



ASIAN AMERICAN

AND PACIFIC ISLANDER

HERITAGE MONTH

with the 86

Celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with the 86 FSS Libraries! Recognizing the vital contributions and the continued struggle for equality for an extraordinarily diverse group--AAPI encompasses over 50 ethnic groups in 40 countries (including the largest continent on Earth), over 100 languages, and 23 million Americans living across the United States and its territories--the Ramstein and Vogelweh Libraries will feature displays of works by AAPI authors, an online reading list, and the book club discussion of *Pachinko* by Korean American author Min Jin Lee on May 25th. While these communities encompass the entire Asian continent, all Pacific Islands, and Native Hawaiians, each with their own distinct history and culture, every community shares the common experiences of racial injustice and exclusion, discriminatory legislation, and / or a legacy of colonization.



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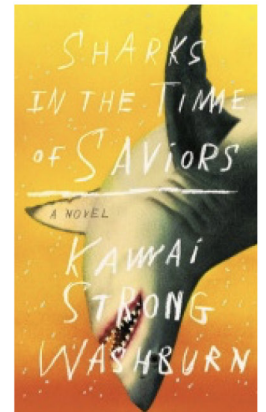
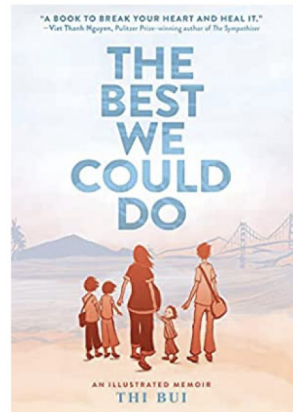
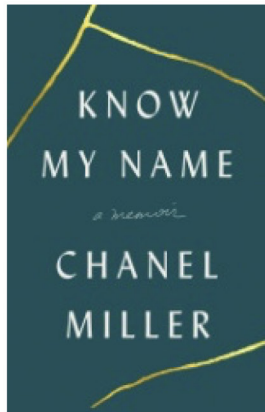
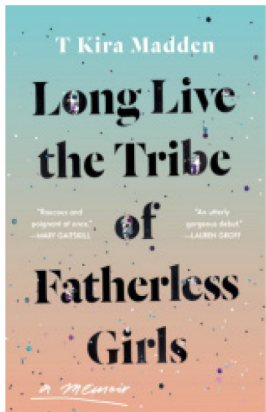
FSS Libraries

Originally started as Asian / Pacific American Heritage Week in 1978, the recognition of the historical and cultural contributions of Asian communities, Pacific Islander groups, and Native Hawaiians to the United States was expanded to a month in 1992. In 2009, the month was renamed to Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (AAPI). May was purposefully chosen to memorialize the first Japanese Americans to immigrate to the United States (May 1843) and the completion of the transcontinental railroad (May 1869), an enormous infrastructure effort finished in large part to Chinese immigrant workers. However, this choice to designate May does not reflect the entire experience; the forced incarceration of 120,000 people of Japanese descent during WWII is considered one of the most heinous violations of 20th century American civil rights and the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was the first immigration ban of a specific ethnicity -- sending thousands of Chinese workers out of the United States after the completion of the railroad -- and was not repealed until 1943 (although quotas remained in place).

Both Asian American and Pacific Islander are broad and monolithic terms institutionalized as racial categories to describe enormously diverse and unique communities (now 7.3% of the US population). The term Asian American--originally developed in the 1960s -1970s by Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino activists to collectively combat racism--was expanded to impossibly describe Asian ethnicities from over 20 ethnic and national origin groups including Hmong, Laotian, Korean, Vietnamese, Asian Indians, Thai, and Cambodian communities. The category of Pacific Islander was created to unite the many communities located in the Pacific that experienced (and continue to combat the effects of) colonialism. As a group, Pacific Islanders can identify as immigrant and / or Indigenous; the category includes Samoan, Tokelauan, Tahitian, Tongan, Chamorro, Mariana Islander, Saipanese, Palauan, Yapese, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Kosraean, Marshallese, I-Kiribati, Fijian, Papua New Guinean, Solomon Islander, and Ni-Vanuatu people. Often merged under the term Pacific Islander, many Native Hawaiians can also identify as their own autonomous group fighting for recognition.

While the communities under the AAPI label share historical and present experiences--including an unprecedented rise in hate crimes throughout the United States--the broad category obscures not only the unique heritage of each individual group, but also their representation both in American culture and even in their own federally-designated month of recognition. This terminology also fails to accurately represent the intersectionality of Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiians; these issues of violence, historical oppression, and marginalization are further compounded for LGBTQIA+, women, and Indigenous communities.

