Introduction

*Our Voices*

GAIL M. NOMURA

*Our Voices, Our Histories: Asian American and Pacific Islander Women* brings together thirty-five Asian American and Pacific Islander authors in a single volume to explore the historical experiences, consciousness, and actions of Asian American and Pacific Islander women in the United States and beyond. It examines the intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, indigeneity, ethnicity, and other aspects of the lives of these women. Through the voices and lives of the women themselves, these works foreground the agency, power, and resilience of Asian American and Pacific Islander women and their capacity to enact change and transform their lives and communities within local, transnational, and global contexts.

In addressing the diverse histories of Asian American and Pacific Islander women in this anthology, the editors recognize the heterogeneity within and between these socially and politically constructed panethnic umbrella groupings. We do not seek to subsume, obliterate, or obscure their distinctiveness but to expand the research and the interpretative boundaries leading to new ways of understanding a complex, richer history of the United States. In addition to the many possibilities of dialogue, alliances, and connections through differences we also seek to explore commonalities and shared agendas without perpetuating or reinscribing the same hierarchies and exclusions that have sometimes marred such projects. Effective coalition-building constructs a shared agenda that is a work in progress, constantly negotiated and debated. It requires continuous interchanges to explore boundaries, frontiers, and borderlands of interactions and separations to open new conversations and collaborations.

This book is a step toward exploring these interactions and separations, which will enable readers to begin to question and push theoretical constructs and interpretations beyond the analyses of single ethnic groups. It will also allow readers to more deeply consider the power of individual intentional action within, at times, seemingly overwhelming limits and constraints. The selections present new research that studies diverse aspects of Asian American and Pacific Islander American women’s history while acknowledging shared experiences as women of color in the United States. The authors bring fresh, alternative insights, ways of knowing, analyses, and narratives as well as research sources, approaches, and
strategies. In this way, they reveal the agency, resistance, and resilience of Asian American and Pacific Islander women in all their diversity and, in the process, a new understanding of women’s history.

Diversity

The Asian American and Pacific Islander women presented in this anthology comprise diverse groups of peoples of many cultures, ethnicities, languages, and religions that have a history with the United States. Diversity within and between groups is a key point to remember.

“Asian American” is a socially and politically constructed panethnic umbrella term emerging out of the social movements of the 1960s and early 1970s in the United States. It generally refers to immigrants and US-born people of Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, South Asian (e.g., Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Maldivian, Nepalese, Pakistani, Sri Lankan), Southeast Asian (e.g., Burmese/Myanmarese, Hmong, Indonesian, Khmer/Cambodian, Lao, Malaysian, Mien, Singaporean, Thai, Vietnamese), Taiwanese, and Tibetan ancestry, among others. Some may expand the term to include peoples of Asian descent in all the Americas, and others have defined “Asian” as comprising peoples from the entire geographical region of Asia including West Asia/the Middle East.

“Pacific Islander” and “Pacific Islander American” are socially and politically constructed terms designating US-born and immigrant people who have ancestry among the indigenous peoples from Oceania—Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia. Most Pacific Islanders subscribe to a distinct island-based indigenous identity—for example, Native Hawaiian, Sāmoan, Chamorro, Tongan, Fijian, or Māori—rather than to a panethnic identity. Pacific Islanders see clear sociocultural, political, and historical distinctions between and among different islander groups. However, the panethnic terms have come into use in recent years to forge a pan–Pacific Islander identity and coalitions, notably in the continental United States, while maintaining island-based identities.

In particular, “Pacific Islander” and “Pacific Islander American” refer to indigenous peoples of Pacific islands with a history of US colonialism:

1. the state of Hawai‘i—incorporated into the United States in 1898 through a joint congressional resolution, organized as a US territory in 1900, became the fiftieth state in 1959
2. the US territory of Guam—acquired by the United States by treaty from Spain in 1898, established as an unincorporated organized US territory in 1950
3. the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI, main islands Saipan, Tinian, and Rota)—acquired by Germany from Spain in 1899; acquired by Japan after World War I as a League of Nations mandate;
administered by the United States after World War II as part of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands; approved by the UN and the US Congress and by plebiscite to form the commonwealth in political union with the United States, with a new constitution and government taking effect in 1978, and covenant agreement fully effective in 1986

4. American Sāmoa—acquired by the United States in 1899, became an unorganized and unincorporated US territory in 1900

The indigenous peoples of Hawai‘i, Guam, and the CNMI are US citizens, except for a small number of people living in the CNMI who, in 1986, voluntarily chose to give up their newly acquired US citizenship and remained noncitizen US nationals. Indigenous Sāmoans born in American Sāmoa are noncitizen US nationals.

