Melting Pot: Demographic Change in Iowa

Interpreting Iowa

Introduction to Museum Studies

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Central Theme:

Demographics in Iowa are continuously changing and are a vital part of the fabric of the state. This exhibit features aspects of demographic change in Iowa from 1800 to the present as measured by changing ethnic diversity allowing for the study of culture, countries of origin, reasons for migrating, settlement patterns, and cultural expression through festivals.

Exhibition Overview:

The central theme of the Changing Demographics in Iowa exhibit is Iowa’s changing demographics between 1800 and the present as measured by ethnic diversity in the state. This measurement allows us to focus on the cultures of the numerous immigrant and refugee populations that settled in Iowa while also including indigenous Iowans like the Meskwaki. One of our sub-themes is immigration over time. This section will outline when different ethnic groups arrived in the state and where Iowa immigrants have come from. For example, this section will clearly present the various cultures that are represented in Iowa by showing various maps or flags. This section will also address the indigenous cultures that were in Iowa at the time the settlers came and who are still there today. The second and third subtheme are the reasons people left their country of origin and why they decided to settle in Iowa. Reasons immigrants have chosen to come in Iowa include, but are not limited to, conflict, poverty, religious persecution, and increased opportunity in Iowa for things like higher paying jobs, education for children, and ideological and personal safety. Our fourth and final subtheme is the modern expression of ethnic diversity through festivals. This section will highlight Iowa towns that hold festivals celebrating a populations’ heritage or numerous populations’ heritages. In this subtheme
the components of the festivals are discussed such as food, dancing, and how festivals brings communities together through things like competition.

Exhibition Objective and Visitor Outcomes

This exhibition will portray how immigrants and refugees have continuously been settling in Iowa. It will show who the Iowa residents are, why they came to Iowa, why they chose to stay in Iowa, and how festivals in Iowa are used to express their heritage and bring people together. When this exhibit is viewed, the goal is to have people walk away with a knowledge of some of the immigrant and refugee groups that have come to Iowa between the 1800s and the present. The audience should be able to articulate why immigrants and refugees left their home countries and why they chose to settle in Iowa. Lastly, the audience will be able to understand some of the components of festivals in Iowa and they might be encouraged to visit festivals in Iowa.

Statement of Significance

The exhibition will present how ethnic diversity and immigration have shaped the very definition of what it means to be “Iowan.” All too often, Iowans are charged with having a homogenous, whitewashed culture. The narrative of this exhibition will counter that misconception by explaining and showcasing various ethnic groups that have settled in the state. Demographic change is a continuous process and new populations will forever be entering Iowa.
Learning about the various ethnic groups that live in Iowa will allow visitors to better understand breadth and depth of Iowa culture.

Exhibition Narrative

Melting Pot: Demographic Change in Iowa

Demographic change is a constant in all locations, but there is a widely held misconception that Iowa is a homogenous society. In reality, Iowa is a mix of many different cultures, some which have called Iowa home for over 200 years while others are more recent Iowa residents. In Iowa, the people are an integral part of shaping the state. There are many reasons people choose to leave their home countries and plenty of reasons why they choose to stay in Iowa. The people also influence the towns they live in by introducing their culture and expressing their identity through stores, changes to schools, and festivals. Festivals are particularly important because they bring different populations together to embrace diversity.

This exhibit explores demographic change in Iowa by tracking immigration over time in Iowa, the push-pull factors that encourage migration and settlement in Iowa, and the expression of culture through festivals.

While this project begins analyzing demographic change in Iowa around 1800, Native Americans like the Ioway and Meskwaki already lived in Iowa before immigrants began coming to Iowa in the early to mid-1800s. The Meskwaki are a good example of indigenous Iowans as they had settled in Iowa and were temporarily forced out, but in 1837 they were able to broker a deal to purchase land in Tama County where they live today. While other Native American groups were being pushed onto reservations, they were able to buy their land and they remain
there today. Signs of other indigenous Iowans can be seen across the state. In particular, Effigy Mounds National Monument includes 24 out of 50 mounds in the shape of birds, bears, and cones created around the years 700 to 1300 AD. Early immigrant groups in Iowa included German, Norwegian, Dutch, and Jewish populations. Historian Dorothy Schweider makes the point that the state was recruiting immigrants in the mid-1800s through a 96 page booklet printed in 1869 that was titled, “Iowa: Home of the Immigrants.” It was published in five different languages, English, German, Dutch, Swedish, and Danish, and outlined what it was like to live, work, and attend school in Iowa.

