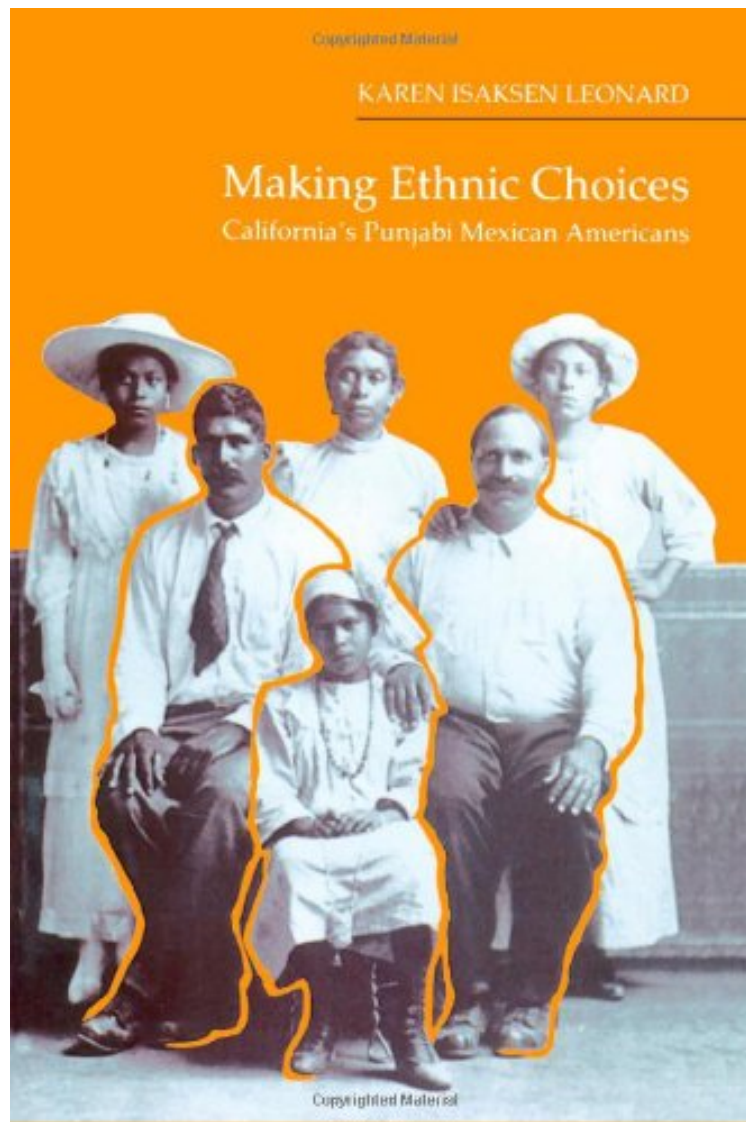


[Download] Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans (Asian American History Cultu)

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Karen Leonard

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Karen Leonard : Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans (Asian American History Cultu) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans (Asian American History Cultu):

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By wayne s. good book good price 2 of 2 people found the

following review helpful. AwesomeBy psychrox80Being that I myself am half Mexican and half East Indian (Punjabi), I wanted to explore my cultures and roots a bit more. It was great to see there are others just like me that go back to the early 1900s in the United States. Good read and historically accurate; to my knowledge. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A scholarly book with a powerful storyBy William J. HartProfessor Karen Leonard's study of one of California's more interesting multi-ethnic communities, founded at the turn of the 20th century by Hindu, Moslem and Sikh men from India's Punjab region and their Mexican-American wives, is a well-researched look into how different immigrant cultures meld to become American, while retaining some ethnic traditions. Leonard also examines the effects of discriminatory U.S. and California laws on the community. As it happens, anti-miscegenation laws were influential in forming many of the original marriages, as those with like racial classifications married like.An earlier reviewer of Leonard's book claims that the author was unaware of the difference between Hindus, Moslems, and Sikhs--and this reviewer thereby questions her scholarship. The claim is simply not true. Leonard makes clear that the lumping of all three Indian groups under the category "Hindu" was accomplished by the prevailing "Anglo" community in California. The term became so widely used that the Indian men finally acquiesced and referred to themselves in that way, whatever their religion. But they were not confused, and neither is Dr. Leonard. All this is explained clearly in her study.For a unique and eye-opening view of Americanization under the most trying of circumstances, buy and read this book.

This is a study of the flexibility of ethnic identity. In the early twentieth century, men from India's Punjab province came to California to work on the land. The new immigrants had few chances to marry. There were very few marriageable Indian women, and miscegenation laws and racial prejudice limited their ability to find white Americans. Discovering an unexpected compatibility, Punjabis married women of Mexican descent, and these alliances inspired others as the men introduced their bachelor friends to the sisters and friends of their wives. These biethnic families developed an identity as "Hindus" but also as Americans. In this work, Karen Isaksen Leonard has related theories linking state policies and ethnicity to those applied at the level of marriage and family life. Using written sources and numerous interviews, she invokes gender, generation, class, religion, language, and the dramatic political changes of the 1940s in South Asia and the United States to show how individual and group perceptions of ethnic identity have changed among Punjabi Mexican Americans in rural California. The intermarriages featured conflict as well as respect and love, and the Punjabi-Mexican families formed a unique community in many ways. As she inquired about the childhood experiences of people with names like Maria Jesusita Singh, Leonard discovered the swift communication network of the "Mexican Hindus," the dynamics between domineering Indian men, and the strong kinship ties and compadrazgo relationships of their Hispanic wives. She describes the cultural inventiveness of the children of these unions, who claimed the "Hindu" identity despite their incomplete inheritance of Punjabi culture. She also examines the problematic kinship between recent South Asian immigrants and the Punjabi Mexican Americans. Assembling life stories as well as collective biographies of localized groups, Leonard demonstrates that ethnicity is both persistent and flexible, that ethnic identities a

"[A] thoroughly original study that greatly expands our knowledge of how ethnic identities are formed. Leonard writes clearly and her inclusion of the voices of the Punjabi-Mexicans lends humor and depth to the history. This insightful study will be of interest to all scholars concerned with immigration and ethnicity and the history of California."The Journal of Asian Studies