Coming from a diverse elementary and high school, my interest in other cultures has always been relatively high compared to those who might have not been as fortunate to have had the same experiences as I have so luckily had. However, by growing up in such a diverse group of friends I learned that some people did not like other people not because of who they were but simply where they were from. One of my best friends as a child was a Chinese-American who once told me at the age of 9 how he did not like the Japanese. When asked why, he simply replied by telling me he had overheard his parents say that. It was not until a few years later did he actually tell me the reason for saying such a comment. As it turns out, during World War II much destruction and havoc was wreaked upon China and Korea from by the Japanese. Stories of rape and mass murder by the Japanese were well known accounts told by my friends’ family. Up to then, my best friend at the time admitted to disliking the Japanese for the same reason, despite the fact that they [the Japanese] had never done any harm to him. This
hate from events that had taken place nearly 60 years ago was still alive and pulsating through my friend. Stemming from this same interest did my curiosity to learn what causes certain groups to hate each other evolve into a research project I would most definitely be eager to pursue. The notion that hate still exists within people from events that did not happen in their lifetime was the basis for my research. Throughout the research we will come across different personal accounts and will discover whether an ethnic animosity still exists between young generation Indians and Pakistanis and if so to what extent.

The significance of these two ethnic groups for me began when I was still in grammar school. During that time, my sister’s best friend was Pakistani. During a casual conversation did she tell me about a time when she began to poke fun at her friend by calling her Indian instead of Pakistani and how her Pakistani friend responded by playfully yelling at her telling her she would rather be dead than to be called an Indian. At a time when I was still ignorant, I did not know what to think of that statement; much less have the courage to ask my sister why her best friend had said what she said in fear of being labeled as ignorant, even though I clearly was. It was up until high school that I read about Indian history and discovered that India and Pakistan were at one time one nation and due to some war they split up. Still, not much information had been gathered to answer the question of why people of Pakistani descent would cringe at the thought of being called Indian, and quite honestly I was not too concerned at the time to figure it out. This all changed when I entered college and began to spend some time with my Indian friend during my Algebra class. I will never forget the day during the first few
weeks of school when I made the disastrous mistake of asking him whether he was
Pakistani. Upon finishing asking that absolute stupidity of a question, my friend turned
to me with flaring eyes and nostrils and replied by saying: “Do I look Pakistani man?!
Don’t you ever call me that again! I am Indian!”. Much in shock I did not know whether
he was being truly serious or maybe overreacting. While smirking I apologized and
slowly turned away. At that moment I knew there was much more to Indian and
Pakistani relations than a simple, minute dislike. Rather, it was something much deeper
than, say, a rivalry. Judging from the responses my sister’s Pakistani friend and my
Indian friend I knew there had to be some historical causes that I would someday wish
to figure out.

As mentioned earlier, this research’s primary focus was to discover whether or not there
still exists an ethnic animosity (similar to my Chinese friend’s hatred towards the
Japanese) between young generation Indians and Pakistanis living in the Chicago land
area, regardless of whether these young generation Indians or Pakistanis were born in
the United States, India or Pakistan. The methods I used to collect my data included
personal interviews as well as surveys. However, with such techniques come certain
limitations on my research. First of all, the pool of interviewees is relatively small. For
the same reason, there were only a few surveys filled out. Second of all, for the same
reason as stated above, these interviewees are not necessarily representative of the
Indian and Pakistani population in the Chicago land area as a whole. Third of all, either
all, some or none of the interviewees could have been bias, possibly causing some skew
in the results. Finally, being that this is a first project of its kind for the author of this
research, the setting and the interviews could have been to a certain degree informal, possibly causing the interviewees to give dishonest answers which could have inadvertently affected the outcome of the results.

