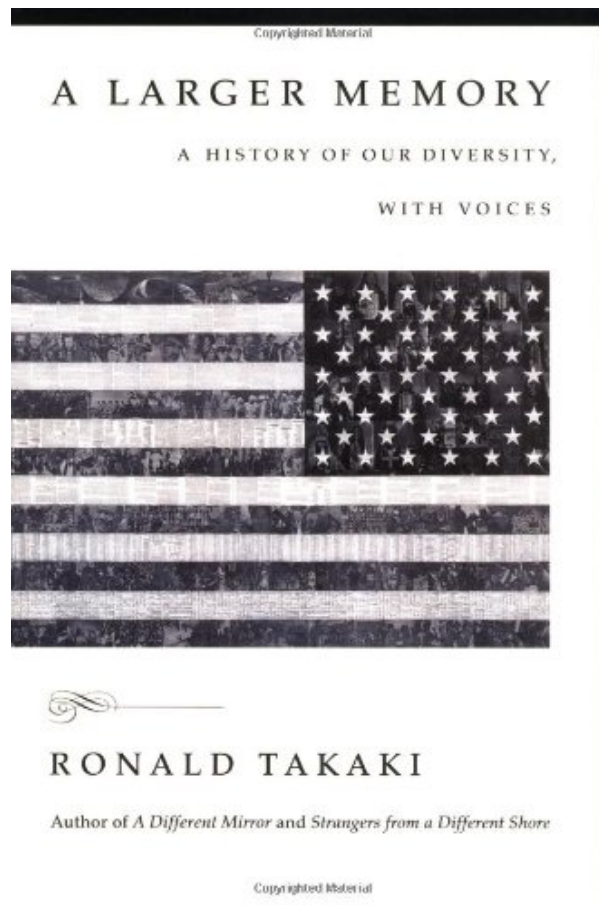


# A LARGER MEMORY: A HISTORY OF OUR DIVERSITY, WITH VOICES BY RONALD TAKAKI



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# A LARGER MEMORY

A HISTORY OF OUR DIVERSITY,

WITH VOICES



RONALD TAKAKI

*Author of A Different Mirror and Strangers from a Different Shore*

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From Publishers Weekly

Through this collection of essays, oral histories and primary source material, Takaki challenges what he describes as "the master narrative of American history, the ethnocentric story told from the perspective of the English colonists and their descendants" by illuminating the contributions that America's numerous ethnic groups have made to the nation's history. One of the country's premier multiculturalist scholars, Takaki (*A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*) eschews the angry, jargon-ridden ideological polemics that make up the usual artillery of the curriculum wars, opting instead to let America's diverse peoples speak for themselves in excerpts that are both informative and moving. While a few pieces are by familiar figures such as Frederick Douglass and Black Elk, most are by "ordinary" people—African, Latino, Native American, Irish, Chinese, Jewish, Japanese, Polish, Mexican, Italian, Caribbean, Indian, Puerto Rican, Korean—who recount their struggles and aspirations eloquently and with dignity. Takaki introduces themes throughout, such as how immigrant groups fought to keep America true to its own promises of justice and equality. For example, an Irish American who became a radical labor activist recalls a teacher who "drilled us so thoroughly in... the Bill of Rights, that I have been defending it ever since." Rather than balkanize America, scholarship of this caliber serves to bring Americans together in a greater appreciation of the diverse origins of our common heritage. Editor, Jennifer Josephy; agent, Rick Balkin.

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From Booklist

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#### About the Author

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A sweeping yet intimate history of the diverse individuals who, together, make up America. Ronald Takaki uses letters, diaries & oral histories to share their stories. Workers, immigrants, shopkeepers, women, children & others, their lives often separated by ethnic borders, speak side by side as Takaki frames their voices with his own text.

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#### Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

GREAT!

By CaliReader

This is an excellent book. Seeing the American experience through the eyes of different cultures was a very eye opening experience. This is an excellent cultural education. The prejudice experienced by new immigrants and those of us who will always "look" different--non-white, can be experienced by everyone to take the narrow out of our mindedness.

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Why I give this book a 4?

By A Customer

Ronald Takaki focuses on his book about Asian-American history through Asian and non-Asian perspectives. It is often controversial because readers would think that this is reverse racism towards White-Americans but NO! One must remember Asian have been in the U.S. for 150 years and out of these 150 year, around 120 years the government has institutionalized racism towards the Asians so 4/5 of Asian-American history is about racism. Even the past 30 years after the civil rights movements there is still resentment towards Asian-Americans. So if one was to write about Asian-American history, racism could not be obliterated unless you would like to omit 80+% of the history to appeal to the everyone.

The fact is racism is ugly but we must confront it and solve the problem. This is a message to all American and all earthlings no matter your background. The reason for this is that well a majority of the population may mistreat the minority of that particular population but a individual from the majority would become a minority when he/she travels elsewhere. Anyone may be mistreated and it is still happening today everywhere. I believe though this book still has space for some minor improvement and I'm certain Mr. Takaki and his staff, pioneers in this area, is working on it. Mr. Takaki's books are actually suggested as reading material in many Universities which I find convincing enough as a book to pickup from the book store or from amazon and read on your spare time if you have a open-mind and want to know more about Asian-American history. Takaki's main focus is Asian-American history but his materials include history of many minority groups such as Irish, African-American, Jews, etc. I look forward to new material from Takaki.

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Just a response to another review.

By C. Krall

One of the reviews below claimed that there was a theme of "white man is evil" in the book, and I really have to disagree with that. Although it's easy for alternative histories to often fall into that theme, Takaki

does well to separate himself from that pitfall. Rather than replacing WASP history with equally exclusive anti-WASP history, his goal is to incorporate and acknowledge EVERYONE involved in the history of America. I personally think that his explanations of what "a larger memory" truly means are excellent. In addition to all of that, hearing history through the actual voices of people involved was a great idea that I'm sorry to say I haven't ever run into before (although I admit my exposure is somewhat limited).

Overall, I'd recommend this book simply for its vision, if nothing else.

See all 11 customer reviews...



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