, slyly

[176] Joseph Keppler, "Free Ballots for Freedmen," cartoon, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, August 23, 1876, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000020241391&view=2up&seq=648
[177] Joseph Keppler, "Congr-ass," cartoon, *Puck* (German), December, 1876, no. 14, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=174
[178] Joseph Keppler, "How to encourage religion – make our churches attractive in the summer," cartoon, *Puck*, June, 1877, no. 13, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=218

receiving payment from New York state senator John Morrissey.[179] The cartoon outlines a changing landscape with regards to racial violence, but also shows that even though tactics have changed, the political power situation remains the same.

In an April 1879 cartoon, titled "The New Exodus," Keppler commented on black migration, citing the Exoduster Movement. He drew an African American family leaving the South for Kansas, while a white man worked digging a ditch. The caption reads, "Sambo – 'Now, boss, how you like it you' self?'"[180] The cartoon shows how they aimed to move on to a better life, as seen in the ballot box being carried by the man, and making the white man do his own work, but at the same time, the depiction stereotyped African Americans in general. Keppler supported the idea of moving for more opportunity, but still portrayed it in a way that suggested differences between races.

Where the image of African Americans in Nast and Keppler cartoons shifted over time, generally getting worse as public support for Reconstruction waned, the image of women remained more consistently negative and dismissive through that time. Outside the South, opposition grew to the expansion of African American rights, and to back up ideas of African American inability to act as equal members of society, cartoons portrayed them in more harmful and stereotypical ways. Women who did not get full citizenship, received consistent suggestions to remain in domestic roles by the cartoonist overlooking their political involvement capabilities.

[179] Joseph Keppler, "Tempora Mutantur etc." cartoon, *Puck*, August 29, 1877, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=394
[180] Joseph Keppler, "The New Exodus," cartoon, *Puck*, April 16, 1879, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435082757600&view=2up&seq=92

Portrayals of Women

Most historians who look at late 19th century political cartoons cover the treatment of African Americans and Irish Catholics, however they include scant analysis of the image used to portray women. During the 1870s, very few women published political cartoons, and the male cartoonists rarely alluded to women as an active shaping factor of politics and social change.[181] In reality, women played a vital role in organizing and supporting reforms from Reconstruction through the Progressive Era. They seized upon new legislation granting rights, as well as sought to influence social debates such as prohibition and suffrage. The images of women produced by cartoonists like Keppler and Nast come across as dismissive of the political role women played, relegating them to a domestic role and not taking their activism seriously, however by analyzing their works using more recent approaches, one can glean significant information about women and politics.

Before the 1970s few historians researched the role of women during the long Reconstruction, but the field has become more active in recent decades. A few works help to inform the study of women's roles and images in late nineteenth century America. One seminal book from 1978, *Feminism and Suffrage*, by Ellen Carol DuBois used a more top down approach, looking into the reform movements led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony.[182] She noted their initial connection with abolition, but primary focus on women's rights which led to a split after African Americans received further constitutional rights and women did not. Unlike some later books, this does not so much look at the role of common women, but it does examine the independence of their reform movements.

[181] Martha H. Kennedy, *Drawn to Purpose: American Women Illustrators and Cartoonists* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2018).
[182] Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

An important element of this study appears in Laura F. Edward's book *Gendered Strife & Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction*.[183] She suggested that many men and women from different economic statuses and races believed that men should provide for and protect their families, but due to conservative power structures, over time the definition of providers and those worthy of protection narrowed to elite whites. The cartoons of Nast and Keppler often insinuated that white men made most important political and family decisions, but they usually included these honest laborers as active agents. The cartoonists, especially Nast, who usually seemed more politically progressive and reform minded, also reinforced divided and unequal gender roles.

More recently, historians have debated the merits of gender studies rather that women's studies, looking at the conditions which influenced women, men, and the connections between them. For instance, Jeanne Boydston examines in, 'Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis' how historians should not study women using "universalized assumptions," rather investigate each point of focus with "relatively open questions applied to a discrete time and place of inquiry."[184] Such a methodology helps to contextualize why specific gender roles existed, and the feelings people had about them. Political cartoons, although generally made by men and for male readers, still give valuable insight into why a specific image of women developed and spread during the late nineteenth century.

