



The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority (3rd Edition)

By Timothy P. Fong

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This book examines the contemporary history, culture, and social relationships that form the fundamental issues confronted by Asians in America today. Comprehensive, yet concise, it focuses on a *broad* range of issues, and features a unique comparative approach that analyzes how race, class, and gender intersect throughout the contemporary Asian American experience. Chapter topics cover the history of Asians in America; emerging communities, changing realities; Asian Americans and educational opportunity; workplace issues; anti-Asian violence; Asian Americans and the media; Asian American families and identities; and political empowerment. For anyone interested in an understanding and awareness beyond the simplistic stereotype of the “model minority” –through the exposure to important concerns of Asian American groups and communities.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

This book examines the contemporary history, culture, and social relationships that form the fundamental issues confronted by Asians in America today. Comprehensive, yet concise, it focuses on *abroad* range of issues, and features a unique comparative approach that analyzes how race, class, and gender intersect throughout the contemporary Asian American experience. Chapter topics cover the history of Asians in America; emerging communities, changing realities; Asian Americans and educational opportunity; workplace issues; anti-Asian violence; Asian Americans and the media; Asian American families and identities; and political empowerment. For anyone interested in an understanding and awareness beyond the simplistic stereotype of the "model minority" - through the exposure to important concerns of Asian American groups and communities.

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This book is intended primarily for college-level courses, but is written in a clear and direct narrative form that can easily reach a broader audience. In *The Sociological Imagination* (1959), C. Wright Mills chides authors for what he calls "socspeak," the complex writing style commonly used in the social sciences. Mills complains that in academic circles, anyone who writes "in a widely intelligible way" is belittled for being "a mere journalist."¹ As a social scientist, I know many colleagues who criticize the journalistic writing style for being too simple. As a former journalist, I also know that journalists criticize academic writing style for being too abstract. Despite these criticisms of each other, social scientists and journalists do share a common goal: increasing understanding of the issues confronting today's society. You will find the academic/journalistic approach in this book refreshing because it combines the rigor of scholarship with the accessibility of journalism. It will also help you to better appreciate the significance of the research work of scholars from a variety of academic disciplines.

The Contemporary Asian American Experience has several major objectives. The first is to provide you with a sound academic background to better comprehend the history, culture, and social relationships that form the fundamental issues Asians in America confront today. This book analyzes the interrelationship of race, class, and gender and explores how these factors have shaped the experiences of Asian Americans. I hope that you will arrive at a new level of understanding and awareness beyond the simplistic stereotype of the "model minority" through exposure to important concerns of Asian American groups and communities.

Second, this book offers a balanced and comparative analysis of the different Asian ethnic groups, newer immigrants, and American-born Asians. The Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos were among the earliest immigrants from Asia, but I also discuss concerns of the newer immigrants such as the Koreans, Asian Indians, and Southeast Asian refugees, who have come in large numbers to the United States since 1965. With this in mind, I organized the chapters by specific issues rather than by individual ethnic group. In addition, the book is balanced in terms of strong representation of how the various topics pertain to and impact Asian American women.

Third, I analyze competing aspects of the Asian American experience. Most of the early research on Asian Americans focused on the "positive" cultural aspects of a strong work ethic and filial piety, amazing success in education, and enviable economic upward mobility. Since the 1970s, however, an increasing number of Asian American scholars have challenged what they believe is an overemphasis on anecdotal evidence and

superficial statistical data. They have focused on issues of prejudice and discrimination, underemployment, educational problems, family and intergenerational conflict, and a host of other social concerns intended to provide a comprehensive picture of the Asian American experience.

Fourth, this book compares and contrasts various theoretical perspectives throughout the text where appropriate, a unique approach, but necessary given the diversity of issues covered. For example, I discuss different theories on immigration, immigrant adaptation and assimilation, ethnic entrepreneurship, educational achievement, ethnic identity, interracial marriage, and political incorporation, among others. Within this, recent Asian immigrants greatly differ from earlier immigrants in socioeconomic background and adjustment to American society. Clearly there is a need to review traditional concepts and theories, which are primarily based on historical experiences.

Lastly, an up-to-date collection of immigration, demographic, socioeconomic, and educational data on Asian Americans is included. Liberal use of tables highlights this information and serves as an excellent resource for the general audience, students, and researchers. In addition, an extensive bibliography of books, articles, and reports on Asian American issues will be very useful for student papers and research projects.

This book could not have been written without the help of many others. I first and foremost want to thank all the academic researchers, the journalists, and the community activists who have focused their attention on Asian Americans and Asian American issues. Their work is evidence of the growth and maturity of Asian American Studies as an academic discipline, the increased attention on Asian Americans in the media, and the importance of the issues raised on the grassroots level. Together, their works and activities over many years have converged and only recently reached a critical mass. Whether directly cited or not, their works and activities are very much the core of this book. It is their insights, analysis, and hard work that gives this book life.

I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Asian American Studies Department at California State University at Northridge and the Social Sciences Division at Holy Names College where I taught while writing the first edition. Thanks also go to my colleagues in the Ethnic Studies Department at California State University at Sacramento where I taught while writing this second edition. All of their support and encouragement were invaluable. Special thanks go to librarians Francis Hu, Lena Chang, Wei-chi Poon, and Rhonda Rios Kravitz for their help locating reference materials. Colleague, friend, and neighbor Colleen Fong took extra time out of her already busy schedule to make important editorial and critical comments that helped reshape this second edition. My highest praises go to Nancy Roberts, sociology editor at Prentice Hall, and Joanne Riker, editorial/production supervisor from East End Publishing Services, for their professional guidance.

Lastly, this book is dedicated to my wife, Elena Almanzo, our son Gabriel, the little one on the way, and our community of family and friends.

Timothy P. Fong
California State University, Sacramento

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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The reason why? Because this The Contemporary Asian American Experience: Beyond the Model Minority (3rd Edition) is an unordinary book that the inside of the guide waiting for you to snap the item but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book close to it was fantastic author who have write the book in such awesome way makes the content on the inside easier to understand, entertaining means but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this any longer or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book get such as help improving your talent and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I were being you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

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