



Cross-Cultural Diversity

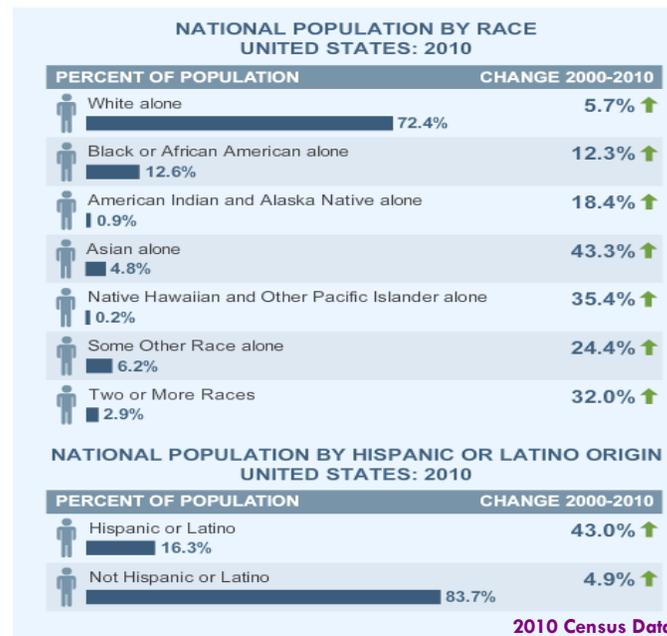
This information package is compiled by the IRC for Kristen F. Bauer (Consul General Surabaya) Outreach Program

Diversity in the Twenty-First Century

The United States is often referred to as the “Great Melting Pot,” a metaphor that connotes the blending of many cultures, languages and religions to form a single national identity. But this metaphor fails to capture the slow, complex and frequently turbulent process by which immigrants of diverse backgrounds and beliefs join U.S. society, even as they transform it.

Debate — even rancor — over immigration is neither new nor uncommon in U.S. history. Immigration is both an important part of our national identity and a source of social and political tension. Today, as during earlier periods of mass immigration to the United States, integrating newcomers into the American mainstream is a dynamic process that requires adaptation and change not only on the part of immigrants, but by receiving communities, public institutions and private entities.

As columnist Gregory Rodriguez recently



pointed out, the number of Americans who checked both "black" and "white" on their census forms grew by 134% from 2000 to 2010. (Among non-Hispanics, about 1.6 million reported being both black and white, but not any other race; among Hispanics, about 654,000 did so.) Rodriguez lamented the president's decision not to include himself in more than one racial category.

By 2020, children of color will comprise nearly half

of the school-aged population. As the ethnic composition bring their religions from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. They also bring diverse language, values, and ideas that are reshaping U.S. society.

The culture and the society of the United States are dynamic. They are in a continuous state of change.

Sources:

- <http://goo.gl/saN0N>
- <http://goo.gl/rNAZs>
- <http://goo.gl/Y8aVB>

Information Package

July 2011

U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S. Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region.

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Asian Pacific American Heritage Month a Celebration of Diversity

By Louise Fenner; America.gov staff writer



Performers lead a 75-foot dragon during the 7th annual Colorado Dragon Boat Festival near Denver. (© AP Images)

Washington — “I feel very fortunate to have two sets of cultures to enjoy — American and Vietnamese. Rather than divide my identity in half, these two sets of experiences double my understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the world around me.”

Writing these words on his website, *Asian Nation*, Vietnamese-born C.N. Le adds that he sees Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, which is celebrated in the United States every May, as an opportunity “to share in the accomplishments of all Asian Americans before me.” Le is a professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Lee further says, Asian Americans include the well-known people as well as the ones who are not famous but whose accomplishments are no less impressive and inspiring”, such as Chinese workers on the transcontinental railroad, the Japanese Americans interned during World War II, and “everyday Asian immigrant families who work tirelessly to improve their lives and build a future for their children.”

President Obama praised the contributions of Asian Americans to every facet of life in the United States — business, academia, sports, the arts, science and technology -- in a May 1, 2009, proclamation.

He noted that “Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have endured and overcome hardship and heartache,” including “unjust working conditions, prejudice, and discrimination — yet

they excelled.”

Obama also pointed out that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders “have defended the United States from threats at home and abroad, serving our Nation with valor.”

[...] Throughout the United States, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated with community festivals, traditional foods, parades and cultural performances. Many schools and government offices hold educational and cultural events.

