

Race 2 Fredrickson, Racism: A Short History Ch. 1

Please read Chapter 1, “Religion and the Invention of Racism,” from Fredrickson’s *Racism: A Short History*. Consider the following questions as you read:

1. Was race or racism known in the ancient world?
2. Did the Christian church or government officials spread the view that Jews were not just unbelievers but evil, or was it only a popular myth? Why does this difference matter?
3. What was the first real anticipation of modern racism?
4. Why was the Spanish doctrine of purity of blood (“*limpieza de sangre*”) undoubtedly racist?
5. What was the “dichotomy of the Indian” that emerged from Spanish colonization of the New World? Why did the Spanish have this confused attitude toward the Indians?
6. On what basis did the humanity of the Indians turn in the debate between Las Casas and De Sepulveda? Why did Las Casas ultimately prevail?
7. What's the difference between a pagan and an infidel? Why were blacks enslaved even though they were pagans rather than infidels?
8. In what way was Spain in the 16th and 17th centuries a critical segue to the naturalistic racism of the modern era?
9. How did the idea that Africans carried the curse of Ham or Canaan justify their enslavement? Did the Church or religious authorities endorse the idea, or was it purely a popular belief?
10. Why did Christian universalism conflict with the development of racist ideology?
11. How did the Virginia laws of the late seventeenth century change the basis of slavery? Why was this a significant milestone in the development of racism?