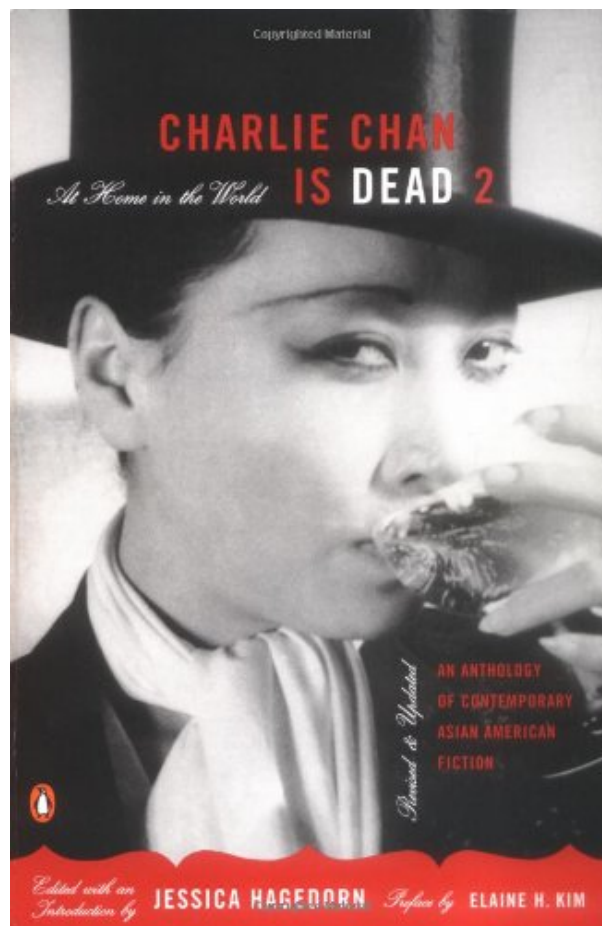
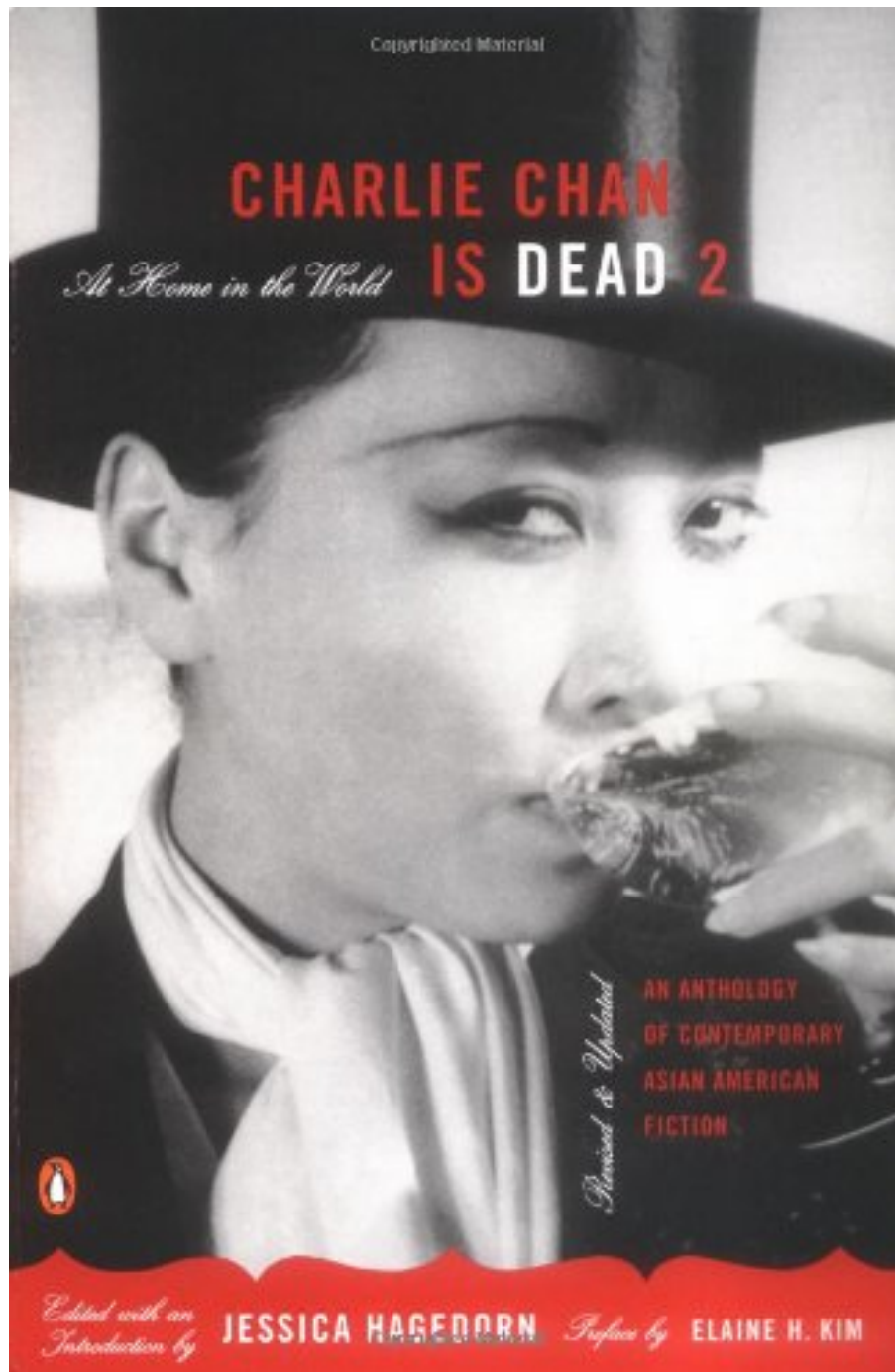


