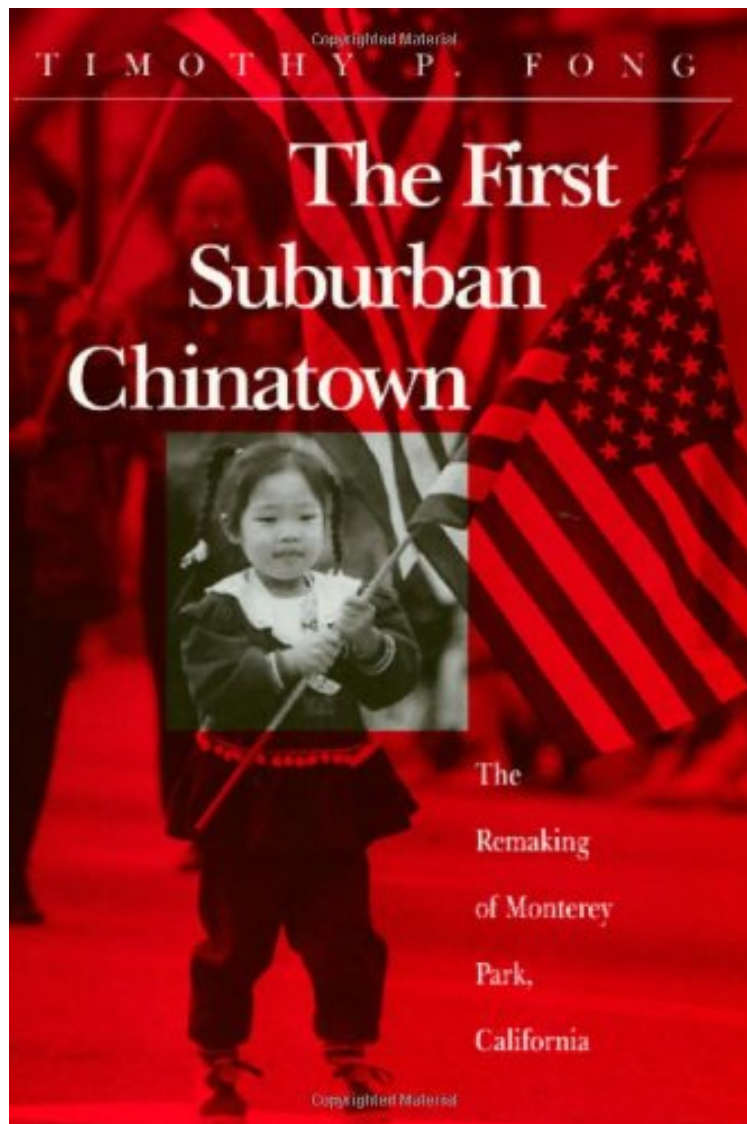


(Download) The First Suburban Chinatown: The Remaking of Monterey Park, California (Asian American History Cultu)

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Timothy Fong

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Timothy Fong : The First Suburban Chinatown: The Remaking of Monterey Park, California (Asian American History Cultu) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The First Suburban Chinatown: The Remaking of Monterey Park, California (Asian American History Cultu):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Monterey Park!By SLIMJIMSome reviews of book deserve to be a

