

# TO AMERICA

similar to those that motivated earlier immigrants

BY SAM ROBERTS

and Santa Fe, in what are now Florida and New Mexico.

By 1776, most Americans were immigrants, or their descendants, from the British Isles. The majority were white Anglo-Saxon Protestants who came in search of economic opportunity or to escape religious or political persecution. But the population also included large numbers of Dutch, Spanish, and Germans, in addition to American Indians, whose ancestors came from Asia thousands of years ago, and blacks, who were brought from Africa as slaves beginning in 1619.

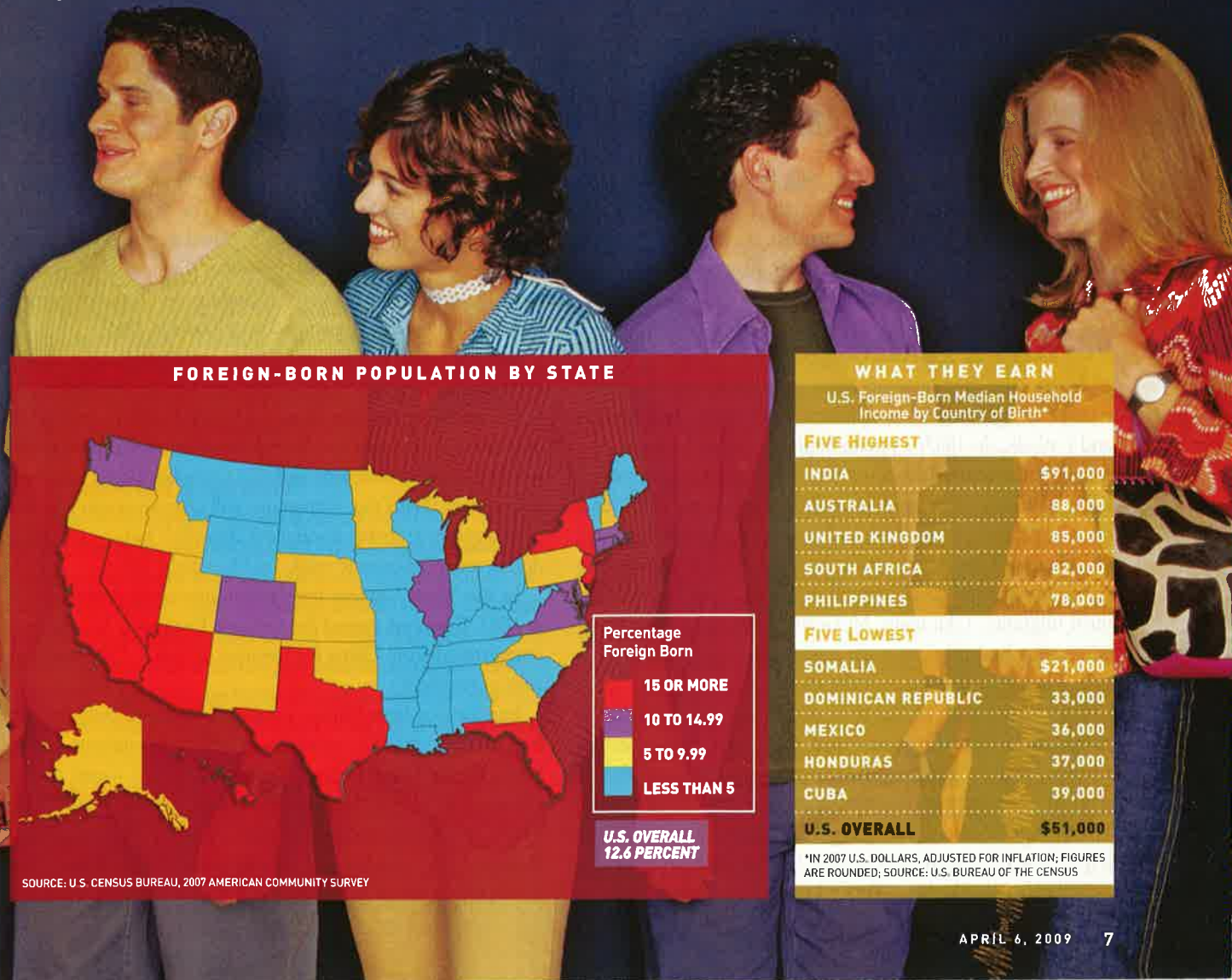
Most Americans today can trace their ancestry back to immigrants at some point. But despite our heritage as a

nation of immigrants, Americans have often been wary about welcoming foreigners.

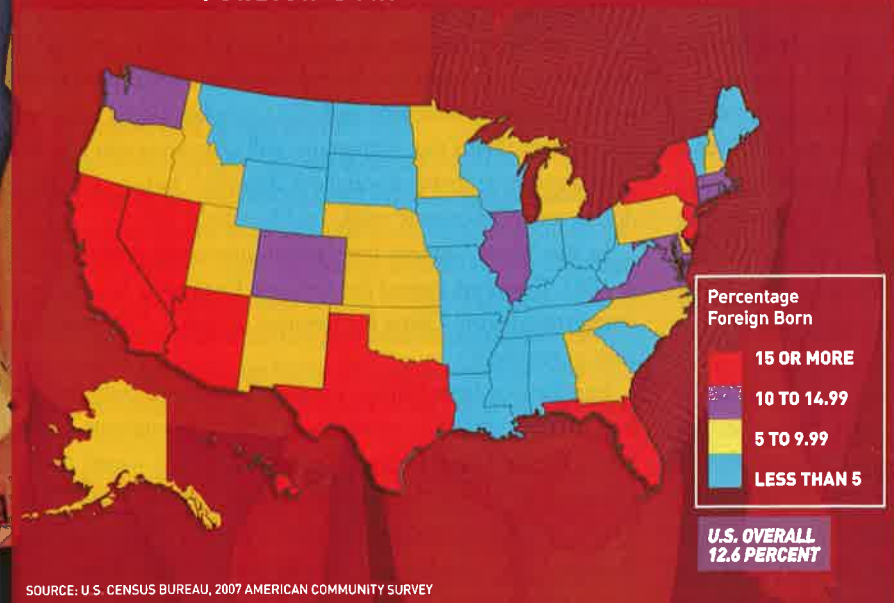
## 'A COLONY OF ALIENS'

Benjamin Franklin worried more than 200 years ago that German immigrants were taking over his home state. "Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a colony of aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to

*Sam Roberts is urban affairs correspondent for The New York Times; additional reporting by Sewell Chan and David Leonhardt.*



### FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION BY STATE



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2007 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

### WHAT THEY EARN

U.S. Foreign-Born Median Household Income by Country of Birth\*

#### FIVE HIGHEST

INDIA	\$91,000
AUSTRALIA	88,000
UNITED KINGDOM	85,000
SOUTH AFRICA	82,000
PHILIPPINES	78,000

#### FIVE LOWEST

SOMALIA	\$21,000
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	33,000
MEXICO	36,000
HONDURAS	37,000
CUBA	39,000

**U.S. OVERALL \$51,000**

\*IN 2007 U.S. DOLLARS, ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION; FIGURES ARE ROUNDED; SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS