**History of Chinese American Women in the US**

**Ya-chen Chen, Ph.D.**

In *Surviving the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and Their Lives*, Chinese-heritage women immigrants’ history is generally divided into three parts: first, the early period from 1840s to 1943; second, 1943-1965; third, 1965 to the 1990s.[[1]](#endnote-1) The year 1943 functioned as a valid boundary to mark the difference between the first and second stages of Chinese Americans’ history because 1943 witnessed the historical turning point of the Chinese Exclusion Act being repealed. In addition, the US congress excitingly welcomed the speech of the Chinese first lady, Soong Mei-ling, in 1943. Title VII and EEOC (Equal Employment Occupation Commission) started the US federal endorsement of racial equality in workplaces in 1964; therefore, the year 1965 initiated the third part of Chinese American women’s history.

Although the Immigration Commission reported Chinese in America in 1820, the first woman to arrive reportedly was Afong Moy who came to New York City in 1834. Three decades later the number of Chinese women in America had reached only 1784, mainly distributed throughout California, Nevada, and Idaho. Some worked as prostitutes in mining areas, but many were the working wives of farmers, grocers, restaurant owners, laundrymen, cooks and laborers (Ling, *The History Teacher*).

The United States started to have an increasing number of Chinese-heritage women during the 1850s; however, it was a pity that sexual inequality went hand in hand with racial discrimination and disparate treatment.[[2]](#endnote-2) The disproportionate population of Chinese-American men and women was around 18:1 in 1860, 13:1 in 1870, 21:1 in 1880, and 27:1 in 1890. Most Americans tended to regard Chinese American women as merchants’ wives or sex workers during the era from the 1840s to 1943.

Take Hawaii for example; Hawaii’s first Chinese people included fifty carpenters, blacksmiths, craftsmen, and sailors aboard the British vessels *Felice* and *Iphigenia* in 1788 according to *Chinese Pioneer Families in Maui, Molokai, and Lanai*. In *The Sandalwood Mountains,* Hawaii’s first Chinese woman was a female maid to serve an American family, and she arrived in Hawaii in 1837. According to the Hawaii state government, however, the state’s first Chinese woman was “Lady of Ayum,” entering Hawaii on August 19, 1855. In 1865, Hawaii Commissioner of Immigration William Hillebrand brought 473 men and 52 women from China. The ratio of male population to female population was 17:1 in 1884. By 1920, less than a third of Hawaii’s Chinese men married nearby Chinese women. In other words, most male Chinese-heritage citizens in Hawaii married non-Chinese women.

California was one of the places where most early Chinese American women lived; however, it did not turn California into a friendly location for early Chinese-heritage women. In 1870, the California government passed the Page Act. Chinese American women could not enter California without appropriate paperwork for their “good standing” because of the Page Act. Chinese-heritage women who lacked the required paperwork of “good standing” were treated or mistaken as illegal sex workers.[[3]](#endnote-3) California census data from 1880 shows that “there were 70,000 Chinese men but fewer than 4,000 Chinese women” (Adler, 7).

Female Chinese-heritage immigrants experienced a lot of difficulties. Many of them left China for America because of their trust in liars’ promises to help them marry businessmen but ended up with miserable lives in brothels. In 1870, some American missionaries tried to help these poor women by establishing the Oriental House in San Francisco’s Chinatown and teaching them occupational skills to make a living. The Oriental House became Gum Moon[[4]](#endnote-4) Women’s Residence (金门女子公寓), and was turned into Asian Women’s Recourse Center later on (Chen, 54-55).