The terms “Pacific Islander” and “Pacific Islander American” also include the indigenous citizens of the three sovereign nations that comprise the Freely Associated States (FAS):

1. the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), composed of the states of Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae
2. the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)
3. the Republic of Palau (ROP)

The citizens of all three of the FAS nations currently have rights to travel freely to, live, work, and study in the United States and its territories or possessions under nonimmigrant status, according to the terms of their individual nations’ Compacts of Free Association with the United States.

Also, all Pacific Islander immigrants, indigenous peoples from Oceania, and their descendants born in the United States are included in the terms “Pacific Islander” and “Pacific Islander American.” A tension can exist between legal categories and self-identity when defining an “American.” For example, permanent residents may self-identify as American, and given issues of sovereignty and struggles for self-determination, some Pacific Islanders in US colonized territories may not self-identify as American.

The complexity of “Asian American” and “Pacific Islander” is illustrated by noting the many ethnicities included in the larger subcategories of “Asian American” (e.g., Southeast Asian American) and the many different indigenous island groups encompassed by “Pacific Islander.” The panethnic terms often obscure distinctions within these synthetic groupings. For example, the term “South Asian American” is often taken to mean Indian American, the most numerous ethnic group under that designation; even the term “Indian American” masks, for example, regional, religious, and linguistic distinctions. Likewise, many take “Pacific Islander” to mean the numerically dominant subgroup “Native Hawaiian,” and
the term “Chamorro” includes the Chamorro of Guam and the Chamorro of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, although separated politically since 1898 by imperial powers. Furthermore, the term “Sāmoan” includes those who are US nationals from American Sāmoa and those who come as immigrants to the United States from the independent state of Sāmoa.

Further, if one interrogates a single ethnic category, such as “Chinese American,” one finds ethnic Chinese of varying national origins (e.g., ethnic Chinese from Vietnam or the Philippines) and sometimes multiple national journeys (e.g., Chinese who went to the United Kingdom, then Canada, then the United States) as well as those who conflate Taiwanese American with Chinese American. Distinct ethnicities emerge even in what seems to be an unambiguously homogeneous group, as in the case of Japanese Americans. Their generic category often subsumes and obscures the distinct Okinawan American grouping. Adding to the inability to neatly define stable categories of classification are the growing numbers of multiracial, multiethnic peoples who trace their ancestries in part to Asia and/or the Pacific Islands. While in 1990, 10 percent of Asian Americans were multiracial, it is projected that by 2060, that rate will be nearly 20 percent; in 2015, 50 percent of Pacific Islanders were multiracial, and that rate is expected to increase to 54.5 percent by 2040.3

Generational differences further complicate relations within and among these groups. For example, some Asian Americans have histories of seven, eight, or more generations in the United States. But particularly since the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 lifted many discriminatory policies and quotas against Asians,4 there has been a growing number of recent immigrants who brought their children with them, the “1.5 generation”—those who were born in Asia but came as young children to the United States and acculturated rapidly. After the Vietnam War, the Fall of Saigon in 1975 prompted a sudden wave of refugees from Southeast Asia, and in the present, other refugees have come from Bhutan, Myanmar/Burma, and Nepal. Thus, the number of Asia-born immigrants in the United States increased exponentially. The Asian American population shifted from a small but predominantly US-born population in 1960 to one of the fastest-growing racial groups in the United States with at times almost two-thirds being immigrants, though since 2000 there has been an increasing number of US born. Current projections indicate that by 2040 there will be an even numerical parity of US born and Asia born.5

With this influx of new immigrants and refugees from Asia, enhanced by US immigration policies that supported family reunification, the Asian American population more than doubled from 1.5 million in 1970 to 3.7 million in 1980 and nearly doubled again to 7.3 million in 1990. The Asian American population more than doubled again from 1990 to 2010, when the US Census counted 17,320,856 Asian Americans, including mixed race persons identifying as part Asian. Almost half of those Asian Americans lived in the western United States,
and 52 percent were women. In 2017, the estimated number of Asian Americans was 22.4 million. The largest ethnic Asian American group (alone or in any combination) was Chinese (5 million, excluding those who reported Taiwanese only), followed by Asian Indian (4.4 million), Filipino (4 million), Vietnamese (2.1 million), Korean (1.8 million), and Japanese (1.5 million).\(^6\)

