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Racial Stereotypes

Being something other than white carries no weight. Laws and practices make race wshat it is. Immigrants were desired workers but also seen as a threat. They were able to do the work for cheap labor but were viewed as lazy. Scientific race theory claims people were perceived as being separate races. There was a hierarchy of European whites.

America is supposed to be the “melting pot” but never included people of color. Whiteness was the key to citizenship. To be white was to gain full rewards of American citizenship. Different states had different guidelines to being black or white. In one state you could be considered black and then another one white depending on the fraction of black or white you had in you. The courts however were very contradicting with their laws and how they wanted people to be proven in the white race. Whiteness was whatever they said it was. In one case, there was a man so distraught over the court’s decision of his citizenship, he took his own life. He felt humiliated.

Levittown, PA was a community for G.I’s and their wives. This community was to create equal opportunity for homeownership. Equal opportunity was not given to people of color. When people of color did move into the neighborhood, property value decreased because white people were selling and leaving their homes because they did not want black neighbors. Integrated neighborhoods were seen as unstable.