Therapy with South Asian American Women

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Brief History of Asian Americans

* In the 1960s, where Asian immigrants (who were the first-wave of immigrants to enter the United States in the 1700s) were depicted and characterized to be a threat to the dominant culture’s way of life due to their ideology and traditions that were seen as uneducated and highly enculturated.
* The Asian Exclusion League (AEL) claimed that the “Hindoos (i.e., Hindus) were invading the state.” The AEL proclaimed that South Asian Indians were not worth the high risk as inexpensive laborers and argued that anyone that supported East Indians was a threat to national security more so than the Chinese and Japanese.
* SAAs were persecuted. Unlike other Asian immigrants, the Alien Land Laws drove South Asian Americans out of their towns and cities, including California and Marysville, Bellingham, and Washington; they were also forbidden from owning and/or leasing land as well as bringing their families and partners to the.
* The U.S Immigration Commission of 1911 stated that out of all the immigrants admitted to the U.S thus far, South Asians or *Hindoos* were the worst of them all.
* The Immigration Act of 1917 (i.e., *Asiatic Barred Zone*) barred or prohibited 500 million Asians from entering the U.S (Lee, 2015).
* Under the 1913 California Alien Land Law, Asians lost their current properties and businesses and were prevented from purchasing new property (Mahajan, 2015).
* In 1923 the Supreme Court ruled that SAs were not allowed to become U.S citizens (Mahajan, 2015).
* The Immigration Nationality Act occurred about 40 years later, in 1965 (with a stipulation), became the important first phase of Asians that were allowed to immigrate to the U.S. Only the highly educated individuals were allowed entrance.

Newspaper Clipping and Transcription:

A September 16, 1906 newspaper article from Puget Sound American describing recent "Hindu" immigration to Bellingham, Washington (Lee, 2015).



**Transcription:**

*Puget Sound American*, Sept. 16, 1906, p. 16

HAVE WE A DUSKY PERIL?

HINDU HORDES INVADING THE STATE

BELLINGHAM workmen are becoming excited over the arrival of East Indians in numbers across the Canadian border, and fear that the dusky Asiatics with their turbans will prove a worse menace to the working classes than the “Yellow Peril” that has so long threatened the Pacific Coast.

Hordes of Hindus have fastened their eyes on Bellingham and the northwestern part of the United States in general, and the vanguard of an invasion which, in the minds of many discerning people, threatens to overshadow the “yellow peril” has reached this city. Encamped in a weather beaten and patched building, just east of the E.K. Wood Lumber Company’s mill, within sight of passing hundreds every day, are more than a dozen swarthy sons of Hindustan. Thousands of worshippers of Brahma, Buddha, and other strange deities of India may soon press the soil of Washington.

It is on a peaceful mission these Asian tribes are bound, but they are counted as the enemies in the industrial warfare of the white man, and their coming is regarded with distrust by the average laboring man, who is carefully studying the cause and effect of the new immigration. It was only a few years ago that these men of Asia began leaving their primeval homes for North America, landing in British Columbia. Now there are more than 5,000 Hindus in the Canadian province, and they are regarded with such aversion by the industrial classes that the Ottawa government has been petitioned to take drastic measures to turn back this stream of humanity, which is becoming irresistible.

FLOODS OF HINDUS COMING

Investigation of Hindu immigration reveals the startling fact that more than 2,000 citizens of India have entered British Columbia in the last two months. This is enough to frighten any community where it is essential that white labor should prevail to insure continuous industrial and commercial advancement, and none realize this more than the British Columbia workman, who has asked his national government to exercise extraordinary power to repress the industrious Oriental.

Principally at the behest of the laboring classes, the federal superintendent of immigration in Canada has been sent to the province to investigate the situation thoroughly. As a result of these protests it is considered likely that the federal authorities will take advantage of the authority vested in the governor in council, which can, if it chooses, prohibit the entrance of any class of immigrants. Perhaps the chief reason why the Canadian government has proceeded slowly in championing the popular clamor is found in the fact that the Hindus are British citizens.

If the government does use its extraordinary powers, and Hindu immigration is effectually stopped, the United States will have to bear the brunt of the Indian immigration. Prevented from landing in Canada, the East Indians will come direct to America.

At the present time the majority of Hindus reach the Northwest on the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company lines and its pauper passengers have two chances to find a home. If they find nothing in British Columbia they can come to the United States, provided they pass the physical, mental, and contract labor prohibitions. If Canada shuts the Hindus out, Seattle, Portland, and Tacoma will become the chief ports of entry for the easterners in the Northwest.

STEAMSHIP LINES BUSY

The steamship companies calling at Puget Sound ports can be depended upon to work up a big business in the transportation of Hindus. They are not likely to be outdone by the steamship concerns of the Atlantic, which annually contract with various agents to transport tens of thousands of undesirable Europeans to the United Sates [sic]. Hindus are accorded the same privileges by the immigration laws of the United States as the people of the most favored nations; therefore, in view of Canada’s contemplated action, and even without that perspective, nothing, apparently, will prevent or seriously discourage Hindus from coming to this country by thousands.

