

Instrumentalizing Pseudoscience: How European Scientific Racism Shaped Confederate Political Thought and Policy

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Abstract

Through the antebellum period and American Civil War, American and European race theorists exchanged ideas through correspondence and scientific explorations asserting the truth of scientific racism. Scientific racist beliefs posited the natural superiority of white people and inferiority of Black people based on what these theorists claimed were innate biological characteristics. These beliefs served as a critical linkage between Europe and the United States. Utilizing correspondence and journal entries, this paper shows that this exchange of scientific racist ideas significantly influenced the Confederacy's political thought and policy positions, especially foreign relations, through the Civil War. Through the work of propagandist Henry Hotze, the Confederacy sought to gain support among the European public, particularly in Great Britain, by promoting scientific racist ideas justifying the Confederacy's defense of slavery. Such ideas were assimilated from American race theorists like Samuel George Morton and Samuel Cartwright, along with European race theorists like Arthur de Gobineau. This paper ultimately demonstrates the historical continuity of actors uniting across borders to instrumentalize scientific racism to uphold white supremacy into modern times.

Introduction

In March 1861, the Union arrived at a moment of grave peril. Following the 1860 presidential election of Republican Abraham Lincoln, Southern state governments subverted the Union through secession to protect slavery. From the pre-colonial period through the antebellum period, Southern states institutionalized a "slave society" that relied on the slave labor of over 1 million imported Africans to cultivate

staple crops such as cotton.¹ Cotton cultivation accelerated through the early 1800s, which was fueled by American inventor Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1793 and an increase in cotton prices from eight cents to eleven cents by 1847.² Declining trade protectionism with European powers further enabled the South to gain a large share of the international cotton marketplace based on their political economy of slavery. This entrenchment of slavery and the institution's oppression of Black slaves became the fundamental sociocultural and political force driving the South. In the eyes of Southern politicians, Lincoln's record of abolitionism threatened this Southern institution and, thus, Southern civilization. By January 1861, Southern politicians channeled their anxieties through secession conventions across seven states.³ These conventions resulted in proclamations, such as the 1860 South Carolina Declaration of Secession, that declared each Southern state to have control over the "right of property in slaves."⁴

One such politician who helped lead Southern secession was Vice President of the Confederacy Alexander Stephens. On March 21, 1861, Stephens delivered his "Cornerstone Speech" in Savannah, Georgia following the state's secession in January 1861. Speaking to a full-capacity audience of adoring

1 Ian Tyrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective Since 1789* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), 74.

2 Matthew Karp, "King Cotton, Emperor Slavery: Antebellum Slaveholders and the World Economy," in *The Civil War as Global Conflict*, eds. David Gleeson and Simon Lewis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2014), 38.

3 Hudson Meadwell and Lawrence Anderson, "Sequence and Strategy in the Secession of the American South," *Theory and Society* 37, no. 3 (June 2008): 216.

4 "Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union" (Declaration, Charleston, 1860), 8.

supporters, Stephens vociferously defended Southern secession and the formation of the Confederacy. Stephens asserted that the Union established a constitutional system that was perversely influenced by the Founding Fathers, such as Thomas Jefferson, who believed that “the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of Nature.”⁵ Such a belief, according to Stephens, burdened Southerners by inhibiting their political sovereignty over their “peculiar” institution of slavery that served as the bedrock of their society.⁶ The culmination of Stephens’s speech was his stated opposition to egalitarianism. He claimed that the Confederacy’s foundations were “laid... upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man” and that “slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition.”⁷ Stephen’s claim that Black people possessed biological qualities justifying their oppression as an inferior class indicated a widespread acceptance of a virulent ideology among Southerners: scientific racism.

Scientific racism, a pseudoscientific group of beliefs asserting that certain racial groups possess innate physical, moral, and intellectual characteristics rendering them superior or inferior to other groups, greatly influenced Confederate political thought and policy. I will argue, however, that this influence did not emerge out of a vacuum. Instead, I will contend that Southern race theorists assimilated scientific racist ideas that European race theorists formulated during the Age of Enlightenment. Through the antebellum period, American and European race theorists exchanged scientific racist ideas through correspondence and pseudoscientific publications to justify slavery. These figures included American physicians Samuel George Morton and Samuel Cartwright. The commencement of the Civil War not only accelerated these transatlantic exchanges of racist ideas, but these exchanges became instrumental in shaping Confederate foreign relations. Through the work of propagandist Henry Hotze, the Confederacy sought to gain support among the European public,

particularly in Great Britain, by promoting scientific racist ideas justifying the Confederacy’s defense of slavery. Hotze further represented the political and financial sacrifices Confederate leaders and American and European race theorists made to protect an institution upholding white supremacy. This paper ultimately illustrates how these exchanges of ideas impacted debates and policies that influenced the direction of the Civil War and future of American racial relations.

The Origins of European Scientific Racism: The Age of Enlightenment

European conceptions of scientific racism emerged out of the theoretical and political debates of the Age of Enlightenment.⁸ Between the mid-seventeenth and late eighteenth centuries, European race theorists explored philosophical and scientific questions through the scientific method. The scientific method, which involved the empirical study of natural phenomena through experimentation and observation, motivated theorists to determine universal scientific truths rooted in human behavior.⁹ Theorists’ use of the scientific method generated newfound ideas on a global scale. As Janet Giltrow outlines, an “information explosion,” fueled by mechanical innovations like the printing press, democratized mass media that reached Western elites and the larger public. Such democratization enabled these theorists to transmit scientific ideas through correspondence, pamphlets, and academic journals.¹⁰ Taxonomic theories that involved the classification of animals, human remains, and living individuals were exchanged through a transatlantic network of colonial settlements and scientific explorations.¹¹ Humanity was no longer solely conceptualized through philosophical moralizations of rationality that characterized classical intellectual debate.

5 Alexander Stephens, “Cornerstone Speech” (1861), in *The Civil War and Reconstruction: A Documentary Reader*, ed. Stanley Harrold (Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 61.

6 Stephens, 60.

7 Stephens, 61.

8 Devin Vartija, “Revisiting Enlightenment Racial Classification: Time and Question of Human Diversity,” *Intellectual History Review* 31, no. 4 (2021): 605-606.