In the 1880s, female Chinese students began to study in the United States. Research records show that the first group of them returned to China as physicians (Ye, 315-346). In 1885, the New York medical system finished the academic training sessions of its first female Chinese-heritage physician, Jin Yamei (金雅妹 1864-1934).[[5]](#endnote-5) Jin Yamei returned to China in 1888, administered Beiyang Hospital in 1907, initiated China’s first Western-style public nursing school in 1908, raised funds for orphanages, and passed away in 1934. The second female Chinese-heritage medical student in the United States was probably Hü King Eng (許金訇 1866-1926; also recorded as Ke Jinying柯金英 or He Jinying何金英). After the *New York Times* reported her arrival in the United States in 1884, she studied at Wesley College, transferred to the Women’s Medical College of Philadelphia in 1888, and returned to China after the completion of her MD in 1895. Because of Li Hongzhang (李鴻章), Hü King Eng represented China in the World Women’s Congress in 1898. She served as the head of Woolston Memorial Hospital in her Chinese hometown in 1899. In the late nineteenth century, the United States also had two other female Chinese-heritage medical students: Idah Khan (康爱德1873-1931)[[6]](#endnote-6) and Mary Stone (石美玉1873- 1954).[[7]](#endnote-7) They traveled from China to America in 1892 and earned their MDs at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1896. The Chinese townsfolk let off firecrackers to celebrate their return, and they collaboratively established the first Western-style hospital and completed the first Western-style surgeries in their hometown, Jiujiang, in Jiangxi Province. In 1899, Idah Khan represented China at the World Women’s Congress.

In 1900, US census data showed the dramatic ratio of the Chinese American population: one woman for twenty-six men. This proportion did not catch any attention in mainstream American society at that time. Instead, new American laws worsened the disproportion. From 1906 to 1948, the California government outlawed Chinese-heritage people’s marital relationships with Caucasians (McClain, 9-43). Tye Leung Schulze’s life was a persuasive example of how this racially discriminatory law changed Chinese American people’s lives. She was the first Chinese civil servant and the first female Chinese assistant to the matron at the Angel Island Immigration Station in 1910. She was also the first female Chinese American voter in American elections in 1912. However, she was forced to give up her governmental job because she fell in love with and married her Caucasian colleague. In 1924, US law disallowed Asian-heritage women to enter the country, worsened the disproportion of Chinese-heritage male and female population in America, and turned the Chinese American community into a “bachelor’s society.”

From the 1930s to the 1940s, several female Chinese-American aviators made efforts to assist China’s flights against Japan. Becoming the first female Chinese American pilot and establishing good connections with Amelia Earhart (1897-1937; first female American pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean), Katherine Sui Fun Cheung (张瑞芬1904-2003) raised funds, purchased an airplane, and planned to start a training program for pilots in China to help China’s battles against Japan in 1937. The second female Chinese-American pilot was Hazel Ying Lee (李月英1912-1944). She finished her flying lessons in 1932, worked for the Chinese Aviation Committee in 1937, and joined China’s fights against Japan as a military pilot during WWII. Maggie Gee (朱美娇b. 1923) followed Hazel Ying Lee’s footsteps and served as the second female Chinese American military pilot during the war period. After these three female Chinese-heritage pilots, the United States did not have any female aviators at the cockpits of military airplanes until three decades later.

Soong Mei-ling (宋美龄 1897-2003) was the first Chinese first lady to give a speech and win the audience’s collective applause in the US Congress, though she returned to China after the completion of her academic degree and did not come to live in the US until her old age. Her powerful speech was given in 1943, but it remains an everlasting monumental landmark in the history of US-China relation.

I feel that if the Chinese people could speak to you in your own tongue, or if you could understand our tongue, they would tell you that basically and fundamentally we are fighting for the same cause [great applause]; that we have identity of ideals; that the “four freedoms,” which your President proclaimed to the world, resound throughout our vast land as the gong of freedom, the gong of freedom of the United Nations, and the death knell of the aggressions [Applause]. I assure you that our people are willing and eager to cooperate with you in the realization of these ideals, because we want to see it that they do not echo as empty phrases, but become realities for ourselves, for our children, for our children’s children, and for all mankind…without the active help of all of us our leaders cannot implement these ideals.

The solution for Chinese Americans’ “bachelor’s society” did not appear until the War Bride Act accepted American men’s Asian spouses in 1947. More than 6000 Chinese-heritage women came to the United States as Americans’ foreign wives from 1947 through 1950.