Hindu immigration to the United States began early in January, 1906. On January 7 Linah Singh and Pola Singh walked over the boundary line at Blaine without previously passing the required examination for admission. Arriving in Bellingham afoot on the Great Northern Railway they were arrested and confined in the city jail. They were found to be unlawfully in the country and were deported via Sumas.

While in the local prison the Singhs exhibited several peculiarities of their far off home. They, of course, wore turbans, and threatened to die of starvation rather than eat food cooked by other people. They were finally induced to eat rice, but they devoured it sparingly.

NO UNCLEAN RICE

When they were given the opportunity to cook their own rice at the Sumas detention shed they ate big quantities of it. Rice is the principal food of their more fortunate countrymen in Bellingham, and it is said that seventeen men from the land of the cobra and the Bengal tiger surround the pot of rice cooked in the humble Oriental home near the E.K. Wood mill.

Two months after Linah and Pola came to Bellingham five other turbaned beings rode into the city on the Bellingham Bay & British Columbia Railway. They found employment digging ditches, but they did not like the work, and they quit to labor in the E.K. Wood lumber mill. The same liking for timber plants is shown by the majority of Hindus who have settled in the Northwest.

These were soon followed by others who, perhaps, were led to come here through the glowing accounts written by the pioneers. All have been examined by A.J. Ferrandini, the immigration inspector in charge at this port, and he is constantly looking for Hindus who have been rejected at the ports of entry or at the United States immigration headquarters at Vancouver…

NEW MOVEMENT…

Since the Singhs first ate rice in one of Uncle Sam’s prisons, more than 100 of their countrymen have entered the United States to the knowledge of the local immigration office and about an equal number has been denied admission. Admissions were refused to all who failed to pass the physical or mental examinations and to such as could not prove that they were not likely to become public charges or contract laborers.

The immigration offices are given the power to reject immigrants even though they find only an implication of contract labor. As an example, of the officers find that a relative or friend has informed the applicant that he can get work at a certain place that can be construed to mean contract labor and the application can be denied. If the applicant has been merely told that there is plenty of work in this country a construction of prohibition cannot be placed on the information. Frequently disease bars the Hindus. Some suffer from trachoma, and fifteen were rejected a week ago on this account. At Vancouver this year several rejected Indians were bound for Bellingham. Discretionary powers delegated to the officials are often used.

The Hindus who are in Bellingham are, on the whole, remarkably fine-looking men. This is due to the fact that many are ex-soldiers of the Indian army. Their acknowledge handsome appearance does not appeal to the employes [sic] of the mills where they find work and an effort is being made to oust them and this discourage future immigration to Bellingham. Unless the mill owners support the movement against the Orientals and decline to give them work, it will be hard to keep the undesirables out, for the reason that here they receive 50 cents more per day than they do in British Columbia, according to the local mill hands.

WHITES OPPOSE HINDUS

Work is plentiful in the mills, in fact, too plentiful, and this is responsible for the ease with which the foreigners have found employment. The scarcity of white men has led mills to accept the service of those whom American workers regard as a common enemy. They feel that wages will be reduced if suppressive measures are not taken in the beginning. They argue, also, that the presence of several scores or hundreds of Hindus in Bellingham will act as a brake on the city’s progress. A strong point against them, they say, is that they live cheaply and save their earnings to return to India to spend them.

The Bellingham Hindus are tall and well-formed and they stand erect. They seem to be intelligent and are polite, neat and clean. This is the opinion held by immigration officers, but it must be admitted that the Hindus here are of the lowest class. Of the seventeen said to be in Bellingham eleven have served as soldiers, according to Sanda, whose likeness appears on this page. Inspector Ferrandini says he found them honest and willing to reply to questions of examination. Many Japanese and Chinese who apply for admission are far from being so ready of tongue or so courteous.

The land of the Hindus harbors 300,000,000 souls, and it has been called “an epitome of the whole earth,” so varied is its physical characteristics. There the bull, the cow and the monkey are held sacred. In all there are about fifty tribes, which can be traced back to two or three original races. The Hindus form the largest part of the population, and their religion, Brahmanism, is therefore, chief. Of the other principal religions, Mohammedanism has 60,000,000 followers and Buddhism 8,000,000 believers.

Brahmanism dates back to 1200 B.C., and its sacred books, the Vodas, [sic] are the oldest literary documents known. They consist principally of hymns. Brahmanism was originally a philosophical religion, mingled with the worship of the powers of nature. Brahma was represented by four heads to indicate the four quarters of the globe. In practice, in the course of years, the religion became a system of idolatry, with cruel rites and hideous images.

The caste system, a part of the religion, became a grievous burden, and still is. In the first class are the priests. Warriors are next, followed by traders, and they by the common types.
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**Keep the Hindus Out, Says Writer**

Bellingham, Sept. 15, 1906.
Editor, American.
Having resided in India nine years and closely observed the habits of the Hindus, I consider their advent in this country very undesirable. They are strictly non-progressive and adhere to their old established customs with far more tenacity than either the Japanese or Chinese. Their code of morals is bad (from our point of view), and if allowed the freedom, which they naturally expect in America, they will eventually become troublesome. The most of them have been soldiers under the British government and are well-versed in the use of fire-arms. In conclusion, they have the habit of running amuck, when annoyed, in which case a number of innocent people get butchered. By all means keep them out.

G. PERINET