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More than a decade after its initial publication, the groundbreaking anthology *Charlie Chan Is Dead* remains the best available source for contemporary Asian American fiction. Edited by acclaimed novelist and National Book Award nominee Jessica Hagedorn, *Charlie Chan Is Dead 2: At Home in the World* brings together forty-two fresh, fascinating voices in Asian American writing—from classics by Jose Garcia Villa and Wakako Yamauchi to exciting new fiction from Akhil Sharma, Ruth Ozeki, Chang-Rae Lee, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Monique Truong. Sweeping in background and literary style, from pioneering writers to newly emerging voices from the Hmong and Korean communities, these exceptional works celebrate the full spectrum of Asian American experience and identities, transcending stereotypes and revealing the strength and vitality of Asian America today.

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Most helpful customer reviews

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

An Excellent Range of Voices and Cultures

By Debbie Lee Wesselmann

Jessica Hagedorn has put together a mostly impressive collection of short stories and a few novel excerpts written by Asian Americans. From well-known names to lesser known talents, this anthology covers the wide terrain of both stylistic approaches and Asian cultures. Its writers can claim heritages from Vietnam, India, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, Japan, Cambodia, and Korea. Some stories, such as Peter Ho Davies's "The Hull Case," have little, if anything, to do with Asian culture, but most have stronger connections to cultural uniqueness. Sarah Chin's "Red Wall" follows a Chinese-American narrator as she explores the faces of China as the member of a documentary film crew. Bharati Mukherjee, in her well-known and powerful story "The Management of Grief," explores the impact on the Canadian-Indian community of a plane crash in India that kills their loved ones. Ka Vang's "Ms. Pac-Man Ruined My Gang Life" tells of a Hmong member of a girl-gang who is forced by her home-girls to exact revenge on a Puerto Rican girl. Gish Jen's strong "Who's Irish?" is movingly told in broken but lucid English by a Chinese woman who doesn't like the wildness in her half-Irish granddaughter. Some of my favorite writers are included here: Chang-Rae Lee, Ruth Ozeki, Akhil Sharma, Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri, Monique Truong. However, many of these forty-two writers were unknown to me before I read their stories, and I'm grateful Hagedorn introduced me to their work.

While some of these stories fall short of succeeding, all are well-written. The range in voices gives the reader a sense of the variety of the cultures and their individual members. I recommend this for readers of international fiction as well as Asian-Americans who long for writers who speak to their culture. This would make an excellent textbook for high school and college level courses that explore non-Western contemporary literature.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Asian American Experience Through Literature

By R. DelParto

Jessica Hagedorn's second installment of the Asian American experience, **CHARLIE CHAN IS DEAD 2: AT HOME WITH THE WORLD** comprises of a diverse group of provocative Asian American fictional writers who share their inspiring stories. These writers are third-fifth generation Asian Americans who were either born or immigrated to the United States during the late 1950s and 1960s and lived their formative years during the 1970s and 1980s influenced by American material and popular culture, which is a significance distinction that defines their identity. This factor captures the essence of American and Asian culture, which embodies an eclectic marriage to large proportions. All the writers and their essays have merits of their own. However, it is their storytelling that reveals a shared intimacy and complexity, which forms this shared experience. The subtitle of the book is quite fitting because it best describes "home" within this diaspora of writers.

CHARLIE CHAN IS DEAD 2 is rich with Asian American culture. The dialogue and dialects reveal the various voices and faces, which journey beyond US boundaries. The essays in this collection are graphically detailed with metaphors that relate to religion, family, and Asian cuisine. These writers embrace their culture with the voices they provide for the characters they present. The writers jokingly confront stereotypes and acknowledge and understand that it is a part of their identity. The stories speak of the present but resonate with the past struggles Asian Americans have had to experience in the United States.

The essays in CHARLIE CHAN IS DEAD 2 offer a fresh mix of Asian American voices that may appeal to a younger group of readers preferably at the high school and college level. However, it is not limited to anyone interested in literature of any genre. The most helpful aspect of this volume is its bibliographical listing at the end of the book, which may encourage first-time readers of Asian American literature to read on. On a suggested note: Read Hagedorn's first edition, CHARLIE CHAN IS DEAD: AN ANTHOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY ASIAN AMERICAN FICTION first in order to understand the progression of the Asian American literature experience.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll recognize facets of your own life

By AvidReader

Great collection of short stories by many different writers. Each story has its own mood, setting, and way of interacting with characters that is inherently part of a specific culture. I had to buy this for a college course but ended up reading more than what my professor assigned. Also, I really felt a connection with a few of the stories. They told of experiences I could really relate to.

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