The popularity of *Madame Butterfly* and *Miss Saigon* in mainstream US society deepened most Americans’ misconceptions about submissive and self-sacrificial Asian-heritage (including Chinese American) masseuses or seductive Asian girls for Caucasian men. The images of Chinese-heritage women in American films, live shows, and TV combined sexual and racial problems. For instance, the lyrics about the American Dream in *Miss Saigon* irritated Chinese-heritage and other Asian-heritage audiences. These on-screen images also reflected practical concerns of a number of Chinese-heritage actresses in America, including Anna May Wong (黃柳霜 1905-1961) who complained about the US film industry’s disapproval of Chinese-heritage performers playing Chinese-heritage protagonists in early American movies. According to Anna May Wong, the US law that barred inter-racial marriage in 1850 even blocked her in kissing scenes with Caucasian actors on the silver screen. Nancy Kwan’s (关家蒨b. 1935; father from Hong Kong and mother from Scotland) on-stage portrayal of Chinese-heritage women in *The World of* *Suzie Wong* and *Flower Drum Song* also provoked racial and sexual disputes about the stereotypical American misunderstanding of Chinese women. Even in the twenty-first century, Chinese-heritage directors, film scholars, and journalists in the US multi-media[[8]](#endnote-8)—Tina Chen (陈蒂娜 actress), Wen Ming-Na (溫明娜 b. 1963; actress), Lela Lee (李萊拉b. 1974; actress), Bertha Bay-Sa Pan (潘贝思director), Bai Ling (白灵 b. 1966), Christine Choy (崔明慧feminist film scholar with a background as an architect), Connie Chung (宗毓华), Karin Chien (producer), and Lucy Liu (刘玉玲 b. 1968; actress)—are still deeply concerned about the ways to counter-construct the stereotypes of Chinese people in American mass media or in Hollywood industry.

One of WWII’s most influential impacts on women in the United States, including Chinese-heritage women in America, was its coincidental creation of job openings for women. Because of men’s participation in military affairs during WWII, job vacancies were gradually filled and occupied by career women. These career women, including Chinese-heritage women, started the “double burdens”: responsibilities in the public sphere and in the private sphere at the same time.

Although the job market seemed to be open to career women in the United States, most jobs and positions with authoritative power, good salaries, and high social status still went primarily to men or Caucasians. In 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act benefited Chinese-heritage women on the US job market, banning employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

In 1975, California Governor Jerry Brown passed the SB86 Act. This law permitted the legal status of acupuncture in America. Before this law, this thousand-year-old Chinese therapy received no recognition and was also excluded from coverage byAmerican medical insurance.

In 1978, the Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) stopped personnel managers from discriminating for or against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability; however, it is still not unusual for Chinese-heritage women to share most American women’s difficult fights against the “glass ceiling” in the United States. Below are some examples:

Although most Chinese-heritage immigrants stereotypically have better academic performance in science and technology than ordinary Americans from childhood, Chinese American women share most American women’s small proportion in male-dominating fields. Persuasive statistics data show that notoriously male-dominated fields include physics, chemistry, mathematics, civil engineering, computer science, mechanics, electrical engineering, astronomy, aviation, architecture, urban construction, biomedical technology, mining, navigation, public transportation systems, and so forth. A former Harvard University president, Lawrence Summers, made a public announcement about his belief that women never compete with men in science and technology; this belief reflected the above-mentioned disproportion. In 2006 because of this matter. The AAUW (American Association of University Women) responded to this disproportion by announcing that its American Community Action Grant encourages projects related to women’s success in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.[[9]](#endnote-9)

Regardless of occupational differences, most people at the top rank of their workplaces who jockey the powerful administrative positions with good rewards, authority, and reputation are still men. For instance, presidents of nations, prime ministers, governors, mayors, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, legislators, university presidents, CEOs and high-ranking managers of companies, generals, captains, bankers, police officers, fire-fighters, scientists, and engineers are usually male. This disproportion applies to the entire human world, not only to Americans with Chinese-heritage. Marian S. K. Ming (閔錫庆) is the first female Chinese-heritage attorney recorded in the list of the US Supreme Court. Catherine Yiyu Cho Woo (卓以玉) is the first female Chinese-heritage winner of the US Presidential Award. Wu Chien-Shiung (吳健雄) is the first Chinese-American woman to be honored as the “Queen of Physics,” the “First Lady of Physics,” and the greatest female scientist after Madame Marie Skłodowska Curie (1867-1934). Fossie Wong-Staal (黃以靜 Chinese name: Wong, Yee Ching; b. 1947) is the first scientist to discover and decode the DNA structure of the AIDS/HIV virus in 1989 and one of the ten super female scientists in the United States honored by the Institute of Scientific Information during the 1990s. Lu Chen (b. 1972) won the McArthur Foundation Fellowship thanks to her research in neuroscience.

