



A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America

By Ronald Takaki

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A dramatic retelling of our nation's past by today's preeminent multiculturalism scholar, Ronald Takaki, this book examines America's history in "a different mirror"-from the perspective of the minority peoples themselves. Beginning with the colonization of the "New World" and ending with the Los Angeles riots of 1992, this book recounts the history of America in the voices of the non-Anglo peoples of the United States-Native Americans, African Americans, Jews, Irish Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and others-groups who helped create this country's rich mosaic culture. In this significant work of scholarship, Professor Takaki grapples with the raw truth of American history and examines the ultimate question of what it means to be an American.

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A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America By Ronald Takaki Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #571167 in Books
- Published on: 1993-12-20
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.75" w x 5.50" l, 1.06 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 508 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This vibrant ethnographic history of America was on PW 's "best books of 1993" list.
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From School Library Journal

YA-Takaki 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. Well-known occurrences, such as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, the Trail of Tears, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Japanese internment are included. Students may be surprised by some of the revelations, but will recognize a constant thread of rampant racism. The author concludes with a summary of today's changing economic climate and offers Rodney King's challenge to all of us to try to get along. Students will find this overview to be an accessible, cogent jumping-off place for American history and political science assignments, plus a guide to the myriad other sources identified in the notes.

Barbara Hawkins, Oakton High School, Fairfax, VA
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From Library Journal

In his new work, Takaki (*Strangers from a Different Shore* , LJ 7/89; *Iron Cages* , LJ 3/1/80) calls for "a more inclusive and accurate history of all the peoples of America." But the book is limited to accounts of Native Americans, Africans, Irish, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, and Eastern European Jews, prefaced with a discussion of English settlers in the 17th century. Even within these limits, this book is not the "story of multidimensional ethnic interaction" that the author desires. Beyond victimization, few common themes emerge. Still, the book is useful, notwithstanding the author's sometimes questionable generalizations, oversimplifications, and fuzzy chronology. Not even seasoned historians will be knowledgeable about all the groups included. Takaki fails to show us how to reunite American history, but he provides in one volume a very readable version of some lesser-known parts. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 2/15/93.

- *Robert W. Frizzell, Hendrix Coll. Lib. , Conway, Ark.*
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