The basic pattern of demographic change in Iowa and other states across the Midwest beginning in the 1950s has been a decreasing rural population as people move to urban areas. Some reasons for this include technological advances limiting the number of farmers needed to work the land and many immigrants finding work in agricultural factories. This is the case for many immigrants from Latin America who have been coming to Iowa throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. Refugees from Bosnia, Somalia, and Myanmar are the most recent immigrants to Iowa. The choice to immigrate is often a hard one to make with many sacrifices along the way, but many people have chosen to leave and settled in Iowa.

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1 Dorothy Schwieder, Thomas Morain, and Lynn Neilson, Iowa Past to Present: The People and the Prairie (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2011): 15-33. This section talks about the earliest Native Americans to be in Iowa and also highlights the Meskwaki (Mesquakie as they write it) and “Immigration to Iowa,” Iowa Pathways and Iowa Public Television, 2014, accessed October 25, 2014, http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/mypath.cfm?ounid=ob_000150.
There are many reasons why people leave their ancestral homelands and settle in a new place. Immigrants seeking new horizons and fresh starts may not want to leave their home, but choose to leave for a better future for themselves and their families. Many immigrant communities maintain strong links with their home countries and sometimes travel back and forth, especially when they are employed in seasonal jobs. Refugees escaping war and persecution often would prefer to stay in their home countries too, but they have no choice if they want to protect themselves and their families. Recently, Iowa has seen an influx of Somali people in Des Moines, Sioux City, Postville, and other places. Although Somali people have been coming to the United States since the 1920s, many that are coming today are refugees from a civil war that has been raging in Somalia and the bordering countries since 1988. Because of the civil war, 1.1 million people are either displaced or have claimed refugee status. Iowa was not a destination for resettlement of refugees, and many went to California, Minnesota, Georgia, and Washington. Somali made their way to Iowa in search of jobs, safety, and a good education for their children. Other groups leave their homes because of financial and social insecurity as a result of trade agreements that make it next to impossible for smaller-scale farmers and

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businesses to make ends meet. Some groups were forcibly relocated out of Iowa for a time, though they were able to return at a later time after struggling for their own rights and recognition.

Agriculture has been the primary industry in Iowa since it was first granted statehood in 1846, and it has been drawing workers to the area ever since. The state has been advertising its fertile farmland to prospective settlers, and the meatpacking industry has been attracting workers since the industrial revolution. Immigrants have been arriving for centuries because of promises of freedom and making enough money to support themselves and their families, and extended family members would be enticed by letters sent back home praising the New World and how much better life is there. Meatpacking plants have drawn in more recent immigrants and refugees for work. The work is dirty and grueling, but often either pays higher wages than agricultural work in their home country and immigrants often have few options for employment, especially if a language barrier exists.

Groups of people arriving from the same place tend to settle together, leading to concentrated populations of different ethnic groups in different areas of the state. These groups also serve to draw in others from the same ethnic group, spreading the word about a place to their family and friends. Many ethnic populations tend to settle in towns where people similar

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to them have already settled because of the shared cultural and linguistic background. In Iowa, many towns are made up of a mix of cultural backgrounds. Cultural identity is often expressed through festivals, and in Iowa these festivals serve to bring communities together.

Festivals are often created to express a cultural identity and to celebrate the heritage of certain populations. In Iowa, many towns in which immigrants settled have formed their own festivals to celebrate the culture(s) that make up their town. Many festivals promote cultural understanding among the different cultural groups in Iowa because they provide information among their entertainment. For example the 2014 Diversity Celebration in Postville had singing, dancing, poetry reading, art, and a fashion show along with exhibits that featured historical and cultural information. A teacher commented at the event, “We want the community to be able to interact with culture, not be afraid of people that are different, teach them about their cultures and hopefully create acceptance.”