Politically speaking, Annett Hsiu-lien Lü’s (呂秀莲) experience in serving as a female vice president (2000-2008) in Taiwan was an exceptional case in male-dominated politics; however, so far, the same miracle for a Chinese-heritage woman to enter the White House as the vice president of the United States is still seen as an unfulfilled miracle for female Chinese-Americans. Christiina M. “Tina” Tchen (陈远美 b. 1956) is the first female Chinese-heritage chief of staff to serve the American first lady, Michelle Obama, at the White House. Julia Chang Bloch (张之香 b. 1942) is America’s first female Chinese-heritage Ambassador to Nepal (from 1989 to 1993). Elaine Hsiao-lan Chao (趙小兰b. 1953) rose to be the first Chinese-heritage woman in the following US positions: White House Fellow (1983), Chair of the Deputy Administrator of the Maritime Administration in the US Department of Transportation (1986), Head of the Federal Maritime Commission (1988-1989), Deputy Secretary of Transportation (1989), Director of the Peace Corps (1991-1992), President and Chief Executive Officer of the United Way of America (1992-1996), Distinguished Fellow in Heritage Foundation (1996-2001 and 2009-present), and US Secretary of Labor (2001-2009). Although these two Chinese-heritage women’s jobs at the White House are eye-catching, the number of the Chinese American women with significant political and administrative power in overall US politics is still tiny when compared with the number of men in the same positions in the United States.

In American history, California has been famous for its racist hostility against Chinese-heritage residents in the past. Recently, however, it has had an amazingly large number of female Chinese-heritage politicians. Yuegui Jiang Yu (余江月桂) is California’s first female Chinese-heritage acting governor and state secretary. Lily Wan-ro Lee Chen (陈李婉若) is America’s first female Chinese-heritage mayor, winning the election in Monterey Park, California, in 1983. Following Lily Wan-ro Lee Chen’s footsteps, Betty Tom Chu (趙谭美生) also held the positions of mayor and vice mayor in Monterey Park, California. Lena Tam (谭莲娜) is the first female Chinese-heritage councilmember of Alameda. Suzanna Lee Chan (陈李素英) is the first female Chinese-heritage councilmember of Fremont, California. Jean Quan (关丽珍) is the first female Chinese-heritage mayor of a large city—Oakland, California—in American history. Laura Lee (李欒復青b. 1943) and Carol Chen (陈金凱莉) both have experience in being mayor and vice mayor in Cerrito. Kris Wang (胡宜兰) served as the mayor and vice mayor in Cupertino. Ann Cheng (程明安) won elections to be vice mayor and mayor of El Cerrito. Mary Su (苏王秀兰) was elected to the positions of council member and mayor of Walnut. Judy S. Wong (汪嵩之) held political positions as councilmember and mayor of Temple City, but she resigned after the crime of bribery. Chang Ling Ling (张玲齡) was elected to the positions of council member and vice mayor of Diamond Bar. Wilma Chan (**陈煥瑛b. 1949**), as a third-generation immigrant, was elected to California’s assembly (from 2000 to 2006) and served as the Assembly Majority Leader (2002-2004) and Vice Chair of the Asian-Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus. Alice Lai-Bitker (赖燕屏) served as the chair of supervisors in Alameda County. Polly Law (刘朱嘉仪) was elected as council member of Rosemead. Carmen Chu (朱嘉文 b. 1978) was elected to lead the board of supervisors and to be deputy budget director of San Francisco.

Outside of the White House and California, there are some other female Chinese-heritage politicians in the United States. For example, Mae Yih (叶邓稚凤b. 1928) is America’s first female Chinese senator. She served the Oregon State House from 1977 to 2002 and was named the Senate President Pro Tempore from 1993 through 1995. Cheryl Lau (刘美莲) is America’s first female Chinese-heritage lawyer in the United States House of Representatives. She was also the deputy attorney general (1987-1991) and secretary of state for the State of Nevada (1991-1995). Ellen Young (杨爱伦 b. 1952) is New York’s first female Chinese-heritage assemblywoman and her term was from 2006 to 2008. Cecilia Xie Birge (谢兰 b. 1968) is New Jersey’s first female Chinese-heritage mayor, and her past administrative positions include council member, vice mayor and mayor in Montgomery township. Lisa A. Wong (黃素芬) is Massachusetts’s first female Chinese-heritage mayor with her first successful election at Fitchburg City in 2007. Kimberly Yee (余艳芬) is the first female Chinese American to serve in the Arizona state legislature with her victory in 2010. Judy Chu (赵美心) is the first Chinese American congresswoman in US history. Martha Wong (**黃朱惠爱**b. 1939) is the first Chinese American woman elected to the Houston City Council (1994-1999) and Texas House of Representatives (2003-2007).