One of the most important aspects of changing historical coverage centers on the great political opportunities and involvement of women during the time. Authors such as Faye Dudden and Lisa Tetrault no longer equate the lack of suffrage with not striving for rights or

[183] Laura F. Edward, *Gendered Strife & Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).
[184] Jeanne Boydston, "Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis," *Gender & History* 20, no. 3 (November 2008): 559.

remaining politically active; women still pushed their own agendas, and the 1870s stood as a foundation upon which later rights built.[185] This viewpoint, at odds with the pictures of Nast and Keppler, helps lead to questions about why the cartoonists overlooked the role of women.

Rebecca Edwards brings up the activity and influence of women in politics and society in her 1997 book *Angels in the Machinery*. In this, she argues that a large part of government centered on preserving familiar relationships, but the definition of the gender roles became widely debated. She contends that Republicans focused on the "moral superiority" and "maternal influence" of women who set examples for men to follow, while Democrats centered more on "patriarchal control" which helped to protect women.[186] This also extended to the economy with Republicans backing protective tariffs as, "the key to women's elevation, because it offered male breadwinners a family wage and allowed women leisure for self-cultivation." She posits that women did not use a "separate women's political culture," but involved themselves actively with "a bewildering choice of identities and objectives" to seek their political goals.[187] Such active involvement did not show in Nast and Keppler cartoons, and the reasons for such dismissal appear when analyzing the image of women used in their illustrations.

Keeping in mind the debated status of men and women in politics and society, as brought up by Edwards, helps to inform the images of women present in caricature. Political cartoons often included women, however their use usually fell within a few categories. Most commonly a woman stood as an allegory for larger ideas, such as Lady Liberty or Miss Columbia representing the United States, or Lady Justice reacting to political decisions. These however

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[185] Faye E. Dudden, *Fighting Chance: The Struggle over Woman Suffrage and Black Suffrage in Reconstruction America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Lisa Tetrault, *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).
[186] Rebecca Edwards, *Angels in the Machinery: Gender in American Party Politics from the Civil War to the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5-6.
[187] Edwards, *Angels in the Machinery*, 8-9.

served to express an idea rather than depict realities of women. Another frequent role of women in cartoons, the wife or mother, showed them responding to the choices of her husband and of the government. They did not often appear as involved in politics, showing up in cheap jokes about fashion, but cartoonists did display different views about women's role in government, including club involvement and demands for suffrage. Another way cartoonists used the image of women came from drawing men wearing women's clothing for comedic effect and to make a statement about the man not fulfilling his prescribed masculine role. This made fun of the man, but also suggested the inferior role of women.

By far the most frequent representation of women in political cartoons around the 1870s and 1880s did not portray an actual woman, but used an allegorical figure. In a similar manner to Uncle Sam, Lady Liberty and Miss Columbia personified the feelings of the nation on a variety of subjects. When critiquing laws or rulings, Lady Justice or other comparable women weighed in on the issue. Often dressed in a Romanesque toga, armor, or patriotic garb, these images did not make statements about contemporary women as much as expressing the cartoonist's ideas through a motherly medium. This common usage of symbolic women to represent political points in cartoons reflects the reluctance many men held about women's involvement in politics in the late nineteenth century. Some held that political involvement would only tarnish pure-hearted and morally driven women, so for their own protection they should remain relegated to a domestic role. In the late nineteenth century, many young women marched in political or patriotic parades while wearing pure white dresses, this mirrors the symbolic view cartoons shared about women's political involvement, showcasing them as representatives of an issue, but overlooking their role as shaping factors of that topic. By relying

on symbolic women, cartoonists like Nast and Keppler used the image of a woman to support their arguments while keeping them on a pedestal and out of public politics.

