

## Summary of Bernard Wong's Presentation

Drawing from my research on the Chinese in New York, San Francisco and Silicon Valley, I will examine the formation and development of the Chinese community in the U.S. first and then discuss changing strategies used in the past 160 years. The paths from sojourners to multicultural citizenship used by them indicate the dynamics interplay of factors emanating from the sending, receiving countries and the global economy. Relevant theoretical and ethnographic issues for the study of overseas Chinese will be highlighted and scrutinized.

### Outline

#### A Brief History of the Chinese in America

- 4<sup>th</sup> century AD?
- more than a thousand years ago?
- reliable records show the first large influx began from the 1850s – increased until the implementation of the Chinese Exclusion Act
- bachelor society until 1945 with the implementation of the GI Fiancée Act when wives and families of the Chinese started to arrive in Chinatowns
- relocation, ethnic businesses and Chinatowns as adaptive strategies from Exclusion Era until 1965
- 1965 Immigration Reform Act: Influx of new immigrants
- post 1965: H1B visas and the high-tech professionals

#### New Changes in Social Structure and Adaptive Strategies

- 50/50 ethnic businesses vs professional sectors
- political and social adjustments: *luo-ye-sheng gen* to *luo-di-sheng-gen*; from sojourners (with a small group wanting to be assimilated and accepted – names changed from Chen to Chin, from Li to Leigh, from Wong to Wrong – the melting pot model...) then recently to multicultural citizens (American citizenship with a special cultural heritage)
- coalition politics, 20/80 projects, interest groups like OCA, Committee of 100, public offices.....
- globalization activities

#### Issues and Comments relevant to the study of the overseas Chinese

- Is there one Chinese Diaspora or many?
- Negotiations and Interface between the global and local
- The meaning of being a Chinese in the Diaspora
- Globalization, Diversification, Hybridity and Multicultural Citizenship