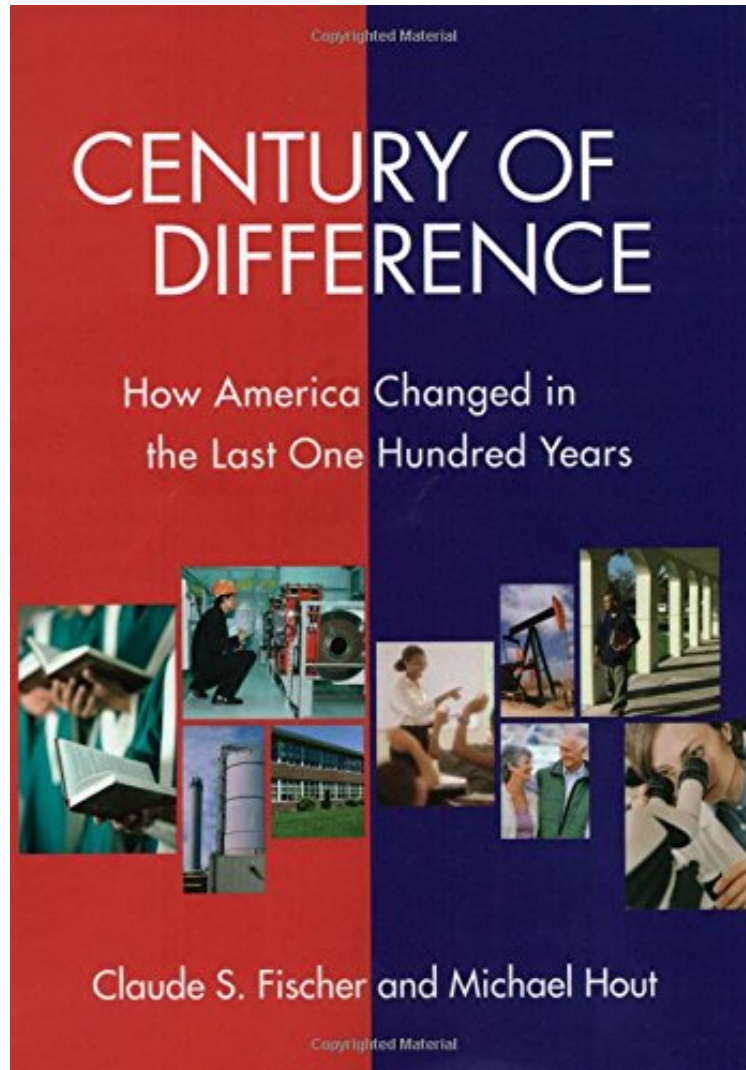


(Read free) Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years

Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years

Claude S. Fischer, Michael Hout
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#182316 in Books Russell Sage Foundation 2008-10-16Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.50 x 6.00l, 1.38 #File Name: 0871543680421 pages | File size: 32.Mb

Claude S. Fischer, Michael Hout : Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years:

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Quick, clear, objective, interesting sociological overview of what America is like todayBy Andy RowellBerkeley sociology professors Fischer and Hout give a great overview of what America is like and how it changed from 1900 to 2000 using quality survey data. They identify and summarize trends but mostly refrain from drawing strong conclusions. They write well and the chapters are pleasantly short.Why buy the

book?(1) This is an excellent resource for when you need a quote or a statistic about something you are researching. This is a quality, reputable resource that can be quoted in academic papers. Some of this information you could find on the internet but you would not be sure of its quality, nor if the statistics were being interpreted correctly.(2) One cannot help but perceive the world from one's own experiences and observations. Fischer and Hout fill in that perspective with quality data. For example, they give the statistical data about how perceptions about women in the workplace have changed, how church affiliation has changed, how the attainment of college degrees have changed, and how income disparity has changed. They also provide the relevant data from the year 2000. Century of Difference helps put into perspective the statistics and poll data that one hears on the news. Conclusion: We were assigned this book in the first week of a sociology course at Duke University. Century of Difference helps college students begin to see the ways patterns of work, education, race, geography, religion and values have changed in the past 100 years in the U.S.A. If you want to be a more thoughtful person, read these 10 chapters (which will take you a 1/2 hour each). You won't be blown away, but you will be a better thinker and more interesting conversationalist.

In every generation, Americans have worried about the solidarity of the nation. Since the days of the Mayflower, those already settled here have wondered how newcomers with different cultures, values, and (frequently) skin color would influence America. Would the new groups create polarization and disharmony? Thus far, the United States has a remarkable track record of incorporating new people into American society, but acceptance and assimilation have never meant equality. In Century of Difference, Claude Fischer and Michael Hout provide a compelling and often surprising new take on the divisions and commonalities among the American public over the tumultuous course of the twentieth century. Using a hundred years worth of census and opinion poll data, Century of Difference shows how the social, cultural, and economic fault lines in American life shifted in the last century. It demonstrates how distinctions that once loomed large later dissipated, only to be replaced by new ones. Fischer and Hout find that differences among groups by education, age, and income expanded, while those by gender, region, national origin, and, even in some ways, race narrowed. As the twentieth century opened, a person's national origin was of paramount importance, with hostilities running high against Africans, Chinese, and southern and eastern Europeans. Today, diverse ancestries are celebrated with parades. More important than ancestry for today's Americans is their level of schooling. Americans with advanced degrees are increasingly putting distance between themselves and the rest of society in both a literal and a figurative sense. Differences in educational attainment are tied to expanding inequalities in earnings, job quality, and neighborhoods. Still, there is much that ties all Americans together. Century of Difference knocks down myths about a growing culture war. Using seventy years of survey data, Fischer and Hout show that Americans did not become more fragmented over values in the late-twentieth century, but rather were united over shared ideals of self-reliance, family, and even religion. As public debate has flared up over such matters as immigration restrictions, the role of government in redistributing resources to the poor, and the role of religion in public life, it is important to take stock of the divisions and linkages that have typified the U.S. population over time. Century of Difference lucidly profiles the evolution of American social and cultural differences over the last century, examining the shifting importance of education, marital status, race, ancestry, gender, and other factors on the lives of Americans past and present. A Volume in the Russell Sage Foundation Census Series

About the Author CLAUDE S. FISCHER is professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. MICHAEL HOUT is professor of sociology at the University of California, Berkeley.