

damali ayo playback

the golliwog

in case you didn't know...

The Golliwog is one of the major anti-Black caricatures in the United States. Golliwogs are grotesque creatures, with very dark, often jet black skin, large white-rimmed eyes, red or white clown lips, and wild, frizzy hair. The Golliwog began life in 1895 in London as a story book character created by Florence Kate Upton. He was a doll caricature of American black faced minstrels -- in effect, the caricature of a caricature. He was ugly. He was often drawn with paws instead of hands and feet. He had a coal black face, thick lips, wide eyes, and a mass of long unruly hair. He was a cross between a dwarf-sized Black minstrel and an animal. The appearance was distorted and frightening. Later Golliwogs were often unkind, mean-spirited, and even more visually hideous.

He became enormously popular, featured in hundreds more children's books, pins, dolls, and becoming a trademark of the Robertson's toy making company. In the 1960s one of the most noted regiments in the British Army wore a Robertson's golliwog brooch for each Arab they had killed.

Golliwog is a racial slur in Germany, England, Ireland, Greece, and Australia. Derived from the word Golliwog, *wog* is an English slur against dark-skinned people. As a racial epithet, it is comparable to *nigger* or *spic*, though its usage extends beyond any single ethnic group. The association of *wog* with racial minorities is also seen with the word *wog-box*, which is slang for a large portable music box, the European counterpart of the *ghetto blaster*. Golliwog is also a common name for black pets, especially dogs, in European countries -- much as *nigger* was once popular as a pet name. Golliwog was also the original name of the rock band Credence Clearwater Revival. They sometimes performed the song "Brown-Eyed Girl" (not the Van Morrison tune), dressed in white afros.

In 1995, Golliwog collectibles, which always had a loyal following, again boomed on the secondary market. This popularity continues today and is evidenced by numerous eBay and Yahoo internet auctions and the presence of several international Golliwog organizations. They argue that the Golliwog is just a doll and fun to collect. New versions of golliwogs can be found on internet auctions, and stores, even in such versions as the golliwog mouse-pad or golliwog latte mug.

Of this, the Black Trinidadian writer, Darcus Howe, said "[White] people never give up."

source: *the jim crow museum of racist memorabilia*

<http://www.ferris.edu/news/jimcrow/golliwog/>

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note: golliwog images and dolls used in this show
were gathered from the internet. none were made by the artist.