Asians are the third largest minority group — and the second fastest-growing group — in the United States, according to the Census Bureau, which predicts that Asians will increase from 5 percent to 9 percent of the total population by 2050. Approximately 15.2 million foreign-born and native-born citizens — or 5 percent of the U.S. population — identify themselves as Asian alone or in combination with other races

[...] More Asian Americans claim Chinese heritage than any other background, followed by Filipinos, Indians, Vietnamese, Koreans and Japanese.

In addition to proclaiming special heritage months, the U.S. government celebrates America’s diversity through the “**Outstanding Americans by Choice**” awards, which have been presented since 2006 by the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) to recognize the professional accomplishments and civic participation of naturalized U.S. citizens. About a dozen Asian Americans have been named Outstanding Americans by Choice

[...]Two Asian Americans have been specially recognized by the Ellis Island Foundation with the Peopling of America Award, which honors immigrants who have made a major contribution to the American experience. . . .

The contributions of Asian Americans officially were recognized in 1978 when a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific American Heritage Week. President George H.W. Bush expanded it to a month in 1990, and two years later Congress made it official with a law designating May as Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month.

The Library of Congress states that the month of May was chosen because the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States on May 7, 1843; May also marks the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

A Growing Benefit to American Society

C.N. Le, creator of the website *Asian Nation*, points out that Asians are “one of the fastest-growing racial/ethnic group (in terms of percentage increase) in the U.S.” More Asians are moving out of traditional enclaves in big cities such as Los Angeles and New York and settling in suburbs and smaller cities in the South and Midwest, he states “This introduces more Americans to elements of Asian and Asian-American culture,” said Le, “They can see firsthand that these residents and small businesses are part of the community and are helping strengthen their communities.”

“We are just as American as anyone else,” he said

Sources:

- <http://goo.gl/LgySS>
- <http://goo.gl/289V1>

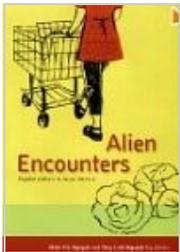
Related sources:

Facts of Feature: Asian/Pacific Heritage Month: <http://goo.gl/BNnnRD>

Diversity in the U.S: Offering Place for Everyone: <http://goo.gl/LGOu4>



Books and e-Publications

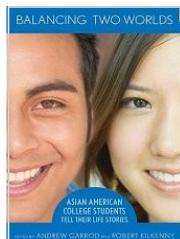


Alien Encounters: Popular Culture in Asian America/Mimi Thi Nguyen and Thyu Linh Nguyen Tu (editors). Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-822339229

Alien Encounters showcases innovative directions in Asian American cultural studies. In essays exploring topics ranging from pulp fiction to multimedia art to import-car subcultures, contributors analyze Asian Americans' interactions with popular culture as both creators and consumers. Written by a new generation of cultural critics, these essays reflect post-1965 Asian America; the contributors pay nuanced attention to issues of gender, sexuality, transnationality, and citizenship, and they unabashedly take pleasure in pop culture.

Asian America: Forming New Communities, Expanding Boundaries/ Huping Ling (editor). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0813544878

This book looks at post-1960s Asian American communities in the United States and Canada. From Chinese Americans in Chicagoland to Vietnamese Americans in Orange County. Presenting groundbreaking perspective, this book revises worn assumptions and examines current challenges Asian American communities face in the twenty-first century.

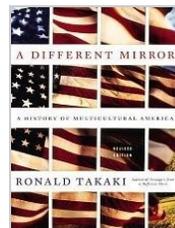


Balancing Two Worlds: Asian American College Students Tell Their Life Stories/Andrew Garrod and Robert Kilkenny (editors). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007. ISBN: 978

-0801473845.

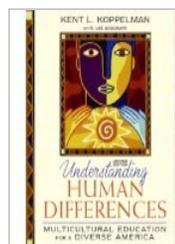
Balancing Two Worlds highlights themes surrounding the creation of

Asian American identity. This book contains fourteen first-person narratives by Asian American college students. Their engaging accounts details the students' very personal struggles with issues of assimilation, gender, religion, sexuality, family conflicts, educational stereotypes and being labeled the "model minority".