Suggested Books



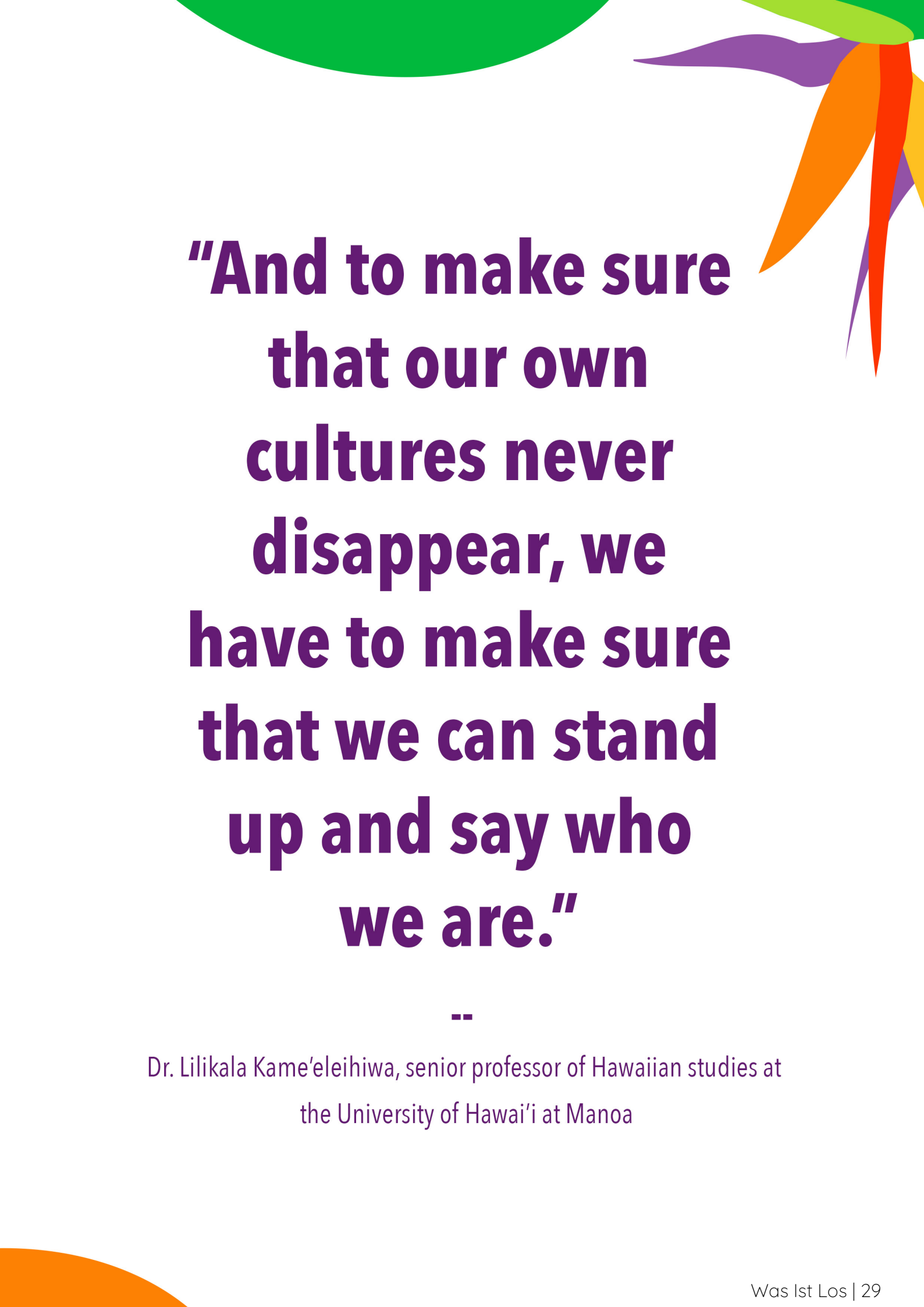
“When I advocate for the Native Hawaiian community—for our native rights, whether it be gathering rights or rights to practice our language and culture—I am by default advocating for gender equity and gender expression in a manner that is consistent with our culture.” -- HINALEIMOANA WONG-KALU

For Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians especially, their historical and present-day experiences are often overshadowed by larger Asian populations not only in terms of data collection and resolution development, but during AAPI month as well. Many Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian communities align more with Indigenous groups due to historical, racial, and economic experiences. Native Hawaiians for example, continue to fight for recognition and justice following the American overthrow of their Kingdom and Queen Lili’uokalani in 1893. Reclaiming land ownership rights, protecting heritage sites, preserving natural resources (the Hawaiian concept of aloha aina translates to “loving the land”), and combating environmental degradation (including the poisoning of the water supply for residents from Halawa to Maunaloa by American jet fuel) are just a few of the obstacles facing one AAPI community.

“Acknowledging the diversity and complex intersectional identities among us, advocating for disaggregation of data so people understand the true nature of the inequities our community faces. Realizing how much more we have in common than different, continuing to advocate for representation in public school curriculum, not forgetting our history of achievements and of discrimination, and teaching it to others.” -- Ghazi Edwin, Former Executive Director, American Citizens for Justice/Asian American Center for Justice

Celebrate the contributions of all Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian communities this month through our displays, reading list, and book club!





**"And to make sure
that our own
cultures never
disappear, we
have to make sure
that we can stand
up and say who
we are."**

--

Dr. Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, senior professor of Hawaiian studies at
the University of Hawai'i at Manoa