Before being asked questions, a simple survey was handed to the interviewee to better understand who our interviewees were and where they come from in regards to India/Pakistan as well as in the Chicago land area. The questions asked along with a choice of answers in the survey go as follows:

*Sex:* Male Female

*Age:* 0-12 13-17 18-25 36-44 45-64 65+

*Economic class you best describe yourself to be in:* Upper-Upper Upper-Middle Upper-Lower Middle-Upper Middle-Middle Middle-Lower Lower-Upper Lower-Middle Lower-Lower

*Ethnicity:* Indian Pakistani

*Place of birth:* India Pakistan USA

*Current permanent residence:* India Pakistan USA (City/Suburb, State)

The results of those surveyed are as follows:

- 4/7 (57.14%) were female, 3/7 (42.86%) were male
- 7/7 (100%) were between the ages of 18-25

- 2/7 (28.57%) considered themselves to be of Upper-Middle class, 1/7 (14.29%) considered themselves to be of Upper-Lower class, 2/7 (28.57%) considered themselves to be of Middle-Upper class, and 2/7 (28.57%) considered themselves to be of Middle-Lower class

- 4/7 (57.14%) were of Indian ethnicity, 3/7 (42.86%) were of Pakistani ethnicity

- 2/7 (28.57%) were born in India, 2/7 (28.57%) were born in Pakistan and 3/7 (42.86%) were born in the US

- 4/7 (57.14%) currently reside in Chicago land suburbs, 1/7 (14.29%) currently reside in Chicago and 2/7 (28.57%) chose not to answer

The results logic behind the questions in the survey were to distinguish whether the level of ethnic animosity relates to their sex, age, economic class, ethnicity, place of birth and their current place of residence. Of all these factors, I am most interested in finding out whether their economic class has any impact whatsoever on their attitudes towards the people of the rival culture.

The actual interview questions preceded the interview questions. Depending on the interview, some questions were modified while others were added on or simply not asked at all. The following are the basic questions that were to be asked prior to commencing the interview:
1. Growing up, what were your family’s (be it nuclear or extended) views towards people of Indian/Pakistani culture?

2. Do you share your family’s views? What are your personal views? Do your friends share your point of view?

3. Have you ever visited India/Pakistan, and if so how often do you go? Do you notice any difference between attitudes teenagers over there have towards people of Indian/Pakistani culture and the attitudes teenagers have in the United States?

4. To the best of your knowledge, what events led to the creation of Pakistan?

5. What is your opinion on the future relations between India and Pakistan? Do you see anything positive in the near future? Please explain.

6. Any questions or comments?

The answers greatly varied from those with much hostility to those that had great pacifism. For the sake of the reader, the answers given by the two groups will be divided. I will begin by analyzing information given by the three Pakistani individuals. For privacy purposes, I will give the Pakistani individuals pseudonyms. These pseudonyms will be Mary, Rachael and Ivan. Furthermore, to better conserve space, only the most important passages will be written down.

When asked on their family’s views towards people of Indian culture, Maria stated how her parents never encouraged her or to even unintentionally persuaded her to dislike
Indians. Her father came to the United States as a teenager to attend school and was submerged into a very diverse population. She accredits his lack of hate towards Indians to his exposure to different cultures and ethnicities in the United States at a young age.

Rachael, on the other hand, explains to me in detail how her parents have always had some sort of rival feeling against Indians. When asked to give me examples, Rachael answered by saying that her parents always claim Paki’s, as she calls them, have the better culture in regards to food and clothes. She also explains how most of this animosity does not necessarily stem from the fact that they are Indian, instead that this animosity is attributed to different religions (Pakistan being predominantly Muslim and India being predominantly Hindu).

Ivan is more of a combination of both Mary’s and Rachael’s parents. He states that although his parents never really befriended Indians, they rarely, if ever, criticize them either. He explains how it is more of a “if they don’t bother us, we won’t bother them” type of attitude.

