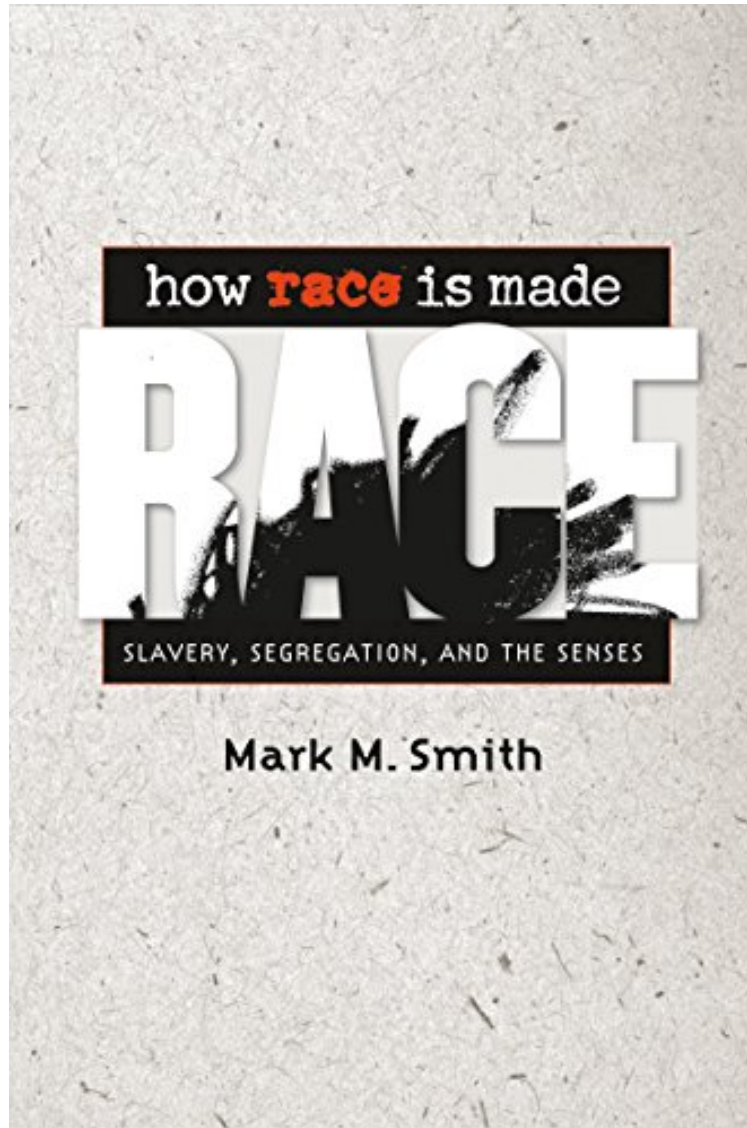


(Download free pdf) How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses

How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses

Mark M. Smith

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Mark M. Smith : How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How Race Is Made: Slavery, Segregation, and the Senses:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book about the odd madness of racismBy snaxlegProfessor Smith, an Englishman living in North Carolina, has written a trenchant analysis of the origins of racism in the United States. I cannot exaggerate my admiration of the work. And very witty too. You will like his take on completely crazy Southern observations concerning increasing albinism among slave children in the mid-19th century. The salutary

effect of Christianity and propinquity to civilization indeed. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book, shameful printing on-demand By cp5cents This book on the construction of race through the senses is well-researched and accessible to academics and a general audience alike. Unfortunately, provided a copy that was print-on-demand and poorly bound, raising concerns that the book was not, in fact, from the publisher itself. It adds insult to the injury of copyright violation of an academic press book when I realized that the publisher of Smith's monograph is UNC-Chapel Hill, my alma mater. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Must read By Nestor 'How Race Is Made' is among the most deeply insightful and genuinely thought provoking books on the subject of the history of racism in the United States that I have read. Through extensive research and countless examples from the colonial period through the 1950's, Mr. Smith has provided us with a shocking and unvarnished portrait of the justifications manufactured by whites in America for slavery and segregation. The extensive literature that exists on the subject alone is disturbing and yet, Mr. Smith managed to draw me through the details without leaving me encumbered by a wall of facts.

For at least two centuries, argues Mark Smith, white southerners used all of their senses--not just their eyes--to construct racial difference and define race. His provocative analysis, extending from the colonial period to the mid-twentieth century, shows how whites of all classes used the artificial binary of "black" and "white" to justify slavery and erect the political, legal, and social structure of segregation. Based on painstaking research, *How Race Is Made* is a highly original, always frank, and often disturbing book. After enslaved Africans were initially brought to America, the offspring of black and white sexual relationships (consensual and forced) complicated the purely visual sense of racial typing. As mixed-race people became more and more common and as antebellum race-based slavery and then postbellum racial segregation became central to southern society, white southerners asserted that they could rely on their other senses--touch, smell, sound, and taste--to identify who was "white" and who was not. Sensory racial stereotypes were invented and irrational, but at every turn, Smith shows, these constructions of race, immune to logic, signified difference and perpetuated inequality. Smith argues that the history of southern race relations and the construction of racial difference on which that history is built cannot be understood fully on the basis of sight alone. In order to come to terms with the South's past and present, Smith says, we must explore the sensory dynamics underpinning the deeply emotional construction of race. *How Race Is Made* takes a bold step toward that understanding.