full hour conversation rather than a written blurb. This is one of them though I will keep it brief. I started to read this because local history fascinates me and the work's focus on how Monterey Park became a Chinese suburb made it even more interesting. I appreciated the author giving some historical background of Monterey Park itself before talking about the immigration of ethnic Chinese, which gave me an appreciation of what Monterey Park was like before the 1970s rush of Asians. Here the author gave interesting bits of information along the way, such as how Monterey Park in the 1920s had an agreement among real estate agents to only sell property to white people and that in April 1924 there was a KKK meeting inducting new members in Garvey Avenue that had 20,000 people coming out to see it. History is ironic, today Garvey Avenue is where people get cheap Chinese food and no doubt the God of History has a sense of humor in this irony. It was also a book that gave me some background to who Repetto was, and the story behind the Cascade waterfall and the current Chamber of Commerce building. But the gist of the book was focused on the conflict of old time locals who were into "slow growth" of the city versus those who were new and freshly immigrated. I admit I haven't had the best experience of Asian American studies literature in the past but this is one of the better works--and I must also say I enjoyed it. The author's explanation of things was not simplistic and his historiography was able to combine interviews critically along with statistics and a good amount of citation of local newspapers and election fliers. Fong points out that driving behind all the back and forth rhetorics of accusation of racism was really a competition of interests--between land developers and those who wish to retain their property values, etc. I appreciated his explanation for the sudden immigration of Chinese to Monterey Park was due to influences in the International scene of American diplomacy under Nixon with China and the UN recognizing the PRC rather than Taiwan as the legitimate Chinese state as the source of instability of the future that prompted many to move to America. That, and coupled with a man who decided to buy land in Monterey Park and sell ads in Hong Kong and Taiwan that Monterey Park is the "Chinese Beverly Hills." I also thought his explanation for the economic phenomenon of cheap Chinese shops was quite sound: due to the huge jump in real estate value due to land speculation in Monterey Park, most businesses could not afford to stay in Monterey Park and thus when there's no money to be made with loss businesses, land owners would decide to cater to have many smaller businesses in order to make their money; these smaller businesses would barely get by and with the increase of many competitors would then be lowering their prices with free in-house family laborers to get by financially. This of course, wouldn't do the city any good in collecting tax revenue, prompting greater conflict in the city in the midst of a large cultural change. As I said before, there are so much to say about this book. Even as I read the work I was conscious that this book was written 20 years ago--and that has also brought other developments in Monterey Park as well. At the same time, it made me think of memories of my childhood growing up in Monterey Park. This work was also interesting for me to see names that I recognize in Monterey Park politics and law enforcement and their younger political and/or community beginnings. Excellent work in social, economic and historical analysis. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A classic work. Fong is actually Professor of Ethnic ...By CoasttoCoastA classic work.Fong is actually Professor of Ethnic Studies at California State University, Sacramento..

Monterey Park, California, is a community of 60,000 residents, located east of downtown Los Angeles. Dubbed by the media the "First Suburban Chinatown," Monterey Park is the only city in the continental United States with a majority Asian American population. Since the early 1970s, large numbers of Chinese immigrants moved there and transformed a quiet, predominantly white middle-class bedroom community into a bustling international boomtown. Timothy Fong examines the demographic, economic, social, and cultural changes taking place in Monterey Park, as well as the political reactions to change. Although the city was initially recognized for its liberal attitude toward newcomers, rapid economic development and population growth spawned numerous problems. Greater density, traffic congestion, less open space and parking, and strain on city services are problems that any city would encounter with rapid unplanned growth. The prominence of Chinese-language business signs, and ethnic restaurants, markets, and shops persuaded many older residents to focus blame on the immigrants. Fong describes how, by 1986, the once ethnically diverse city council became predominantly white and promoted such "anti-Chinese" measures as controlled growth and English as the official language. Unlike earlier waves of Asian immigrants, many of the Chinese who settled in Monterey Park were affluent and well educated. Resentment over their rapid material success was fueled by pervasive anti-Asian sentiment throughout the country. Fearing that newcomers were "taking over" and refusing to assimilate, residents supported a series of initiatives intended to strengthen "community control." These initiatives were branded as "racist" by development interests, as well as by many of the usually apolitical Chinese in the city. Fong chronicles the evolution of the conflict and locates the beginnings of its recovery from internal strife and unwanted negative media attention. He demonstrates how the para

From the Publisher Ethnicity issues fuel internal strife as a community faces change Donald H. Pflueger Local History Award, Historical Society of Southern California Outstanding Book Award in the Social Sciences, Association for Asian American Studies From the Back Cover Monterey Park, California, is a community of 60,000 residents, located east of downtown Los Angeles. Dubbed by the media the "First Suburban Chinatown", Monterey Park is the only city

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About the Author Timothy P. Fong teaches at the University of California, Davis, and at California State University, Hayward.