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Featured Bookshelf: 2019 Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

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Asian Pacific American Heritage Featured Bookshelf



May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month!

Asian Pacific American as a topic covers vast oceans of identity and information. By definition, an Asian Pacific American is an American (whether born, naturalized, or other) who was born on or has heritage from anywhere on the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands,

Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Easter Island). These areas cover a wide array of languages, cultures, religions, and ethnicities that have brought countless skills, hopes and dreams to the United States.

UCF Libraries faculty and staff have (very enthusiastically) suggested 24 books and movies within the library's collection by or about Asian Pacific Americans. Keep reading below to see the full list, descriptions, and catalog links. These, and additional titles, are also on the Featured Bookshelf display on the second (main) floor next to the bank of two elevators.

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[A Concise History of China](#) by J. A. G. Roberts

In this overarching book, J. A. G. Roberts refers to recent archeological finds--the caches of bronze vessels found at Sanxingdui--and to new documentary reevaluations--the reassessment of Manchu documentation. The first half of the book provides an up-to-date interpretation of China's early and imperial history, while the second half concentrates on the modern period and provides an interpretive account of major developments--the impact of Western imperialism, the rise of Chinese Communism, and the record of the People's Republic of China since 1949.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Research & Information Services

[A Tragedy of Democracy: Japanese confinement in North America](#) by Greg Robinson

Most remarkably, *A Tragedy of Democracy* is the first book to analyze official policy toward West Coast Japanese Americans within a North American context. Robinson studies confinement on the mainland alongside events in wartime Hawaii, where fears of Japanese Americans justified Army dictatorship, suspension of the Constitution, and the imposition of military tribunals. He similarly reads the treatment of Japanese Americans against Canada's confinement of 22,000 citizens and residents of Japanese ancestry from British Columbia. *A Tragedy of Democracy* recounts the expulsion of almost 5,000 Japanese from Mexico's Pacific Coast and the poignant story of the Japanese Latin Americans who were kidnapped from their homes and interned in the United States.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Research & Information Services

[An Artist of the Floating World](#) by Kazuo Ishiguro

In the face of the misery in his homeland, the artist Masuji Ono was unwilling to devote his art solely to the celebration of physical beauty. Instead, he put his work in the service of the imperialist movement that led Japan into World War II. Now, as the mature Ono struggles through the aftermath of that war, his memories of his youth and of the "floating world"—the nocturnal world of pleasure, entertainment, and drink—offer

him both escape and redemption, even as they punish him for betraying his early promise. Indicted by society for its defeat and reviled for his past aesthetics, he relives the passage through his personal history that makes him both a hero and a coward but, above all, a human being.

Suggested by Rachel Edford, Teaching & Engagement

Born Confused by Tanuja Desair Hidier

Seventeen-year-old Dimple, whose family is from India, discovers that she is not Indian enough for the Indians and not American enough for the Americans, as she sees her hypnotically beautiful, manipulative best friend taking possession of both her heritage and the boy she likes.

Suggested by Sara Duff, Acquisitions & Collections

Cora Cooks Pancit written by Dorina Lazo Gilmore and illustrated by Kristi Valiant

When all her older siblings are away, Cora's mother finally lets her help make pancit, a Filipino noodle dish. Includes recipe for pancit.

Suggested by Cindy Dancel, Research & Information Services

Dance Dance Revolution by Cathy Park Hong

Named one of the Los Angeles Times's Best Science Fiction Books in 2007, Dance Dance Revolution is a genre-bending tour de force told from the perspective of the Guide, a former dissident and tour guide of an imagined desert city.

Suggested by Sara Duff, Acquisitions & Collections

Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram

Darius Kellner speaks better Klingon than Farsi, and he knows more about Hobbit social cues than Persian ones. He's a Fractional Persian—half, his mom's side—and his first-ever trip to Iran is about to change his life. Darius has never really fit in at home, and he's sure things are going to be the same in Iran. His clinical depression doesn't exactly help matters, and trying to explain his medication to his grandparents only makes things harder. Then Darius meets Sohrab, the boy next door, and everything changes. Soon, they're spending their days together, playing soccer, eating faludeh, and talking for hours on a secret rooftop overlooking the city's skyline. Sohrab calls him Darioush—the original Persian version of his name—and Darius has never felt more like himself than he does now that he's Darioush to Sohrab.

