cities, especially Miami, Florida, which they have transformed into a major international business and commercial center with ties throughout Latin America. Nevertheless, in 1995 Cuban family income was still only three-fourths (76 percent) of non-Hispanic white income, and the Cuban poverty rate was 16 percent compared with the overall white rate of 11 percent (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1995).

The most recent influx of Cubans—those who left Cuba during the so-called Freedom Flotilla or Mariel Boatlift of 1980—numbered about 125,000. A substantial proportion of this recent migration was people of working-class and lower-class origins (Davis, Haub, and Willette 1983:23).

Asian Americans

Asians are an extremely diverse category, differing in linguistic, cultural, historical, national, and class backgrounds. Historically the Chinese, the Japanese, and, later, the Filipinos, have been the most prominent Asian groups; most Koreans, Asian Indians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians are more recent arrivals. Compared with the many millions of Europeans who have migrated to the United States, Asian immigration has, until recently, been modest. At no time until the past two decades did the numbers of Asian immigrants ever approximate those from Europe. For example, Chinese immigration reached its peak during the decade from 1873 to 1882, when 161,000 Chinese entered the country (a period during which nearly half a million Irish and nearly a million German immigrants were received). Peak Japanese immigration occurred during the decade between 1900 and 1909, when 139,000 entered (at the same time that nearly 2 million immigrants from Italy and more than 1.5 million from what later became the Soviet Union were admitted). In contrast, between 1840 and 1920 there were thirty-one different years when the number of immigrants from a single European country alone exceeded 150,000. As Figure 3 on page 98 reveals, the total number of immigrants from Asia, in general, and Japan and China, in particular, have been insubstantial when considered in the context of American immigration as a whole. What is significant, however, is the response that the presence of Asian immigrants generated, and the subsequent adaptation of Asian peoples to discrimination in the United States, which we will discuss later.

However, partly as a result of changes in American immigration laws, which before 1965 had virtually excluded them, Asians are today proportionately the nation’s fastest-growing racial category. Since 1970, Asians have constituted more than one-third (35 percent) of all legal immigrants, and the Asian population of the United States has increased by 648 percent, compared with increases by Hispanics of 219 percent, by American Indians of 179 percent, by African Americans of 50 percent, and by European Americans of 24 percent. By 1998 Asians numbered 10.2 million, which represented 3.8 percent of the American people. The rapid growth of the Asian American population is expected to continue during the twenty-first century, reaching over 40 million (or 10 percent of the population) by 2050 (Day 1993). Although almost all states have experienced substantial increases in Asian residents during the last quarter of the twentieth century, almost 40 percent of Asian Americans live in California, where they make up 10 percent of the state’s population (Barringer 1991; U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service 1997; U.S. Bureau of the Census online 1997).
Early Immigrants: Chinese and Japanese

The earliest modern Asian immigrants were the Chinese, who migrated to North America beginning in the 1840s. During the next four decades more than 200,000 Chinese immigrants, primarily unskilled laborers, arrived. Filling a need for labor created by the economic development of the West in the mid-nineteenth century (especially in mining and in building the transcontinental railroad), the Chinese were initially welcomed. As their numbers increased, however, the Chinese became perceived as an economic threat to native labor, and racist opposition to them mounted. As a consequence the Chinese were subjected to various forms of harassment, mob violence, and discriminatory legislation, including laws designed specifically to harass them. Finally, in response to anti-Chinese agitation in California, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which was the first federal law to restrict immigration of a specific nationality to the United States. In contrast, more than forty years were to pass before substantial restrictions were placed on European immigration (Hsu 1971; Lyman 1974; Nee and Nee 1973).

The anti-Asian sentiment that pervaded the hysteria over Chinese immigration was revived when the Japanese immigrated in the early twentieth century. Although the Japanese represented an extremely small proportion of the population of both California and the nation as a whole, their presence generated intense nativist hostility. Like the Chinese before them, the Japanese were the object of legislation designed to harass and intimidate them. In 1906 the San Francisco Board of Education precipitated an international incident when it attempted to place all Japanese children, native and foreign-born, in a segregated “Oriental” school in Chinatown. Immediate protests from the Japanese ambassador ultimately led the school board to rescind its order; but the Board of Education’s segregation efforts in reality were stymied only because President Theodore Roosevelt was able in 1907 to negotiate the so-called Gentleman’s Agreement with Japan. Under this agreement, the American government agreed to end discrimination against Japanese living in the United States, and Japan pledged to grant visas to the United States only to family members of Japanese citizens residing there.