Festivals also often serve as fundraisers with the money going to help the community or place hosting the event. The Festival Latino is held in West Liberty by St. Joseph’s Catholic Church and one of the most popular aspects of this festival is the festival Queens. Young ladies compete with each other to see who can raise the most money and thus be crowned as that year’s Queen. Joanna Palmer was crowned the 2010 Queen when she raised $11,000 to be used for updating the church.

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To say that Iowa is a homogenous culture, devalues these Iowan’s participation in the state citizenry and ignores nearly two centuries of immigrant and refugee settlement in Iowa. Immigrants have broadened the scope of “Iowa Culture,” and have added many wonderful traditions, food, music, ideas, and other aspects of culture to Iowan society. Immigrants will continue to leave their countries or origin, settle in Iowa, have children, blend with other Iowans of varying cultural backgrounds, and continue celebrating their heritage through festivals while at the same time celebrating Iowa’s diversity.

Object List and Labels

(Introductory Panel)

Melting Pot: Changing Demographics in Iowa

Introduction

When people think of Iowa, bucolic scenes like this pasture filled with meandering cattle or endless rows of corn occupy their minds. These scenes are often accompanied by the common misconception that Iowa is homogeneously populated, and people rarely imagine the diversity housed within the state. Alongside Iowa’s indigenous populations, the state has experienced a constant
influx of immigrants and refugees from around the globe for centuries. Continued patterns of refugee settlement and immigration have led to ever-changing demographics in Iowa. These new residents have influenced Iowa culture and expanded the very definition of what it means to be “Iowan.” This exhibit features aspects of demographic change in Iowa from 1800 to the present as measured by changing ethnic diversity, allowing for the study of culture, countries of origin, settlement patterns, and cultural expression through festivals.

(Object 1 Label: Bucolic Iowa Scene) Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Object Label 2: Flags of the Old Home)

Flags of the Old Home
Immigrants and refugees come to Iowa from many different countries. Flags can be seen as a symbol of the new arrivals’ pride in their culture and identities and may be depicted in artworks or clothing. Judaism has the distinction of being the only religion that is also an ethnic group. For much of history, there was no official Jewish state, and Jews came to Iowa from many countries, including Russia, Germany and Poland, to escape persecution. Flags courtesy the CIA Factbook.

(Section 1: Panel Label)

Immigration to Iowa

Immigration to Iowa has been a constant throughout the state’s history. The Mississippi River, pictured above, facilitated travel to Iowa from the east. The first immigrants included German, Norwegian, Dutch, Swedish, and Jewish populations who settled in Iowa in the mid-1800s. Founded many of Iowa's first towns, like Keokuk, Dubuque, and Burlington, near the banks of the Mississippi. More recently, Latino, Bosnian, and Somali populations have made Iowa their home. However, Native Americans inhabited the land long before any settlers came and many tribes, like the Meskwaki, remain in the state today.

(Object 3 Label: Scene of the Mississippi) Photo courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Object Label 3.1: Arrival of Emigrants [i.e. Immigrants], Ellis Island)

Arrival of Emigrants [i.e. Immigrants], Ellis Island
The “Arrival of Emigrants [i.e. Immigrants], Ellis Island” video, published by the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company in 1906, shows the hustle and bustle of Ellis Island where thousands of immigrants arrived in the United States. Many would eventually find their way to Iowa. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (http://www.loc.gov/item/00694368)
Indigenous Iowans

Before settlers came to Iowa, Native Americans like the Sioux, Winnebago, Ioway, Omaha, Sauk, and Meskwaki lived on the land. Today, the Meskwaki own and maintain a settlement in Tama, Iowa. In the 1830s they were removed from Iowa to Kansas, but were able to buy land in Tama County in 1857. They were the first Native American group to purchase their own land at a time when many others were being forced onto government owned reservations.

