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Describe your educational background.

I have a BA in Ethnic Studies with a focus on Asian Pacific American history. I have been a subject collector for 21 years tending the library's collection related to Anthropology, Asian American Studies, Linguistics, Native American Studies, Philosophy, and Sociology.

What was your path to librarianship like?

Luck, serendipity, and intentional. After high school my first paid position was as a library page at the San Diego Central Public Library. It was the moment when I discovered the importance of the public library to the community of all ages and backgrounds, especially those who had few resources or means of livelihood. I was reminded again of this idea of the library as a socio-cultural space during my service in the U.S. Army in Germany when I frequented and volunteered at the base library.

I resumed my education at University of California, San Diego (UCSD) in Ethnic Studies. It was in a class on Asian American Literature that I first learned about Filipino-American history when I read *America Is in the Heart* by Carlos Bulosan, a classic semi-autobiographical work in Asian American literature. In the book the library was crucial to Bulosan's bittersweet immigrant experience and education, epitomized in the line, "I had only one escape – the Los Angeles Public Library."

Bulosan's writings became my entry point to a history that heretofore was missing in my education. It radically changed the kind of life and career I wanted to pursue. At UCSD I met a wonderful librarian who was coordinating an internship program for students interested in librarianship. After the year-long internship I went to UCLA to earn an MLIS. Soon afterwards I was accepted to the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) Library Residency Program in 1998 and I continue to practice engaged librarianship at UCSB.

Tell us about a recent professional achievement of which you are particularly proud.

I have a chapter, "Doing the Work You Want Your Library Work to Do: Reflections of an Academic Librarian," in the anthology *Asian American Librarians and Library Services: Activism, Collaborations, and Strategies* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), where I further elaborate on my career path to librarianship.



Describe RCL in three words.

Well-curated guide.

What are some of the most useful resources for selecting core books in your discipline?

Scholars, students, catalogs, and conference book exhibits.

What is the biggest challenge for you in maintaining the RCL subject collection?

2018 commemorated the 50th anniversary of the field of Asian American Studies, which was born out of the 1968 strikes of the Third World Liberation Front at San Francisco State University and the University of California, Berkeley. Since then, the field has evolved, and the scholastic breadth continues to expand in interdisciplinary research areas and methods (e.g. Food Studies, Filipinx American Studies, etc.). As a result, the original taxonomy requires occasional review and revision to remain relevant and reflect the new and emerging works that are international in scope.

If you could select the campus-wide read using a book from your RCL subject, which book would it be? Why?

The Making of Asian America: A History by Erika Lee. To quote Judy Yung (Professor Emerita of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz and author of *Unbound Feet*): "Building on the best and newest scholarship, Erika Lee has written a sweeping yet personal and critical history of Asian Americans across centuries, continents, and diverse cultures without losing sight of the global, racial, and historical contexts of Asian migration, exclusion, and resettlement. A definitive and ideal text for college classes and the general public, *The Making of Asian America* is truly an enjoyable, informative, and insightful read."

What is your best advice for new subject selectors?

Consider maintaining a journal and start projects early.

Stereotypes about librarians abound. What is the most unlibrarianlike thing about you?

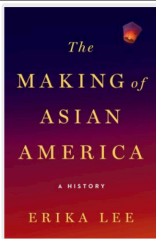
I am unorganized.

Complete this sentence: "When I'm not in the library, you can find me _____."

...at department symposia, academic conferences, job talks, family gatherings, the gym, or traveling.

You've been shipwrecked. What one book do you want with you to read while you await rescue?

Selections from the Prison Notebooks by Antonio Gramsci.



The Making of Asian America
A History

Author: Lee, Erika
Publication Year: 1 Sep 2015
Format: Hardback
ISBN-13: 978-1-4767-3940-3
ISBN-10: 1-4767-3940-4

Summary
The definitive history of Asian Americans by one of the nation's preeminent scholars on the subject.

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Professional Reviews
Kirkus Reviews August 14, 2015
A sweeping study of the fastest growing group in the United States that underscores the shameful racist regard white Americans have long held for Asian immigrants. A historian of immigration whose ancestors hailed from China, Lee