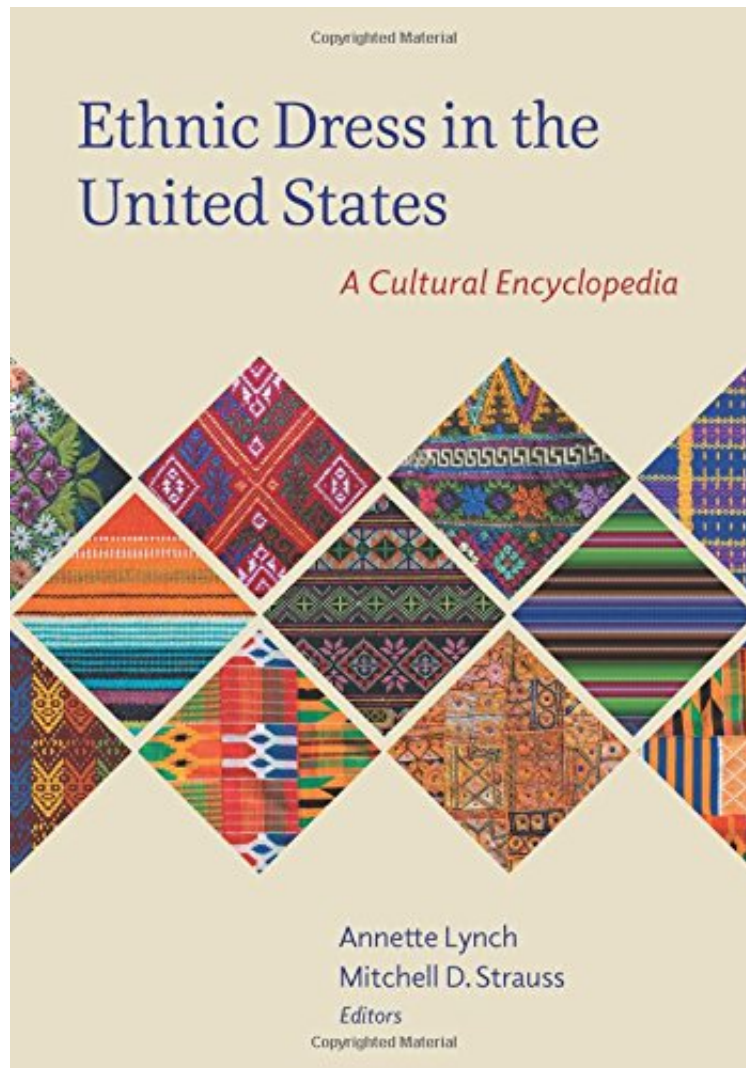


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Ethnic Dress in the United States: A Cultural Encyclopedia

*Helen Ritchie freelance decorative arts researcher
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Helen Ritchie freelance decorative arts researcher : Ethnic Dress in the United States: A Cultural Encyclopedia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ethnic Dress in the United States: A Cultural Encyclopedia:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A major disappointment for me is the lack of good visualsBy Kindle CustomerThe content is incredibly rich and well researched. A major disappointment for me is the lack of good visuals. Don't be fooled by the cover, there are no color photographs, only a sparse variety of about a dozen or so very small pen and ink drawings that are kind of ugly.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Valerie DavisEssential for my textile research library.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Don't waste

your money; don't waste your time. By ddd0302 This book has some very good individual articles, but as a whole it is a very poor work. First of all the idea of "what is ethnic" is not well established. Items such as cloche hat and oxford shirt are included and as they are part of the mainstream fashion story, why are they here? There is an egregious lack of good visuals; what illustrations are included are rather silly looking secondary research line drawings. There are no primary source visuals in the book. Other aspects are troublesome. Hmong people's attire is documented well, while Tibetan's are not (by the way editors there are Tibetans in the US as well.) The udeng of Bali is considered as essentially the same as Javanese blangkon - this is not only inaccurate but offensive to the ethnic groups involved. While I could detail many more such gaffes, the greatest exception I have for the articles is the article on hijab; as an encyclopedia, there should be facts only, yet this article includes interpretation and opinion. Fine for a conference paper, but this is not appropriate. I read this book cover to cover and repeatedly I found a poorly researched article, insufficient bibliographic details, as well as poorly delineated articles. With so many good scholars contributing, I had high hopes for this book; sadly those hopes were dashed.

The clothes we wear tell stories about us and are often imbued with cultural meanings specific to our ethnic heritage. This concise A-to-Z encyclopedia explores 150 different and distinct items of ethnic dress, their history, and their cultural significance within the United States. The clothing artifacts documented here have been or are now regularly worn by Americans as everyday clothing, fashion, ethnic or religious identifiers, or style statements. They embody the cultural history of the United States and its peoples, from Native Americans, white Anglo colonists, and forcibly relocated black slaves to the influx of immigrants from around the world. Entries consider how dress items may serve as symbolic linkages to home country and family or worn as visible forms of opposition to dominant cultural norms. Taken together, they offer insight into the ethnic-based core ideologies, myths, and cultural codes that have played a role in the formation and continued story of the United States.

One way that multicultural diversity in the United States can be seen is by observing past and present ethnic influences on contemporary fashion. Like much of the US population, anorak parkas, Ugg boots, pashmina shawls, and dashikisto name just a few of the topics covered in this concise volume all came from somewhere else. More than 150 diverse and unique clothing items, including headwear, shoes, jewelry, and accessories, are described in short signed essays by contributors with academic credentials or professional interests in fashion and costume. Each signed entry provides a brief history of the artifact's origins, how it has been interpreted in the US, and the influences or impact it may have had on popular dress and culture. The entries provide ample see also and compare to cross-references, along with short lists of further readings. Selected entries are accompanied by small but detailed black-and-white ink drawings. The inclination of some contributors to provide examples of ethnic dress worn by particular film and music celebrities tends to date some of the entries. Based on the content and writing, this resource seems most appropriate for public libraries and secondary-school reference collections. Summing Up: Recommended. General readers. (CHOICE) The information is highly engaging and challenges the beliefs Americans may hold about their own culture. . . . Ethnic Dress in the USA is written for a general audience making it appropriate for public libraries, secondary schools and community college libraries, as well as colleges and universities with programmes in textiles, culture and history. (Reference s) Ethnic Dress in the United States is the go-to resource for anyone who has ever wondered where a particular clothing item or style originated. This work also provides an entry into further exploration of the diverse ethnic groups that continue to enrich the culture of the United States through the introduction and transformation of traditional clothing into Western fashion. (Laura Kidd, Southern Illinois University Carbondale) About the Author Annette Lynch is a professor in the Textile and Apparel Program at the University of Northern Iowa. Her research focuses on the role of dress and appearance in negotiating gender role transformation and cultural change, particularly within the United States. Her book Dress, Gender and Cultural Change examined the role of dress worn within rites of passage in modifying and reinventing tradition and gender ideals for Hmong and African American teenagers and young adults. She has also written extensively on the mainstreaming of porn culture into fashion and identity constructions in the new millennium. Mitchell D. Strauss is professor of textiles and apparel at the University of Northern Iowa. He has been involved in education and consulting with the textile industry for more than thirty years. He has also served as the dean of the Institute of Textile Technology, department head of Design, Textiles and Interior Design at Kansas State University, and director of textile research at Air Products Chemicals. His most recent scholarship has included field research exploring the meaning of dress among Confederate Civil War re-enactors, as well as coauthoring with Dr. Lynch Changing Fashion: A Critical Introduction to Trend Analysis and Meaning.