

Sample Lesson 33: South Asian Americans in the United States

South Asian American Studies

Time: 45 Minutes

Essential Questions

- How does history shape present-day attitudes towards South Asian Americans?
- What are the challenges faced by immigrants (and their children and grandchildren)?
- How do we make our society more inclusive?

Lesson Objectives (Students will be able to...):

- define key terms related to bullying and xenophobia;
- understand the historical migration of South Asians to the United States; and
- explore instances of discrimination and xenophobia at the individual, community and policy-level.

Materials

1. Handout on "Who are South Asian Americans?" (one page, one copy per student)
2. Glossary Handout (one page, one copy per student)
3. Printouts of Images (11 pages, one image per group)

4. Short Timeline of South Asian Americans in the US handout (two pages, one copy for each student)
5. Chart paper with a timeline from 1870s [to](#) the present (this can also be written on a blackboard or white board as long as it's large enough for the images to be posted).
6. Post-its and pens/markers

Main Activity (30 minutes)

1. Make sure that a timeline from the 1850s to the present is drawn (or a clothesline can be hung with dates dangling and clothespins for students to attach their images) somewhere in the room with room for students to hang/stick their images on.
2. Divide students into 11 groups (ideally of no more than 2–3 students per group).
3. Distribute the Timeline of South Asian Americans in the US (one per student) and the images (one per group).
4. Ask students to discuss their image and utilize any terms from the glossary that apply to the example and situation given. Students can apply post-its with keywords that apply to their historical image on the bottom of the page or if using a clothesline, on the back of the printed image.
5. After students have discussed their image, have them look at the timeline of South Asian Americans in the US and decide where on the timeline their image goes.
6. Once all images are lined up, have students read out chronologically the historical timeline of events and examine the images. [Variations: students can

line up with their images and read out chronologically. Students can do a silent gallery walk to read about the images and look at the historical timeline.]

Discussion/Closing (15 minutes)

1. Pose the question: What did you learn in today's lesson that you didn't know before?
2. What things can lead to a rise in xenophobia (historically or in the present)?
3. How can tolerance be promoted?

Homework:

Ask students to investigate their migration stories using the worksheet enclosed.

1885

A memento of the Dean's reception, held October 10, 1885; Photograph of Anandabai Joshee, Kei Okami, and Tabat M. Islambooly, students from the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania taken in 1885 (left). Gurubai Karmarker (from India) graduated from Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1892 (right). (1885;1892) From Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia, PA.

With international ships and missionary societies, people from India began visiting the United States as early as the late 1700s. In the late 1800s, international students from India attended the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, such as the women pictured above.

Image #1 courtesy of the Legacy Center Archives, Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia. "Students posing for photo," photo# ahc1_003

Image #2 courtesy of the Legacy Center Archives, Drexel University College of Medicine, Philadelphia. "Gurubai Karmarker," photo# ahc_1520

1912

The first Gurudwara (Sikh [house of worship](#)~~Temple~~) in the United States was established in 1912 in Stockton, California. Immigrants from [South Asia](#)~~India~~, usually men and generally from the region of Punjab, came to the United States to study, work on the Pacific & Eastern Railroad as construction workers, in lumberyards, or in agriculture. By 1910, 5,000 men had migrated to the West Coast of the United States from colonial India.

Many early immigrants were not able to bring family members to the United States with them, and few women were allowed to migrate, so many migrants inter-married with other groups, such as European Americans, Mexican Americans, or other Asian Americans. The PBS film, *Roots in the Sand*, documents the history of this community.

"Exterior photograph of the Stockton Gurdwara." January 1916. *The Hindusthanee Student*. Courtesy of South Asian American Digital Archive. (<http://www.saadigitalarchive.org/item/20121224X1186>).

1917

In February 1917, during World War I, the US Congress passed the **Immigration Act of 1917** (also known as the **Asiatic Barred Zone Act**). Although President Woodrow Wilson previously vetoed it in 1916, the congressional majority overrode the President's veto. The act added people originating from the Asiatic Barred Zone (see above) to the list of people who were considered "undesirable" for immigration to the US; the list also included: "homosexuals", "idiots", "feeble-minded persons", "criminals", "epileptics", "insane persons", "alcoholics," "professional beggars", all persons "mentally or physically defective", "polygamists," and "anarchists."

