

“Multicultural Book Collection”

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Growing up in the United States, a person of Philippine descent will never learn the history of her people unless she makes an exceptional effort to do so. The history of F/Pilipinos and F/Pilipino Americans is completely concealed, overtly obsolete, and absolutely nowhere to be found. Growing up in the United States, the F/Pilipino American is taught very little about her culture or ancestry. And although she may not know much about where she came from, she is taught to live with the perpetual stereotypes (dogeater, island savage, brown monkey) that her ancestors have been taunted with for centuries. F/Pilipino Americans are taught in this country that White is beautiful and that Brown is ugly. They are taught that they are never “American” enough, that they do not have a place in the history books, and that society cannot be bothered by their invisibility or marginalization. Growing up in the United States, we discover that F/Pilipinos do not exist in American history.

I grew up in the United States. As a child, I sometimes questioned why there were no brown people on television. As an adolescent, I often questioned why there were no brown people in my history books. As an adult, I continually question how I am going to teach my children that they do have a significant place in history. How will my children learn that they have every right to be proud of who they are and where they are going? And how are other children who do not have the proper resources supposed to learn that they, too, are beautiful, intelligent, and extraordinary. If they are not learning from their textbooks or from television, where are they supposed to learn?

This is why I have initiated my very own Multicultural Book Collection, with an emphasis on the P/Filipino American experience. It has become my personal duty to ensure that everyone I meet has the opportunity to learn about her history, culture, and existence in American society. It has been my hope that F/Pilipinos growing up in the U.S. will strengthen their ethnic and cultural awareness and pride, in which many of their childhoods have been deprived. It has been my goal to serve as that resource that students of life can turn to, when they need to (or want to) study the experience of F/Pilipinos and other cultural beings. With that, my book collection also includes other ethnic groups; for it is through the learning and appreciating of other cultures, that one is able to fully appreciate the beauty of her own culture. This is why my book collection has been formed- not only for my own personal growth and enlightenment, but for my willingness and passion to share this education with others. Sometimes referred to as my own multicultural library, my collection is a place where I encourage others to “borrow” books that they cannot find at local bookstores or libraries and “return” them with a newfound knowledge and personal understanding.