Even though some workplaces are full of women and are thus not stereotypically labeled as “men’s jobs,” most well-established people in these workplaces are still men. For instance, most award-winning chefs or bakers are male though cooking is a stereotypical choice for women. The well-known exception is probably the miraculous success of Chang Ya-feng (张亚凤), a first-generation Taiwanese-heritage immigrant with the honorable titles of the “Queen of Cantering Enterprise” and the best Asian-American female entrepreneur in 1999; however, the limited number of exceptional cases cannot alter the overall disproportion. The incredible number of female tailors, cosmeticians, hair dressers, and fashion designers are also good examples because most successful award-wining leaders in their workplaces are usually male. Although there are some famous exceptions, such as Vera Wang (王薇薇b. 1949), the minimal exceptions cannot improve the disproportion, either. Secretaries and assistants are another good illustration. Most state secretaries with substantial political power are male, though secretaries and assistants are usually female in public and private organizations. One more convincing example is female K-12 and college teachers’ male supervisors. Most administrative leaders of elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and universities are male, though most K-12 teachers are female and the number of female university professors is growing.

Theoretically speaking, American feminists did not take Chinese American women into serious consideration until their third wave of feminism. Most women’s and gender studies programs and feminist organizations in the United States did not include a large number of Chinese-heritage women, either. The earliest Chinese women’s community service organization in the United States, the Square and Circle Club, was not co-established by Alice Fong Yu (1905-2000), the first female Chinese-heritage public school teacher in California, with six Chinese-heritage women until 1924.[[10]](#endnote-10) Depending on different systems of American higher education institutions, Chinese American women’s and gender studies belong to either women’s and gender studies programs, American studies programs, Asian American studies programs, Asian studies programs, or Chinese studies programs. Betty Lee Sung (李瑞芳) initiated one of the earliest Asian American studies courses on the US East Coast, and she also showed strong interest in Chinese American women’s studies. Wang Zheng (王政) cooperated with Mainland Chinese feminists such as Du Fangqin (杜芳琴) to win support from the Ford Foundation and to establish one of the earliest graduate-level “seed teachers programs” for Mainland Chinese women’s and gender studies.

Rose Hum Lee was the first female Chinese-heritage researcher to direct an academic department in American academy. In 1956, she was appointed to chair the Sociology Department at Roosevelt University in Chicago (Bakken and Farrington, 21; Yu, Henry, 38-42). Unfortunately, American higher education has not been free from injustice, including sexual inequality and racial discrimination, though its women’s studies and ethnic studies programs aim to broadcast the value of open-minded-ness and insistence on egalitarianism. For instance, the average number of female associate and full professors, including those who have administrative leadership, in current US academy is still smaller than that of their male counterparts. Undoubtedly, it is also no exception for the small percentage of female Chinese-heritage associate professors, full professors, and faculty with administrative power in American academy. In other words, it is highly likely for more female Chinese-heritage university-level instructors to suffer from various bottlenecks than their Chinese-heritage or non-Chinese male counterparts in the overall structure of American academic environment. In this book, three of the notable female Chinese-American scholars as subjects of chapters had personal experiences of crises of job loss in the US academic structure—not to mention other cases that are known, heard, seen or recorded in other sources of data. These three women are Lucie Cheng, Mi Chu Wiens, and Chia-lin Pao Tao.