9 Linda Burnett, “Collecting Humanity in the Age of Enlightenment: The Hudson’s Bay Company and Edinburgh University’s Natural History Museum,” *Global Intellectual History* 8, no. 4 (2023): 387-388.

10 Burnett, 388.

11 Burnett, 388.

European race theorists shifted these debates to focus on pseudoscientific studies seeking to place humans within an empirically observed natural world.

These efforts to situate humanity within a natural context centered around the classification of racial groups, which served as the foundation for scientific racist theories. European race theorists united around three major beliefs that, as Richard Popkins outlines, were based on the findings of pseudoscientific studies on human physiology and social behavior. The first theory postulated that the “mental life of non-whites, especially Indians and Africans,” was “significantly different from that of [Europeanized] whites.”¹² The second theory negatively framed such mental differences as a sign of non-white inferiority, since the “normal, natural condition of man is whiteness” and being non-white was “a sign of sickness or degeneracy.”¹³ The third theory asserted that non-white people were not truly human. Rather, they were members of a subservient class who were “lower on the great chain of being.”¹⁴

These assertions constituted a theoretical framework that promoted the pseudoscientific belief of polygenism. Polygenism, as Terence Keel explains, argued that “each [racial] group possessed its own unique ancestor,” which caused racial groups to be intellectually and morally different from each other.¹⁵ European race theorists not only supported polygenism, but they wielded its claims to justify a racial hierarchy that was also based on religious conceptions of morality. Based on racially biased methodologies, these theorists framed white people as “being the best” race, while non-white people were degraded as “pre-Adamithic creations” who “never contained the [spirit] of genuine men.”¹⁶ Race theorists moralized their scientific racism through their invocations of Christian theology, which allowed them to claim that

racial differences were created from God’s intelligent design of humanity.¹⁷ Thus, racial hierarchy upholding white supremacy served God’s will and could not be altered.

Enlightenment figures further promoted scientific racist theories based on their expertise in various disciplines, including physiology. Franz Joseph Gall, a German physiologist, was one such theorist. Gall conducted the first-known modern studies on the pseudoscience of phrenology, which posited a false association between scalp morphology and an individual’s intellectual capacity.¹⁸ In 1798, Gall published a letter in *Der neue Teutsche Merkur*, a pro-Enlightenment Weimar journal, where he presented his principles of phrenology. Gall claimed that the brain is the organ of the mind and the mind’s qualities are “multiplied and elevated in direct ratio to the increase of the mass of [the] brain, proportionally to that of the body.”¹⁹ Certain brain areas were theorized to have specialized functions that were “distinct and independent of each other.”²⁰ Individuals who were found to have “diseases and wounds” in such areas were “deranged, irritated, or suspended” from normal cognitive thinking.²¹ Gall’s conceptions enabled him to assert that Black people were “inferior to the [white] European intellectually” because they had “smaller heads and less cerebral mass than European inhabitants.”²² Based on his pseudoscientific analysis, Gall advocated for a racial caste system that consigned Black people to slave labor in service of white people.

As the future of slavery remained a leading political issue in Europe and the United States into the antebellum period, European race theorists built on Enlightenment theories of scientific racism. Figures

12 Richard Popkins, “The Philosophical Basis of Eighteenth-Century Racism,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 3, no. 1 (1974): 247.

13 Popkins, 247.

14 Popkins, 247.

15 Terence Keel, “Religion, Polygenism and the Early Science of Human Origins,” *History of the Human Sciences* 26, no. 2 (2013): 4.

16 Popkins, “The Philosophical Basis of Eighteenth-Century Racism,” 247.

17 Keel, “Religion, Polygenism and the Early Science of Human Origins,” 20.

18 Susan Branson, “Phrenology and the Science of Race in Antebellum America,” *Early American Studies* 15, no. 1 (2017): 170.

19 Franz Joseph Gall, “Letter from Dr. F. J. Gall, to Joseph von Retzer, upon the Functions of the Brain, in Man and Animals,” *Der neue Teutsche Merkur* 3, no. 1 (December 1798): 320.

20 Gall, 320.

21 Gall, 321.

22 Franz Joseph Gall, *Research on the Nervous System*, in *The Invention of Race: Scientific and Popular Representations*, ed. Nicholas Bancel et al. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 55.

including German naturalist Carl Vogt affirmed the theories of polygenism and phrenology through their globally distributed publications that popularized European scientific theories in elite circles.²³ Their academic work enabled them to find common cause with each other on the importance of upholding slavery. At the same time, these figures started exchanging their work with American race theorists who integrated their beliefs to manufacture their own justifications for slavery.

Samuel George Morton: The Father of the “American School” of Race Science

In the early 1800s, American physician Samuel George Morton, a staunch defender of slavery as a necessity to maintain a white supremacist society viewed as natural,²⁴ generated his own pseudoscientific beliefs that incorporated European scientific racist ideas. Morton developed an interest in anatomy after he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania as a Doctor of Medicine in 1820 and the University of Edinburgh with an advanced degree in 1824.²⁵ Utilizing his working relationships with prominent Philadelphia physicians, Morton became president of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, cementing his status as an esteemed academic among his colleagues.²⁶

Morton concentrated his work on craniological studies that sought to examine the size and structure of the human skull. The Enlightenment’s promotion of the scientific method compelled Morton to frame human history as part of a natural history. As Ann Fabian outlines, Morton desired to answer questions that “comparative anatomists had asked about the shape and size of skulls of different animals” by conducting empirical studies comparing the skulls

of different racial groups.²⁷ Morton used polygenism and phrenological theories formulated by Gall to construct diagrammatic methods utilized to form a correlation between cranial capacity and intelligence. Morton claimed that larger cranial capacity signified a higher intelligence, while smaller cranial capacity denoted lower intelligence.²⁸ From this theorization, Morton established the “American school” of race science, a pseudoscientific movement asserting white intellectual superiority based on “empirical” findings that sought to differentiate the brain sizes between white and Black people.²⁹

Morton publicized his scientific racist theories through phrenological examinations he conducted between the 1830s and 1840s. Starting in 1830, Morton regularly traveled to Brazil, Egypt, and Mexico to excavate archeological sites and exchange scientific information with other American race theorists, including Josiah Nott and George Gliddon.³⁰ Morton accumulated a catalog of over 1,000 human specimens, including 600 intact human skulls that were housed at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Named the “American Golgotha” as a reference to the location of Jesus’s crucifixion and Morton’s objective to determine how God created humanity, Morton’s catalog became the world’s largest collection of human skulls.³¹ Morton used his increased international recognition to create widely distributed lithographs of skulls from different racial groups.³² He would publish these lithographs and findings in his 1839 book, *Crania Americana; or, A Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America*, and 1844 book, *Crania Aegyptiaca; or Observations on Egyptian Ethnography, Derived from Anatomy, History and the Monuments*.