Even this accommodation failed to satisfy exclusionists, and in 1913 the California legislature enacted an alien land law barring the Japanese, who had become successful farmers, from owning agricultural land. As sentiment for the general restriction of immigration increased during the first three decades of the twentieth century, further limitations were placed on Asian immigration; in 1924 the Johnson-Reed Act prohibited completely all Asian immigration, and the provisions of this legislation remained virtually intact (with some minor adjustments during the 1940s and 1950s) until the antidiscriminatory Immigration Act of 1965 went into effect in the late 1960s.

This anti-Asian agitation, to which the early Chinese and Japanese immigrants especially were subjected, drew support from the same “scientific” sources that provided the intellectual respectability for racist thought described earlier. Ultimately, this fear of the “yellow peril” contributed to the forcible evacuation and relocation of nearly 120,000 Japanese Americans—more than two-thirds of them American citizens—by the federal government during World War II (Thomas and Nishimura 1969; Grodzins 1966; Bosworth 1967; Kitano 1969; Daniels 1972, 1993). In Article 11, “Asian Pacific Americans,” Don Mar and Marlene Kim contextualize Asian migration and adaptation
to the United States in terms of broad structural changes in American society and the global economy.

Despite early antipathy toward the Chinese and Japanese, and the particular hostility toward the Japanese during World War II, both groups have made substantial improvements in socioeconomic status. Their achievements have contributed substantially to the overall socioeconomic status of Asian Americans. By 1990, 37 percent of the Asian population over age twenty-five had completed at least four years of college, which was nearly double the figure (22 percent) for non-Hispanic whites (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992). So extraordinary have Asian educational attainments been that charges have been raised that many of the nation's most prestigious universities have placed limits on the numbers of Asian students they would admit (Mathews 1987).

As a consequence of their relatively high educational attainments, a disproportionate percentage of Japanese and Chinese are found in professional occupational categories. By the 1980s the income levels of American-born and immigrant Asians were not significantly different from those of whites who had comparable skills, and by 1990 actually slightly exceeded those of whites; in 1990 more than one-third (35 percent) of Asian American households had incomes of $50,000 or more, compared with 26 percent of non-Hispanic white households. By 1995 Asian median family income was 109 percent of white family income (compared with 61 percent for black and 58 percent for Hispanic families) (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1997 online). As we will explore more fully in Parts 3 and 4, these educational and economic attainments have contributed to the stereotype of Asian Americans as "model minorities."

The public perception of Asian educational and economic success, however, masks continued discrimination against them (Kuo 1995). Asians generally earn less than do non-Hispanic whites of the same age and educational characteristics, and studies have demonstrated that Asians gain 21 percent less than do non-Hispanic whites from each year of schooling. Moreover, the relatively high levels of Asian household income may reflect a greater number of family household members who work (O'Hare and Felt 1991). Finally, focusing on overall income and educational attainments obscures substantial differences among Asian groups. Although Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans have incomes above those of whites, Filipinos, Asian Indians, and Vietnamese earn less. Reflecting this fact, during the 1980s the poverty rate for Asians actually increased, and by 1995 it was 12.4 percent, nearly double the rate (6.4 percent) for non-Hispanic whites (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 1988; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1996, vii).

Later Immigrants: Filipinos, Koreans, Indochinese, and Indians

As the data in Figure 3 on page 98 indicate, the numbers of several Asian groups—especially Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, Indochinese, and Asian Indians—have recently increased dramatically. With the exception of the Chinese, whose presence in the United States was firmly established in the nineteenth century, these groups have emerged primarily since passage of the 1965 Immigration Reform Act.
Like Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands were acquired by the United States from Spain in 1898 after the Spanish-American War, and the country has been economically dependent on the United States throughout the twentieth century, even after it gained its political independence in 1946. Because the Philippines was considered a territory of the United States, Filipinos were not initially subject to the immigration restrictions placed on other Asian groups. As residents of a U.S. possession, Filipinos were not included in the provisions of the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act that excluded immigration from elsewhere in Asia. Thus, when other Asian immigration was halted, Filipino laborers replaced the Chinese and Japanese as agricultural workers in California and Hawaii, and they also worked in the Alaskan salmon fisheries. However, in 1935, in the midst of the Great Depression, Filipino immigration was restricted as well. An annual quota of 50 Filipinos was established, and it was "liberalized" to 100 in 1946, when the Philippines was granted full political independence. Thus Filipino immigration between 1935 and 1965, when the Immigration Act eliminated national quotas, was negligible.