More than 874,414 Pacific Islanders were enumerated in the 2000 US Census. Slightly less than 50 percent (434,733) were women in 2000. Their numbers grew to 1,225,195 in 2010 and were an estimated 1.5 million in 2017. The largest group of Pacific Islanders in 2017 was Native Hawaiians (614,572), followed by Sāmoans (202,268), Chamorro or Guamanian (156,482), Tongan (71,474), other Micronesian (64,915), Fijian (50,034), Marshallese (34,970), other Polynesian (21,888), and other Melanesian (1,656), with another 249,558 not specified other Pacific Islander.\(^7\) Among Pacific Islanders, one finds generational and regional differences between the indigenous island resident and the off-island Pacific Islander living in or born and raised in the continental United States.

**Our Voices**

In coming together in this anthology, we and our authors collectively lift our voices with our subjects to narrate the complex history of Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s history. Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s voices and lives contest stereotyped mainstream views of them to reveal their strength, resilience, and transformative will and action in meeting the challenges of immigration/migration, colonialism, wars, economic globalization, transnationalism, racism, patriarchy, class, gender and sexuality, family/community building, and changing intergenerational relations. Our authors share the voices of these women, which articulate that women are active agents in shaping their own lives and impacting their community, nation, and world and not subordinate, passive pawns of history. Their “agency”—their capacity to make their own strategic, intentional choices within changing opportunities and constraints presented and to act on those choices—is a theme threading through all chapters in the volume.

Our authors express the wide range of voices of Asian American and Pacific Islander women. In the chapters, we hear the voices of women who are indigenous; US-born; immigrant; refugee; 1.5 and second generation; LGBTQ; mixed race; transracial adoptee; engaged in political action in the grassroots and legislative areas; experiencing trauma and healing; challenging race, gender roles, and class constraints; and contributing to the empowerment of women and community uplift, among others. Pacific Islander women voice the importance of understanding indigenous worldviews, historical stories, oral narratives, cultural practices and values, and connections with deities and the land—counter to Western thought, which represses alternative worldviews and relationships.
Some of our authors, including the editors, reveal their own stories and voices alongside their subjects. In challenging our authors to step out of their academic, third-person-point-of-view positionality to share their stories and first-person points of view, the editors sought to bring to our readers a more palpable connection to and understanding of Asian American and Pacific Islander women. One of our authors, Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, expressed this view: “I also feel the hurt of a generation. It’s our story, and it demands our love, and attention and respect, and we need to tell this story.” The passionate voices and personal stories of our authors add to the richness and depth of the stories they tell in their chapters. In particular, we recognize the courage of some of our authors in revealing their own intimate and sometimes painful experiences in their analyses of their subjects and, in some cases, their self-stories.

In order to learn the history of Asian American and Pacific Islander women, we need to hear these voices. We must be respectful and listen, really listen, to the women, and not impose our ill-informed ideas. The powerful voices and lived experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander women in dialogue in this anthology illuminate the agency of these women throughout history and their multifaceted cultural formations and identities. The voices, dignity, and humanity of the women are at the core of the histories we have presented in this anthology. Their lives have meaning.

NOTES


2 In this anthology, “Chamorro,” and not “Guamanian,” is used to designate the indigenous island population in distinction from nonindigenous people residing in Guam who may be included in the term “Guamanian.” Although “Chamorro” is the more common spelling in English and is used by the US Census Bureau, some believe “CHamoru” or “Chamoru” more accurately reflects the phonetic spelling of the original language of the indigenous people of Guam. There are many political nuances and battles that belie what seems at first glance a simple orthographic issue. Who has the power to decide the spelling of a people’s language? For further discussion, see Gina E. Taitano, “Adoption of ‘Guamanian,’” Guampedia, November 10, 2014, www.guampedia.com; Gina E. Taitano, “Chamorro vs. Chamoru: Spelling Contested,” Guampedia, June 27, 2018, www.guampedia.com.

4 The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 is also known as the Hart-Celler Act and is sometimes referred to as the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965.
Introduction

Our Histories

SHIRLEY HUNE

The editors have developed *Our Voices, Our Histories: Asian American and Pacific Islander Women* to reenvision women’s histories and to advance aspects and understandings of their lives through new approaches, methods, and resources. As we saw in the previous introduction, Asian American and Pacific Islander groups are complex and have unique voices and experiences. While maintaining their own cultural institutions and community organizations, they also collaborate intentionally for common goals and in resistance to discriminatory policies and treatment. As Asian American and Pacific Islander populations have grown numerically in the United States after the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, their members have become more multifaceted in national and ethnic origin; status and condition of arrival and treatment in America; education, occupation, and income; religion and spirituality; generation in America; family formations; and other characteristics.

