

Alien, Part One

If you were Chinese, you had (mostly) been excluded since 1882.
If you were Japanese, things were complex after 1907–8.

If you were anything else, you were not excluded as such in 1916

although there were many who thought you should be
if you were the eastern or southern European
that you increasingly were: Russian / Polish
Jewish Italian Polish Slavic Greek . . .

—and you could have been excluded as a convict
lunatic beggar pauper polygamist anarchist
prostitute epileptic contract laborer mental defective
bearer of loathsome / contagious disease . . . : a growing list.

If you came after 1892, you probably (90%) arrived on Ellis Island,
where in 1906 you were still likely (99%) to be admitted,

but where, if you came in 1914, you might have been given
an intelligence test by Henry Goddard, the results of which
were inconclusive (and your chances of being excluded small)
but in 1916 you might (10%) have been marked *X mental defect*.

If you came in 1917, the new Immigration Act could have excluded
you for 33 reasons, and for the first time would have done so
if you could not pass a literacy test (for which Madison Grant
had lobbied) or if you came from an extensive *Asiatic Barred Zone*.

If you were admitted, you might have taken a train
from New York to southern Illinois, where you probably
would have worked in a mine, especially if you were Italian.

Fitter Families

Yea, I have a goodly heritage my mother
said her sister said the Bible said
and it does and they did we do but

that was also the motto of Fitter Families
for Future Firesides, contests featured
at state fairs using anthropometric

measurements medical dental vision
exams intelligence tests personality
evaluations of families some

with several generations as well
as eugenic family histories. The forms
had a blank for *race* (which could be *Nordic*)

and charts were posted with literacy rates
FOR NATIVE-BORN FOREIGN-BORN NEGROES
as well as birth rates for NATIVE-BORN ALIEN

There were also displays with flashing lights

This light flashes every 15 seconds

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Every 15 seconds \$100 of your money
goes for the care of persons with bad
heredity such as the insane, feeble-
minded, criminals & other defectives.

—and medals awarded to winners, which read:

YEA, I HAVE A GOODLY HERITAGE

Fit / Fit

healthy hearty worthy made
to fight explore rule a good
fit for a fit the facts
to be fit as befitting

un- diseased defective dragging
down might have a right
here in the yard to be tied so can't
have more of them select

fit into a square a round
of weeping anger and starts
to be stopped before they throw
a poor poor and if the shoe