

(From Portraits of Pride II, Appendix B, p. 263)

1854

People v. Hall rules that Chinese cannot give testimony in court. The California Supreme Court decided that a state law prohibiting “Blacks, Mulattos, or Indians” from testifying for or against a white criminal defendant should be interpreted to include Chinese. In the court’s view, an opposite conclusion would produce an “anomalous spectacle.” After all, the court reasoned, Chinese were “a race of people whom nature has marked as inferior, and who are incapable of progress or intellectual development beyond a certain point ... between whom and ourselves nature has placed an impassable difference.”

http://www.cetel.org/1854_hall.html