There is no single encompassing Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s experience. Recent trends emphasize their diversity, but there are features of their experiences that are similar. The purpose of this volume is to contribute to a fuller comprehension of Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s lives by bringing together a collection of their histories that incorporates cutting-edge research approaches, focuses on their different communities as well as specific experiences in common, and highlights the women’s voices and perspectives. In this introduction, I consider new dimensions in the scholarly focus of US history, Asian American and Pacific Islander studies, and women’s and gender studies that are reinterpreting Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s histories and explain how this book reflects these new approaches. The content of this anthology, its scope and coverage of ethnic groups and topics, and three interlocking themes—agency, resistance and resilience, and identity—are discussed. These themes flow through the chapters and elucidate the kinds of experiences the women have in common in conjunction with their unique histories and lives. Finally, I outline how the volume is organized. In short, this book is a new anthology of original work grounded in historical studies that seeks to transform current understandings of Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s histories.
New Dimensions: Globalism and Transnationalism; Exclusion, Empire, and Colonialism; and Gender and Intersectionality

In developing this anthology, the editors considered how new approaches in US history, Asian American and Pacific Islander studies, and women's and gender studies inform research on Asian American and Pacific Islander women. I use the term “dimensions” to discuss cutting-edge approaches and recent research in history that are contributing to revisionist studies of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in general and women specifically. Three of them help to frame the structure and organization of this volume. They have been developing for more than two decades and are not necessarily new. What is novel is our application of these approaches to Asian American and Pacific Islander women's histories. The new dimensions are akin to paradigm shifts that dramatically change previous interpretations, in this case of Asian American and Pacific Islander women's lives. I discuss them briefly below. It is not possible, however, to do justice to these new approaches in this limited space. For more details, I have included extensive endnotes and citations of pertinent revisionist studies.

**Globalism and Transnationalism Dimension**

Asian American and Pacific Islander histories have generally been studied through the lens of US national history. As global historians challenge the dominance of nation-framed history, revisionist studies call for reinterpreting US history as part of a global or world history of colonial relations, trade, labor migration, and other dynamics. Transnationalism involves relationships and the integration of people and political, economic, and cultural forms across national borders. Consequently, transnational aspects of Asian American and Pacific Islander women's histories—for example, memories and connections—become more visible and relevant. US immigrant and refugee experiences have always been transnational, whatever the circumstances of their leavings and resettlements, but dominant ideologies have focused on their American lives and marginalized their global dimension. Diaspora studies is also of value. Its emphasis is on emigrants with a shared history, culture, and geography who have dispersed to many distant lands thus placing it outside the scope of this volume.

New studies of both pre-mid-nineteenth-century migrants and post-1965 communities are recontextualizing Asian American and Pacific Islander histories within globalism and transnationalism. Chapters include these contexts for early Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, and Korean women and present-day experiences of females of Bangladeshi, Chamorro, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Indian, Japanese, Khmer/Cambodian, Korean, Laotian, Sāmoan, Taiwanese, Thai, Tongan, and Vietnamese backgrounds, integrating them with their lives in the United States. Several chapters discuss transnational and local dynamics in
areas, such as the role of food, the politics of language, being a transracial adoptee, lesbian or of mixed race, and organizing across ethnic groups and national borders to include a larger range of women’s activities than has generally been addressed.

**Exclusion, Empire, and Colonialism Dimension**

Reflecting the nation-state focus of both US history and immigration studies, earlier frameworks of Asian Americans emphasized immigrant chronicles and assimilation and adaptation, albeit interlocked with their resistance to racism and other inequities. The idea of the United States as a (welcoming) nation of immigrants has been systematically countered. In particular, Asian exclusion policies have long contradicted this concept. Revisionist studies, including indigenerist and postcolonial critiques, highlight exclusion, empire, and colonialism in national and global history, especially the impact of imperialism, wars, military interventions, and colonial occupations on the displacement, forced relocation, and accompanying violence and trauma experienced by specific Asian American and Pacific Islander groups. Chapters document the varied experiences of Asian American and Pacific Islander women under empire in earlier eras and less-studied locations. They also feature recent histories of Filipino, South and Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander women whose lives were considerably changed by empire, war, and colonial occupation.

