

# Smithsonian eyes influences of Indian Americans

By Brett Zongker  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Indian Americans are doctors, engineers, motel owners, taxi drivers, and spelling bee champs — just a few takeaways from a new exhibit at the Smithsonian.

Looking closer, though, curators are probing the history behind certain cultural stereotypes of the population of 3.3 million Americans in a new exhibit in Washington, D.C.

The influx of Indian doctors, for example, began in the 1960s as the U.S. needed more physicians for its new Medicare system and immigration law opened the door to those with medical training. Later, the American inventors of Hotmail, the Pentium chip, and fiber optics were all of Indian origin, perhaps because H-1B visas for engineers were a U.S. effort to remain competitive with the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

“Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation” is the Smithsonian’s first major exhibit to examine the history of Indian immigration to the United States and the influence of Indian Americans.

It’s a story that dates to the first Indians arriving in 1790, those who helped build the nation’s railroads and farms, and those who fought for citizenship when immigration from Asia was discouraged. There are also plenty of more recent contributions of leading Indian-American writers, entertainers, athletes, and a fashion designer favored by First Lady Michelle Obama.

Curator Masum Momaya said her team used Indian-American stereotypes as an entry point for visitors to learn more.



**INDIAN INFLUENCE.** Indian immigrants work on the construction of the Pacific and Eastern Railroad in Oregon, circa 1906. The image is part of a display, “Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation,” the Smithsonian’s first major exhibit examining the history of Indian immigration to the United States and the influence of Indian Americans. (Photo courtesy of the Southern Oregon Historical Society and the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program)

“We want to take people beyond some of the things they know and have seen in popular culture to the deeper and more nuanced history,” she said. “I think one of the things that museums can do is add history and add context to contemporary conversations about race and immigration.”

So in a subtle way, curators show the current debate over immigration has been debated before.

The Smithsonian borrowed and collected objects from many Indian Americans, from family photos and shoes that evoke a family home to the NFL helmet worn by the first Indian American to win the Super Bowl, Brandon Chillar with the Green Bay Packers.

For more than a year, curators worked to borrow a dress made by Indian-American designer Naeem Khan for Mrs. Obama.

Khan draws on a line of Indian embroidery techniques in his design for an American silhouette.

The rarely seen gown joins items from other Indian-American groundbreakers. There’s the NCAA basketball jersey from the first player to wear a turban in competition as a symbol of his Sikh faith, a silver Olympic medal won by gymnast Mohini Bhardwaj in Athens, and the first U.S. spelling bee trophy won by an Indian American in 1985. Coincidentally, Indian-American students have been on a spelling bee winning streak for most of the past

decade.

“It’s novel, but at the same time, it does speak to that experience of becoming American,” said Konrad Ng, director of the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center. “Spelling bees have this symbolic value of being American, being literate in the language of the country and excelling in it.”

The exhibit at the National Museum of Natural History is part of a \$2 million ongoing heritage project at the center. It will also help bring new items into the Smithsonian’s collection to represent Indian Americans.

Newly acquired artifacts include campaign materials from former U.S. representative Dalip Singh Saund of California, who was the first Asian American elected to congress in 1957.

The display is on view at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, located at 1000 Constitution Avenue N.W. in Washington D.C., through August 16, 2015. To learn more, visit <[www.apa.si.edu/indian-american/beyond-bollywood.html](http://www.apa.si.edu/indian-american/beyond-bollywood.html)>.

## Fortune cookie turns Bronx woman into millionaire

NEW YORK (AP) — A 75-year-old New York woman found her fortune in a cookie.

Emma Duvoll won \$2 million in a recent Powerball drawing after playing the numbers found in her fortune cookie.

The retired Bronx resident bought the lottery ticket after dining at a Chinese restaurant in Greenwich Village.

The Daily News reports that the owner of Sammy’s Noodle Shop & Grill joked that

maybe the waiters should get 20 percent of her winnings.

Duvoll, a retired deli owner, picked up her prize this month. She purchased the ticket for the February 1 drawing at the Hannaford Pharmacy in upstate Pine Bush.

She plans to invest her winnings and may splurge on a trip to Switzerland to see relatives.

## Frozen wins Oscar for animated feature film

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Disney’s fairytale musical *Frozen* won the Oscar for best animated feature.

The 3-D film about a magically icy princess and her sister was directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee, with voicing by Idina Menzel, Kristen Bell, and

Josh Gad. It’s loosely based on the 19th-century Hans Christian Andersen fairytale, “The Snow Queen,” and features the catchy tween anthem “Let It Go.”

Other nominees were: *The Croods*, *Despicable Me 2*, *Ernest & Celestine*, and *The Wind Rises*.

The 86th Academy Awards aired live on ABC from the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, with Ellen DeGeneres as host.

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3			7		
2	5			9	8
			2	1	
		2	9		7
	8	1	4		
4		6	8		
	6	5			
1	9			8	5
			6		1

Difficulty level: Hard

#37259

**Instructions:** Fill in the grid so that the digits 1 through 9 appear one time each in every row, column, and 3x3 box.

**Solution to last week's puzzle**

Puzzle #59683 (Medium)

All solutions available at <[www.sudoku.com](http://www.sudoku.com)>.

3	5	4	9	2	6	7	8	1
1	2	8	4	5	7	6	9	3
9	7	6	1	3	8	4	2	5
2	9	3	5	8	4	1	7	6
6	4	5	2	7	1	9	3	8
8	1	7	3	6	9	2	5	4
7	8	2	6	1	5	3	4	9
4	3	1	8	9	2	5	6	7
5	6	9	7	4	3	8	1	2

一圖千字

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