Suggested by Peter Spyers-Duran, Cataloging

Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng

"Lydia is dead. But they don't know this yet." So begins this exquisite novel about a Chinese American family living in 1970s small-town Ohio. Lydia is the favorite child of Marilyn and James Lee, and her parents are determined that she will fulfill the dreams

they were unable to pursue. But when Lydia's body is found in the local lake, the delicate balancing act that has been keeping the Lee family together is destroyed, tumbling them into chaos. A profoundly moving story of family, secrets, and longing, *Everything I Never Told You* is both a gripping page-turner and a sensitive family portrait, uncovering the ways in which mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and husbands and wives struggle, all their lives, to understand one another.

Suggested by Rachel Edford, Teaching & Engagement

[Fa Mulan: the story of a woman warrior](#) by Robert D. San Souci

A retelling of the original Chinese poem in which a brave young girl masquerades as a boy and fights the Tartars in the Khan's army.

Suggested by Peggy Nuhn, Connect Libraries

[Front Desk](#) by Kelly Yang

Mia Tang has a lot of secrets. Number 1: She lives in a motel, not a big house. Every day, while her immigrant parents clean the rooms, ten-year-old Mia manages the front desk of the Calivista Motel and tends to its guests. Number 2: Her parents hide immigrants. And if the mean motel owner, Mr. Yao, finds out they've been letting them stay in the empty rooms for free, the Tangs will be doomed. Number 3: She wants to be a writer. But how can she when her mom thinks she should stick to math because English is not her first language? It will take all of Mia's courage, kindness, and hard work to get through this year. Will she be able to hold on to her job, help the immigrants and guests, escape Mr. Yao, and go for her dreams?

Suggested by Peter Spyers-Duran, Cataloging

[Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the censored images of Japanese American internment](#) by Dorothea Lange

Censored by the U.S. Army, Dorothea Lange's unseen photographs are the extraordinary photographic record of the Japanese American internment saga. This indelible work of visual and social history confirms Dorothea Lange's stature as one of the twentieth century's greatest American photographers. Presenting 119 images originally censored by the U.S. Army—the majority of which have never been published—*Impounded* evokes the horror of a community uprooted in the early 1940s and the stark reality of the internment camps. With poignancy and sage insight, nationally known historians Linda Gordon and Gary Okihiro illuminate the saga of Japanese American internment: from life before Executive Order 9066 to the abrupt roundups and the marginal existence in the bleak, sandswept camps.

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

[John Okada: the life & rediscovered work of the author of No-no boy](#) edited by Frank Abe, Greg Robinson, and Floyd Cheung

No-No Boy, John Okada's only published novel, centers on a Japanese American who refuses to fight for the country that incarcerated him and his people in World War II and is cast out by his divided community. The novel faced a similar rejection until it was rediscovered and reissued in 1976, becoming a classic of American literature. As a result of Okada's untimely death at age forty-seven, the author's life and other works have remained obscure. This collection offers the first full-length examination of Okada's development as an artist, placing recently discovered writing by Okada alongside essays that reassess his legacy. Meticulously researched biographical details, insight from friends and relatives, and a trove of photographs illuminate Okada's life in Seattle, military service, and careers as a public librarian, technical writer, and ad man. This volume is an essential companion to No-No Boy.