Lucie Cheng (成露茜1939-2010) started her field studies about Chinese-heritage sex workers in Los Angeles early in the 1960s and made great contributions to Asian-American studies[[11]](#endnote-11); however, she suffered from obstacles when applying for tenure and promotion in the 1970s. Most details about Lucie Cheng’s successful strategies to survive the difficult period for her tenure and promotion were unclear because of the impossibility to interview Lucie Cheng and obtain her own first-handed information. Except for some vague memories about students’ supportive petitions, Lucie Cheng’s elder sister, Cheng Chia-ling (成嘉玲) who was the first female dean in Taiwanese academy, did not know many details of Lucie Cheng’s American experience in tenure and promotion at the UCLA. Lucie Cheng’s niece, Eileen Chow (周成荫), did not, either. According to Don T. Nakanishi’s memory, the Chancellor rectified the injustice for Lucie Cheng.

Chia-lin Pao Tao (鮑家麟) is another example. Although she was already a tenured professor and the first faculty to design and teach the earliest women’s studies courses at National Taiwan University before her arrival in the United States, she was not reappointed after her pregnancy in the late 1980s and early 1990s. According to Chia-lin Pao Tao’s interview, the University of Arizona paid no attention to her complaint at the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) office and even tried to bribe her first attorney by hiring this lawyer as an adjunct visiting instructor at its law school. Nothing improved, and the University of Arizona did not offer to settle until her second attorney started to file an official lawsuit.

Mi Chu Wiens (居蜜) suffered from discrimination when she applied for a position at the Library of Congress. She won her federal lawsuit in 1977-1979. The fighting spirit matched her insistence on the legal rectification of the injustice.

Outside of this book, there are certainly a number of female Chinese-heritage scholars suffering from difficulties in academic workplaces.[[12]](#endnote-12) For instance, the University of Pennsylvania rejected Rosalie Tung’s tenure and refused to disclose documents about the reason. The Civil Right Act in 1964 and Title VII in 1972 disallowed the university’s refusal to divulge the official records about Rosalie Tung’s lack of tenure.

Title VII… created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to investigate charges of discrimination. The EEOC was given a broad right of access to any “relevant” evidence for its enforcement duties. The confidential nature of peer review evaluations increasingly conflicted with the EEOC’s needs for information. When universities refused information, the EEOC often responded with subpoenas through the courts.[[13]](#endnote-13)

Later on, a senior faculty member confessed that the school is not interested in China-related research and thus decided no tenure and promotion for Rosalie Tung. Although the grievance committee believed that the university discriminated against Rosalie Tung, the provost did not rectify the injustice because he felt that Chinese-heritage people would not fight back like Westerners or mainstream Americans.[[14]](#endnote-14)

Marcy Wang is another example. She suffered from no tenure and promotion and ended up with one million USD as the university’s compensation for her because “a faculty ‘boys club’ … did not want Asian American women in their ranks.”[[15]](#endnote-15)

Even after tenure, some female Chinese-heritage faculty members still suffered in academic workplaces. Jean Jew is an example. She suffered from rumors related to her personal relationship with another male faculty member.

In the workplace, objectification comes to mean that the material valuation of women’s contributions will be based not on their professional accomplishments or work performance but on men’s perceptions of their potential to be harassed. Asian Pacific women suffer greater harassment due to racialized ascriptions (exotic, hyper-erotic, masochistic, desirous of sexual domination) that set them up as ideal-typical gratifiers of Western neocolonial libidinal formations. In a 1990 Gentleman’s Quarterly article entitled, “Oriental Girls,” Tony Rivers rehearsed the racialized particulars of the “great Western male fantasy”… Gender stereotypes with racial overtones painted Jew as an undeserving Asian Pacific American woman who traded on her sexuality to get to the top. To Jew, this stereotyping and her refusal to accede to it played a large role in the “no-win” configuration of departmental power relations.[[16]](#endnote-16)

Conclusion

Mainstream US society witnessed an incredible number of Chinese-heritage women during and after the 1850s. It also experienced impressive changes in its attitudes toward Chinese American women and gender issues. Major challenges included sexual inequality, racial discrimination, and disparate treatment at that time. The average ratio of Chinese American women’s survival and success is still different from that of American Caucasian men’s, American Caucasian women’s, Chinese American men’s, Latino-heritage women’s, or African-heritage women’s. The high hope for more opportunities for Chinese-heritage women to succeed in the United States still needs enormous efforts to become reality. The recent increase of female Chinese-heritage politicians might be an exciting example to inspire or promote mainstream American society’s acceptance of and support for Chinese-heritage women’s survival and success.

