



The South Asian Americans (The New Americans)

Karen Leonard

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Immigrants from South Asian countries are among the fastest growing segment of our population. This work, designed for students and interested readers, provides the first in-depth examination of recent South Asian immigrant groups—their history and background, current facts, comparative cultures, and contributions to contemporary American life. Groups discussed include Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Nepalis, and Afghans. The topics covered include patterns of immigration, adaptation to American life and work, cultural traditions, religious traditions, women's roles, the family, adolescence, and dating and marriage. Controversial questions are examined: Does the American political economy welcome or exploit South Asian immigrants? Are American and South Asian values compatible? Leonard shows how the American social, religious, and cultural landscape looks to these immigrants and the contributions they make to it, and she outlines the experiences and views of the various South Asian groups. Statistics and tables provide information on migration, population, income, and employment. Biographical profiles of noted South Asian Americans, a glossary of terms, and selected maps and photos complete the text.

The opening chapter introduces the reader to South Asian history, culture, and politics, material on which the rest of the book draws because of its continuing relevance to South Asians settled in the United States. Leonard provides a fascinating look at the early South Asian immigrant Punjabi Mexican American community whose second and third generations are grappling with the issue of being Mexican, Hindu, and American. A comparative examination of immigrant groups from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Afghanistan illuminates the similarities and differences of their rich cultural and religious traditions, the social fabric of their communities, and how these immigrants have adapted to American life. Leonard looks closely at the diversity of cultural traditions—music, dance, poetry, foods, fashion, yoga, fine arts, entertainment, and literature—and how these traditions have changed in the United States. Keeping the family together is important to these immigrants. Leonard examines family issues, second generation identities, adolescence, making marriages, and wedding traditions. This work provides a wealth of information for students and interested readers to help them understand South Asian immigrant life, culture, and contributions to American life.

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