In *Crania Americana*, Morton outlined the

23 J. MacGregor Allan, “Carl Vogt’s Lectures on Man,” *The Anthropological Review* 7, no. 25 (April 1869): 177-178.

24 Marianne Sommer, “A Diagrammatics of Race: Samuel George Morton’s ‘American Golgotha’ and the Contest for the Definition of the Young Field of Anthropology,” *History of the Human Sciences* (2023): 10.

25 George Bacon Wood, *A Biographical Memoir of Samuel George Morton* (Philadelphia: T.K. & P.G. Collins, 1853), 6.

26 George Bacon Wood, *A Biographical Memoir of Samuel George Morton* (Philadelphia: T.K. & P.G. Collins, 1853), 9.

27 Sommer, “A Diagrammatics of Race: Samuel George Morton’s ‘American Golgotha’ and the Contest for the Definition of the Young Field of Anthropology,” 3.

28 Sommer, 3.

29 Adam Dewbury, “The American School and Scientific Racism in Early American Anthropology,” *Histories of Anthropology Annual* 3, no. 1 (2007): 121.

30 Stephen Jay Gould, “Morton’s Ranking of Races by Cranial Capacity,” *Science* 200, no. 4341 (1978): 503.

31 Gould, 503.

32 Gould, 504.

purportedly different physical qualities of the skulls of numerous racial groups. He classified humans into separate racial groups, including Caucasians and Black Ethiopians. Morton characterized Caucasian people as fair skinned individuals with large skulls and the “highest intellectual endowments.”³³ In contrast, he described Ethiopians as Black people who had long, narrow skulls, expressed a “joyous... and indolent disposition,” and constituted the “lowest form of humanity.”³⁴ To measure these alleged intellectual differences and demonstrate the purported intellectual superiority of Caucasian people, Morton filled up skulls with BB-sized lead shot to calculate the average skull volumes of different racial groups.³⁵ Morton determined that Caucasian skull volumes averaged 87 cubic inches, while the skulls of Ethiopians, referred to as “Negros,” averaged 78 cubic inches.³⁶ Because Black people were theorized to have smaller brains, he asserted they possessed lower intelligence that caused them to have “little invention.”³⁷ However, Black people possessed “strong powers of imitation” that enabled them to succeed as slave laborers.³⁸ Thus, Morton’s racist and pseudoscientific methodology enabled him to claim that a racial hierarchy subjugating Black people as slaves was necessary to exploit their labor for the benefit of white society.

Morton solidified his scientific racist beliefs in *Crania Aegyptiaca*. Examining the skulls of ancient Egyptians, Morton sought to further differentiate Caucasian and Black skulls. Morton employed a methodology comparable to the one in his *Crania Americana* study, but he instead classified Black people as “Negroid” because he viewed them as subhuman.³⁹ Like in *Crania Americana*, Morton concluded that

Caucasian skulls were larger than those of Black people and that these cranial differences denoted Caucasian superiority and Black inferiority. Caucasian skulls were determined to have an average volume between 78 and 80 cubic inches, while Black skulls were determined to have an average volume of 75 cubic inches.⁴⁰ Morton further used his findings to support polygenism. He asserted that Caucasian and Black intellectual differences were so stark that they were indications that God created different racial groups meant to serve different purposes. According to Morton, Black people were created in Egypt to be suitable “as [slaves] or bearers of tribute to [Caucasian] Pharaohs.”⁴¹ This subordinate social position of Black people in ancient times was “the same... as in modern times.”⁴² By establishing this historical continuity of slavery, Morton argued that racial hierarchies relegating Black people to slavery were foundational to human societies. In his view, slavery emerged from natural differences in intelligence between racial groups, and he argued for the necessity to maintain slavery to adhere to what he claimed was God’s design for humanity.

Morton’s scientific racist work served as a significant influence on Confederate political thought. Eager to defend slavery for their political and economic self-interest, Southern slaveholding elites gravitated towards Morton’s work and used his arguments to defend slavery. Upon Morton’s death in 1851, the *Southern Medical Journal*, then a pro-slavery medical journal serving Southern slaveholding political leaders, published a tribute which stated that Southerners “should consider [Morton] as our benefactor, for aiding most materially in giving to the negro his true position as an inferior race.”⁴³ Morton further contributed to the development of physical anthropology as an academic discipline, which was consistently cited by Confederate elites to defend slavery. His phrenological methodologies would be used by Confederacy-supporting race theorists such as Gliddon to defend slavery as rooted in the

33 Samuel George Morton, *Crania Americana; or, A Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America* (London: James Madden & Co., 1839), 5.

34 Morton, 7.

35 David Thomas, *Kennewick Man, Archaeology, And The Battle For Native American Identity* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 40.

36 Samuel George Morton, *Crania Americana*, 260.

37 Morton, 88.

38 Morton, 88.

39 Samuel George Morton, *Crania Aegyptiaca; or Observations on Egyptian Ethnography, Derived from Anatomy, History and the Monuments* (London: James Madden & Co., 1844), 4.

40 Morton, 22.

41 Morton, 59.

42 Morton, 59.

43 Emily Renschler, “The Samuel George Morton Cranial Collection,” *Expedition Magazine*, 2008.

natural truths of white supremacy.⁴⁴ Morton linked European scientific racist ideas with the political aims of Southern elites, and other American race theorists would continue this transatlantic exchange of ideas.