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 had barred Chinese from entering the US, and the 1917 legislation expanded the categories to the entire Asian region. The rising “nativism” and “xenophobia” in the US led to the passage of the Act in prohibiting immigration of certain groups. Congress repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 and the Luce-Cellar Act of 1946 ended discrimination against Asian Indians and Filipinos, who were accorded the right to naturalization, allowed a quota of 100 immigrants per year. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, known as the McCarran-Walter Act allowed other Asian groups (Japanese, Korean, and others) to become naturalized US citizens.

Accessed from:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Asiatic_Barred_Zone.png

1918

Bhagat Singh Thind at Camp Lewis. Photograph dated November 18, 1918, of Bhagat Singh Thind with his battalion at Camp Lewis, Washington. His unit was called Washington Company No. 2, Development Battalion No. 1, 166th Depot Brigade. From the South Asian American Digital Archive, donated by David Thind.

Bhagat Singh Thind (who lived from 1892 to 1967) was born in Punjab, [South Asia in pre-partition India](#) and came to the US to study in 1913. He was enlisted to join the US military during World War I (in 1918). He was first granted US citizenship because of his military service in 1918, but it was revoked four days later because citizenship was only available at the time for “free white men.” Later, Thind brought a case to the Supreme Court (in 1923) arguing the immigrants from India to the US should be allowed to be naturalized citizens. The Supreme Court disagreed since only commonly understood “Caucasian” immigrants were eligible to become citizens. Thind finally became a citizen in 1936. He went on to study spirituality and lecture extensively in the US.

"Bhagat Singh at Camp Lewis" November 18, 1918. Courtesy of South Asian American Digital Archive. With Permission from Donor David Thind.

(<http://www.saadigitalarchive.org/item/20110802;264>)

1937

"East India Store Section," Honolulu Advertiser, Hawaii (1937), From South Asian American Digital Archive, from the collection of the Watumull Family, donated by Indru Watumull

Description: This four-page advertisement insert from the June 3, 1937, edition of the *Honolulu Advertiser*, marking the opening of the Watumull Building on 1162 Fort Street. Includes several short articles about G.J. Watumull and J. Watumull, advertisements for the stores, products, and boutiques housed in the building, as well as photographs of the East India Store interior and its employees.

"East India Store Section," Honolulu Advertiser (1937). Courtesy of South Asian American Digital Archive.

With Permission from Watumull Family.

(<http://www.saadigitalarchive.org/item/20110722;249>)

1961

Congressional Coffee Hour at the White House with President John F. Kennedy, May 18, 1961.

From Left to Right: Congressmen **Dalip Singh Saund** (California), Congressman Harold C. Ostertag (New York); Congressman James A. Haley (Florida); President John F. Kennedy; Congressman Frank W. Boykin (Alabama); Congressman Harold T. Johnson (California); Congressman John W. Byrnes (Wisconsin). Photographer Robert Knudsen. From J.F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum.

Dalip Singh Saund (who lived from 1899 to 1973) was the first Asian-American member of the US House of Representatives (Congress). He served as the Congressman from the 29th District of California from 1957;1963. He was born in Punjab, [South Asia in pre-partition India](#) while it was under British rule and migrated to the United States (via Ellis Island) in 1920 and pursued his Masters and Doctoral degrees at the University of California, Berkeley. He campaigned for the rights of South Asian immigrants in the United States. After the Luce-Celler Act was signed into law by then-President Harry Truman in 1946 (allowing for people from India and the Philippines to become naturalized US citizens), Saund could become a US citizen, and later, successfully ran for national office.

Photograph No. KNX17834, "President John F. Kennedy at Congressional Coffee Hour," May 18, 1961. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

1965

President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the 1965 Immigration Act with Vice President Hubert Humphrey and Senator Edward (Ted) Kennedy greeting the President. Source: LBJ Library and Museum, Photo credit: Yoichi Okamoto.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Immigration Act of 1965, which changed US immigration policy. Previously, immigrants from Asia and Africa were allowed into the United States in very small numbers (even if they were highly educated or had family living in the US). The Act of 1965 was signed in [front](#) of the Statue of Liberty, on Liberty Island, and reflected the Civil Rights movement's gains for racial equality. US immigration policies had been severely discriminatory given decades of exclusion of non-European immigrants.