Effigy Mounds

In the Northeastern corner of the state, on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi, mounds in the shape of bears, birds, and cones were created by Native Americans between 700 and 1300 AD. The picture above was taken at Effigy Mounds National Monument where the National Park Service protects 24 out of around 50 mounds. Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

Picture of Kee-o-kuk

As settlers began arriving in Iowa, Native Americans were pushed into each other’s territory and conflicts often arose. The Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1825 aimed to solidify boundaries among the Native American groups in the area. As pictured in Volume 20 of the Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Kee-O-Tuck, also known as Kee-O-Cuck and Keokuk, was the chief of the Sauk when the treaty was signed. Courtesy of American Memory

Global Iowa

Many immigrants and refugees that settle in Iowa maintain strong connections with their home countries. Travel back and forth is not uncommon, and money and goods are frequently sent to family members or friends still residing outside of the U.S. Architectural designs, languages, and foods from the immigrants’ home countries are incorporated into life in Iowa.

Countries Represented in Iowa

The maps pictured here represent a few of Iowa immigrants’ home countries. Maps courtesy the CIA Factbook.
Reading Materials from Across Iowa
Magazines and pamphlets like these can be found at various locations across Iowa. This issue of El Trueque was available near El Patio Mexican Restaurant in West Liberty. The issue of El Centinela pictured here was available outside of the Guppy’s and Go in Postville. The pamphlet for the Hassidic Jewish Walking Tour was available at the Postville City Hall. Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson.

The Vermeer Mill
The Vermeer Mill is an icon of Pella’s Dutch heritage. It includes the tallest functional windmill in the United States. It was constructed in 2002 in Pella, using parts built in Holland, and was patterned after a grain mill in Groningen, Netherlands in the 1850s. Using only wind power, wheat is ground into flour, which is then used by local restaurants and bakeries. Photo available in the public domain.

Transportation to Iowa
Early settlers came from Europe by ship and made their way to Iowa by covered wagon, carrying with them all they owned. Recent refugees and immigrants have access to airplanes and modern vehicles. Sometimes immigrants from Latin America travel by train, which can be very dangerous. The numerous accidents that have occurred while riding the train has earned it the name La Bestia or The Beast.

Norwegian Chest
This intricately carved Norwegian Chest was made in 1830 and was brought to the U.S. in 1855 by Hanson and Gunhild Lovik from Norway. Its dimensions are 8.5 inches high, 12.12 inches wide, and 8.12 inches deep. Although not very big, it probably carried some of the family’s possessions. Photo courtesy of the Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum.

Emigrants [i.e. Immigrants] Landing at Ellis Island
This video titled, “Emigrants [i.e. Immigrants] Landing at Ellis Island,” was published by Thomas A. Edison, Inc. in 1903 and shows the ferryboat ‘William Meyers’ docking at Ellis Island and immigrants from Europe disembarking. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (http://www.loc.gov/item/00694367)
On the Tracks
The train pictured here is owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and is headed east. The photo was taken at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, near Marquette, Iowa in 2004. Courtesy of Sean Lamb

Section 2: Panel Label

Push Factors

“Push” factors are the events or situations that cause a person to leave their place of origin and look for somewhere else to live. There are many reasons why people would leave their homes to settle somewhere new. Some people leave looking for a new start for themselves or to provide more opportunities for their families. Others are forced to leave and are classified as political or war refugees.

(Section 2: Panel Label) Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

Subtheme Panel

Violence and War

War, famine, and natural disasters are forms of "push factors" that can force people from their countries with refugee status. Although refugees are initially settled in big cities, many refugees from Thailand, Myanmar, Somalia, and Bosnia have relocated to Iowa towns like Waterloo and Columbus Junction.

Other immigrants leave their home countries because of war, but are not recognized as refugees. Guatemala’s 36-year civil war left violence, economic insecurity, and social unrest in its wake. The war was later deemed a state-sponsored genocide, however, even in 1984 at a time when massacres and forced disappearances were a regular occurrence, the U.S. only had a three percent approval rate for political asylum seekers from Guatemala.