The dimension of exclusion, empire, and colonialism also shifts the geography of Asian American and Pacific Islander studies from solely the US continent to the larger Pacific world: its ocean, islands, and lands. This approach is more inclusive of former US colonies and territories—their histories, populations, and issues—including addressing American influence in their homelands. Several chapters offer new interpretations of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women’s activities, resistance and resilience, and identities through their histories and voices.

**Gender and Intersectionality Dimension**

As women’s and gender studies give more attention to nonwhite, non-Western women and their situations—locally, nationally, and globally—they bring visibility to female migrants around the globe. Feminists have also adopted gender as an analytical category for considering women’s disparities, especially the ideologies and practices that privilege men and disadvantage women. In this volume, the editors build upon our efforts to view Asian American and Pacific Islander women as historical subjects actively negotiating better lives for themselves, their families, and their communities within constraints of gender biases, laws, and customs, a construct we introduced in *Asian/Pacific American Women:*
A Historical Anthology (2003). Chapters extend that construct to richly detail Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s agency, resistance and resilience, and identity as common themes as they confront gender boundaries in their families, communities, work situations, and public spaces in US society and their homelands.

As a component of gender studies, intersectionality focuses on different hierarchies of power, such as race, gender, sexuality, class, religion, ability, etc., as they combine and overlap, conflict or contest, accumulate over time, and complicate women’s struggle for equality in a male-dominated Western world. We incorporate intersectionality in this book to reveal the complexity of Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s lives as they may hold different advantages and disadvantages in particular eras, places, and situations. For example, several chapters discuss how religious affiliation or spirituality intersects with race, class, gender, and other hierarchies in different historical times and locations to inform the women’s agency, resistance and resilience, and search for identity.

Scope and Content

Time Frame. This anthology extends previous time frames of Asian American and Pacific Islander histories through chapters that span from creation narratives of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders and Asian migration in the 1500s to their lives in the early twenty-first century. They include cutting-edge research findings that incorporate globalism and transnationalism; exclusion, empire, and colonialism; and gender and intersectionality dimensions in their analyses.

Locations. We expand the geographical terrain of Asian American and Pacific Islander studies with chapters on women’s experiences in less-studied regions of the United States—the South, the Midwest, and New England—and in the islands of the Pacific. Other chapters introduce lesser-known voices, histories, and concerns of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in America and their birthplaces. There are also discussions of women’s transnational experiences and their struggle against the dominance of US mainstream culture in their homelands and the United States.

Diversities. Chapters include more diversities of Asian American and Pacific Islander women as ethnic groups and social classes and as transracial adoptees, lesbians, mixed race persons, and different generations, such as youth and the elderly, than have generally been featured in prior works. This volume is also distinctive in that several chapters feature 1.5- and second-generation women as young adults in various historical times and places. And there are additional findings on long-standing topics of immigration, family, work, community, and political engagement. Moreover, the anthology also increases knowledge of women’s lives, with topics such as food studies, religious affiliations
and spirituality, cultural performance, aging, the life course, alternative family formations, professional women, and intergenerational dynamics.

Gender Dynamics/Life Histories. Chapters provide thick details on gender dynamics and intersections, such as women’s initiatives in migration; family and community building; challenging race and gender biases and obstacles in their careers; pushing boundaries in institutional settings like the church and academia; engaging in political change, ranging from national legislation to community practices; and holding highly visible community leadership and professional positions. Life histories also expand gendered analyses of Asian American and Pacific Islander lives by addressing women’s relations with spouses, partners, children, siblings, parents, grandparents, coworkers, community members, and others. Throughout the anthology, our authors identify individual women and provide their voices, life histories, and contributions, some at great length. This approach notably advances research findings on Asian American and Pacific Islander women who for too long have been invisible, unidentified, unheard, and unnamed.

Themes in Common: Agency, Resistance and Resilience, Identity

Three interrelated themes also course through the chapters linking Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s experiences across time, topics, and communities. First is their agency or proactive participation as the women navigate new lives in different eras and through various lands, locations, and situations. The term “agency” here refers to a set of behaviors, such as a collectivity of aims, actions, initiatives, activities, and strategies, that they undertake consciously and unconsciously every day to ensure their and their families’ well-being.