In 1960 Filipinos numbered only 175,000, a substantial portion of whom lived in Hawaii. The great preponderance of Filipino immigration to the United States, therefore, has come since 1965. The 1970 census recorded 343,000 Filipinos. Their numbers more than doubled, to 775,000 during the 1970s and nearly doubled again during the 1980s, recording a total of 1.4 million in 1990 (see Table 1). However, because Filipinos, unlike other recent Asian immigrants, have not established identifiable ethnic communities, they have tended to be invisible, and their status as the second-largest Asian group in the United States today may therefore come as a surprise to many people. Like many other recent Asian immigrant groups, Filipino immigrants today have much higher educational levels than previous Filipino immigrants, and they have included high percentages of professional and technical workers, especially physicians and nurses. Despite these qualifications, Filipinos are much more likely than whites to work in occupations below their educational levels (Takaki 1989:434-436).

Koreans are also a relatively recent ethnic group in American society. Although a small number of Koreans, primarily agricultural laborers who migrated to Hawaii, were recorded in the census as early as 1910, as late as 1950 there were still fewer than 10,000 in the United States. A small portion of the increase since 1950 resulted from marriages of Koreans to members of the American armed forces stationed in Korea during and after the Korean War and from the adoption of Korean orphans.

However, most of the dramatic increase in Korean Americans—nearly 800,000 in 1990—has occurred since the 1965 Immigration Act went into effect in 1968. Reflecting their relatively recent arrival, in 1980 nearly seven in ten Koreans (69.3 percent) had arrived in the previous decade (Xenos et al. 1987:256). Reflecting the post-Korean War modernization of South Korea, Koreans, like most other recent Asian immigrants, have had high educational attainments—for example, in 1980 more than 93 percent of Koreans had completed high school (Xenos 1987:270). Moreover, Koreans are more likely than the white population to be found in the two most prestigious and best paid occupational categories: executive, administrative, and managerial positions and the professions (Xenos et al. 1987). In contrast to the invisibility of the Filipinos, Korean communities have recently become very visible in several American cities, most notably New York City and Los Angeles. One of the most distinctive features of these communities has been the prominence of Korean small business
enterprises, a phenomenon that is discussed in Part 3. Utilizing ethnic resources such as the Kye, or rotating credit association, and capital accumulated in Korea, they have been especially prominent as proprietors of greengroceries, fish retail businesses, and dry cleaning establishments [Kim 1981, 1988; Light and Bonacich 1988; Takaki 1989:436-445].

The migration of Asian Indians to the United States began as early as the 1880s, when Hawaii's sugar planters recruited Indian workers to supply their labor needs. During the last decade of the nineteenth and the first two decades of the twentieth century, small numbers of Indians—primarily male sojourners who worked in the railroad and lumber industries and in agriculture—immigrated to the U.S. mainland. Although these early immigrants were called "Hindus" by Americans, they included Muslims and Sikhs as well. Although Caucasian, they were included in the anti-Asian hysteria directed against the Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans and the subsequent legislation restricting Asian immigration. By the end of World War II, the Asian-Indian population numbered only 1,500 [Takaki 1989]. Most Asian Indians in the United States today, therefore, are products of the second wave of Indian migration begun after 1968. The 1980 census found 362,000 Indians, and this number increased to 815,000 by 1990 [see Table 1]. Unlike earlier Indian immigrants, who were unskilled, this second wave has overwhelmingly been comprised of highly educated professionals. For example, 1980 census data revealed that nearly 90 percent of all Asian Indians over the age of twenty-five had completed high school, and two-thirds had completed college, in contrast to two-thirds of the total U.S. population who had completed high school and only one-sixth who had completed college (Bouvier and Gardner 1986:22).

Peoples from Indochina, the country's most recent arrivals, represent a diversity of ethnic groups from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Most Indochinese have been refugees who have immigrated since the fall of Saigon in 1975. In 1990 they collectively totaled about 1 million, approximately two-thirds of whom are Vietnamese (Bouvier and Agresta 1987:292). It is anticipated that, because of the continuing social, political, and economic upheavals in southeast Asia, these numbers will continue to be reinforced in the near future. Many of the earliest Vietnamese immigrants were highly educated and possessed marketable technical skills. Later arrivals, including most Laotians, Cambodians, and Hmong have had fewer such resources and no established ethnic enclave to provide economic and social support. Consequently, their adjustment to American society has been much more difficult than that of many other recent Asian immigrants.

The recent increase of immigration from the Third World—especially from Latin America and Asia—has contributed substantially to some of the most dramatic changes in the ethnic composition of the United States in its history. Today more than one-quarter of all Americans are of Native American, African, Hispanic, or Asian descent. By the year 2020—approximately one generation from now—nearly one-third of the nation will be nonwhite [Quality Education for Minorities Project 1990]. Any effort to comprehend both the short-term and long-term implications of these changes in the ethnic composition of American society must consider at least three basic factors: (1) recent changes in global political and economic structures; (2) structural changes in the American economy; and (3) the patterns of ethnic and racial relations that have