I then followed this question by asking them what their own personal views on Indians were. Maria said that, again, thanks to her dad she never grew up with that mentality of “oh, you HAVE to hate Indians”. Interesting enough, however, she made a point of stating that she herself has been a victim of name calling by some members of an Indian fraternity (she did not specify which fraternity). According to her, one day while at a bar, her and her Indian friend were approached by some Indian guys and began talking to them. When asked she [Maria] was from, she replied by saying she was from
Pakistan. Immediately these guys began making fun of her telling her things such as “oh, we kicked you out of our country” and other stuff that she felt was very disrespectful. She further comments on how she sees a lot of Indian guys doing this to Pakistani girls and yet she says one would never see a Pakistani boy do that to an Indian girl. She justifies her statement by saying that that scenario would not likely happen due to there being so few Pakistanis at the U of I campus in comparison to the Indian population as well as there being so much stigma attached to them as it is and doing something like that would only make things worse.

Rachael, on the other hand, does not have any negative attitudes against Indians. On the contrary, she admits to having many Indian friends. Unlike her parents and grandparents, Rachael believes her generation does not dwell on that same prejudice their elders do and believes it will only get better as time goes by.

Ivan, like Rachael, does not harbor any negative feelings towards Indians. As a matter of fact, Rachael and Ivan hang out with the same crowd of friends, hence they have a lot of mutual Indian friends. To further establish his point, he comments how he has never had a negative experience with any Indian at any time.

The following question only went out to Rachael and Ivan. I ask them if they go back to Pakistan often and if so, do they notice a difference between the attitudes teenagers have against Indians. Rachael smiles and tells me that in fact there is still some tension but that it is nowhere how it used to be with her parents or grandparents.

Ivan, however, has not been to Pakistan ever since his arrival to the United States 12
years ago.

Next, based on their knowledge, I ask them all if they could give me some history on the events that would lead to the creation of Pakistan. Maria goes in depth on how the British ruled India for 400 years and upon their leaving they left India in total chaos. She also spoke of Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of present day Pakistan. She says there was much discrimination towards Muslims prior to partition. One example was that of her grandma when she was a young girl attending a private school in India. Because she was Muslim, her grandmother, along with other Muslim girls, would be discriminated against in school. Also, she goes on to say that during the time prior to partition, Muslims were being denied the right to vote, which only further encouraged Jinnah to act on behalf of the Muslim people.

Rachael has less knowledge of the situation because she never really did much research but basically bases all of the fighting on religious differences.

Ivan also mentions the British’s role in the whole fiasco but also attributes the separation to religious differences in the region.

Finally, I ask them whether they see any positive future relations between India and Pakistan. On this question they all agree that it is definitely getting better, albeit it may take time to reconcile any differences, Maria, Rachael and Ivan all agree relations between the two nations keep getting better and better with every passing generation.

No one had any further comments.
Now I will begin with the Indian interviewees. Again, for privacy purposes I will give pseudonyms to the Indian interviewees. Their names will be Margie, Scott, Gabe and Francesca.

Out of the four respondents, only Margie had much hostility towards Pakistanis. Although I will not post the interview in its entirety, much of the important passages will be. Following are some excerpts of what she had to say in regards to the history if India and Pakistan:

“…1943, the time around which India was about to attain independence. A man named Muhammed Ali Jinnah came into the picture. He demanded a free country for Muslims, claiming they could no longer live with us Hindus in peace. Are you kidding me? Us? Hindus? With no epic battle or war to speak of, Muslims walked away with a large chunk of Indian territory as though they had a natural right to a country that was shared by all in peace…”

When asked about her family’s views:

“Don’t get me wrong, my family has Pakistani friends… As far as my family goes, I have one rule that I live by: don’t date or marry a Pakistani, ever. And I don’t break that rule. Again, this attitude stems from the tense history that my family has lived through for generation.”

Then when asked about her personal feelings towards Pakistanis:

“Do I have negative feelings towards Pakistanis? Yes, to some degree, I do feel a sense
of resentment towards Pakistanis. As a people I feel that we have been wronged, our generosity taken advantage of, and have suffered in the hands of greed. These negative feelings arise primarily from my strong identification with India and its history.”

