

PERMANENT RESIDENT CARD

NAME: H.B.

BIRTHPLACE: CHINA

BIRTH DATE: SEPTEMBER 1998

RESIDENCE: UNITED STATES



I don't really identify with the term immigrant even though I am one.

I was adopted so young,
that I don't have memories
of anything but America.

It's quite common for Chinese girls to be adopted internationally, especially in my age range with the one child policy. China has stopped that though and also ended all foreign adoptions because of a shortage of girls. Maybe some people might praise my parents for doing an interracial international adoption but I don't think it deserves praise.

They were people who wanted a baby.

They loved me like any other parents would.

I never felt different from them other than the obvious lol. But they're my parents. End of story. I think some people see interracial adoption as some big "traumatic" thing but I think that concept only divides rather than unifies.

I don't really feel a loss of my culture or heritage because I've always known about it. It's not some big taboo. And I've gotten to reconnect to it by studying Chinese and visiting abroad. But at the end of the day I feel like an American who is also proud of my Chinese descent.

[illegible]

Moving Documents

Designed by Ibby Farooq

A collection of documents related to immigration, with the words of three immigrants of different backgrounds and identities replacing the words and checklists on the various forms, cards, and books they encountered during the immigration process.

By highlighting their words and experiences above the bureaucratic processes they went through, *Moving Documents* aims to highlight its subjects' perspectives, experiences, and humanity.

Identifying information of the subjects have been anonymized.

This publication is designed to be read starting in any order, with each document format acting as a self-contained story about a specific person. Together, however, the documents speak to the diversity of experiences in immigrants.





Credits

Thank you to H.B., K.R., S.F., and L.S. for providing your words. This publication would not have been possible without your contributions.

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USCIS; Various Documents and Logos



Public Law 106-395
106th Congress

An Act

to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for the acquisition of citizenship by children born outside the United States and for other purposes.

Bill Clinton signed a law that allowed internationally adopted children adopted with at least one US citizen parent to become automatically naturalized when they step foot onto US soil. (At least that's how it was explained to me.)

This Act is known as the "Child Citizenship Act of 2001".

TITLE I

CHILD CITIZENSHIP

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

SEC. 2. CITIZENSHIP OF CHILDREN OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Whenever an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence is adopted by a United States citizen, the child shall be deemed to be a citizen of the United States at the time of adoption.

(b) CITIZENSHIP OF CHILDREN OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS.—Whenever an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence is adopted by a United States citizen, the child shall be deemed to be a citizen of the United States at the time of adoption.

I remember going to my grandparents' house where they threw me a party. I remember wearing red, white, and blue, and there were red, white, and blue star balloons. I think there was cake? I don't really remember much since I was about 3 or 4. I didn't really know what was happening and thought we were celebrating the 4th of July. It wasn't until I was older and looking through my scrapbooks that I realized what that party was.

"(2) The child is under the age of 18.

"(3) The child is residing in the United States in the legal and physical custody of the citizen parent.

admission for permanent residence.

"(b) Subsection (a) shall apply to a child who is a United States citizen parent if the child is not otherwise eligible for citizenship under section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act.



APPLICATION FOR NATURALIZATION

Department of Homeland Security
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

Part 1. Information About Your Eligibility (Select only one box to identify the basis of your eligibility or your Form N-400 may be delayed or rejected.)

1. Reason for Filing (Please see Instructions for eligibility requirements under each provision.):

A. General Provision



Part 2. Information About You (Person applying for naturalization)

Name: K.R.

I am Indian by ethnicity, but I was born in Hong Kong. When I was about a year old, my family moved to Canada, and when I was around four, we moved to the United States. I spent my childhood traveling, spending the school year in America and the summer months in India with my extended family.

Despite the fact that I've been living here since I was four, I didn't properly get my citizenship until around eighteen years later. Before I turned 18, I was able to stay in the country because my parents were citizens. And considering I've been here so long, you'd think it would be pretty simple to get my citizenship after my 18th birthday. The problem

is that along with being an immigrant, I am transgender, and in the time between my seventeenth and eighteenth birthday, I began the process of legally transitioning. Because of the transphobic laws in my birth country, I am unable to change my birth certificate, but because I now passed as male, I needed my current documentation to match my identity, both because it's who I really am and for my own safety.

Because of this mishmash of circumstances, once I turned eighteen and was no longer under my parents' protection, from a legal standpoint I kind of did not exist. I wasn't allowed to be male, but I was now too much of a freak to be

female. Hilariously, along with this fun new situation, the government also let me know that I'd been added to the draft. When it comes to my rights and personal safety, they're fine with me being in legal limbo, but they had to be just trans inclusive enough to add me to their imperial war machine.