Works Cited

Bakken, Gordon Morris and Brenda Farrington. *Encyclopedia of Women in the American West*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 2003, p. 21.

Barde, Robert. “An Alleged Wife: One Immigrant in the Chinese Exclusion Era.” Prologue 36.1 (Spring 2004): <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/spring/alleged-wife-1.html> **(website retrieved in February 2011).**

**Boorman, Howard L. *Biograhphical Dictionary of Republican China*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967, pp. 225-226.**

**Burton, Margaret E. *Notable Women of Modern China*. New York: Fleming H. revel, 1912, p. 15-70.**

**Char, Tin-Yuke. *The Sandalwood Mountains: Readings and Stories of the Early Chinese in Hawaii*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975.**

**Chen, Lily Wan-ro Lee. *Taiwan nühai meiguo shizhang* (*Taiwanese Girl, American Mayor*). Taipei: Shangzhou, 2004.**

**Ding, Loni, Jennie Chin Hansen, Daphne Kwok, and Doreen Yang. “The Emergence of Chinese American Women.” *Chinese America: History and Perspectives*. (Moderator: Alice Lowe).** <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3167/is_2007_Annual/ai_n29334782>**. (Online data retrieved in September 2011).**

**Hennessey, Gregg. Book Review on *Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and Their Lives*. *Journal of San Diego History* 45.4 (Fall 1999):** <http://chineseculture.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sandiegohistory.org%2Fjournal%2F99fall%2Fgold.htm> **(website retrieved in February 2011)**

Hune, Shirley and Gail Nomura. Asian Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology. NY:  New York University Press, 2003.

Lee, Ken and Nancy Wong. *Chinese Pioneer Families in Maui, Molokai, and Lanai*. Honolulu: Hawaii Chinese History Center, 2009.

Lee, Lily Xiao Hong and A. D. Stefanowska. *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*. (The Qing Period Editor: Clara Wing-chung Ho). Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998, pp. 94-96.

Ling, Huping. *Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and Their Lives*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1998.

—. “Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A Review of Sources about Chinese American Women.” *The History Teacher* 26.4 (August 1993):

Mazamdar, Sucheta. “Through Western Eyes: Discovering Chinese Women in America.” A New Significance: Re-envisioning the History of the American West. Clyde A. Milner edt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 159.

Peffer, George Anthony. If They Don’t Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Immigration Before Exclusion. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Pelz, Ruth. Women of the Wild West: Biographies from Many Cultures. Open Hand, 1994, pp. 25-27.

Tong, Benson. Unsubmissive Women: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.

Wang, Huiji. *Qingmo minchu de nüzi jiaoyü* (*Female Overseas Students’ Education at the End of the Qing Dynasty and the Beginning of the Republican Era*). Master Thesis. Taipei: National Chengchi University, 1980, p. 216.

Weatherford, Doris. A History of Women in the United States: State by State Reference. Danbury, CT: Grolier Academic Scholastic, 2004.

Yu, Connie Young. “The Word of Our Grandmothers.” Making Waves: An Anthology of Writing By and About Asian Women. Asian Women United of California edt. Boston: Beacon Press, 1989, pp. 38-41.

Yu, Henry S. N. *Thinking Oriental: A History of Knowledge Created about and by Asian Americans*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Yung, Judy. *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