Both Nast and Keppler created many examples of allegorical women. One of Nast's works from February of 1875 used Lady Liberty to represent his feelings about inadequate national defense. In the first page a scared Lady Liberty, cowers behind crumbling ramparts defended by a log standing for a cannon and a skeleton soldier, while on the second page she stands resolutely next to a large cannon and an attentive soldier, accompanied by olive branches and flying doves.[188] Similarly, Nast used Lady Justice to comment on the racially motivated deaths in Hamburg South Carolina in August of 1876. She holds a tilting scale with one white death on one side, and six black dead on the other. Her face shows anger and disgust about the inequality, and she stands as Nast's idea of a moral compass for the nation.[189] Reflecting the ideas of some Republican men, Nast wanted the readers to note and react to the 'morally superior' female feelings of this allegorical lady, while at the same time only using the idealized image of a woman to stand in for the nation.

In November of 1876, Keppler drew Miss Columbia as the tattooed lady, whose ink included America's sins of Tammany Hall corruption, the Credit Mobilier scandal, election frauds, the Whiskey ring, and others. The caption reads, "Wenn das Tätowiren in dierser Weise fordauert, so muss ich trotz meiner guten Constitution zu Grunde gehen,"signifying that if such corruption continues the United States would perish.[190] As a call for reform, this used the female personification to represent the shamefulness of America's actions, but Keppler used the bared

[188] Thomas Nast, "Peace Insecure – Peace Secure," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 13, 1875, 136-137.
[189] Thomas Nast, "Declaration of Equality," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, August 12, 1876, 656-657.
[190] Joseph Keppler, "Auch eine Tätowirte," cartoon, *Puck* (German), November, 1876, no. 9, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=118

woman's naked form to represent the nation's embarrassment with its politician's actions rather than the role of women in seeking reform.

Similarly, the following year, Keppler drew a lady to stand for issues facing New York. This time Mater Dolorosa, our lady of Sorrows, stood for New York, and knives representing Tweed, Kelly, and Morrissey stick into her heart.[191] This religious reference showed a pure woman killed by the corrupt actions of misled politicians. He also used the personification of a sickly woman as New York City in order to make a political point. Two rogues, one for the city and one for the rural legislature, lead her through the street while ignoring the rampant diseases all around.[192] These cartoons played on the people's suffering because the men of government did not fulfill their required roles, and although the symbolic women react to the issues, real women's political opinions or involvement do not come across in the illustrations.

Nast drew a cartoon which used Uncle Sam and Miss Columbia standing in positions of a married couple. Uncle Sam who had just made, in Nast's opinion, an unwise choice about the coining of silver, sat dejected while getting chastised by Miss Columbia. In an indirect way, this shows one of the ways that women influenced late nineteenth century politics. They knew about subjects, argued for them, and organized in order to affect change. This did not, however, focus on the public actions of women in politics.[193]

These examples used allegorical women to stand for the opinions of a city, state, or the nation as a whole, creating a motherly figure judging political actions or a victim dealing with the injurious results of policies. This involved images of women in political choices, but used an

[191] Joseph Keppler, "Our Modern Mater Dolorosa" cartoon, *Puck*, September 26, 1877, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=458
[192] Joseph Keppler, "Between Two Rogues," cartoon, *Puck*, April 20, 1881, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435081696189&view=2up&seq=126
[193] Thomas Nast, "Giving U.S. Hail Columbia," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, May 4, 1878, 345.

idealized symbol representing the cartoonist's idea of the role of women rather than commenting on the ways women involved themselves in the movements.

Male artists produced these symbols, and focused on connecting with voting citizens, but they still depicted the prevalence of women's perspectives on political issues. Although denied the vote, women and their opinions remained quite active in post-Civil War reform. When portraying actual women, Nast and Keppler often placed them in the role of wives and mothers. They rarely inhabited a place of power, instead reacting to, or suffering from the choices of their husbands. The caricatured women generally stayed within prescribed domestic roles and did not stand as people to take seriously in politics, but the illustrations did bring up topics that women legitimately shaped.

Several examples used women to show that specific policies hurt families, but the wife, usually accompanied by children, stood as background support. In a Nast illustration, a wife with children angrily look on after a Communist killed the goose that laid the golden egg, representing capital. This aimed to show that Communism hurt the wage laborer as well as his family.[194] He used the same strategy to express his anti-union stance, depicting a concerned wife watching her husband giving his money to a union rather than saving it in a bank.[195] A similar example shows the sadness of a wife and children, upset about communists trying to destroy home and family ties.[196] None of the cartooned woman stepped in, they merely responded quietly to the attacks on family life and wellbeing.

