

Darwinism in America

Students Name

Institutional Name

Date of Submission

Darwinism in America

Darwinism and the evolution theory played a key role in America and mainly shaping its societal structure, policies, and way of life in the mid-eighteenth and nineteenth century (Villamar, 2016). The theory, which ascertained that people just like animals and plants evolved making an improved breed in the following generation, was used to categorize people and classify them into social classes. The theory also embraced capitalism in the American society and eventually led to racial discrimination in that some races were asserted and treated as superior, “better, wiser and important” as compared to others and particularly from southern and eastern Europe (Winlow, 2009). The theory also played a key role in setting a gap and policies discriminative to the immigrants since it asserted that immigrants were less successful, as compared to the host and policies, for instance, demanding their castration were implemented.

Similarly, social Darwinism similarly misapplied the assertions of Darwin in mistreating immigrants by applying the discriminative approach in political, economic, and social dimensions. The social Darwinism encouraged survival for the strongest and as such both host and immigrants were subjected to discrimination. Due to the growth of such perceptions, the poor had minimal help from the government and society (Villamar, 2016). Moreover, the misinterpretation and misuse of the theory implied and segregated society in two categories – socially and economically fit and for the unfit. The developed policies significantly impacted the immigrants seeking to gain from businesses and benefit from the established social structures in America (Winlow, 2009). The eugenics as well in the twentieth century applied the misinterpreted theory and sought to enhance human health by supporting good health and intelligent people. The group started sterilizing members of society deemed weak-minded particularly the immigrants, women, and the minorities.

Furthermore, the whites in America perceived the immigrants as less-civilized and as such less-deserving in society. Due to such perceptions and social considerations, immigrants were treated as “lesser-human beings living at the mercy of whites” and the natives saw it as their role to bring civilization to them particularly to the non-English speaking immigrants (Winlow, 2009). Together, social Darwinism and the eugenics proposed and implemented laws and policies that enhanced racism, discrimination, and growth of poverty in society (Villamar, 2016). Collectively, immigrants had difficult times in America and struggled to fit in American society.

On the other hand, the Fundamentalist Christians strongly opposed the Darwinism theory in various ways. The group of Christians objectively fought to protect the teachings of the Bible and the knowledge shared among Christians mainly on the origin of man (Deutchman, 2008). The Christian fraternity also opposed the discrimination encouraged by Darwinism, supported justice for all, and advocated that all men were equal and deserved equal rights and freedom in society. The fundamentalists also asserted that the theory did not declare God as a creator and as such, it purported atheism in America. The group of Christians as such proudly fought against the teaching of the ideas of the evolution and its application in the social, economic, and political doctrines in society (Deutchman, 2008). Its leaders also started parallel teachings to emphasize the theological teachings in an attempt to respond to the evolution theory, which was growing fast across Europe.

References

- Deutchman, I. E. (2008). Fundamentalist Christians, Raunch Culture, and Post-industrial Capitalism. *The Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, 19(1), 4-4.
doi:10.3138/jrpc.19.1.004
- Villamar, A. A. (2016). Darwinism in Latin America: Reception and Introduction. *Social and Ecological Interactions in the Galapagos Islands Darwin, Darwinism, and Conservation in the Galapagos Islands*, 91-107. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-34052-4_6
- Winlow, H. (2009). Darwinism (and Social Darwinism). *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, 4-11. doi:10.1016/b978-008044910-4.00675-1