Suggested by Missy Murphey, Research & Information Services

Little Fires Everywhere: a novel by Celeste Ng

In Shaker Heights, a placid, progressive suburb of Cleveland, everything is planned -- from the layout of the winding roads, to the colors of the houses, to the successful lives its residents will go on to lead. And no one embodies this spirit more than Elena Richardson, whose guiding principle is playing by the rules. Enter Mia Warren -- an enigmatic artist and single mother -- who arrives in this idyllic bubble with her teenaged daughter Pearl, and rents a house from the Richardsons. Soon Mia and Pearl become more than tenants: all four Richardson children are drawn to the mother-daughter pair. But Mia carries with her a mysterious past and a disregard for the status quo that threatens to upend this carefully ordered community. When old family friends of the Richardsons attempt to adopt a Chinese-American baby, a custody battle erupts that dramatically divides the town -- and puts Mia and Elena on opposing sides.

Suggested by Sandy Avila, Research & Information Services

Memoirs of a Geisha by Arthur Golden

In Memoirs of a Geisha, we enter a world where appearances are paramount; where a girl's virginity is auctioned to the highest bidder; where women are trained to beguile the most powerful men; and where love is scorned as illusion. It is a unique and triumphant work of fiction—at once romantic, erotic, suspenseful—and completely unforgettable.

Suggested by Peggy Nuhn, Connect Libraries

Music for Alice by Allen Say

As a girl, Alice loved to dance, but the rhythms of her life offered little opportunity for a foxtrot, let alone a waltz. World War II erupted soon after she was married. Alice and her husband, along with many other Japanese Americans, were forced to leave their homes and report to assembly centers around the country. Undaunted, Alice and her husband learned to make the most of every circumstance, from their stall in the old stockyard in Portland to the decrepit farm in the Oregon desert, with its field of stones. Like a pair of skilled dancers, they sidestepped adversity to land gracefully amid golden opportunity. Together they turned a barren wasteland into a field of endless flowers.

Such achievements did not come without effort and sacrifice, though, and Alice often thought her dancing days were long behind her.

Suggested by Peggy Nuhn, Connect Libraries

No-no Boy by John Okada

No-No Boy tells the story of Ichiro Yamada, a fictional version of the real-life "no-no boys." Yamada answered "no" twice in a compulsory government questionnaire as to whether he would serve in the armed forces and swear loyalty to the United States. Unwilling to pledge himself to the country that interned him and his family, Ichiro earns two years in prison and the hostility of his family and community when he returns home to Seattle. As Ozeki writes, Ichiro's "obsessive, tormented" voice subverts Japanese postwar "model-minority" stereotypes, showing a fractured community and one man's "threnody of guilt, rage, and blame as he tries to negotiate his reentry into a shattered world."

Suggested by Missy Murphey, Research & Information Services

Severance by Ling Ma

Candace Chen, a millennial drone self-sequestered in a Manhattan office tower, is devoted to routine. With the recent passing of her Chinese immigrant parents, she's had her fill of uncertainty. She's content just to carry on: She goes to work, troubleshoots the teen-targeted Gemstone Bible, watches movies in a Greenpoint basement with her boyfriend. So Candace barely notices when a plague of biblical proportions sweeps New York. Then Shen Fever spreads. Families flee. Companies cease operations. The subways screech to a halt. Her bosses enlist her as part of a dwindling skeleton crew with a big end-date payoff. Soon entirely alone, still unfevered, she photographs the eerie, abandoned city as the anonymous blogger NY Ghost. Candace won't be able to make it on her own forever, though. Enter a group of survivors, led by the power-hungry IT tech Bob. They're traveling to a place called the Facility, where, Bob promises, they will have everything they need to start society anew. But Candace is carrying a secret she knows Bob will exploit. Should she escape from her rescuers?

Suggested by Sara Duff, Acquisitions & Collections

The Astonishing Color of After by Emily X. R. Pan

Leigh Chen Sanders is absolutely certain about one thing: When her mother died by suicide, she turned into a bird. Leigh, who is half Asian and half white, travels to Taiwan to meet her maternal grandparents for the first time. There, she is determined to find her mother, the bird. In her search, she winds up chasing after ghosts, uncovering family secrets, and forging a new relationship with her grandparents. And as she grieves, she must try to reconcile the fact that on the same day she kissed her best friend and longtime secret crush, Axel, her mother was taking her own life.