(Object 12 Label: Rubble following the Siege of Sarajevo in 1996)
Rubble following the Siege of Sarajevo in 1996
After Bosnia and Herzegovina attained independence from Yugoslavia, the city was besieged by the Bosnian Serbs, who wanted a new Bosnian Serb state, Republika Srpska. The siege lasted longer than the Bosnian war; the siege lasted from April 5, 1992, one day before the start of the war, to February 29, 1996, two months and fifteen days after the end of the war. An agreement was reached with the Bosnian Serbs in October of 1995, but peace was interrupted by further acts of hostility. The siege was officially lifted after the Bosnian Serbs left the city. The picture of above shows the devastation after the Siege of Sarajevo in 1996. Courtesy Hedwig Klawuttke

(Object 13 Label: A Wall of the Disappeared)

A Wall of the Disappeared
In Guatemala, streets are plastered with posters shown above. They are hung by groups like H.I.J.O.S, Hijos por la Identidad y la Justicia contra Olvido y el Silencio (the Children for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence). The posters feature pictures of people who were kidnapped and never seen again, or 'disappeared,' during the civil war from 1960-1996. The posters ask, “Where are they?” and proclaim, “For each and every one disappeared: neither forget nor forgive. For memory, truth, and justice.” The posters pictured here are located near the intersection of 12 Calle (12th Street) and 8A Avenida (8A Avenue), in Guatemala City. Photo taken August 2014. Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Subtheme Label)

Religious Dissidents
Religious persecution has been pushing people out of their homes for centuries. People of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian faith, among others, have left their home countries seeking a place they could settle and practice their beliefs without fear of maltreatment.

(Object 14 Label: 1637 Dutch Bible Cover)

1637 Dutch Bible Cover
A translation of the Bible was completed in the Netherlands in 1635 and was extremely important for Dutch Protestant churches. Pictured here is the cover of a 1637 Statenvertaling, or Statenbijbel (States Translation/State Bible). Calvinist dissidents, led by Dominie (Minister) Hendrik Scholte, broke away from the State Church in Holland in 1834. They believed the Church was too lax and modern in its policies and practices. Their persecution, which included fines, discrimination and ostracism, pushed the group to leave and settle in the area that is now Pella, Iowa. Photo available in the public domain

(Subtheme Label)
Societal Issues

Immigrants often leave their home countries because of a breakdown in their government. Many countries have seen a proliferation of violence or repression either by the state, paramilitary groups, or gangs. Violence further deteriorates the services usually provided by the state such as education and a viable economy, leading people to immigrate to the United States.

(Object 15 Label: Painting by Diego Rivera, “Glorious Victory”)

Painting by Diego Rivera, “Glorious Victory”
This painting by Diego Rivera titled, "Glorious Victory," signifies the breakdown of Guatemalan government after the CIA backed coup d’etat that overthrew Jacob Arbenz Guzman in 1954. Guzman was democratically elected and promoted land reforms to help peasants. The land reforms worked against the interests of the largest landholder in Guatemala, the United Fruit Company, a US corporation. Some scholars mark the coup as the beginning to Guatemala’s civil war that ended in 1996. The painting is on display at Casa De La Memoria (House of Memory) in Guatemala City. Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Section 3: Panel Label)

Pull Factors

Similar to the ‘push’ factors’ a ‘pull factor’ is what draws people to a particular area. There are many factors that prompt immigrants and refugees to settle in Iowa, they may be attracted by the state’s fertile farmland or be seeking work or educational opportunities. Many others are encouraged to come by friends and family who have already settled in Iowa.

(Subtheme Label)

Agriculture and Industry

When Iowa acquired statehood in 1846, its rich farmland was advertised to attract settlers. Early immigrants to the state settled on land that they would later buy. Farming continues to be an important part of the Iowa economy and many immigrants are hired by farmers. Others find work in Iowa’s Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program that contracts with Iowa’s estimated 2,500 farms. Some come because farming in their home country is no longer profitable. Many
immigrants and refugees arriving in the 21st century are recruited to work in meat processing plants like Tyson.

(Object 16 & 17 Label: two photos of farm machinery)

_Farming in Iowa_

_Farm implements used on a Northeast Iowa farm near Elgin in the 1930s and 1940s. Courtesy of Dona Peck_

(Subtheme Label)

**Education and the Workforce**

Immigrants and refugees often cite the educational opportunities available in the U.S. as a "pull factor." Some choose to settle in Iowa to provide their children with access to an education that was unavailable to them at home.

Many Iowa towns offer education services to immigrants and refugees through the local community school districts or through nearby colleges. In Postville, Iowa, residents can take Adult Literacy ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes or get help earning a GED through the local school district and Northeast Iowa Community College, NICC.