In Nast's cartoon "The Bar of Destruction" he depicted a mourning wife with two concerned children standing in the door of a bar full of men acting violently and receiving rum

[194] Thomas Nast, "Always killing the goose that lays the golden egg," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 16, 1878, 205.
[195] Thomas Nast, "The Workingman's Mite," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, May 20, 1871, 468.
[196] Thomas Nast, "Home Sweet Home," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, June 22, 1878, 496.

from a skeleton bartender. This made an anti-alcohol stance by drawing how men drinking too much hurt the family (Figure 15).[197] Even though the wife just looked on in the cartoon, women became very active in the temperance debate, organizing groups to mobilize against it. Nast reflected a similar point to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, but did not include them or their influence in the cartoon.

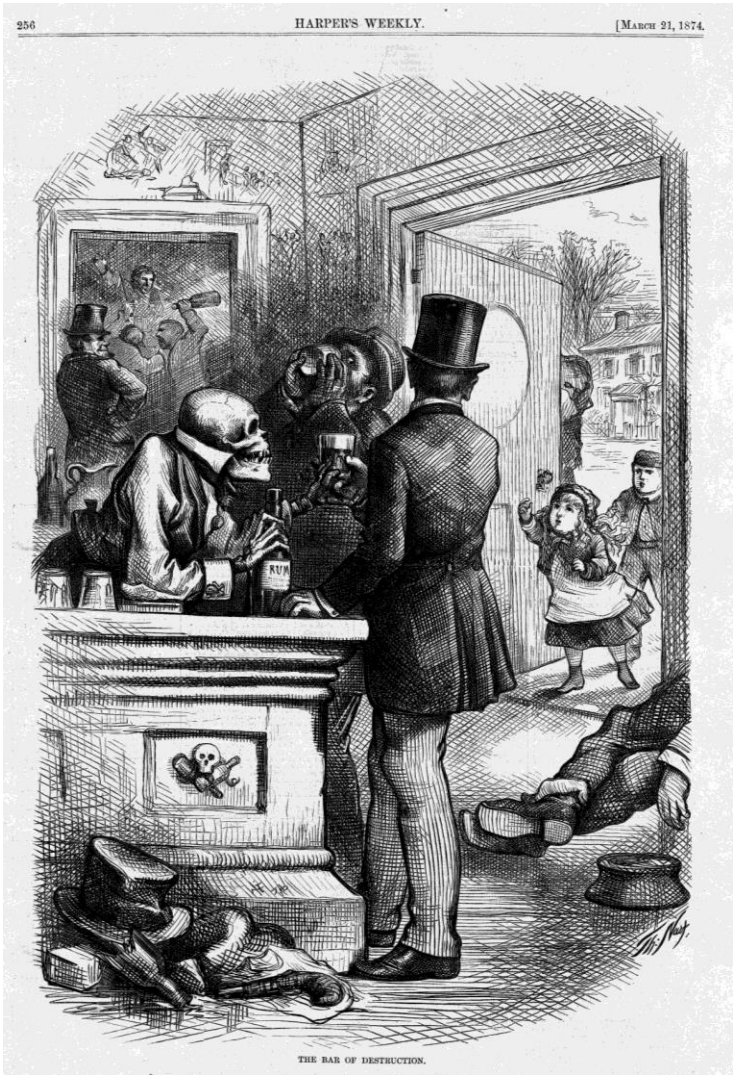

Figure 15: Nast cartoon from March 21, 1874 titled "The Bar of Destruction."
Source: *Harper's Weekly*, photo from HarpWeek, https://app-harpweek-com.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/IssueImagesView.asp?titleId=HW&volumeId=1874&issueId=0321&page=256

[197] Thomas Nast, "The Bar of Destruction," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 21, 1874, 256.

Such negative portrayals likely stood to make men second guess supporting Communism or spending time at a bar, but women viewers also formed opinions and either agreed or disagreed with the message of the illustrations. Many women took part in organizations which shaped sentiments as well as legislation. For example when discussing alcohol, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, organized in 1873, became a widespread and influential group for prohibition as well as other social reforms.