She then further gives many reasons of her animosity towards Pakistanis, here are a few:

- As part of Islamic religion, it is proper for women to be conservative… men should not look at women, YET, they rent out “bollywood” videos and oogle their eyes out at our women and our bodies. This is from personal experience growing up in Saudi Arabia.

- I dislike the inequality inherent in the religion, in the sense of the way the women are treated.

- I resent the greed for more and more land.

- Stories about Islamic law’s being very literally interpreted (such as being stoned to death for adultery) anger me.

- Any and all claims they have to culture is simply Indian culture stolen and repackaged as “authentic Pakistani”

Finally, for her possible solutions, this is what she had to say:

“I think the problem is too deep rooted to be fixed. I feel that generally Muslims tend to instigate the violence against Hindus and angry Hindus rebut. Being a pacifist, I am against all sorts of violence. However, looking throughout history, India has never
invaded another country that I am aware. Muslims and Christians, however, have
managed to slaughter countless numbers in the name of their religion. Even now, look at
the world: Jerusalem is a constant war ground between Christians, Muslims and Jews.
Pakistan-India = Muslim vs. Hindu. US-Iraq, US-Afghanistan = Christian-Muslim,
Christian-Muslim...”

We will now see what the other Indian individuals have to say in respect to this. Similar
to what I asked the Pakistani group, my first question was what their family’s view was
towards people of Pakistani culture.

Scott says his father is very anti-Muslim due to his father losing many relatives during
the time that the partition was occurring as well as his father’s side of the family having
to move from present day Pakistan over to present day India. Scott failed to mention
anything about his mother, however.

Gabe on the other hand states that because his family is from south India they never
really had any problems with Pakistani’s. As long as he’s concerned, Indians and
Pakistanis are the same.

Francesca’s dad, like Scott’s dad, also has negative feelings towards Pakistani’s because
he too was affected by the partition and the riots. According to Francesca, her father’s
village was burned down as a consequence of one of these riots.

Following the same format I had with the Pakistani group, I proceeded to ask them
whether they shared their family’s views:
Scott: Not at all, I’m not anti-Muslim whatsoever. My career lies in the Islamic world and that’s actually what I am studying in college as well.

Gabe: Well, I’m gonna be like “Oh, you Pakistani…” I’m gonna give him crap like that but… I know hes the same as me, for face value I’m gonna say “yeah, I’m Indian” and try to show off and say “I’m better than you”

Francesca: No, not really. Most Muslim people I know are Pakistani, I don’t know too many Indian Muslim people, except for the ones that are in my neighborhood that I grew up with in my community, but like at school here it’s such a mix of people, like obviously I have no qualms, I’ve never had that history, I never grew up with that tension so I’ve never experienced it.

What about your friends? Do they think the same as you?

Scott: For the most part no, I was pretty young when I moved to the US, I was 10 years old, so I don’t really remember having conversations with my friends about what their thoughts on Muslims or Pakistanis were but here in the US most of my friends be they of Indian descent or not aren’t anti-Muslim, at least not in the same way my dad or his side of the family was.

Gabe: Some of them do feel that they’re better and some of them are like me, no one feels inferior to them.

Do you go to India? If so, do you notice a difference in the attitudes Indian teenagers in
India have towards Pakistanis and Indian teenagers in the US?

Scott: I have once. And yeah, are cultural differences as there would be anywhere in the world. I think it’s just one of those habits that’s culturally promoted throughout maybe the media or maybe their upbringing or education system so I would say yeah but for the most part it’s not very outspoken or loud, it’s kind of just subliminal or maybe just runs on the under radars of the Indian culture.

Gabe: I haven’t gone back in eight years since I got here.

Can you give me some history on the events that led up to the creation of Pakistan?

Gabe: Well, I heard that the British gave them an option basically, the British basically separated them out and the main conflict is obviously Kashmir. We always fight over who has Kashmir. So it’s like, pretty much right now in our maps and stuff, the Indian maps, we’ll have all of Jamel and Kashmir but like actually what we are in control of is like ¾ of it or 2/3 of it. So that’s the main problem between us and them.

