

## A Chinaman's Chance Reflections On the American Dream By Eric Liu

In the story “A Chinaman's Chance Reflections On the American Dream” the author Eric Liu, examines his identity against the difference between both Chinese and American cultures. Steeped as he was in Western democratic values, Liu realized that his parents had also imbued him with a strong sense of the “rite, social context and obligation” that defined Chinese society. Even his home exposure to Chinese language, with its “implied meanings freighted terseness,” had influenced his writing and his way of thinking. While Liu’s love for America was beyond question, he also recognized that it was shaped more by a Chinese-inflected desire to belong to a whole rather than by some abstract idea of America. Yet in a world where the U.S. now competes with an aggressively modernizing China, America still retains the cultural edge. The key is not for the U.S. to become more like China, which Liu sees as unable to synthesize cultural differences. Rather, it is to become even more open to combining “new genes and memes” and in so doing, demonstrate its global indispensability.