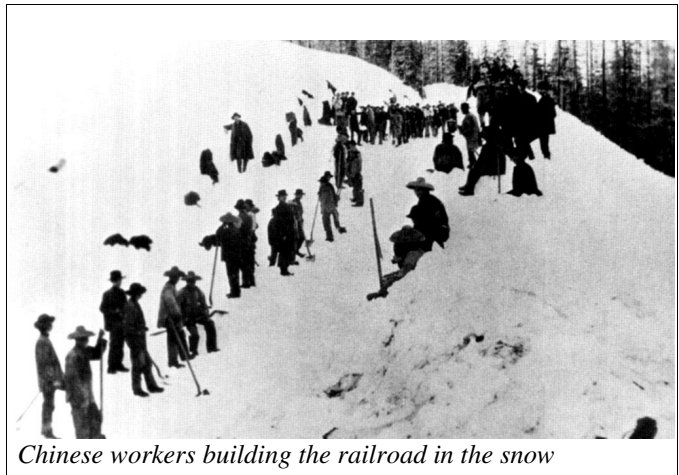


# Chinese Immigration: Yesterday and Today

America is a country of immigrants. Only the American Indians didn't immigrate here. Everyone else came here from another country - or their family did before.

For a long time the US had no immigration laws. One of the first laws to stop immigrants to *exclude* Chinese people.

It was called the Chinese Exclusion Act. It was passed in 1882. The Act excluded Chinese people from coming to the United States for 10 years. It reduced Chinese immigration from 30,000 people per year to just 105. The Chinese Exclusion Act was the first immigration law made for one *ethnic group*.



Chinese workers building the railroad in the snow

*Conditions* were bad in China. Thousands of Chinese immigrants came here looking for work. Many came during the California Gold Rush, from 1848 to 1855. About 200,000 Americans and 40,000 Chinese immigrants moved to California to look for gold and get rich. In China, one name for America was "Gold Mountain." In the 1860s, there were many jobs working on railroads. Most Chinese immigrants came on five year work contracts.

About 90% of Chinese immigrants were men. Most of these men wanted to return home. It was difficult to find Chinese women in to marry in the US, because very few were allowed into the country. Chinese-American communities had many single men and very few babies.

In the 1960s, millions of black Americans couldn't vote or get good jobs. Americans fought to end *discrimination against* black people. People also fought to end discrimination against immigrants. The 1965 Immigration Act made it possible for more Chinese and Latino immigrants to come to the US. Before the Act, less than one percent of Americans were Asian or Latino. Now, more than four percent are Asian, and more than 14 percent are Latino.

## Vocabulary

1. *exclude* – verb - To keep out. "Pets are excluded from restaurants, but seeing eye dogs can come in."
2. *Act* – noun – Law. "The PATRIOT Act was passed after September 11th."
3. *ethnic group* – noun - A group of people who have the same culture or language. "The two big ethnic groups in my neighborhood are Chinese immigrants and Mexican immigrants."
4. *conditions* – noun – How you work or live. "I have better working conditions at my new job. We have two breaks a day and paid lunch."
5. *discrimination against* – noun – When people are treated badly because of who they are. "Discrimination against women is illegal, but it still happens all the time."

## Vocabulary Practice

1. __ Act	a. To keep out
2. __ exclude	b. When people are treated badly because of who they are
3. __ ethnic group	c. How you work or live
4. __ conditions	d. Law
5. __ discrimination against	e. A man with no wife
6. __ immigrant	f. To move from one country to another country
7. __ immigrate	g. A group of people who have the same culture or language
8. __ _____	h. A person from another country

## Questions

1. Why did Chinese people immigrate to the US?
2. What was the Chinese Exclusion Act?
3. Why did Chinese men usually go back to China?
4. Why did the US pass the Chinese Exclusion Act? Why did they change it in 1965?