Samuel Cartwright and “Drapetomania”: Black Existence as a Disease

At the same time Morton was conducting his pseudoscientific studies, American physician Samuel Cartwright began to advance theories of scientific racism that integrated aspects of European race science. Cartwright was first motivated to study physiology through his experiences as a soldier in the War of 1812, where he observed doctors’ treatment of wounded soldiers.⁴⁵ After graduating with Doctor of Medicine from Transylvania University in 1823, Cartwright received acclaim for his 1824 essay, “An Essay on the Epidemic Fever of Monroe County, Mississippi, in the Summer and Autumn of 1822,” in which he detailed how cholera caused an “inflammation in the cellular tissue that envelope[s] the kidneys.”⁴⁶ His findings on cholera contributed to a growing literature on the development of human diseases and enabled Cartwright to bolster his reputation among fellow scientists. Harvard University’s Boylston Medical Library awarded Cartwright a gold medal for his research on the human cardiovascular system’s response to cholera in 1826.⁴⁷ The Medical and Chirurgical Society of Maryland further awarded him a one-hundred-dollar prize for an 1826 essay he published on cholera.⁴⁸

From the early 1820s onward, Cartwright based his physiological examinations on a reliance on Black bodies for autopsy. Cartwright expressed a deep conviction in the importance of using human

corpses for medical discovery that he believed could reveal universal natural truths about humanity. Cartwright used his autopsies of Black corpses to track the progression of numerous diseases in the human body, including yellow fever, syphilis, and epilepsy.⁴⁹ Cartwright opportunistically sought to use his racially biased conclusions of these autopsies to frame Black people as physiologically deficient. He claimed that “almost every year of my professional life... I have made post mortem examinations of negros... and I have invariably found the darker color pervading the flesh and the membranes to be very evident in all those who died of acute diseases.”⁵⁰ Cartwright’s autopsies enabled him to integrate scientific racist theories promoted by his contemporaries that asserted the biological inferiority of Black people.

Cartwright also based his work on a trip to Europe he took between 1836 and 1837. Cartwright traveled across Europe to form professional networks with physicians who advanced the “French school” of medicine.⁵¹ Scholars like Patrice Pinell and Sean Quinlan outline that the French school was characterized by an emphasis on the study of internal medicine using surgical observation⁵² and a preoccupation with achieving biological “perfectibility” in creating an intellectually superior race.⁵³ Cartwright revealed that “a team of medical men” traveled with him to Europe to study human evolution, writing that “conscious of our deficiencies, we have... taken the trouble to visit London, Rome and Paris, and gather from the store-houses of science... to assist” his studies.⁵⁴ Cartwright assimilated the scientific racist beliefs of French

44 Dewbury, “The American School and Scientific Racism in Early American Anthropology,” 128.

45 Mary Louise Marshall, “Samuel A. Cartwright and State’s Rights Medicine,” *New Orleans Surgical and Medical Journal* 93, no. 2 (August 1940): 74-75.

46 Samuel Cartwright, “An Essay on the Epidemic Fever of Monroe County, Mississippi, in the Summer and Autumn of 1822,” *American Medical Observer* 7, no. 4 (October 1824): 667.

47 Marshall, “Samuel A. Cartwright and State’s Rights Medicine,” 77-78.

48 Marshall, 77-78.

49 Christopher Willoughby, “Running Away from Drapetomania: Samuel A. Cartwright, Medicine, and Race in the Antebellum South,” *Journal of Southern History* 84, no. 3 (August 2018): 588.

50 Samuel Cartwright, “Philosophy of the Negro Constitution,” *New Orleans Surgical and Medical Journal* 8, no. 1 (1852): 196.

51 Samuel Cartwright, “Cannan Identified with the Ethiopian,” *Southern Quarterly Review* 2, no. 4 (October 1842): 328.

52 Patrice Pinell, “The Genesis of the Medical Field: France, 1795-1870,” *Revue Française de Sociologie* 52 (2011): 121.

53 Sean Quinlan, “Hereditry, Reproduction, and Perfectability in Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, 1789-1815,” *Endeavor* 34, no. 4 (December 2010): 143.

54 Cartwright, 321.

Enlightenment philosopher Voltaire, who claimed that Black people were “not capable of paying much attention... and do not appear to be made...for the advantages” of modern society.⁵⁵ Cartwright professed his new conviction in polygenism, claiming that “the differences in organization” between white and Black people “are so evident... that in Paris, we found the savants denying the common origins of man.”⁵⁶ Cartwright was “cordially received by the medical faculty of the principal [European] cities” based on an appreciation for his autopsies on Black corpses to evaluate diseases.⁵⁷ Encouraged by this transatlantic exchange of ideas, Cartwright returned to the U.S. to disseminate his own theories of scientific racism.

Upon returning, the Louisiana State Medical Convention tasked Cartwright in the mid-1840s to investigate alleged diseases unique to Black slaves.⁵⁸ Cartwright’s racially motivated studies led to his conception of “drapetomania.” He articulated this theory through his 1851 paper, “Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race,” that was published in widely read pro-slavery Southern journals like the *Southern Medical Reports* and *DeBow’s Review*.⁵⁹ Cartwright conceived drapetomania, or “Free Negro Insanity,” as a mental illness that caused Black slaves to run away from their white masters. Cartwright claimed that drapetomania fostered “mental alienation” in Black slaves, provoking them to experience mental schisms that falsely convinced them of their equality.⁶⁰ To quell this “rascality,” Cartwright claimed to Southern slave owners that “with the advantage of proper medical advice... this troublesome practice of running away, that many negroes have, can be almost

entirely prevented.”⁶¹ Such advice included whipping slaves with broad leather straps.⁶² Through these methods, Cartwright claimed that slave owners could compel Black slaves to return to their natural position as subservient laborers. Any attempt by slaveowners to “oppose the Diety’s will, by trying to make the Negro anything else than ‘the submissive knee-bender’... by putting [white slaveowners] on an equality with the Negro” would result in slaves running away based on their delusional belief in their equality.⁶³ Cartwright conceived Black existence as a disease, and he asserted that this disease needed to be counteracted with violence to force Black slaves to adhere to God’s will.

Cartwright’s theories that incorporated European scientific racist ideas profoundly influenced Confederate political thought and policy. Cartwright was directly embraced by Confederate leaders, including Confederate President Jefferson Davis, who saw Cartwright as a leading intellectual aiding the Confederacy’s cause. After reading Cartwright’s “Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race,” Davis started corresponding with Cartwright from the late 1840s through the Civil War.⁶⁴ In their letters, both bonded over their shared belief in the virtues of slavery and their opposition to naturalization proposals seeking to make slaves American citizens amidst fallout over the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.⁶⁵ Cartwright’s friendship with Davis became so strong that in 1861, Davis introduced Cartwright to Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston and told Johnston that “as a physician [Cartwright] holds the first place in

55 Voltaire, *Essai Sur Les Moeurs Et L’esprit Des Nations* (Paris: Werden & Lequien, 1756), 84.

56 Cartwright, “Cannan Identified with the Ethiopian,” 328.

57 “Dr. Cartwright,” *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* 19, no. 3 (November 1866): 347.

