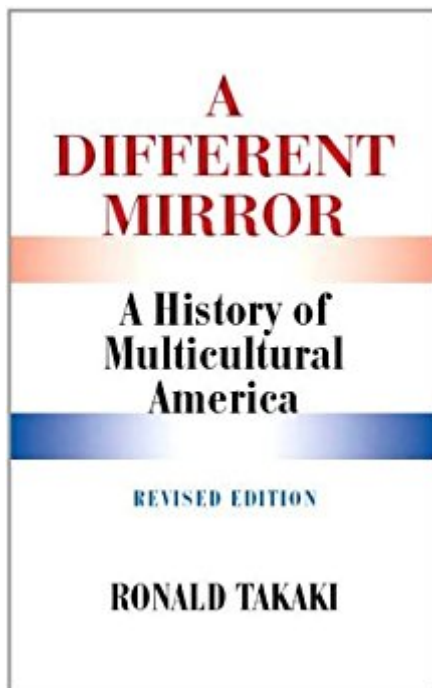


The book was found

A Different Mirror



Synopsis

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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an excellent multi-cultural account of American history. Takaki focuses on the perspectives of many different cultural groups, providing several interesting, unique and sometimes sobering stories of America's history. After reading this book, you may find yourself feeling cheated by your grade school history lessons. This work is fair, honest, and *VERY* well documented, with endnote

references on almost every page. I don't believe Takaki has a score to settle with this book. Nor do I believe he is racist or *overly* slanted, but I can see how some might feel that way. His focus on nontraditional perspectives seems to me an effort to balance the scale a bit by emphasizing the viewpoints, stories and facts that have been under-emphasized in the past. Perspectives include those of the Irish, Japanese, blacks, Native Americans, and others as various times throughout American history. To me, Takaki does a very good job of putting the reader in the mindset of the people at a certain place and time. Stories in this book are not sugar-coated, which may at times be unsettling, but the facts and research that back the stories up are indisputable. Takaki uses many direct quotes and indirect references to underscore his points. His accounts are credible, believable and educational. This book should be required reading in all high schools, but should not be considered a replacement for traditional American history texts. It is more a book about cultural perspectives in history than about historical facts. As an example, Takaki will devote many pages to very specific events in history to catch a specific cultural perspective, while completely glazing over many larger and arguably more historically significant timeframes.

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