From Publishers Weekly Smith, "an Englishman who studies Southern history," challenges notions of race as defined by sight alone, digging into Southern history to argue all five senses played roles in how race was defined and how our understanding of it has evolved. He begins with a crude (yet apt) anecdote that exemplifies his agenda of showing how "the association between the senses and emotion, between race-thinking and gut feeling, was, in many ways, a central theme of Southern history." From there, he quickly takes the readers back to the shores of 16th-century Africa, where European merchants were stunned by the presence of men "as blacke as coles." As European and African cultures became increasingly intertwined, whites from all points across the social spectrum "racialized what was in effect a class distinction," so that "lower-class whites elevated themselves" and looked down at (judging by the mid-century cartoon reproductions Smith includes) foul-smelling, ape-like miscreants. Enmeshed in these concepts are striking details such as how Europeans found Native Americans to smell sweet and compared the olfactory capabilities of Africans to dogs. Smith's research is rich and his prose accessible, making this an ideal primer on the socio-anthropological underpinnings of race. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. An ambitious and original experiment in the way the senses determined the ideology of race in southern American history over the last two centuries.--Senses Society Pathbreaking. . . . Smith's well-written study is based on meticulous research, including 50 pages of notes serious students will find useful when pursuing primary and secondary sources for further study of sensory perception and racial stereotyping. Highly recommended.--Choice Succinct and innovative. . . a thought-provoking sensory history of southern slavery, segregation, and race relations. . . . Furnishes new insight into important but already well-researched topics such as the origins of segregation and miscegenation. . . . Elegantly written and impressively researched.--Southern Historian [A] highly original interpretation of slavery and segregation.--Walter Uhler, The Huffington Post *How Race Is Made* shows how white perceptions of smell, taste, touch, sound--as well as sight--stood at the center of southern constructions of race for over two centuries. As attentive to black resistance as he is to white racism, Mark Smith reframes the history of slavery and segregation imaginatively and incisively. It is an original, important, and edifying achievement.--Henry Louis Gates Jr. Smith has written a short, thought provoking book on the role of the senses--or more specifically, white sensory stereotypes--in constructing race in the United States. . . . Smith's history provokes reflection not only upon how people in the past sensed their worlds, but how our own socially constructed senses shape what we write and think today.--American Historical A slim volume that cuts a very wide path in the literature and opens several imaginative and analytical possibilities. . . . Merits serious consideration.--Journal of the Early Republic Smith's provocative book explores a two-hundred year history. . . . Convincing and original.--Journal of Social History This

work adds a new dimension to an ever-growing literature on race relations in American history. Well researched, sensitively written, and groundbreaking in terms of its methodology. . . . A necessary resource for scholars and students to more fully understand the construction of racial stereotypes in America.--Louisiana History

Sensitive to black challenges, Smith's book is foremost a well-researched, frank, and revealing analysis of white racism. Only by coming to terms with the gut-level impact of sounds, smells, tastes, and textures--and by understanding the conceptual frameworks in which they were experienced--can [historians] begin to explain the power and persistence of something as impervious to reason as Americans' historical concepts of race.--Journal of American History

In this concise, elegantly written book, Smith presents a stimulating sensory history of southern slavery, segregation and race relations from the colonial era to the 1950s. . . . How Race Is Made makes an innovative contribution to the history of race in the southern United States.--Journal of American Studies

[A] tight, well-argued book.--Register of the Kentucky Historical Society

Smart, original, and vividly written, How Race Is Made surveys the ways Americans have claimed to know race through their senses. Mark Smith reminds us that racial categories rest on perceptions of smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch, not reason.--Grace Elizabeth Hale, University of Virginia

This strongly written volume reminds even experienced readers of the pernicious power of racism. It is a strong challenge that echoes in the current shaping of stereotypes.--Historian

Original and provocative. . . . [A] path-breaking book.--Alabama

Mark Smith has crafted an extraordinary and remarkable book. His exploration of the sights, smells, and tastes, real and imagined, adopted and constructed, is subtle and compelling. This work illustrates the irrational and rationalized structure of racism. The scholarship is outstanding and the writing is beautiful.--Percival Everett, University of Southern California

Our only way out of the dark forest of racial superstition will come through our minds, not our beliefs and our passions alone. Toward that purpose, Mark Smith has written a book that calls into question a good number of the 'common wisdom' stereotypes with which racist actions were justified. This is not a harangue; it is a book made strong by the rationality of its argument and the writer's willingness to raise well-researched facts where opinions are often considered good enough. Mark Smith has proven, page upon page, that what was once considered equal to the task now has to be pulled down so that we all can step up.--Stanley Crouch

Smith's research is rich and his prose accessible, making [How Race is Made] an ideal primer on the socio-anthropological underpinnings of race.--Publishers Weekly

Focuses analytically and critically on questions virtually ignored by previous scholars . . . reexamines long-familiar sources through new lenses . . . nudges us to rethink basic components of what we already thought we knew.--South Carolina Historical Magazine