58 James Guillory, “The Pro-Slavery Arguments of Dr. Samuel A. Cartwright,” *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 9, no. 3 (1968): 212.

59 Willoughby, “Running Away from Drapetomania: Samuel A. Cartwright, Medicine, and Race in the Antebellum South,” 593.

60 Samuel Cartwright, “Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race,” *DeBow’s Review* 11, no. 3 (1851): 331 - 333.

61 Cartwright, 331.

62 Samuel Cartwright, “Remarks on Dysentery Among Negroes,” *New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal* 11 (September 1854): 155.

63 Cartwright, “Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race,” 331 - 333.

64 Willoughby, “Running Away from Drapetomania: Samuel A. Cartwright, Medicine, and Race in the Antebellum South,” 613.

65 “Samuel A. Cartwright and Family Papers: Series 1, Professional Papers, 1826 - 1858,” Louisiana State University Libraries Special Collections, Mss. 2471, 2499, 1826 - 1874, 5.

my estimation.”⁶⁶ Through his relationships with Confederate elites, Cartwright cemented himself as a reliable resource who provided “empirical” findings to Confederate leaders to defend slavery.

Cartwright’s scientific racist ideas also sparked the formation of a Southern medical movement that further supported the Confederacy’s defense of slavery. Cartwright became a leader of the “state’s rights medicine” movement, which framed Southern medicine as distinct from Northern medicine. Northern physicians, as Cartwright argued, distorted Enlightenment-era practices by encouraging doctors to treat patients as equal descendents of a common ancestor.⁶⁷ Northern medicine was thus inadequate to remedy the diseases of Black slaves that were theorized to be indicative of their subhuman status.⁶⁸ Based on these beliefs, Southern race theorists like Cartwright formed the movement to popularize racist ideas among Southern elites against Northern intellectuals, who were viewed as supporters for dangerous egalitarian ideas.

Southern physicians’ advocacy for “state’s rights medicine” directly influenced Confederate policy. The movement appealed to slave owners, who desired to exploit the most labor possible out of their slaves.⁶⁹ Confederate leaders like Davis cited the ideas of “state’s rights” physicians in policies that incentivized slave owners to increase labor efficiency based, in part, on Cartwright’s recommendations to treat drapetomania.⁷⁰ Cartwright’s exchange of ideas with European race theorists and his incorporation of their theories into his work provided the foundation upon which he was able to influence Confederate policy and

political thought.

Henry Hotze: Race Theorist and Confederate Propagandist

As the Confederacy waged war against the Union, Confederate leaders ordered Henry Hotze to promote scientific racist theories in Europe to increase public support among European elites and the general public for the Confederacy’s cause. After immigrating from Switzerland in 1855 and naturalizing as an American citizen in 1856, Hotze established himself as a prominent proponent of scientific racism in the United States.⁷¹ Hotze constantly read Morton and Cartwright’s work, and he expressed his support for their theories.⁷² Josiah Nott, a “state’s rights” physiologist revered by Southern academics, heard of Hotze through acquaintances and decided to meet Hotze near his residence in Mobile, Alabama in 1854. Upon meeting Hotze, Nott “suggested [that Hotze’s] knowledge of foreign languages” and his belief in scientific racism would be useful in translating the work of European race theorists into English.⁷³ He agreed, and they began establishing relationships with European race theorists to distribute and popularize their ideas among Confederate political leaders.

Hotze and Nott’s most important joint endeavor involved their English translation of French aristocrat Arthur de Gobineau’s 1855 work, *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*. Gobineau first promoted scientific racist theories following the French Revolution of 1848 that resulted in the establishment of the French Second Republic. Viewing the Revolution as a subversion of traditional social hierarchy, Gobineau advocated for slavery as a mechanism to achieve social order and suppress egalitarian values.⁷⁴ Gobineau’s anti-egalitarianism culminated in *An Essay*, in which he contended that Black people constituted a separate and intellectually

66 Jefferson Davis to Joseph E. Johnston, September 6, 1861, Box 11, Folder 53, Series 3, Rosemond E. and Emile Kuntz Collection, Tulane University Digital Library Archives, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

67 John Duffy, “The Evolution of American Medical Education, Institutional Histories, and the Medical College of Georgia,” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 71, no. 4 (1987): 623-624.

68 Duffy, 624.

69 Samuel Cartwright, “How to Save the Republic, and the Position of the South in the Union,” *DeBow’s Review* 11, no. 2 (August 1851): 191.

70 Willoughby, “Running Away from Drapetomania: Samuel A. Cartwright, Medicine, and Race in the Antebellum South,” 613.

71 Stephen Oates, “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” *The Historian* 27, no. 2 (February 1965): 133.

72 Robert Bonner, “Slavery, Confederate Diplomacy, and the Racist Mission of Henry Hotze,” *Civil War History* 51, no. 3 (September 2005): 291.

73 Bonner, 291.

74 Michelle Wright, “[Black] Peasants from France: Missing Translations of American Anxieties on Race and the Nation,” *Callaloo* 22, no. 4 (1999): 833.

inferior racial group. Black people were “mere savages” compared to white people, who exhibited a naturally superior ability to build civilizations.⁷⁵ Hotze and Nott read Gobineau’s *An Essay* and decided to correspond with him to express their interest in working with him on the publication of his work. Hotze wrote to Gobineau that he viewed his work as “the light I had sought for so earnestly,” and he vowed to be Gobineau’s “first disciple” in promoting his scientific racist theories throughout the United States.⁷⁶

