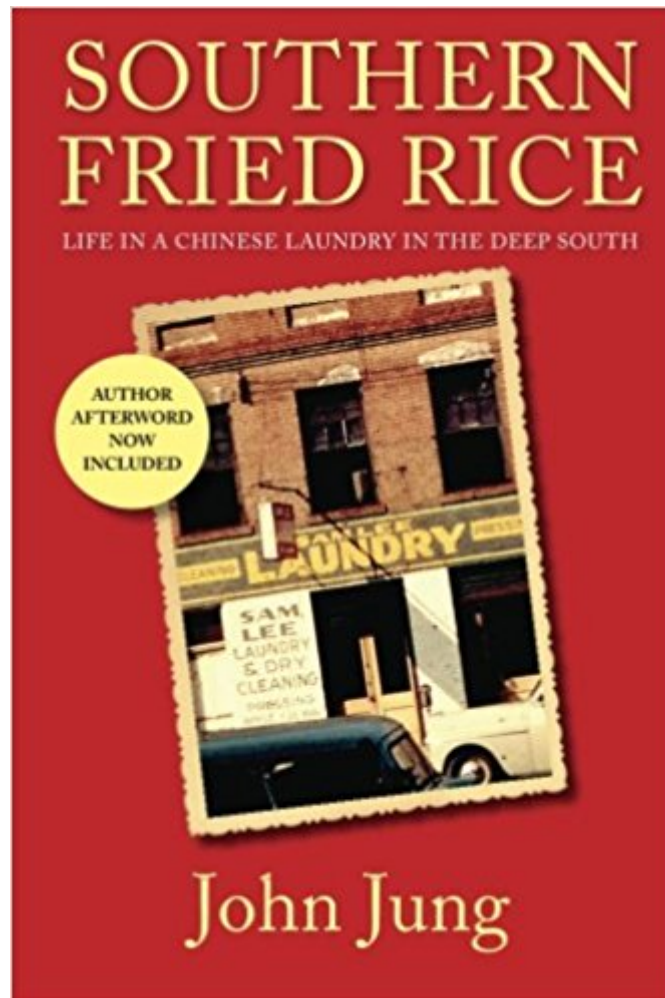




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Southern Fried Rice: Life In A Chinese Laundry In The Deep South



Synopsis

This memoir conveys the experiences, first of my parents and subsequently of our family, the only Chinese people living in Macon, Georgia between 1928 and 1956. It describes our family's isolated existence running a laundry, enduring loneliness as well as racial prejudice for over 20 years, explains why and how it moved across the continent to live in San Francisco near a Chinese community, and relates how each family member adjusted to the challenges and opportunities of their new lives.

Some Review Excerpts

"..fascinating and insightful account of Chinese-American family life...charming and information..." Paul Rosenblatt, U. of Minnesota

"..woven with genuine scholarship...masterful bit of storytelling..." Ronald Gallimore, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, UCLA

"...a unique view of ethnic identity.. fascinating insights...what it means to be Chinese when there is no Chinese community... and the way subsequent experiences in__and out__ of a Chinese community further shape this process." Jean Phinney, Author, Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure

...an intriguing and unique perspective on American immigration. Based on his experience as a child in the only Chinese family in Macon, Georgia in the mid-20th century, Jung's story is a fascinating account of the negotiation of personal and ethnic identity in a foreign environment. His narrative highlights many of the features of the larger society, including both government policy and situational practice, that shape the lives of immigrants, both then and now." Kay Deaux, City University of N.Y. Grad Center, Author, "To Be An Immigrant"

... delightful book opens a window providing a glimpse into the lives of one family born to Chinese immigrants in a small town in the South in the 1930s and 1940s. Being the only Chinese in town in a segregated society, their lives were certainly not mint julep and magnolias...

Sylvia Sun Minnick, Samfow, The San Joaquin Chinese Experience Reader Comments

... It has a beautiful flow to it and an enriching quality that is easier to feel than it is to describe. Couched in humor, it deals with the painful and serious matter of day-to-day struggles of existence of a couple who came here with hardly anything more than faith in their hearts and steel in their spines. K. Saxena, Kensington, Ca

