

Collection #  
M 0864

**INDIA IN INDIANA: THE ASIAN INDIAN DIASPORA  
IN THE HOOSIER STATE  
ORAL HISTORIES, 1999–2003**

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Processed by

Emily Castle  
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

**COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
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COLLECTION  
DATES: 1999–2003

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RESTRICTIONS: None

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ACCESSION NUMBER: 2004.0061

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

*India in Indiana: the Asian Indian Diaspora in the Hoosier State* was an oral history project exploring the history and cultural diversity of Indiana's burgeoning Asian Indian ethnic communities. The project was funded by a Clio Grant and was under the co-direction of Professor John Bodnar at Indiana University-Bloomington and Professor Gail Hickey at Indiana-Purdue at Fort Wayne, principal investigators at the Indiana University Center for the Study of History and Memory.

They conducted twenty-two life history interviews in communities around the state with first- and second-generation Indian Americans. The methods used for collecting the data were to find a public association or institution that served the Indian-American community to provide first contact or they would get references from someone who had already been interviewed. They first tried communities in southern Indiana, but were unable to gain access to an active community of Indian-Americans.

Instead they turned their attention on northwest Indiana, choosing to collect interviews from the active communities in that area, many of which maintain strong ties with the Chicago Indian-American community. The number of interviews they ended with was not as many as originally hoped for, but they were pleased with the diversity and depth of the interviews they did collect. The primary data in the interviews provides insights not otherwise available into the lives and concerns of this group of immigrants to the state.

Sources:

Materials in collection

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection consists of typescripts of interviews that were conducted as part of the *India in Indiana: the Asian Indian Diaspora in the Hoosier State* oral history project. The twenty-two interviews in this collection are arranged by date and represent a variety of age groups, professions, Indian states of origin, men and women, and both first- and second-generation Indian-Americans.

For the first-generation Indian-Americans questions of assimilation were paramount: what traditions of their homeland to maintain, and what traditions of their adopted country to practice. Of equal or greater importance was the maintenance of familial and social ties to those who were left behind. Long visits by parents, in-laws, and extended

family members seemed to be a common feature of life in the first-generations families interviewed, as were regular visits back to India.

In the second generation, questions of assimilation were more challenging, for these children do not share the same memories of another homeland that their parents have, even though parents stressed the importance of continuity of their cultural tradition in raising their children. As the children become older, they question Indian cultural traditions that clash with American traditions.

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## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0864).
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