As of now?

Gabe: It’s always been. That’s the problem, that’s why we can’t grow as one, were always fighting with each other, we’ve had a couple of wars with each other. So basically, the British gave them the option of like, who wants Kashmir, so basically the British separated the land between Pakistan for the Muslim people and India for the Hindu people, since there was a lot of population in each one, so they separated them and that separation caused the conflict. If they hadn’t separated us we wouldn’t have a
problem between each other, India would be Pakistan and India. And in India there’s a predominant Hindu population but we still have Muslim people in India, but in Pakistan its Muslim and only Muslim, there’s a very little Hindu population. So that way India is more diverse, India is more accepting of all religions.

Francesca: Well, I feel like it had a lot to do with England leaving and leaving the Indian government in chaos and there’s kind of this, like what native people to India call India is the Hindustan which, I mean if you can see where Hindu is in the word Hindustan, many Hindu people are like “this is Hindustan, Muslims need to leave, Muslims need to get out” so it’s very much a religious conflict. It’s definitely the underlying tones and so, I mean, obviously Pakistan is a 100% Islamic country, there might be maybe 1% other and so I think it was more of a religious conflict and it was just spread on catalyzed by disorganization and chaos because of England leaving the government, just going away and not helping set it up.

Do you see a positive future between Indian and Pakistani relations?

Scott: I don’t think it’s gonna happen anytime soon just because the kinds of people that are in power right now, be it the Musharah or even like the Indian regimes or Hindu extremists and Indian regimes that have come into power within the last 20 years or so. I think those aren’t conducive to progress and change, I think they’re more conducive to perpetuation of these ideals and hatreds, if you want to call it that. So I don’t see it anytime soon but I do think it’s possible, I definitely think it’s possible.

Gabe: Do I see a positive future? If we could just get over Kashmir, if you could
figure that out then we’d be set, that’s the only problem.

Francesca: I obviously don’t know that much… I’m not politically involved in the country but I think that religiously there’s always gonna be that tension especially now that the two countries are always at war whether its Kashmir, they’re always fighting over land, over cultural, religious differences. It takes a while when you have that history there I feel like it might, it will just always exist, I mean, if you think about it 100 years ago it was one country and it’s so recent, you can’t just recover from that right away, it takes hundreds and hundreds of year.

Any questions or comments?

Scott: It’s an interesting subject but at the same time it’s kind of a slippery slope when you ask people in American landscapes or like the Diaspora that exists in America because to a certain extent were really far from the loop from it. We might have some contacts back in India or Pakistan or maybe we might have studied it here and there but for the most part is an issue that’s alive and thriving in India and Pakistan, not really abroad.

Gabe: No… I just think wherever Britain goes they create trouble. Like, basically they were an imperial country and they had India under rule and they left and they caused this major problem and they had the middle east with Israel and all that and they created Israel for the Jews and that created trouble. So wherever they go they pretty much cause trouble.
It is clear from these samples that much of this ethnic tension, at least in the United States (more precisely in the Chicago land area), is beginning to die down with every new generation. As Francesca and Scott said, it will take many years to come for any true resolution to solve decades of fighting and religious turmoil. The most interesting feature in these samples were the differences in attitudes the Pakistani group had from that of the Indian group. It seemed that the Pakistani group were much less hostile, or at least really had no negative feelings towards Indians. The Indian group, on the other hand, seemed to be much more proud and self-assured that (in the case of Gabe) they were much better than Pakistan. Another interesting fact was that the Indian individuals failed to mention that Muslims were discriminated against prior to the partition. Perhaps the truth might be a well kept secret from the Indian public, or it could perhaps be vice versa and fabricated stories have been told to Pakistanis.

Regardless, I encourage future research on this particular subject possibly in a different city, possibly somewhere where there is a larger Pakistani population than an Indian population. One has to take into account even the most benign detail. One can only hope that this ethnic animosity will someday be nothing more than history.