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Sommario/riassunto	What unites and what divides Americans as a nation? Who are we, and can we strike a balance between an emphasis on our divergent ethnic origins and what we have in common? Opening with a survey of American literature through the vantage point of ethnicity, Werner Sollors examines our evolving understanding of ourselves as an Anglo- American nation to a multicultural one and the key role writing has

played in that process. Challenges of Diversity contains stories of American myths of arrival (pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, slave ships at Jamestown, steerage passengers at Ellis Island), the powerful rhetoric of egalitarian promise in the Declaration of Independence and the heterogeneous ends to which it has been put, and the recurring tropes of multiculturalism over time (e pluribus unum, melting pot, cultural pluralism). Sollors suggests that although the transformation of this settler country into a polyethnic and self-consciously multicultural nation may appear as a story of great progress toward the fulfillment of egalitarian ideals, deepening economic inequality actually exacerbates the divisions among Americans today.

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