Several cartoons about women forewent political points altogether in favor of making jokes about their domestic roles, looks, and fashion. Cartoonists jested about the role that women played, which both belittled what they did day to day as well as the possibility of their political involvement. Although fine with using allegorical women to tackle contentious issues facing the nation, actual women in cartoons more often filled domestic roles, and concerned themselves with trifles such as fashion. This reinforced that the cartoonists did not take women seriously as political participants.

Nast commented on an 1880 migration, mostly of African American women, to Indiana for jobs that did not exist in the numbers advertised, by drawing the women as an Army who "have come to wash, clean, and cook."[198] Their armor consists of wash basins, wash boards, and pots, and they have armed themselves with brooms and bars of soap. Although they likely relocated for greater opportunity, the cartoon flattens them to just a domestic occupation. Cartoonists certainly did not create this view of gender roles, and many black women had few opportunities in other employment, but the artworks did help spread a comical notion of their status through a visual medium.

[198] Thomas Nast, "The Invasion of Indiana – A Colored Amazon Legion," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 14, 1880, 97.

In August of 1877, Keppler used a laborer's family to make light of a few issues. The husband came home to a house with no space due to a multitude of children spread out across the floor on makeshift beds. The wife responded, "I guess I have to go on strike."[199] Where Keppler took strikes as a very important and dangerous subject, he joked about a women's domestic equivalent.

Keppler aimed at women's work at home in the 1880 cartoon titled "Kitchen Calisthenics." He suggested ways of staying fit, including an array of women in situations such as: sewing while climbing a rope, washing clothes while hanging from a trapeze, hefting rolling pins over the head, cooking while lifting a baby overhead, and using two irons as a pommel horse.[200] This reinforced stereotypes of women's positions, while not really making much of a larger political point.

In the second month of *Puck's* publication Keppler made a cartoon labeled "The Follies of Fashion," depicting peculiarities of women's clothing to an extreme degree. He made sketches of women with absurdly skinny dresses as well as intricate hats and embellishments.[201] Without an important political point, the cartoon focused what Keppler portrayed as the silliness of caring about fashion

The following year, Keppler made another similar illustration. He drew two skinny women wanting to go swimming in their street clothes, while two curvy women wanted to wear

[199] Joseph Keppler, "Wife – I guess we've got to strike," cartoon, *Puck*, August 1, 1877, 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=330
[200] Joseph Keppler, "Kitchen Calisthenics," cartoon, *Puck*, February 11, 1880, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnfj2c&view=2up&seq=104
[201] Keppler, "The Follies of Fashion," cartoon, *Puck* (German), October, 1876, no. 3, 12. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379302&view=2up&seq=42

their swimming costumes on the street.[202] This cartoon contrasted a joke about women's ideas of image and vanity with other full page political cartoons with deeper purposes.

This silliness with which cartoonists portrayed women's fashion spilled over into how they regarded women in more important and political issues. Cartoons usually portrayed real women as outsiders in politics and included an air of absurdity when combining the two. Nast rarely commented on women in politics or suffrage but suggested that he at least somewhat supported universal voting. Keppler on the other hand brought up the topic more often, at points opposing enfranchising women.

Keppler drew a cartoon in April of 1879 about women trying to influence politics by "stooping" to lobbying. In the multi-tiled image, women asserted their influence on politicians mainly by using their beauty. In one part a comely woman hands a bill to a senator, accompanied with the phrase, "If you want to secure a Senator's favor, try this way." In a similar scene, a woman holds a bill above a senator while stating, "No kiss until you sign my bill." Keppler infers that looks make up all of women's political influence by including an illustration of a homely lady labeled as a "Female who can't lobby worth a cent."[203] This connection between beauty and influence suggests the illustrator saw the woman's body rather than her mind as the most distinctive trait.