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

The Chinese Exclusion Act by directed by Ric Burns and Li-Shin Yu

Examine the origin, history and impact of the 1882 law that made it illegal for Chinese workers to come to America and for Chinese nationals already here ever to become U.S. citizens. The first in a long line of acts targeting the Chinese for exclusion, it remained in force for more than 60 years.

Suggested by Richard Harrison, Research & Information Services

The Making of Asian America: a history by Erika Lee

The definitive history of Asian Americans by one of the nation's preeminent scholars on the subject. In the past fifty years, Asian Americans have helped change the face of America and are now the fastest growing group in the United States. But as award-winning historian Erika Lee reminds us, Asian Americans also have deep roots in the country. The Making of Asian America tells the little-known history of Asian Americans and their role in American life, from the arrival of the first Asians in the Americas to the present-day. An epic history of global journeys and new beginnings, this book shows how generations of Asian immigrants and their American-born descendants have made and remade Asian American life in the United States: sailors who came on the first trans-Pacific ships in the 1500s; indentured "coolies" who worked alongside African slaves in the Caribbean; and Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, and South Asian immigrants who were recruited to work in the United States only to face massive racial discrimination, Asian exclusion laws, and for Japanese Americans, incarceration during World War II. No longer a "despised minority," Asian Americans are now held up as America's "model minorities" in ways that reveal the complicated role that race still plays in the United States.

Suggested by Missy Murphey, Research & Information Services

The Night Tiger by Yangsze Choo

Quick-witted, ambitious Ji Lin is stuck as an apprentice dressmaker, moonlighting as a dance-hall girl to help pay off her mother's mahjong debts. But when one of her dance partners accidentally leaves behind a gruesome souvenir, Ji Lin plunges into a dark adventure: a mirror world of secrets and superstitions. Eleven-year-old Chinese houseboy Ren also has a secret, a promise he must fulfill to his dead master; to find his master's severed finger and bury it with his body. Ren has forty-nine days to do so, or his master's soul will wander the earth forever. Dazzling and propulsive, The Night Tiger is the coming-of-age of a child and a young woman, each searching for their place in a society that would rather they stay invisible.

Suggested by Sandy Avila, Research & Information Services

The Way You Make Me Feel by Maurene Goo

Clara Shin lives for pranks and disruption. When she takes one joke too far, her dad sentences her to a summer working on his food truck, the KoBra, alongside her uptight classmate Rose Carver. Not the carefree summer Clara had imagined. But maybe Rose isn't so bad. Maybe the boy named Hamlet (yes, Hamlet) crushing on her is pretty cute.

Maybe Clara actually feels invested in her dad's business. What if taking this summer seriously means that Clara has to leave her old self behind?

Suggested by Megan Haught, Teaching & Engagement/Research & Information Services

Thich Nhat Hanh: essential writings by Thicht Than

Zen master, poet, monk and peace advocate, Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Buddhist monk who has lived in exile in France for 30 years. Through his writings and retreats he has helped countless people of all religious backgrounds to live mindfully in the present moment, to uproot sources of anger and distrust, and to achieve relationships of love and understanding.

Suggested by Cindy Dancel, Research & Information Services

To the Stars: the autobiography of George Takei, Star Trek's Mr. Sulu by George Takei

This is the autobiography of one of Star Trek's most popular stars, George Takei. It tells of his triumph over adversity and of his huge success, despite an inauspicious start in a wartime US Asian relocation camp. In his lifetime, he has become an actor, a successful businessman, a writer, and a man deeply involved in politics and the democratic process. His story also includes his early days as an actor when he had brushes with greats like Alec Guinness, Burt Lancaster and Bruce Lee, as well as his first meeting with a writer/producer named Gene Roddenberry.

Suggested by Tim Walker, Information Technology & Digital Initiatives

Tumblr post: <https://ucflibrary.tumblr.com/post/184572761598/may-is-asian-pacific-american-heritage-month>

Blog post: <https://library.ucf.edu/news/featured-bookshelf-asian-pacific-american-heritage-2019/>