Hotze and Nott distributed Gobineau’s work in the United States through the mid-1850s and the beginning of the Civil War. As part of the publication process, Hotze wrote an introduction that framed Gobineau’s work within the larger context of American debates over the future of slavery. He wrote that “[when] we contemplate the human family from the... view of the naturalist... the marked dissimilarity of the various [racial] groups” emerges as a driving force of human nature.⁷⁷ Black people demonstrated a uniquely “monstrous stagnation” in their intellectual development,⁷⁸ while white people showcased intellectual progress that proved they were “incontestably and avowedly superior.”⁷⁹ Hotze’s English translation of Gobineau’s *An Essay* became widely read by the Confederacy’s foremost leaders. When the Civil War commenced in 1861, Hotze joined the Confederacy’s Mobile Cadets and traveled through Montgomery, Alabama, where he worked closely with Confederate Secretary of War Leroy Walker and befriended powerful Confederate politicians. One such politician was Davis, who met Hotze in Montgomery and told Hotze he liked his work with Gobineau.⁸⁰ Davis believed that Hotze’s work signified his commitment to promote the Confederate cause for slavery, and he sensed an opportunity to increase

popular support for the Confederacy abroad and pressure European powers to support them. Davis ordered Walker and Confederate Secretary of State Robert Hunter on November 14, 1861 to make Hotze a special agent.⁸¹ Hotze would be using his editorial skills and transatlantic connections to serve as a critical agent for the Confederacy. He would implement a propaganda operation that promoted scientific racism to increase Confederate support in Europe, along with executing other responsibilities like monitoring the progress of arms shipments.⁸²

Hotze arrived at Southampton, England on January 28, 1862 and stationed himself in London to begin his mission.⁸³ Hotze’s first part of his mission required him to network with prominent British political figures, including Lord High Chancellor John Campbell, to generate elite support for the Confederacy. In February 1862, Campbell asked Hotze to prepare a section of a speech he would deliver to Parliament opposing the Union’s blockade of Southern transatlantic trade through the Anaconda Plan.⁸⁴ Hotze succeeded, but he encountered his first challenges with his propaganda operation. As Hotze described, Confederate supporters in Parliament showcased weak “demonstrations for [the Confederacy’s] benefit.”⁸⁵ In contrast, Confederate opponents depicted Southerners as animalistic supporters of slavery because it “grated on [Britons’] national conscience.”⁸⁶ He articulated that although he “can be useful to [the Confederacy’s] cause,” he found it “difficult at times to restrain the expressions of pain... at the gross... and almost brutal indifference with which the great spectacle on the other hemisphere is viewed on this.”⁸⁷ Hotze grew disillusioned with British elites’ reluctance to support the Confederacy,

75 Arthur de Gobineau, *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* (London: William Heinemann, 1853), 133.

76 Henry Hotze to Arthur de Gobineau, January 1, 1856, in *Gobineau’s Rassenwerk*, ed. Ludwig Schemann (Stuttgart: Sr. Srommanns Derlag, 1910), 196.

77 Gobineau, *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, 22.

78 Gobineau, 32.

79 Gobineau, 33.

80 Oates, “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” 134.

81 Oates, 134.

82 Amanda Foreman, *A World on Fire: Britain’s Crucial Role in the American Civil War* (New York: Random House, 2010), 249-251.

83 Oates, “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” 135.

84 Oates, 136.

85 Henry Hotze to Robert Hunter, March 11, 1862, in *King Cotton Diplomacy*, ed. Frank Owsley Jr. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 361.

86 Oates, 361.

87 Oates, 361.

fearing that he would fail to leverage European support to grant the Confederacy international legitimacy.

On February 20, 1862, Hotze ended his disillusionment by initiating the second phase of his mission. Hotze called the editor of the London Post, Liberal British Prime Minister Henry John Temple's official publication, to obtain editorial space to publish an article he wrote that defended Confederate slavery based on his belief in polygenism.⁸⁸ Hotze's article exploded in popularity among British commoners, particularly those in Liberal urban coffee clubs who largely viewed Black people as inferior.⁸⁹ Hotze's newly established popularity helped him expand his propaganda operation. By April 1862, Hotze wrote for the Times, Standard, and Herald in London, the former two being Liberal publications and the latter a Conservative publication.⁹⁰ Hotze also wrote for the Money Market Review, which, as Hotze explained in a letter to Hunter, possessed "great authority among [British] capitalists" who influenced British military appropriations policy.⁹¹ He further gave his wages to staff writers to increase the production and distribution of pro-Confederate articles to British commoners and elites.⁹²

Based on positive feedback from readers, Hotze wrote to Hunter on April 25, 1862 that he wanted to "establish a newspaper devoted to [Confederate] interests" that would be "exclusively under my control" through finances from Confederate leaders.⁹³ On May 1, 1862, Hotze issued the first edition of *The Index*, a 16-page weekly political journal promoting Confederate propaganda that employed scientific racist theories to defend slavery as a righteous institution.⁹⁴ The Index carried news from "leading [Confederate] papers and extracts from Southern speeches, laws, and decrees" to

act as a source for the British press on the Civil War.⁹⁵ As Hotze claims, *The Index* would further strike a tone of moderation to appeal to British politicians of different political parties and act as a "channel through which [Confederate] arguments... can be conveyed... to the [British] Government."⁹⁶

The Index became an instrumental force for Confederate foreign relations with the British government. The journal carried articles that promoted the necessity of defending slavery for the preservation of white supremacy. In terms of policy, these articles specifically advocated for the abolition of the trade blockade that stymied foreign cotton trade with Great Britain. Writers urged the British government to publicly denounce it as an illegal measure against Southern sovereignty and recognize the Confederacy as an independent nation-state.⁹⁷ On an ideological level, *The Index* emphasized purported similarities between British and Southern culture. Staff writers cited Confederate leaders' promotion of scientific racist theories, including polygenism and phrenology, to demonstrate their support for ideas first developed by Enlightenment thinkers.⁹⁸ The Confederacy and Great Britain were framed as ideologically bounded societies that shared common scientific racist beliefs to safeguard white supremacy through slavery.

These articles left a positive impression on British elites. Many Liberal and Conservative leaders in Parliament contacted Hotze to express interest in *The Index*. One such leader was John Arthur Roebuck, a self-declared "independent" Member of Parliament who championed British recognition of the Confederacy. In a September 1862 meeting with Hotze, Roebuck promised him that by the spring of 1863, the British government would recognize the Confederacy as an independent nation due to pressure from Confederate-supporting media outlets like *The Index*.⁹⁹ Hotze's pressure on British elites and the government to support the Confederacy did not go unnoticed by Confederate leaders. Confederate

88 Oates, 138.

89 Oates, 138.

90 Oates, 138.

91 Henry Hotze to Robert Hunter, March 24, 1862, in *King Cotton Diplomacy*, ed. Frank Owsley Jr. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 371.