Departing from the previous system of country-based quotas, US immigration after 1965 has focused on the skills that immigrants bring and reunification of families (immigrants sponsoring their families to join them in the United States).

Image from the LBJ Library Archive

1987

Long Description Text for Graphic:

2010 Hate Crimes: Behind the Bias

Motivation percentages of the 6,624 single bias incidents in 2010.

Race: 57.3 percent

Religion: 20.0 percent

Sexual Orientation: 19.3 percent

Ethnicity/National Origin: 12.8 percent

Disability: 0.6 percent

In 1987, a 30-year-old immigrant from India who worked in a bank, Navroze Mody, was brutally beaten to death by a group of teenagers who called themselves "Dotbusters." This group was active in New Jersey, where a large South Asian immigrant community is concentrated, and they had been harassing immigrants from South Asia for months. A month before Mody's killing, Dotbusters (referring to the *bindi* that Hindu women wear on their foreheads for religious purposes), sent a letter to a local newspaper. Part of their letter read:

"I'm writing about your article during July about the abuse of Indian People. Well I'm here to state the other side. I hate them, if you had to live near them you would also. We are an organization called dot busters. We have been around for 2 years. We will go to

any extreme to get Indians to move out of Jersey City. If I'm walking down the street and I see a Hindu and the setting is right, I will hit him or her. We plan some of our most extreme attacks such as breaking windows, breaking car windows, and crashing family parties. ... They are a weak race physically and mentally. We are going to continue our way. We will never be stopped."

In Jersey City, after Mody's death, another person of South Asian descent was assaulted by three men with baseball bats. Laws against hate crimes have been in existence in New Jersey though incidents still continue.

Information sourced from Pluralism.org and from the FBI hate crimes statistics.

2011

The federal government has ordered Hamtramck to print election ballots and other materials in the Bangla language. By Charles Sercombe.

Here's more proof that Hamtramck's Bengali community is a major voting bloc. The federal government is now requiring the city to print all election material, including ballots and candidate nominating petitions, in the Bangla language as well as in English.

That's because, according to the US Census, the Bangladeshi community is sizeable enough to warrant separate ballots. The agency said it used a variety of data to determine this mandate, but just what exactly the decision was based on was not immediately known.

Hamtramck is not alone in being ordered to print separate ballots. Some 248 voting districts across the country have been told to print up separate ballots for their dominant

ethnic group. City Clerk Ed Norris said the mandate will mean an additional cost to the city, but he did not know how much more elections will now run.

He said there is not enough time to ready ballots for the Bengali community for the Nov. 8 General Election. The next election after the November election is the Republican Primary on Feb. 28. Norris said he's not sure if the additional ballots will be ready by then, either.

"We're going to try to comply the best we can, as soon as we can," he said. Part of the problem in getting ballots ready is finding both a reliable translation service, and a printer that has the proper font for the Bangla language. Another issue to figure out is who is responsible for preparing and paying for the separate ballots when elections are under the jurisdiction of the county or state.

Not all elections are solely city elections. Norris said trying to coordinate this mandate with county and state officials is another hurdle to jump. In the online social network site Facebook, there has been criticism of this mandate. There are some who believe that if you are a citizen and are eligible to vote, you should be able to understand the English language. But the Voting Rights Act of 2006 mandates special language ballots for there is a significant ethnic presence in a community. Norris said that there is no appeal option to challenge the mandate.

Norris added that the city has already provided some election material in Polish, Arabic and Bangla.

2011 Article Accessed and Reprinted with permission from the Hamtramck Review

Post-2001

New York Neighbors is an inter-faith organization that uses the symbols of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to show how people of different backgrounds can get along.

In the weeks following the attacks on 9/11/2001, there were significant increases to bias incidents aimed at persons believed to be of Middle Eastern or South Asian descent. Many groups came together to unite against extremism, and to understand individuals from different backgrounds in order to make sure that unfair laws and practices don't result in discriminatory treatment. One organization included the New York Neighbors. An inter-faith coalition of over 130 groups in New York City that strive to "defend the constitutional and American values of religious freedom, diversity and equality while fighting against anti-Muslim bigotry and discrimination against our neighbors no matter what their national origin or religion.