(Object 18 Label: _Global Literacy Rates from the UN Human Development Report_)

_Global Literacy Rates from the UN Human Development Report_

_Every year, the United Nations publishes reports on literacy, socio-economic conditions, expected years of schooling for males and females, population, life expectancy and labor force participation. Pictured here is the map of the 2011 Global Literacy Rates. This data shows striking disparities between some countries and can explain why many immigrants leave their home countries for educational opportunities. Courtesy of United Nations Development Program_

(Subtheme Label)

**Work and Entrepreneurship**

The possibility of finding or establishing employment is a factor that brings many people into Iowa. Immigrants, refugees, and indigenous Iowans add a variety of skills and ideas that enrich Iowa's workforce. Many start their own businesses, adding employment opportunities for other Iowa residents. They also boost the Iowa economy through paying taxes and buying consumer goods.
Meskwaki Bingo Hotel and Casino
The first Meskwaki Bingo Casino Hotel opened in 1992 in Tama, Iowa. Today the casino generates millions of dollars and attracts both in and out-of-state gamblers. Video available in the Public Domain

Object 20 Label: Picture of Tienda Tonitas)

New Storefronts
Postville, Iowa has seen many new storefronts like Tienda Tonitas featured above and restaurants like Taste of Mexico that cater to various ethnic populations within the town. Storefronts also serve another purpose in Postville, churches rent old stores and turn them into places of worship. Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Festival in Iowa)

Many towns with recent or historic immigrant populations host festivals as a way to celebrate their heritage. Festivals also serve the purpose of educating the public about that culture’s traditions and history. This goal is met by providing informational booths, showcasing handmade goods, the sharing of food, and through traditional dances. Music, competitions, fundraising, and sports are also important aspects of Iowa festivals. All the components listed are present at the annual Nordic Fest, a festival in Decorah, Iowa, pictured above, that celebrates many Iowans' Norwegian heritage.

(Object 21 Label: Nordic Fest) Courtesy of RaeAnn Swanson

(Object 22 Label: Video of Tulip Time)

Tulip Time, Pella, Iowa
This video is an advertisement for Pella’s annual Tulip Time, a festival featuring floats, traditional crafts, such as the carving of Klompen (wooden shoes) traditional Dutch dances and music, Dutch foods and, of course, tulips. Featured in the video is the 2011 Tulip Time. Video available in the public domain

(Subtheme Label)

Food at Festivals
Whether it is the curl of steam that escapes from a Bosnian burek (boo-rick) or pita, a meat or cheese filled pastry, or the taste of fresh baked challah (ha-lah), Jewish braided bread, there is something about sharing food that brings people together. Eating traditional foods is a way to learn about peoples’ culture, and many traditional foods have been adopted into Iowan cuisine. Eating competitions, such as this year’s matzah ball eating competition at the Jewish Food Fair in Des Moines, are often held at festivals in Iowa.

(Object 23 & 24 & 24.1 Label: Traditional foods)

**Traditional Foods in Iowa**

Poffertjes (po-fer-gis), pictured on the left, are Dutch treats similar to fluffy pancakes that are served with powdered sugar served at the Tulip Time festival in Pella. Bosnian burek, pictured in the middle, is a meat-filled pastry that is served in sections. Challah, pictured on the right, is a braided bread served on Jewish holidays and the Sabbath. *Photos in the public domain*

(Subtheme Label)

**Dancing at Iowa Festivals**

Dancing is an important aspect of Iowa Festivals. Some festivals, like the Meskwaki Powwow, use dancing to welcome guests and to get everyone involved. The traditional dances performed during the 2013 Meskwaki Powwow in Tama, Iowa include the Friendship Dance, which is performed in all tribes and welcomes guests to the event, the Harvest or Bean dance, which gives thanks to the Great Spirit for bountiful harvests, and the Buffalo Head Dance, which honors the buffalo and the Creator following each successful hunt.

