Leisure Patterns among Asian Americans

Objectives
- Understand the historical context surrounding the immigration of Asians into the U.S.
- Understand core cultural values of Asians groups
- Understand some general patterns of leisure among Asians (particularly Chinese-Americans)

Asian American… Defined
- Person of Asian ancestry who was born in or as an immigrant to the U.S.
- In the U.S., this term has widely supplanted (replaced) the term "oriental" which was popularly used before the 1990s to describe East Asian peoples regardless of nationality, upbringing, or origin.
Demographic Trends

- Since the 1980s, Asians have been the second fastest growing group in the U.S., including Texas.
- According to the 2010 Census, 14.7 million Americans considered themselves Asian or Asian in combination with another race.
- The Asian population in the United States grew 43% from 2000 to 2010. This is the highest percentage growth among all racial groups.

Major Asian Groups

- India 19%
- China 22%
- Philippines, 18%
- Japan 7%
- Korea 10%
- Vietnam 11%
- Other 13%

Demographics (cont.)

- The U.S. Asian/Pacific Islander population includes many groups that differ in language, culture, and length of time they have been in the U.S.
- Some of the Asian groups, such as the Chinese and Japanese, have been here for several generations.
- Others, such as the Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians, are recent immigrants.
Geographic Distribution

- More than half of the Asian/Pacific Islander population lives in the western United States.
- California has the largest number of residents who consider themselves Asian.
- Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese Americans tend to cluster geographically in California and New York; although large populations have emerged in a handful of states, including Texas.
- What is the only state where Asian/Pacific Islanders are a numerical majority?
  - Hawaii—58 percent of Hawaiians are Asians/Pacific Islanders.

Employment and Income

- The median income of Asian/Pacific Islander households for 2009 reached $60,000, higher than any other racial group.
- Varies markedly by country of origin.
- Asians/Pacific Islanders had a higher rate of employed persons in managerial and professional specialty positions than the total population (40% to 30%).
- Only 3.9% of Asians/Pacific Islanders were unemployed in 1999 (compared to the national total of 4.4%).

Political History of Asians in U.S.

- 1924 Immigration (National Origins) Act
  - Set limits on number of immigrants from any one country.
  - Curtail immigration from Asia.
  - Made Asian immigrant ineligible for citizenship.
  - Goal was to prevent any major changes in racial/ethnic composition of the U.S.
  - Stayed in effect until the 1960s.
Political History of Asians in U.S.

- 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act (better known as the McCarran-Walter Act)
  - Made all races eligible for naturalization, thus eliminating race as a bar to immigration
  - Set strict quotas on the number of people from Asian countries allowed to immigrate into the U.S.
  - Gave preference to people with education, skills, or relatives living in the U.S.
  - Allowed government to deport immigrants or naturalized citizens engaged in subversive activities

Stereotypes

- Homogeneous physically and culturally
- Thought of as "foreigners" regardless of where they are born and extent of assimilation
- Considered a "model" minority—image is they have succeeded and been unhindered by discrimination
- Regarded as fanatical—willing to die and do not value life

Political History of Asians in U.S.

- 1965 Immigration and Nationality Services Act (Hart-Cellar Act)
  - Abolished the national-origins quota system
  - Created an annual quota equal to that of Europeans (particularly England, Ireland, and Germany)
  - Act let to huge increase in immigration from Asian countries
  - Continued to give preference to relatives of American citizens
Cultural values

- Generally collectivistic
- Respect authority
- Value social harmony
- Committed to familial responsibilities
- Strive in education
- Disciplined work ethic

Patterns of Assimilation

- High assimilation, low ethnic identity
- High assimilation, high ethnic identity
- Low assimilation, low ethnic identity
- Low assimilation, high ethnic identity

Rank Order of Perceived Recreation Barriers (Chinese Youth)

- Lack of English proficiency: 68%
- Lack of opportunity: 44%
- Lack of partner: 28%
- Lack of money: 37%
- Site or information unknown: 31%
- Shyness/ lack confidence: 27%
- Family obligations: 20%

Percent
Leisure Patterns among Asian Americans

- Selective acculturation
  - Some Asian activities
  - Some American activities
- Content of activity is important
  - Content determines cultural function or relevance
  - Leisure activities can serve multiple functions
  - Ethnic boundary maintenance may occur
  - Assimilation is not necessarily an outcome of cultural contact

Questions?