Nast commented on women's suffrage shortly after the centennial of the Boston Tea party by noting parallels between women's political position and Americans who lacked representation before the Revolutionary War. Like with several of his other cartoons, he brought up a point of reform, while at the same time making fun of the group in question. In January of

[202] Keppler, "Opposite Wishes," cartoon, *Puck*, July 25, 1877, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=330
[203] Keppler, "When lovely women stoops to lobby," cartoon, *Puck*, April 2, 1879, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435082757600&view=2up&seq=68

1874, Nast wrote, under a cartoon, "'The New England Women's Tea-Party, believing that "taxation without Representation is Tyranny,' and that our Forefathers were justified in resisting Despotic Power by throwing the Tea into Boston Harbor,' hereby do the Same."[204] The cartoon itself showed a proper Victorian lady pouring a steaming pot of tea into the harbor. The reform minded words borrowed directly from America's independence movement contrast with the illustrated situation. The cartoon aimed not to give support to revolutionary action of suffragettes, rather to joke about the silly and quaint action of the women's club.

Keppler commented on women's rights and suffrage with a cartoon titled "Flocking for Freedom" in which a gander of geese stands for rights advocates, led by goose versions of Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Dr. Mary Walker, Isabell Hooker, and others. The caption, which stated, "they saved the ancient Capitol, they besiege the modern" references the First Sack of Rome, when geese alerted the Roman defenders to the Gallic attackers scaling the Capitoline Hill.[205] Where the geese saved Rome, he suggests that the geese standing for the women's movement represent the besiegers of Washington D.C. The cartoon portrayed the women and their arguments as ridiculous as well as harmful for the running of government.

In an even more pointed cartoon in July of 1880, Keppler showed opposition to woman's suffrage. The illustration, titled "A Female Suffrage Fancy" had several sections which each contained a ludicrous situation that could happen if women got the right to vote. Several images deal with the upsetting of gender roles. A few of them had women dressed like men, saying that voting would have them taking other masculine roles. Wearing pants and top hats, women drank around a bar, and pulled a "political machine." It also shows a disheveled man struggling with

[204] Thomas Nast, "This is the Most Magnificent Movement of All," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, January 3, 1874, 16.
[205] Keppler, "Flocking for Freedom," cartoon, *Puck*, January 23, 1878, 8-9.
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=iau.31858045536095&view=2up&seq=738

several screaming children as is wife is "out electioneering." The middle illustration depicts a woman dressed as a gentleman reaching for a cigar, while standing on books labeled "Modest female deportment." A cook book and fashion paper lay discarded, along with a dress and corset. She even has five o'clock shadow on her face (Figure 16). In another way of discrediting women's political decision making, Keppler drew many women encircling a good looking male politician over the caption, "A handsome fool gets the office."[206] This suggests that they would not make informed and rational decisions. This cartoon emphasized many reasons why some people did not support women's involvement in politics. The arguments lampooned shifts away from traditional gender roles, giving women who participated in voting masculine features and assuming tasks at home would go undone, as well as suggesting that women did not have the capacity to make educated political choices.

Nast and Keppler in general forwarded a dismissive view towards women, suggesting directly or indirectly that they had little place in the political sphere. Not all women fit this image of the wife or mother standing as a background part of a family, and many even gained prominence for their activism. Several women advocates received caricature portrayals in political cartoons, ranging from silly to devilish. Even if the cartoonists did not state it directly, they showed the leaders and organizations had enough importance to warrant critical cartoon treatment.

[206] Joseph Keppler, "A female suffrage fancy," cartoon, *Puck,* July 14, 1880, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=346 Many of the same themes emerge in early nineteenth century cartoons leading up to the passage of the nineteenth amendment.

Figure 16: Keppler cartoon from July 14, 1880 titled "A Female Suffrage Fancy."
Source: *Puck*, photo from HathiTrust,
https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=346

Nast drew Victoria Woodhull, a woman's rights advocate who sought equality between the sexes and free love, with a devilish caricature. Her rather radical stance for the time suggested that women have a say in marriage, divorce, consenting to sex, as well as choosing other sexual partners. In the cartoon, Woodhull who had horns sprouting from her head and demonic wings, pointed to a sign stating "Be Saved By Free Love." Behind her, a gaunt woman carrying a drunk husband and their children on a steep and rocky road responds with "I'd rather travel the hardest path of matrimony than follow your footsteps."[207] Nast covered Victoria

[207] Thomas Nast, "Get Thee Behind Me (Mrs.) Satan!," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, February 17, 1872, 140.