Your book is the one that I had promised myself that I would write one day, but you went ahead and wrote it. You did a wonderful job! Henry Tom, Frederick, MD. Thank you for telling your story in such an engaging manner. ...While your story is personal it is also universal because of its working class foundation laced with layers of Chinese ethnicity, family structure and dynamics, and the specificity of the South. Flo Oy Wong, Sunnyvale, CA. Enjoyed very much reading your family history revealing a unique experience yet sharing many of the same problems of families in Chinese laundries. ...Yours is one of the few written accounts of the many family-run laundries in the U. S. Thank you for the careful documentation of this history, which would be

otherwise forgotten. Tunney Lee, Boston, Mass. " ... gave me insight into the lives of Chinese in the South, especially those living where there were no other Chinese... Your move to San Francisco must have been as much of a cultural shock for you as it was for me, an African American moving to the Bay Area from Memphis. Leatha Ruppert, Cotati, CA. I thoroughly enjoyed this book! I learned much that will hopefully give me some leads in searching for information on my paternal grandfather... your book has allowed me to gain some insight into what his life might have been like, what he might have experienced as the only Chinese in St. Augustine, FL. C. M. "Riveting - couldn't put the book down until it was finished - it mirrored many of my own childhood experiences growing up in New Zealand in the 50s. The Chinese immigrant experience must have been the same the world over." Helen Wong, Auckland, New Zealand

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Excerpt from Review by Stephanie Y. Evans, Ph.D. Assistant Professor African American Studies and Women's Studies University of Florida... a fascinating look into Chinese immigration history and into Jim Crow southern living ... an incredible living document, demonstrates the fluidity of regional and national identity...this account of a Chinese family's laundry business in the segregationist South is truly an American story: it defies simple or static definition and is filled with intricate, bitter ironies that separate reality from myth.

I grew up in the only Chinese family in Macon, Georgia, where I was born in 1937. Our family owned and ran a laundry above which were our living quarters. We finally moved to San Francisco in the

early 1950s because our parents wanted their children to live among Chinese people. I eventually earned a Ph.D. in psychology at Northwestern University and then had a 40 year career as a professor at California State University, Long Beach. In retirement, I began to study the life experiences of Chinese immigrants like my parents who endured harsh lives and suffered racial prejudices. My memoir, "Southern Fried Rice: Life in A Chinese Laundry in the Deep South" described what our family experienced living in the South during the Jim Crow era. The interest that this book generated led me to write three other books about the Chinese American experience. "Chinese Laundries: Tickets to Survival on Gold Mountain" is a social history of the important role that these businesses that once dotted the landscape held for the economic survival of Chinese immigrants. Another book, "Chopsticks in the Land of Cotton: Lives of Mississippi Delta Chinese Grocers" examines the similar role of this family occupation for Chinese in the delta. Most recently, I wrote a social history of Chinese family restaurants, "Sweet and Sour: Life in Chinese Family Restaurants."

I've always been curious about the immigrants' struggles in America, and this book allowed the reader a glimpse into the world of a business venture of the Chinese, in achieving laundry. The Chinese in this book are portrayed as hard working individuals, who struggle with different obstacles, such as racism, coercion, and isolation from other Chinese. This book proves to the reader with hard work, and commitment, as well as determination one's dream is possible.

This is a very enjoyable book about Chinese immigrant culture. The whole family went through all the difficulties, struggles and isolation, but still managed to pursue their "American Dream". As a Chinese immigrant, I find a lot of feelings shared in this book and I feel more confident and comfortable after knowing the early Chinese immigrant history. Life is hard for immigrants, but your future is in your own hands.

I read this book in a week, which is fast for me. I was fascinated in this story of Chinese Americans in the deep south in contrast to my own experiences living in Seattle. There are a lot of similarities but certainly different. This book is scholarly with many sources cited.

This book is definitely a must read! It examines the struggles of being an immigrant in the United States and how Americanization places a struggle on culture and identity.

Just finished reading Professor's Jung first book, a memoir of his life. As the son of a paper person and also the son of a laundryman I can really relate to his experiences growing up and adjusting to living in two different cultures. Although I did not grow up in the South, our experiences in San Francisco have many parallels. Both our parents were in the laundry business. We even attended the same high school, junior college, and university. It is the great story of immigration and the American dream. Both my parents were really peasants from southern China who came to America seeking a better life. My father entered the country illegally as a paper son as did Professor Jung's father. He was fortunate that his mother was able to come to the U.S. to join her husband in Macon, Georgia. Because of the immigration laws my mother waited almost 15 years to rejoin her husband. Yet despite great prejudice and within one generation most of the kids acquired college educations and became professionals. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the Chinese American experience. This is the second book of Professor's Jung that I have read. I also read his excellent history of the Chinese laundry.

The struggles described in SFR are very true. My parents worked long hours and in conditions now viewed as sweat shops. Thank you Dr. Jung for your insights.

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