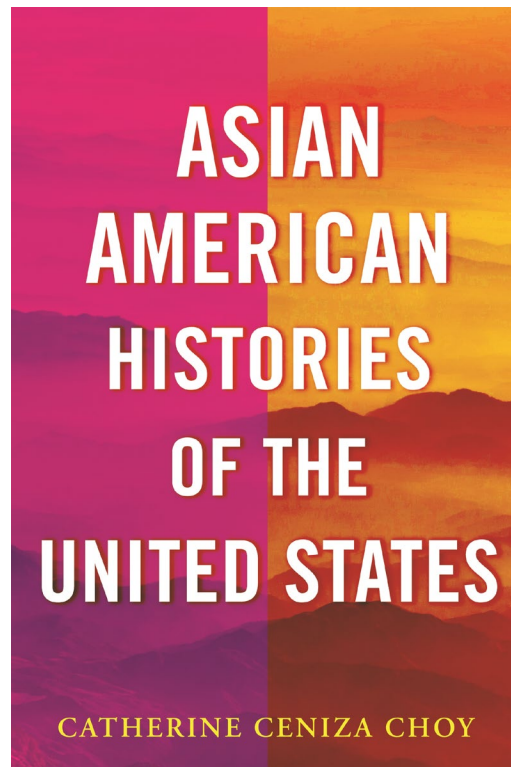


*Asian American Histories of the United States* by Catherine Ceniza Choy

Readers' Guide Discussion Questions



1. Reflect on the title of Catherine Choy's book *Asian American Histories of the United States*. How does the title compare to other books in the ReVisioning History series, such as *An Afro-Indigenous History of the United States* by Kyle T. Mays or *A Black Women's History of the United States* by Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross? What is captured in placing a spotlight on the plural "histories" of minoritized people?
2. In the preface, Choy discusses "positive stereotypes" of one-dimensional Asian American success and how "this misunderstanding ... contributes to the dehumanization of Asian Americans" (viii). Considering no stereotype is truly "positive," name some examples of stereotypes that pose as progressive or constructive for Asian Americans and people of color. How does this book work to combat the myth of the perfect marginalized group?
3. Choy writes an achronological history, depicting important events in the past without specific order. What were your first impressions of the introduction highlighting Asian American history from the most recent to oldest events? How did this achronological structure shift your understanding of this history, and why do you think Choy chose to write the book in this manner?
4. Choy presents to readers how Asian Americans experience the unique challenge of "being both celebrated and villainized at the same time," as explained by Dr. Fu on page 2. In both the text as well as in life, where do you see this sentiment reflected?

5. Chapter 1 discusses the massive influx of Filipino healthcare workers in the US medical field—noting that “31.5 percent of registered nurses who died from COVID-19 were Filipino American, although the group makes up only 4 percent of this labor force.” (14). Were you previously aware of this statistic? What does this tell you about the US workplace and the communities that are valued or neglected?
6. Page 66 focuses on internal dissent between Asian communities within America during the early rise of Asian American social justice movements. Filipinos “felt marginalized by terms like ‘yellow power’” (66). From the workplace to your favorite Netflix show, where else do you see the erasure of dark-skinned Asian Americans? Where does this discrimination stem from? How can we better practice intercommunal allyship and care?
7. On page 67, Abe Ignacio shares how learning his history in school and fostering healthy discussions about his cultural roots helped him rebuild his esteem surrounding his heritage. Taking into account Ignacio’s successes, struggles, realizations, and experiences, can you speak to the importance of teaching a multicultural history in the classroom? Can you think of other instances in your life when learning about your own history helped establish confidence?
8. Suzanna Balino Fernandez, who is Mexican and Filipino, recounts on page 123 how she felt she was rejected from her own cultures for not being “enough” of one or the other. Reflect on the individual who experiences this rejection and how they are affected in the long run. How can the harm of this rhetoric be retraced? What are some effective ways to reframe the narrative surrounding mixed race identity?
9. Choy states on page 166 that historical perspective greatly contributes to the erasure of Asian American histories, “specifically the power that comes from who gets to tell the story.” Do you see any existing parallels to other events in the past that have been forgotten, erased, skewed, or altered by historical perspective?
10. In the context of the Atlanta murders in 2021, we see womanhood and Asian American identity overlap. What challenges arise at the intersection of these identities? How do depictions such as “dragon ladies” and “lotus blossoms” invoke real-life consequences for Asian American women?