Woodhull in a similar manner as he did Communists and Southern Democrats, showing genuine concern and desire to shape public sentiment against the topic.

Keppler also made a statement about a famous women's activist in 1878. The woman known as Madame Restell offered women in New York City contraception as well as abortion services. Even though often seen as a subject too obscene for reputable journalism, Keppler made light of it shortly after Restell died. The caption of the cartoon read, "Fifth Avenue four years after Mad. Restell's death," while the picture showed Fifth Avenue overwhelmed with a great number of small children.[208] Although Keppler did not condone her work, the cartoon hinted at the widespread knowledge about, and the significant role of people like Restell in the usually taboo subject. In *Satire on Stone*, Richard West called this "more of a statement on upper-class hypocrisy," but one should also not overlook the decisions made by many women in the 1870s.[209]

Keppler noted the spread of "The Political Army of Salvation," now known better as the Salvation Army, in a March 1880 cartoon. The illustration showed Roscoe Conkling and his fellow congressmen marching and singing in an effort to convert people to support Grant in a third term. The crooning congressmen wear black dresses in the style of women who supported the Political Army of Salvation.[210] Although the cartoon sought to make fun of the men, it also noted the central role of women in the process of seeking social reforms.

Dressing up men as women became a common way for political cartoonists to attack politicians with whom they disagreed. This at its face value stood as an easy visual way to make

[208] Keppler, "Fifth Avenue Four Years After Mad. Restell's Death," cartoon, *Puck*, April 17, 1878, 16. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435053074753&view=2up&seq=100
[209] West, *Satire on Stone*, 168.
[210] Joseph Keppler, "The Political 'Army of Salvation'," cartoon, *Puck*, March 31, 1880, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=62

fun of the man, but when thinking about the importance of gender roles during the late nineteenth century, the emasculation of a politician also made a statement about his inability to properly fulfill his roles.

As noted by Rebecca Edwards, "the public identities of nineteenth-century men were as strongly gendered as those of women."[211] Many placed significant effort into fulfilling their manly duties, and did not want to allow opponents to get the chance to use these identities as "instruments of persuasion" against them. Edwards backed this up suggesting that women "threatened to mail petticoats to legislators who did not fulfill their protective masculine role."[212] Cartoonists jumped on this way of showing their political rivals as not up to the demands of their jobs as well as silly and frivolous.

Several of Nast's earlier examples aimed at the Confederate ex-president Jefferson Davis. A supporter of the Union, Nast disliked Davis and thought he got off too easy after the Civil War. The feminine garb shown in cartoons aligned with the Union story that Davis wore women's clothing to evade capture, a tale quickly spread by news outlets trying to further smear the Confederate leader's reputation. In 1876 Nast drew an armored knight rearing a horse getting ready for a joust. Behind this, Jefferson Davis stood in a shawl and visible hoop skirt. Nast critiqued the "Southern 'chivalry'" which lead the knight to defend "the unprotected female," and commented on a nonexistent "injured innocence" of the cause.[213] He made fun of both Davis, and the lacking innocence of his cause.

Keppler often portrayed Republican politicians he disagreed with wearing intricate gowns. He also did this for the cheap laughs as well as deeper meanings. In an example from

[211] Edwards, *Angels in the Machinery*, 9.
[212] Edwards, *Angels in the Machinery*, 9.
[213] Thomas Nast, "Injured Innocence," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, March 11, 1876, 204. Another example of this is found in: Thomas Nast, "Judging others by ourselves," cartoon, *Harper's Weekly*, July 5, 1879, 536.

August 25, 1880, he drew presidential candidate James A. Garfield in a wedding dress about to marry Uncle Sam. During the ceremony, the Democratic chairman runs in with a baby standing for Garfield's involvement with the Credit Mobilier Scandal. Kahn and West commented that Keppler argued in this illustration that "Garfield had no more right to present himself to the voters as an honest politician than a bride who had previously given birth had to wear virgin white."[214] This cartoon shows that Garfield's actions did not live up to the expectations of his office, while also reinforcing the era's gender roles.