A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America/ Ronald Takaki. New York, NY: Back Bay Books 2008. ISBN: 9780316022361

The author traces the economic and political history of Indians, African Americans, Mexicans, Japanese, Chinese, Irish, and Jewish people in America, with considerable attention given to instances and consequences of racism. The narrative is laced with short quotations, cameos of personal experiences, and excerpts from folk music and literature



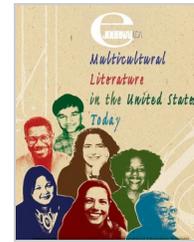
Understanding Human Differences: Multicultural Education for a Diverse America / Kent Koppelman and Lee Goodhart. Boston, MA: Pearson Education Inc, 2007.

ISBN: 978-0205531042

In this book, he author investigates three converging elements in his examination of human differences: individual attitudes and behaviors, cultural expectations, and institutional policies and practices. This examination provides the basis for the conceptual organization of the book.

Above books are available at the IRC of the U.S. Embassy Jakarta.

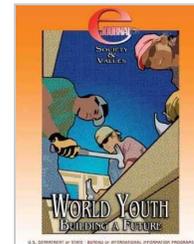
Check more of IRC collections titles at: <http://69.63.217.22/UI0086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>



eJournal USA: Multicultural Literature in the United States Today/America.gov, February 2009

This edition of eJournal USA focuses on distinguished American

writers from various ethnic backgrounds who add immeasurably to mutual understanding and appreciation through tales of their native lands and their experiences as Americans. Accessible online at: <http://goo.gl/N20Jh>



eJournal USA: World Youth Building A Future/America.gov, July 2007.

This *eJournal USA* opens a window on the real life experiences of young people who have left home and

family to participate in an international exchange program. Young American adults offer first-person accounts of their discoveries in educational programs abroad, and exchange students from various other countries share their insights about adjusting to life and family customs in the United States. Accessible online at: <http://goo.gl/iXv5l>

PHOTO GALLERY

Perspective on Identity

It is nearly impossible to describe a "typical" American. Comprising people from many races, ethnicities and religions, the United States has a "patchwork heritage," as described by President Barack Obama in his Inaugural Address. The freedom to express one's ethnic, racial or social identity, and still be considered wholly American, is a common ideal grounded in the belief that people should be able to define themselves as they choose, and respect the freedom of others to do the same. Read more at: <http://goo.gl/EdzwV>

A Patchwork Culture: Identity in America



The United States is a patchwork of diverse ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

The growing diversity of the U.S. population shapes how Americans identify themselves.

Most scholars, writers, politicians and others agree that with the possible exception of the American Indian, to be American is to be, genealogically speaking, from somewhere else in the world. America.gov explores how choosing individual identity is an ever-shifting process.

♣ Identity in America: Are Perspectives Shifting?

Multicultural, post-ethnic, post-racial. While these descriptors are debated, most agree that with the possible exception of the American Indian, to be American is to be, genealogically

speaking, from somewhere else. During February, America.gov is exploring how the ever-increasing diversity of the U.S. population is affecting the way Americans view themselves.

Related full article at: <http://goo.gl/oBCUy>

♣ Are We So Different?

Is race real or a recent human invention? Is it about biology or culture? These questions are addressed by RACE: Are We So Different?, a traveling exhibit and related Web site on the history of the idea of race, the science of human variation, and the experience of living with race and racism. Read full article at: <http://goo.gl/Nv5sE>

♣ Blogging Identity

Satirical blogs such as Stuff White People Like and more analytical Web sites like That Minority Thing are shaping the way people talk about race, view the role of race in their culture, and communicate about their identities. The participatory nature of blogging has changed the Internet, one

author says.

Read full article at: <http://goo.gl/C5GpK>

♣ Growing up Multicultural

Crystal Grace Ofori is proud to be a Ghanaian American, but it wasn't always that way. Iranian-American Gelareh Asayesh faced these same challenges.

Related complete article at: <http://goo.gl/Afjce>

♣ Rebecca Walker carves unique identity

After her parents divorced, author Rebecca Walker grew up alternating between white Jewish and nonwhite mixed-race cultures. While the ongoing process of shifting identities was difficult, Walker explains in an interview with America.gov how the multicultural experience developed a multifaceted person.

Read full interview at: <http://goo.gl/pGHhZ>

Source: <http://goo.gl/oTWUC>



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The IRC collection includes reference collection, a periodicals section, and access to extensive online commercial-databases.

For details on reference and periodical collections, please check our online catalog at <http://69.63.217.22/U10086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>.

For more IRC information products, are available online at: <http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/infoproduct.html>

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