Second is the women’s resistance and resilience as they contest racism, sexism, and other inequalities in US society and as part of globalism and transnationalism, exclusion, empire, and colonialism and as they oppose injustices in their families, communities, and homelands while resolving to survive, keep to their goals, and persist through difficult times and impediments. Third is the women’s expressions of and search for new identities that are more representative of who they are or are becoming and what is important to them in the midst and aftermath of changing structures, conditions, and life courses, despite multiple constraints. Identity formation and sense of self are not fixed but fluid as their consciousness, lives, and encounters change.

Methods and Resources

A strength of this anthology is the many ways in which contributing authors center Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s voices and experiences through a wide range of methods and resources; many are innovative. Most chapters
employ traditional historical research methods and print archival sources. A few chapters include new media-based archives, especially films, videos, and digital formats, which are sometimes self-created. The telling of stories to record history—whether ancestral and passed from generation to generation (an especially important part of Pacific Islander women’s historical knowledge) or contemporary and reflective of cultural practice—is integral to many chapters in this volume. Forms of storytelling, including oral history, often in conjunction with ethnographic studies, interviews, life and self-histories, multimedia materials, memoirs, and autobiographies provide findings on Asian American and Pacific Islander women in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries from a historical perspective. Our authors are inspirational in identifying new and underutilized resources, such as community archives, and innovating through peer- and youth-centered practices to document the evolving and often hidden histories, activities, and lives of Asian American and Pacific Islander women of all ages.

Organization

In this historically grounded anthology, the editors have organized the main body of the volume into eight parts, which are roughly chronological around broad time periods that overlap. This approach allows for an unfolding of Asian American and Pacific Islander histories over time and for assessments of the women’s experiences within similar historical eras. Each part gives attention to a wide-ranging but significant topic in the women’s lives and consists of three or four chapters of different ethnic groups. Readers can both appreciate the women’s distinct histories and assess their common experiences. The editors have prepared an introduction to each part to explain its subject matter and the contributions of the chapters within it.

The parts are: I – Early Era, Indigenous and Global Roots; II – New Intersections of Race, Gender, Generation, Communities; III – New Cultural Formations, New Selves; IV – Wartimes and Aftermath; V – Globalization, Work, Family, Community, Activism; VI – Spaces of Political Struggles; VII – New Diasporas, Diverse Lives, Evolving Identities; and VIII – Gender, Cultural Change, Intergenerational Dynamics. We recognize that chapters often have more than one focus, dimension, or theme and could alternatively be grouped with other chapters. No single volume can be comprehensive, nor can we represent here all the voices and histories of Asian American and Pacific Islander women. Nor can the chapters in each part fulfill all aspects of its focus. To close, the editors briefly provide “Reflections” as an afterword.

This anthology provides a fresh perspective on Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s histories. We designed it to showcase innovative ways of approaching and doing Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s histories;
to support ongoing reinterpretations; to be accessible for specialists, students, and a general audience; and to present some of the exciting leading-edge research on Asian American and Pacific Islander women being undertaken today.

NOTES


5 Madeline Y. Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882–1943* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University...


9 Until recently, Asian American and Pacific Islander women have too often been left out of history or marginalized, their contributions considered less worthy, and when documented, are generally hidden or portrayed as passive, dependents, or victims. In our 2003 anthology, the editors sought a more authentic and gender-balanced interpretation of Asian American and Pacific Islander women’s historical participation by (1) finding and making the women visible; (2) eliminating them from the margins and as “other” in history; (3) centering them as active subjects; and (4) engendering women, an analytical concept that understands the social constructions of women and men as gendered and determined through gender roles and ideologies that privilege men and disadvantage women. Shirley Hune, “Introduction: Through ‘Our’ Eyes: Asian/Pacific Islander American Women’s History,” in Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology, ed. Shirley Hune and Gail M. Nomura (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 1–13.
On agency, we build upon our framework established in Hune and Nomura, *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women*, of historicizing the women as visible, centered, dynamic, gendered, and active participants striving to create new lives in the midst of unequal relationships that restrict their choices and opportunities. In that volume, we chronicled Asian American and Pacific Islander women as actively negotiating “intricate hierarchies of power, including gender, race, class, sexuality, generation, language, religion, community, nation, and the global division of labor in the United States and elsewhere” for themselves, their families and communities, and in some cases, the larger societies in America and their original homeland. Hune, “Introduction,” 7.

Intersectionality grew out of black feminist studies of the late 1980s, some argue earlier, and has been adopted by other women of color as a method to analyze their multidimensional and layered forms of oppression. Jennifer C. Nash, “Intersectionality and Its Discontents,” *American Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (2017): 117–29.