



Diversity in Diaspora: Hmong Americans in the Twenty-First Century

Mark Edward Pfeifer

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This anthology wrestles with Hmong Americans' inclusion into and contributions to Asian American studies, as well as to American history and culture and refugee, immigrant, and diasporic trajectories. It negotiates both Hmong American political and cultural citizenship, meticulously rewriting the established view of the Hmong as "new" Asian neighbors—an approach articulated, Hollywood style, in Clint Eastwood's film *Gran Torino*. The collection boldly moves Hmong American studies away from its usual groove of refugee recapitulation that entrenches Hmong Americans points-of-origin and acculturation studies rather than propelling the field into other exciting academic avenues.

Following a summary of more than three decades' of Hmong American experience and a demographic overview, chapters investigate the causes of and solutions to socioeconomic immobility in the Hmong American community and political and civic activism, including Hmong American electoral participation and its affects on policymaking. The influence of Hmong culture on young men is examined, followed by profiles of female Hmong leaders who discuss the challenges they face and interviews with aging Hmong Americans. A section on arts and literature looks at the continuing relevance of oral tradition to Hmong Americans' successful navigation in the diaspora, similarities between rap and *rwv txhiaj* (unrehearsed, sung poetry), and Kao Kalia Yang's memoir, *The Latehomecomer*. The final chapter addresses the lay of the land in Hmong American studies, constituting a comprehensive literature review.

Diversity in Diaspora showcases the desire to shape new contours of Hmong American studies as Hmong American scholars themselves address new issues. It represents an essential step in carving out space for Hmong Americans as primary actors in their own right and in placing Hmong American studies within the purview of Asian American studies.

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