(Object 25 Label: Meskwaki Powwow video)

**Meskwaki Powwow**

This video was filmed at the 2013 Meskwaki Powwow in Tama, Iowa. In 1923, the Meskwaki were forbidden by the United States government from performing any of their spiritual dances. They retaliated by hosting a huge powwow that turned into a very popular annual event. *Video available in the public domain.*

(Object 26 Label: Krajiski Teferic video)

**Krajiški Teferič**

Festival attendees join in a circle and dance to Bosnian music at the 2011 celebration of Krajiški Teferič (kra-yish-ki te-fer-ich) in Waterloo, Iowa. The large Bosnian population in Waterloo led
Zulfeta Rizvic to form a youth Bosnian dance troupe called K.U.D. Kolo (Cultural Artistic Assembly of Dance) that performed at the 2011 Krajiški Teferić and have performed over 500 times across the Midwest. Video available in the public domain.

(Subtheme Label)

**Festivals Strengthen Communities**

Festivals bring local people together and sometimes draw large crowds from surrounding cities, states and even countries. Some Bosnians will travel from Canada to Krajiški Teferić celebrations in the U.S. and vice versa. Festivals foster pride in the heritage being celebrated and within the Iowa community that is hosting the event. They also strengthen communities by raising funds. The money raised in fundraisers at festivals is used to update community buildings, strengthen community services, or for scholarships for local students. During World War II, the annual Tulip Time in Pella, Iowa was shortened and extra money was sent to Holland. Sports like soccer are played at festivals and bring communities together with friendly competition and teamwork.

(Obje...)

**Festival Latino, West Liberty**

West Liberty, Iowa’s first majority Hispanic town, is the hometown of the annual Festival Latino hosted by St. Joseph’s Catholic Church. The festival celebrates the heritage of the numerous Latin American countries in West Liberty, represented by the flags in the 2014 Festival Latino Flyer pictured above. The festival features music, dancing, and delicious foods. The competition for Festival Queen is an important part of Festival Latino and is also a fundraiser. The 2010 Queen raised $11,000 for renovating the Church. Courtesy of J. Manuel Galvez, El Trueque

(Conclusion Panel Label)

**Conclusion**

The idea that Iowa houses a homogeneous white population is a myth that needs to be dispelled. Immigrants, refugees, and Native Americans, provide diversity to state. They bring new ideas, languages, foods, beliefs, music, clothing and much more. These Iowans add to the workforce and can be a source of new jobs and revenue for the state. Immigrants and refugees who settle in Iowa educate other Iowans about their culture through festivals and heritage celebrations. Since the
days of the earliest settlers, Iowa has seen many different ethnic populations within its borders. Because Iowa has such a multicultural population, whether their ancestors are from Germany, the Netherlands, Latin America, Africa, or the Balkans, the idea that Iowa is a “white-washed” state is a misconception. Iowa Culture is continuously influenced by ever-changing demographics, adopts components of each ethnic group within its borders, and often celebrates its diversity.

(Object 28: Children Playing)

Timeline

700-1300: Effigy mounds were formed in the Northeast Corner of the state

1635: A translation of the Bible completed in the Netherlands

1825: Treaty of Prairie du Chien signed by Native American groups along the Mississippi who were being pressed for space by incoming settlers

1830: Indian Removal Act signed by President Andrew Jackson

1832: After the end of the Black Hawk War, the Sac and Fox tribes were combined into the “Sac and Fox Confederacy”

1834: Dutch Separatists split from the State Church in Holland. As a response, the State Church begins imprisoning, fining and otherwise persecuting the Separatists, including the arrest and fine of Dominie Hendrik Scholte.

1845: Most Meskwaki removed from Iowa and sent to a Kansas reservation.

August 1845: Great Famine spreads from Ireland to northern and central Europe, including Belgium, northern France, southern England, and Holland.

1846: Iowa becomes a state

April 1847: Hendrik Scholte and his followers depart Holland for the United States. Scholte and his family booked a steamer and arrived in 13 days, while his followers took regular ships and arrived in late May and early June.

August 1847: Scholte’s followers arrive in Pella, Iowa and construct temporary shelters until log cabins can be built.

1848: Jewish immigrants began settling in Iowa
1851: Law passed by Iowa government allows Meskwaki to purchase their own land and remain in Iowa, though the US government continues trying to force them out.