In other similar situations, Keppler depicted prominent politicians as courtesans in the laps of industrialists, and presidential hopefuls Grant and Conkling as Cinderella's decadently dressed haughty step-sisters.[215] They all used the image of women's clothing to suggest the men did not have the required abilities to faithfully fulfill their roles, and did not belong in them.

Whether using stereotyped depictions of the clothing, domestic jobs, or moral aptitudes which did not mesh with politics, cartoonists developed an image of women filling a feminine role in society and did not show them as capable or deserving of the same treatment as male citizens. When women or African Americans fought for equality in the late eighteenth century, cartoonists like Nast and Keppler, rather than unequivocally suggesting equal rights, they forwarded an image of people undeserving of, or incapable of understanding and using such privileges.

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[214] Joseph Keppler, "Forbidding the Banns," cartoon, *Puck*, August 25, 1880, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015027620106&view=2up&seq=444

[215] Joseph Keppler, cartoon, *Puck*, September 20, 1882, 8-9; Joseph Keppler, cartoon, *Puck*, October 13, 1880, 8-9. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435070088281&view=2up&seq=50 https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435052379112&view=2up&seq=66

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Political cartoon visuals found in Thomas Nast's and Joseph Keppler's works from the late 1860s through the mid-1880s reinforced, and sometimes influenced, many prominent ideas and perceptions about groups of people. Some of these images continued to sway commonly held notions about these people long after the Reconstruction and Progressive eras. This era, which saw unprecedented changes in the social status and political role of many Americans, also spurred various debates and reactions to how different people fit within society. The works of Nast and Keppler stand as source databases for the analysis of images built to represent groups such as women, laborers, the Irish, and African Americans, as well as how the cartoonists believed they fit into society.

Instead of merely acting as supplementary evidence for histories, political cartoons deserve deeper analysis to draw out how they helped shape public conceptions. Nast and Keppler used caricature and symbolism to connect with their readers in a memorable way. They utilized simplified representations in a repetitive manner while also creating settings that build upon common cultural knowledge and commonly held beliefs.

The use of such strategies helped to define the status of groups of people in American society. For example, Nast and Keppler drew distinctions between "Americans" and "outsiders" by categorizing positive and negative traits as well as assigning them to different groups. They lauded "honest," white, Protestant laborers, while playing up the dangerous aspects of the Chinese and Irish Catholics. The cartoonists also commented on groups they saw as deserving of equal treatment in American society, and those they believed incapable to use such rights.

Especially seen in Nast's cartoons, the image of African Americans started off positive in the years following the Civil War, but by the mid to late 1870s took on more stereotypical aspects and indicators of inequality. In both Nast and Keppler's works, they consistently forwarded a domestic role for women and an incapability of their involvement in traditionally male centered activities.

This study used a limited number of examples and topics to support its arguments, and future research could extend the scope. For instance, a broader examination of the roles of religions, including different Protestant sects, Catholics from various nations, as well as Jewish and Islamic people, could prove useful. Also the inclusion of Native American images, differences between Northerners and Southerners, and a more in-depth coverage of the Chinese could all help show how political cartoons shaped images.

Another extension that can further this study involves the inclusion of more cartoonists and newspapers. Although two of the most famous cartoonists of the time, Nast and Keppler worked alongside as well as competed against many other cartoonists. The inclusion of illustrators such as Matt Morgan, James A. Wales, Frederick Opper, Bernhard Gillam, and many others can make a more fully encompassing view of the images put forth in the pictorial press. A broadening of the time covered in could also add new perspectives, such as cartoons dealing with United States imperialism starting in the late 1890s and suffrage cartoons leading up to the 19th amendment.

A further area of future study includes the freedoms and limitations that cartoonists had when creating their work. Keppler had limited oversight for what he published, but he still had to make sure that the ideas he put forth still sold papers. Nast also chaffed from time to time under the restrictions of the editors and owners at *Harper's Weekly*. The degree to which

cartoonists expressed their own opinions or how much they reflected the goals of others may play a significant role when examining how cartoons portrayed different groups of people.

Continued study into this subject will help bring the underutilized utility of political cartoons to light. Deeper examination of political cartoons can help historians see why popular images of people and groups gained or retained prominence, and act as visuals to codify important abstract ideas that shaped the status of people in American society.

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