2012

On Sunday August 5, 2012, an armed gunman entered a [Sikh Gurudwaratemple](#) ([Sikh house of worshipgurudwara](#)) in **Oak Creek, Wisconsin** and opened fire on innocent people praying [therein their house of worship](#). Six people were killed (Seeta Singh, [a priest](#); and Parkash Singh [who were responsible for official duties and leading services at the Gurudwara](#), [a priest](#); Ranjit Singh; Satwant Singh Kaleka, president of the [Gurudwara committeetemple](#); and Subegh Singh and Parmjit Kaur, [temple](#)-members [of the Gurudwara community](#)). Two other worshippers were injured. A police officer fatally shot the gunman, Wade Michael Page, aged 40. Wade Michael Page is reported to have been affiliated with white supremacist and hate groups and was on the watchlist of organizations that track hate crimes like the Southern Poverty Law Center.

After the shooting, President Obama released a statement that, "At this difficult time, the people of Oak Creek must know that the American people have them in our thoughts and prayers, and our hearts go out to the families and friends of those who were killed and wounded. My Administration will provide whatever support is necessary to the officials who are responding to this tragic shooting and moving forward with an

Commented [1]: There is no official 'priesthood' in Sikhism

investigation. As we mourn this loss which took place at a house of worship, we are reminded how much our country has been enriched by Sikhs, who are a part of our broader American family.”

White House Statement from the Whitehouse blog August 8, 2012, and map adapted from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:USA_Wisconsin_location_map.svg

Glossary

Ally: Someone who acts to help an individual of a group targeted by bullying or discrimination. Allies can help by standing up on behalf of (and together with) the victim, or advocating for changes in attitudes or policies.

Bigotry: Intolerance or inability to stand those people who have different opinions or backgrounds.

Empathy: The ability to understand someone else’s feelings, challenges, or problems. Empathy for another’s difficult situation should ideally lead to some action to help address that situation or its causes.

Harassment: Any type of repeated or persistent behavior that is unwanted, unwelcome and causes emotional distress in the person it is directed at. It is typically motivated by gender, race, religion, national origin etc.

Institutionalized racism: A system, policy, or agency that discriminates based on race or ethnic origin through its policies or practices.

Islamophobia: Irrational fear and strong dislike of anyone who is, or appears to be, Muslim.

Micro-aggressions: Interactions between people of different races, genders, cultures, or sexual orientations where one person exhibits non-physical aggression. Micro-

aggressions can be intentional or unintentional but they convey hostility, discrimination, and attitudes of superiority.

Nativism: Literally refers to the practice of favoring the interests of those of a particular place over immigrants. In the 1900s, nativist policies in the United States made immigration policies restrictive to non-European countries.

Naturalized Citizen: Someone born in one country that becomes a citizen of another country. In the US, there are three ways people become citizens: (1) *Jus Sanguinis* (Right of Blood) in which case if one parent is a US citizen, then the child is also entitled to US citizenship, even if s/he is born outside the US; (2) *Jus Soli* (right of birthplace) in which case if a person is born in the US, they are granted citizenship; (3) through naturalization in which case, after living in the US for multiple years, a person must apply for citizenship and complete a citizenship test.

Prejudice: Negative feelings and stereotyped attitudes towards members of a different group. Prejudice or negative prejudgments can be based on race, religion, nationality, economic status, sexual orientation, gender, age, or other factors.

Refugee: Someone who is outside of the country where they are from or have lived because s/he has been targeted, harassed or persecuted because of her/his race, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, etc. Refugees are often seeking asylum in other countries.

Second Generation: This term refers to the US-born children of immigrant parents. Second-generation children and youth sometimes face discrimination because of their appearances or religion even though they are Americans.

Solidarity: Demonstrating unity or cooperation to work with others who may or may not share the same interests or challenges. Being an ally and working in solidarity go hand in hand together.

Tolerance: The ability to be fair and open to people or beliefs that are different than oneself. Being tolerant means being free from prejudice and bigotry.

Xenophobia: A strong and unreasonable hatred of people who are from other countries, or other ideas and things that are foreign.

Who are South Asian Americans?

Population of South Asians in the US (density)

According to the 2010 Census, approximately 4.3 million South Asians live in the USA. South Asian Americans trace their origins to **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives**. Some were born there, while others are descended from immigrants from these nations.

The community also includes double migrants—members of diasporic communities in the Caribbean (Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago), Africa (Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zanzibar), Canada, Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific Rim (Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore) who have subsequently migrated to the US.