—. *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

1. Notes

   For details, see Ling Huping’s *Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and Their Lives*; Gregg Hennessey’s book review in *Journal of San Diego History*, etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Consult Robert Barde’s “An Alleged Wife: One Immigrant in the Chinese Exclusion Era” in Prologue; Sucheta Mazamdar’s “Through Western Eyes: Discovering Chinese Women in America”, etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Consult Benson Tong’s Unsubmissive Women: Chinese Prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco; George Anthony Peffer’s *If They Don’t Bring Their Women Here*; Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura’s Asian Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology; Judy Yung’s *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*; Connie Young Yu’s “The Word of Our Grandmothers” in *Making Waves*; Doris Weatherford’s A History of Women in the United States; Ruth Peltz’s *Women of the Wild West: Biographies from Many Cultures*; Judy Yung’s *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. “Gum Moon” is Cantonese. The Mandarin Chinese pronunciation is “Jinmen.” [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Jin Yamei (1864-1934) was an orphan at the age of two because of her parents’ death after illness. A medical doctor named Divie Bethune McCartee and his wife adopted her. Because of foster parents’ medical work in China and Japan, Jin Yamei grew up in China and Japan, studied medicine in New York, and became the first Chinese women to win the university degree in May 1885. She passed away in Beijing in 1934, and was known as the Shimoda Utako (famous Japanese female educationist; 1854-1936) of China (Lee & Stefanowska, 94-96). [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. At the age of only two months, Idah Khan (1873-1931) was an abandoned baby girl adopted by female Western missionaries, Miss Howe and Miss Hoag of the Methodist Mission in Jiujiang, China. She had her first trip to the US in 1882, but she returned to China later on. In 1892, she had her second trip to the US together with her life-long good friend, Mary Stone, and became the earliest female Chinese-heritage medical students in the US. She finished her MD program at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1896. She collaborated with Mary Stone and founded the first Western-style hospital and had the first Western-style surgeries for Chinese patients at her hometown, Jiujiang. Her fame increased after the successful curing strategies for Nanchang Mayor’s wife, and this mayor also supported the establishment of her hospital in Nanchang. Even Liang Qichao showed his admiration and adoration for her in that year. In 1899, Idah Khan represented China to attend the World Women Congress. In 1907, she traveled to the West again, studying literature at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago and advancing her medical studies in England. In 1911, Idah Khan returned to China and continued her medical service for Chinese patients. During Nationalists’ combats and warlords’ battles in the 1910s and 1920s, she took care of thousands of injured refugees. She passed away in Nanchang in 1931. Also consult Howard Boorman’s *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, Margaret Burton’s *Notable Women of Modern China*, Wang Huiji’s master thesis on female overseas students, etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. In the US medical history, Mary Stone (1873- 1954) was one of the earliest female Chinese-heritage medical student, traveling with a female Western missionary from China to America in 1892 and completing her MD degree at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1896. Cooperating with her life-long good friend Idah Khan, Mary Stone opened a hospital and successfully cured a number of patients in her Chinese hometown. In 1901, a medical doctor in Chicago supported her establishment of another hospital, naming it “Danforth Hospital” in memory of his dead wife. The Rockefeller Foundation supported her advanced medical research at John Hopkins University in 1918-1919. After returning to China in 1920, Mary Stone not only funded hospitals, pharmacies and nursing schools but also adopted hundreds of orphans. She passed away in 1954. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. For details, consult the workshop with Chinese-American actresses, directors, producers, and film scholars hosted by the Asian Women in Business reported by *World Journal* on August 27, 2010. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. For details, consult the AAUW website about the American Community Action Grant: [www.aauw.org/learn/fellowships\_grants/community\_action.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/learn/fellowships_grants/community_action.cfm) (website retrieved in January 2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Consult Loni Ding, Jennie Chin Hansen, Daphne Kwok, and Doreen Yang’s article entitled “The Emergence of Chinese American Women.” [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. For details, consult the UCLA website after Lucie Cheng’s death: www.soc.ucla.edu/in-memoriam-lucie-cheng (website retrieved in January 2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. I would like to add my special thank-you note for Don T. Nakanishi. His encouragement and support for this part of my research resulted in the current version of these paragraphs about so many female Chinese-heritage faculty members’ suffering in US academy. Details about Don T. Nakanishi’s academic achievements can be found in the following web page:

    <http://www.aasc.ucla.edu/people/dnakanishi.asp> (online data retrieved in September 2011). [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. For details, consult the following website: http://law.jrank.org/pages/23150/University-Pennsylvania-v-EEOC-Significance.html

    (online information retrieved in September 2011) [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. For details, consult the following online information:

    <http://girlarmy.org/reader/APA%20women%20and%20racialized%20sex%20harassment.pdf> (online data retrieved in September 2011) [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. For details, consult the following web page:

    <http://articles.sfgate.com/1996-01-09/news/17766357_1_marcy-wang-tenure-faculty>

    (online information retrieved in September 2011) [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. For details, consult the following web page:

    <http://girlarmy.org/reader/APA%20women%20and%20racialized%20sex%20harassment.pdf> (online data retrieved in September 2011) [↑](#endnote-ref-16)