92 Oates, "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," 139.

93 Henry Hotze to Robert Hunter, March 24, 1862, in *King Cotton Diplomacy*, ed. Frank Owsley Jr. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 400.

94 Oates, "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," 140.

95 Oates, 140.

96 Henry Hotze to Judah Benjamin, November 7, 1862, in "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," ed. Oates, 140.

97 Oates, "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," 142.

98 Oates, 142.

99 Oates, 144.

leaders like Davis complimented Hotze as a “judicious and effective” representative of the Confederacy.¹⁰⁰ Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin was so impressed by Hotze’s propaganda operation that he awarded Hotze a \$30,000 annual salary.¹⁰¹ Hotze’s propaganda operation to “make The Index a worthy representative in journalism of the highest ideal of that Southern civilization which is as yet only in its infancy” continued to expand, reaching the hands and minds of tens of thousands of British elites and commoners.¹⁰²

However, Hotze’s successes in implementing his Confederate propaganda campaign would gradually dissipate. Lincoln’s issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862, which changed the legal status of slaves in the Confederacy from enslaved to free, created political shockwaves throughout Great Britain. Initial reactions to the Proclamation from the Times, along with the Union-supporting Daily News and Morning Star, were contemptuous.¹⁰³ The Times declared that the Proclamation was the “wretched makeshift of a pettifogging lawyer” who undermined natural law upholding the biological inferiority of Black slaves.¹⁰⁴ Hotze was ecstatic, writing to Benjamin that “more than I ever could have accomplished has been done by Mr. Lincoln’s emancipation proclamation, which... appears to have awakened the fears of both Government and people.”¹⁰⁵ The British media, as Hotze claimed, “has been unanimous... in its condemnation” of the Proclamation and generated popular discontent that aided the Confederacy’s efforts to gain European support.¹⁰⁶

As Confederate-allied media published articles opposing the Proclamation, liberal journals generated popular support for the Proclamation, which

sparked the formation of mass liberal movements in Great Britain. Viewing the Proclamation as the liberation from an institution that traumatized the Union and Great Britain, British liberals published articles that appealed to middle-class Britons’ fears of slavery.¹⁰⁷ Such fears stemmed from their experiences with slaveholders’ marginalization of working-class laborers.¹⁰⁸ British liberals paired their publication of widely distributed articles with mass protests meant to convince the British public to support the Proclamation. Through the spring of 1863, hundreds of meetings were organized and led by a diverse liberal coalition of political radicals, women, racial minorities, and middle-class workers.¹⁰⁹ Liberals collaborated with organizations like the London Emancipation Society to send “scores of speakers... to meeting halls across the country to summon British men and women” to support the Proclamation.¹¹⁰ This mobilization of popular liberal discontent ultimately compelled the British government to not intervene for the Confederacy through their potential recognition of Confederate independence.

Hotze’s propaganda operation could not overcome this liberal mobilization of the British public. Outmaneuvered by liberals’ coordinated efforts to distribute anti-Confederate literature, Hotze became resigned to his mission’s inevitable failure. Writing to Benjamin in May 1863, Hotze claimed that Confederate recognition of nationhood by British leaders “is farther off than it was 18 months ago” due to liberals’ successful pressure campaign to vilify Confederates’ belief in scientific racism.¹¹¹ Hotze’s hopelessness was further compounded by Roebuck’s attempt on June 30, 1863 to pass a resolution through Parliament that sought to recognize the Confederacy. Roebuck’s proposal ignited blistering condemnation from Liberal and Conservative lawmakers, who believed that Great Britain would damage its

100 Oates, 143.

101 J.F. Jameson, “The London Expenditures of the Confederate Secret Service,” *American Historical Review* 35, no. 4 (July 1930): 815.

102 Henry Hotze to John Witt, August 11, 1864, in “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” ed. Oates, 141.

103 Oates, “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” 145.

104 Oates, 145.

105 Henry Hotze to Judah Benjamin, January 17, 1863, in “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” ed. Oates, 145-146.

106 Hotze, 145-146.

107 Don Doyle, *The Cause of All Nations: An International History of the American Civil War* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 242-243.

108 Doyle, 242-243.

109 Doyle, 246.

110 Doyle, 246.

111 Henry Hotze to Judah Benjamin, May 9, 1863, in “Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad,” ed. Oates, 147.

reputation if they supported a government opposed to egalitarian principles.¹¹² Roebuck subsequently withdrew the motion, but the damage was done. The Index's popularity declined through the remainder of the Civil War.¹¹³ Confederate defeats at Gettysburg and Vicksburg in 1863 further dissuaded British elites from working with Hotze, who they now largely viewed as a pathetic representative of a lost cause.¹¹⁴ Writing in *The Index*, Hotze sullenly proclaimed that he "lost" the battle of British public opinion.¹¹⁵ Despite all of the political and financial sacrifices he gave to defend slavery abroad, Hotze recognized that his operation had no future, and neither did the Confederacy.

Hotze's propaganda campaign officially ended when *The Index* published its last issue in August 1865, four months after Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox.¹¹⁶ The end of his campaign left Hotze more uncompromising in his belief in scientific racism. Remaining in Europe until his death in 1887, Hotze corresponded with his American friends to warn about what he claimed was an "Africanization of the Union" caused by efforts to make former slaves equal citizens.¹¹⁷ Reiterating his belief in polygenism, Hotze claimed that granting equal citizenship to a separate and unintelligent Black slave class would enable the rise of a "centralized despotism" that undermined white supremacy and God's design for humanity.¹¹⁸ Although unsuccessful, Hotze's propaganda operation critically impacted Confederate foreign relations. Hotze's relationships with British elites enabled him to publish Confederate propaganda through *The Index* that influenced large swaths of the British public. Such propaganda centered around scientific racist theories that pressured the British government to support the Confederacy based on a perceived necessity to defend slavery. Hotze's work served as the culmination of transatlantic exchanges of scientific racist theories that began in the Age

of Enlightenment and shaped Confederate foreign relations through the Civil War.