The South Asian American community is diverse not just in terms of national origin, but also in terms of ethnicity, religion, and language. South Asian Americans practice Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Jainism, Judaism, Islam, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism; others have no faith. The most common languages spoken by South Asians in the United States, other than English, include Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Telugu, and Urdu.

South Asians are also diverse in terms of immigration and socioeconomic status. While many are citizens or permanent residents, thousands live here on short-term work visas

or are undocumented. With respect to employment, there are notable concentrations of South Asians in tech and the health professions, in education, and in service work, taxi work, domestic work, and the hotel and restaurant industry.

Adapted from South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)'s factsheets and from the curriculum "In the Face of Xenophobia: Lessons to Address the Bullying of South Asian American Youth" (2013) available online at: <http://saalt.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/InTheFaceOfXenophobia-Final-11.4.2013.pdf>.

Short Timeline of South Asian Americans in the US

[Key moments in US & world history are also presented in brackets]

1838:

By 1838 approximately 25,000 Indian laborers have been transported as indentured workers to the British sugar colony of Mauritius. By 1917 more than 3.5 million South Asians will have been transported to European colonies in Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific as indentured "coolies," often undertaking harsh work once performed by slaves for a "penny a day" as historians have noted. *[Slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire in 1834 and in the US in 1865]*

1880s & 1890s:

Approximately 2,000 South Asians are residing in the US On the West Coast many are farmworkers from the Punjab region who are members of the Sikh faith. Others are students. *[The modern nations of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Burma were all part of the British Empire from the mid-nineteenth century to the late 1940s.]*

1907–1908:

The Asian Exclusion League, an anti-immigrant nativist group, opposes immigration from Asia and sparks violent race riots against South Asians in Washington, California,

and Oregon in order to drive out “cheap labor.” The Bureau of Naturalization issues directives to dissuade citizenship applications from “Hindoos” (a derogatory term inaccurately applied to all South Asians; of the early migrants, 85% were Sikh, about 13% Muslim, and only 2% Hindus).

1912–1913:

Sikh migrants build the first [Gurudwaragurdwara](#) (Sikh [house of worship](#)~~Temple~~) in the US in Stockton, California in 1912. Founders of the Gurudwara were also founders of the Ghadar Party in 1913. Ghadar leaders galvanized a cross-class community of laborers and students to fight the British by *connecting* colonialism to the racist conditions of labor and life they experienced in the US. As the Ghadar Party expanded, it established official headquarters in San Francisco. Its leaders attracted the attention of the British government, who recruited US immigration officials to keep tabs on Indian nationalists in America, to limit the growing strength of Ghadar’s revolutionary aims.

1917:

Immigration Act of 1917 defines a geographic “barred zone” in the Asia-Pacific (including South Asia) from which no immigrants can come to the US [*World War I lasts from 1914 to 1918*]

1920:

State Alien land laws prohibit transfer and ownership of land to noncitizens; as a consequence Indian farmers lose over 120,000 acres in California. In the following years, over 3,000 Indians return to their homeland due to xenophobic pressures. Migrants still come to the US as traders or merchants through port cities such as New Orleans or New York, and some settle in African American or Puerto Rican communities. [*Women in the US are granted the right to vote in 1920*]

1923:

In the *US v. Bhagat Singh Thind* decision, the US Supreme Court found that Asian Indians are ineligible for US citizenship because they are not white. *[In 1924, US Pres. Calvin Coolidge signs the Snyder Act giving Native Americans US citizenship, but many states still denied them the right to vote until 1948.]*

1946:

The Luce-Celler Act grants right of naturalization and small immigration quotas to Asian Indians and Filipinos, including a national quota of 100 per year for immigrants from India. *[World War II lasts from 1939 to 1945.]*

1957:

Dalip Singh Saund, an [South Asian Indian](#) American from Imperial Valley, California, is elected to the US House of Representatives and serves from 1957 to 1963. South Asian Americans number more than 12,000. *[In 1955, the Montgomery Bus Boycott starts in Alabama. In 1956, the Supreme Court declares segregation on buses to be illegal.]*

1965:

The Immigration and Nationality Act, which removes quotas for Asian immigrants, triggers the second wave of South Asian immigration. *[1965: President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act.]*

1966-1977:

Eighty-three percent of South Asians enter the United States under employment visas, including 20,000 scientists, 40,000 engineers, and 25,000 medical doctors. Most have been educated at great public expense in their nations of origin.