1857: Meskwaki tribe purchases 80 acres of land in Tama County.

1869: The pamphlet “Iowa: Home of the Immigrants” was printed that encouraged immigrants to come to Iowa. It was printed in English, Dutch, German, Swedish, and Danish.

1873: Temple B’nai Jeshrun was founded in Des Moines (This church hosts the Jewish Food Festival)

1910: There were only 590 Latino immigrants living in Iowa

1918: Creation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes

1923: Meskwaki were forbidden by the U.S. Government from performing spiritual dances, so they hosted a huge powwow, the first of the Annual Meskwaki Powwows.

January 1929: Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia under King Alexander I.

May, 1940: German occupation of the Netherlands

January, 1941: Twenty-seven Meskwaki enlist in the US Army. The Meskwaki were among at least seven tribes employed as ‘code talkers’ during the two world wars. The Meskwaki were employed in the North African campaign against Germany.

1943: Kingdom of Yugoslavia rebuilt as the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (DFY)

Winter of 1944-45: Dutch famine because of German blockade

May, 1945: Netherlands liberated when Germany surrenders

1945: DFY becomes the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)

May, 1946: Pella, Iowa Tulip Time festivities suspended. In lieu of the celebration, $100,000 was raised by community auction to aid the people of Holland.

May, 1947: Tulip Time festival resumes, Holland donates 1000 wooden shoes in gratitude for war relief

May, 1948: Holland sends tulip bulbs to Pella as further thanks.

1949: Effigy Mounds becomes a National Monument

1954: Coup d’état of Jacob Arbenz Guzman in Guatemala

1960: Official beginning to the Guatemalan Civil War


1982-4: Guatemala experienced the majority of massacres of the Civil War during these years, but the U.S. had a three percent approval rate of political asylum seekers from Guatemala
1987: Aaron Rubashkin bought the meatpacking plant that he named Agriprocessors, Inc. in Postville, Iowa

1987: First Jewish Food Fair was held in Des Moines

1988: Violence in Somalia leads people to leave as refugees, the violence later leads to Civil War

1991: Official date of Civil War in Somalia

June 27 - July 7, 1991: Ten-day Slovenian Independence War marks the start of the Yugoslav Wars and the beginning of the breakup of Yugoslavia.

1992: Famine in Somalia

1992: Meskwaki Bingo Hotel and Casino Opens in Tama, Iowa

April 5, 1992: Bosnian capitol Sarajevo besieged by Bosnian Serbs

April 6, 1992: Outbreak of the Bosnian War.

December 14, 1995: Official end of Bosnian War

1996: Official end to Guatemala’s Civil War. During the 36 years of war, 45,000 people were disappeared, 200,000 people were killed, and 1.5 million people were displaced.

February 29, 1996: Date of official lifting of siege of Sarajevo. Bosnian Serb forces leave city.

2002: The Vermeer Mill, an icon in Pella, Iowa was constructed

2004: K.U.D. Kolo the Bosnian dancing troupe was formed in Waterloo by Zulfeta Rizvic

2005: CAFTA-DR was approved and flooded Central American countries with U.S. corn

2006: First Annual Festival Latino in West Liberty, Iowa

2006: The Swift & Company plant pork processing plant was raided in Marshalltown, Iowa and 90 people, immigrants without proper documentation, were arrested.

2008: Postville, Iowa experienced the largest work site raid to date at Agriprocessors, Inc. Nearly four hundred people, immigrants without proper documentation, were arrested.

November 15, 2008: Code Talkers Recognition Act signed by President George W. Bush to recognize all Native American tribes employed as code talkers during both world wars

2009: AgriStar, formerly Agriprocessors, in Postville, Iowa began recruiting Somali workers from the Minneapolis, MN area

2010-2012: Famine in Somalia that killed nearly 260,000 people

2011: Waterloo hosted Krajiski Teferic a large Bosnian gathering
2013: This was the first year of the Diversity Celebration in Postville as it is today. Previous festivals were sponsored by various groups and held in various locations in town. The Taste of Postville was also an important celebration in Postville.

2013: The Iowa Holocaust Memorial was constructed in Des Moines, Iowa

Bibliography


