

I Am A Californian
by Alexander Lancaster

Born in Long Beach,
Seventeen Septembers past
Living in a state of diversity.
The son of two cultures,
Racially mixed,
A product of two continents,
I am a Californian.

From the fruited plains of the Midwest,
The sugar fields of Cuba,
The Black Forest of Germany,
Two migrating families,
Seeking new life, a new start,
They join up here and I am made,
I am a Californian.

People stereotype me as Hispanic,
Others think I am white,
I change the bubbles on standardized tests,
Ethnicity and race are two different things,
My identity will always remain the same,
For I always remember,
I am a Californian.

My roots are deep in the soil,
The ground that I walk on,
The air that I breathe,
Does not know me as white,
Does not call me Hispanic,
Nor am I Cuban to nature,
I am a Californian.

Like an onion I am layered,
With culture and race,
A layer of island,
A Grimm's fairy tale,
A farm at the core,
An attitude that tells others,
I am a Californian.

Part of a lineage that goes back generations,
Heritage is important to my identity,
I am a mix of two worlds,
A clashing of cultures,
A body of traits,
An individual who knows,
I am a Californian.

12th Grade, Woodrow Wilson High School