1987:

In Hoboken, New Jersey, Navroze Mody is beaten to death by “Dotbusters”—a violent hate group active in the state. South Asian Americans number more than 200,000 in

the United States. *[1989 marks the fall of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of the end of the Cold War.]*

1990:

Third wave of South Asian immigrants begins, including H1-B visa holders (many working in high tech), students, and working class families.

2000:

Hamtramck, Michigan is the first jurisdiction to provide language assistance in a South Asian language—Bengali—to voters following a lawsuit by the Department of Justice.

September 11–17, 2001:

Attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon take place on September 11, 2001. In the week following 9/11, there are 645 reports of bias incidents aimed at persons perceived to be of Middle Eastern or South Asian descent. South Asians Balbir Singh Sodhi of Arizona, Waqar Hasan of Texas, and Vasudev Patel of Texas are all killed in post-9/11 hate crimes. Harassment and threats make up more than two-thirds of all reported bias incidents.

September 2001–February 2002:

The US government detains without charge about 1,100 individuals (many from India and Pakistan). Many are denied access to counsel and undergo secret hearings. Many are detained for months on end; others are deported with no evidence ever presented of terrorist activity.

2002:

The FBI reports that after 9/11, reports of violence against Muslims rose by 1600%. Nineteen people are murdered in hate crimes prompted by the events of 9/11.

2002:

The Special Registration (NSEERS) program requires men and boys—ages 16 and older—from 25 Asian and African countries (24 of them predominantly Muslim, including Pakistan and Bangladesh), to report to their local immigration office for fingerprinting and interrogation. Over 93,000 people register throughout the country. **None** are ever charged with any terrorist related activity. More than 13,000 people were placed in deportation proceedings, while thousands more voluntarily leave the country.

2005:

Piyush Bobby Jindal becomes the second South Asian American member of Congress. Many South Asians are elected to state office. [In **2007**, Jindal becomes the first ever South Asian American state governor (Louisiana). Nikki Haley becomes the second in **2011** (South Carolina). Haley later becomes the US Ambassador to the United Nations under Donald Trump (2016)]

2012:

Wade Michael Page, a white supremacist, walks in and opened fire during services at a Sikh gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, killing six and wounding four. Page subsequently commits suicide after police arrived on the scene. The shooting is labeled an act of “domestic terrorism.”

2012/2013:

According to the 2010 US Census, there are 4.3 million people of South Asian descent in the United States. In 2012, Ami Bera from California becomes the third Indian American to be elected to the US House of Representatives.

2015:

The assault of Sureshbhai Patel occurred on February 6, 2015. Patel, a 57-year-old Indian national who was visiting his son in Madison, Alabama, US, was seriously injured after being detained by three police officers in a residential neighborhood responding to a call from a neighbor that there was a “skinny black man” walking

around the predominately white neighborhood. There is video footage of the officer slamming Patel to the ground. He had to be hospitalized and is partially paralyzed as a result of the injuries. The police officer (Eric Parker) was at first fired due to international uproar, but then reinstated in 2016, and was later acquitted of all charges.

2016–2019:

After the November 2016 election of Donald Trump, hate crimes have skyrocketed across the US. Islamophobia and xenophobia targeting anyone with brown-skin have resulted in many deaths and injuries. In February 2017, two men originally from India chatted after work at a bar in Kansas. Asking them about their legal status and yelling at them to “get out of my country,” Adam Purinton opened fire, killing Srinivas Kuchibhotla and wounding his friend Alok Madasani as well as Ian Grillot who was at the bar and tried to help the men who were being attacked.

2020:

Kamala Devi Harris, a Black and South Asian Senator, becomes the first woman of color nominated to a major party’s ticket as Vice-President.

*Adapted from “South Asians in the US: A Social Justice Timeline,” developed by
SAALT*

Migration Worksheet

Use this worksheet to find out as much information as possible about how your family came to the United States. If your ancestors are Native American, find out any stories of migration within the US over the past few centuries. It is hard to pinpoint many historical dates, but just get as much information as you can to share with classmates.

What can you find out about the first person in your family (on either or both sides) who migrated to the US? Around what year did that migration take place?

Any additional details?

Feel free to affix copies of any photos or documents you can find to the back of this sheet.