The Challenges of Transatlantic Exchanges of Scientific Racist Theories

Despite their successes in influencing Confederate political thought and policy, American and European race theorists confronted challenges that inhibited their transatlantic exchange of ideas. Strong public criticism inhibited their efforts to sway public opinion to support slavery. Northern newspapers published articles deriding the scientific racist theories of theorists such as Cartwright. For example, the *Ripley Bee* reprinted a notice in 1854 that Cartwright supported the African slave trade. The *Ripley Bee's* editors panned Cartwright's position as a byproduct of Southern pro-slavery ideology that threatened the political stability of the Union.¹¹⁹ Northern medical reviews further publicly criticized these theories. In a review of Cartwright's paper on dysentery, physician Harty Wooten wrote that Cartwright's claim that Black slaves were more vulnerable to attract diseases than white people was incorrect. Cartwright, according to Wooten, relied on faulty data from politically biased pro-slavery sources that polluted his methodology.¹²⁰ This disagreement from academics and the general public limited the appeal of scientific racist ideas to Southern leaders who used such racism to justify slavery for their political and economic self-interests. Such limitations frustrated their attempts to achieve broad-ranging national consensus that slavery was necessary to maintain a naturally-rooted social order.

These limitations were exacerbated by a lack of organizational capacity that restricted the abilities of race theorists to influence public opinion and policy towards supporting slavery. While Confederate actors united with various European political figures on the necessity to preserve slavery, they lacked the resource capacity needed to operate a successful long-term propaganda operation. After *The Index* launched in 1862 with subsidies from Confederate leaders, Hotze had to rely on funds from personal friends and random financiers he befriended in England to

112 Oates, "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," 148.

113 Oates, 152.

114 Oates, 149.

115 Oates, 149.

116 Oates, 153.

117 Henry Hotze to Benjamin Wood, April 21, 1865, in "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," ed. Oates, 153-154.

118 Hotze, 154-154.

119 Willoughby, "Running Away from Drapetomania: Samuel A. Cartwright, Medicine, and Race in the Antebellum South," 592.

120 Willoughby, 599.

keep his operation afloat.¹²¹ His salary of \$30,000, although extremely high adjusted for inflation, did not adequately cover the expansive responsibilities of his operation. Such responsibilities included compensating The Index's staff writers as full-time workers, paying for the publication and distribution of The Index across hundreds of British towns, covering work-related and personal transportation costs, and subsidizing lobbying efforts in Parliament.¹²² While British liberals were jointly networking and pooling resources to influence public opinion, Hotze had to largely command his propaganda operation by himself with minimal support from Confederate leadership. This lack of coordination arose out of a weak capacity to establish interdependent activist networks, which weakened Confederate efforts to impact British public opinion and policy towards slavery.

However, these limitations did not stop American and European race theorists from affecting public opinion and policy in the short-term. Rather than fragmenting, these theorists united on a commitment to defend slavery that they viewed as rooted in human nature. This commitment persisted even as their efforts encountered significant political challenges and it became clear that they would not achieve their goals. These actors recognized that they needed to exert a sizable impact on public opinion and policy in a limited amount of time. Their successes within this short window of time showcase the importance of transatlantic exchanges of ideas in supporting political efforts that can impact the long-term future of racial equality.

Conclusion

These transatlantic exchanges of ideas between European and American race theorists demonstrate how ideas generated in one part of the world can influence policy in another part of the world. European race theorists' ideas were integrated into the scientific racist ideas of American race theorists. These theorists included Morton and Cartwright, who used such ideas to justify Southern slavery. As the Civil War involved European powers, Confederate propagandists like Hotze led political propaganda operations that utilized racist ideas from European race theorists, including

Gobineau, to promote the Confederacy's defense of slavery abroad. Such propaganda attempted to convince the European public to support the Confederacy based on the perceived necessity of maintaining white supremacy. In totality, scientific racism functioned as a critical linkage between Europe and the United States that shaped Confederate political thought and policy, thereby impacting the direction of the Civil War.

The impacts of this transatlantic exchange of scientific racist ideas were not confined to the Civil War. The prominence of such theories directly contributed to the violent state of American racial relations through Reconstruction and Jim Crow. After Reconstruction ended with the Compromise of 1877 that ordered the withdrawal of federal troops from the South, Southern state governments escalated enforcement of systemically racist laws against African Americans. Jim Crow laws included the imposition of grandfather clauses and literacy tests that were implemented to marginalize African American political representation.¹²³ Despite violating the 14th and 15th Amendments that guaranteed African American equal protection and voting rights, Southern leaders justified Jim Crow by citing scientific racist ideas. White supremacist political leaders argued that African Americans possessed lower intelligence and were naturally more susceptible to diseases, thereby rendering them incapable of exerting agency over important political decisions.¹²⁴ Jim Crow policies rooted in scientific racism ultimately exacerbated racial inequalities that are still observed today.

Combined with the ascendancy of Social Darwinism in the late-nineteenth century, Jim Crow further brutalized African Americans based on interconnecting racist beliefs. Social Darwinists asserted that wealthy ruling elites possessed superior levels of intelligence that enabled them to govern over poorer and unintelligent underclasses based on a pseudoscientific interpretation of Charles

121 Oates, "Henry Hotze: Confederate Agent Abroad," 140.

122 Oates, 141-142.

123 Brad Epperly et al., "Rule by Violence, Rule by Law: Lynching, Jim Crow, and the Continuing Evolution of Voter Suppression in the U.S.," *Perspectives on Politics* 18, no. 3 (September 2020): 761-762.

124 Andrea Patterson, "Germs and Jim Crow: The Impact of Microbiology on Public Health Policies in Progressive Era American South," *Journal of the History of Biology* 42, no. 3 (Fall 2009): 533.

Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.¹²⁵ Southern leaders integrated Social Darwinist ideology to justify Jim Crow dehumanization. These leaders claimed that intelligent and wealthy white rulers deserved to govern based on Darwinian natural selection, thereby making them the most fit to rule over unintelligent African Americans.¹²⁶ This intersectionality of Jim Crow racism demonstrates that scientific racist ideas never truly vanish. As previous attempts to defend racial hierarchy end, new efforts emerge that refashion previous pseudoscientific theories to justify the oppression of marginalized groups. Thus, this transatlantic exchange of scientific racist ideas showcases the historical continuity of racist beliefs that unite actors across borders to uphold white supremacy into modern times.

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125 Rutledge Dennis, "Social Darwinism, Scientific Racism, and the Metaphysics of Race," *The Journal of Negro Education* 64, no. 3 (Summer 1995): 244.

126 Dennis, 247.

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