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Part 3. Biographic Information

I've been an immigrant since before I could remember, and both my parents are immigrants. The culture in my household and the culture in my country of residence were never going to match. But it is definitely a fundamental part of my life. I would not be the same person if I hadn't grown up trying to hold onto a past that wasn't quite mine, or if I didn't have that quiet, innate sense of alienation growing up. (Then again, I'm trans and autistic, so that was always going to be with me.) I do also think these are things with positive impacts, though it's also definitely had negative

ones. Too many "true Americans", and in fact patriots of every country, are deeply entitled and entrenched in their worldview because they've never been forced to challenge it.

Honestly, I'm a little bitter. I do identify with being an immigrant, but it also feels like a title that doesn't help me at all. It marks me as an outcast, both here and in my "home" country that has never really been a home for me.

I'm not American enough for America and I'm not Indian enough for India. America demands that I assimilate by

giving up the last vestiges of my culture that I have left. Instead, I have refused to engage with American culture. I stand by the reasons I choose to do this, but it does often feel like I'm left with no culture at all to fall back on.

When I came out as trans my parents essentially disappeared me from the community at large to "protect" me, and so I lost any tenuous grasp I had to a community.

I don't know how many of my parents' friends even know that they have two sons.

I'd probably have a different relationship to my gender identity if I'd grown up in India because, like, queer culture here is very, very white. And though the trans community has accepted me more than the Indian one, I feel like it's damaged my ability to think of myself and people like me as queer

I didn't really have any transition inspirations like I saw all the time with baby gays because you could only find stuff about white guys transitioning. part of why I have an American name and an Indian one is because I don't think either name can encapsulate who I am by itself.

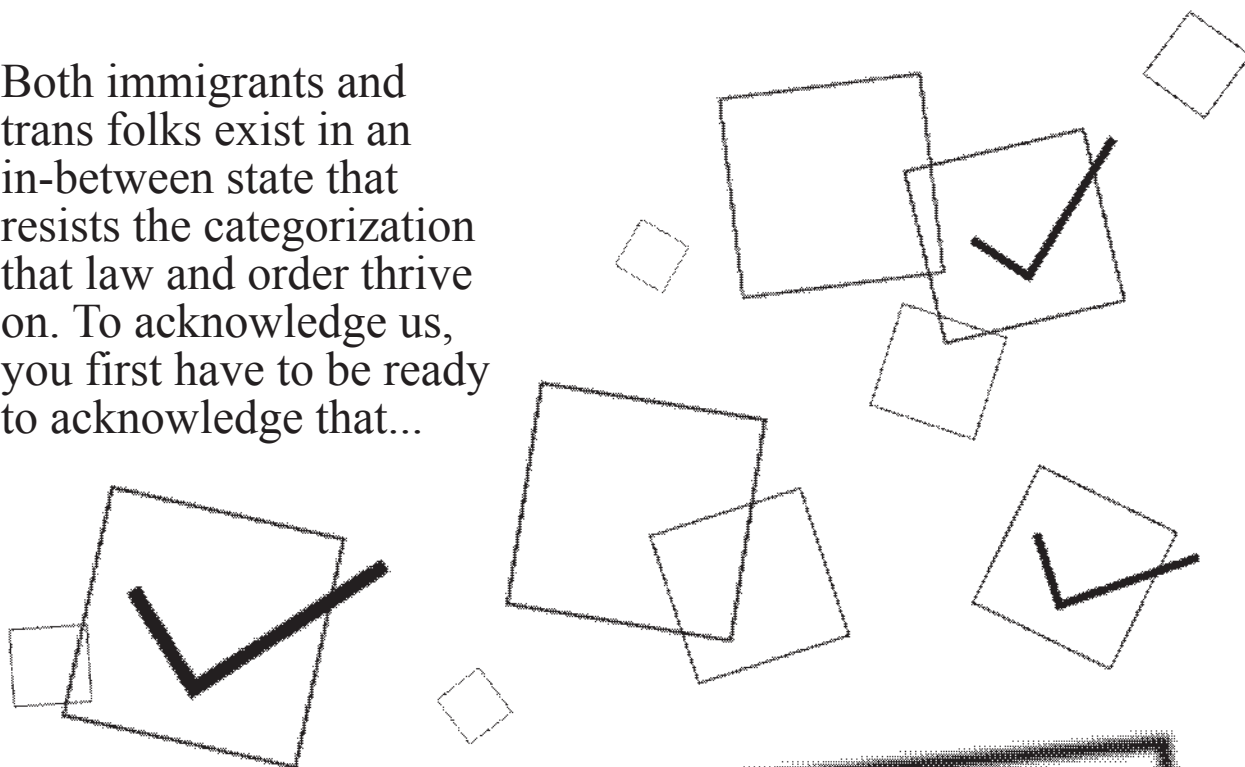
I'm a mishmash of dozens of different cultural puzzle pieces stuffed into a human-shaped meat sack.



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Both immigrants and trans folks exist in an in-between state that resists the categorization that law and order thrive on. To acknowledge us, you first have to be ready to acknowledge that...



**...there isn't
that big a gap
between male
and female,
or between Us
and Them.**