Off-White Brides and the Sanctity of Citizenship: American Marriage and Romantic Love in the Development of Twentieth-Century Immigration Politics

By Kathryn Vaggalis

Submitted to the graduate degree program in American Studies and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzes the histories of early-twentieth century Southern European immigrant picture brides, who from 1907-1924, were women in arranged marriages with emigrant men from their home countries. Whether they came as wives married by proxy or as fiancées engaged via letters and photographs across seas, picture bride women immigrated to the United States and often met their partners for the first time on American soil. Picture marriage has become synonymous with Japanese immigration history, yet the practice was far from unique; it was common in many immigrant groups coming to the United States around the turn of the twentieth century, including Koreans, Chinese, Italians, Armenians, Germans, and most prevalently, Greeks. But though practices were similar, there was a vast difference in the public's reactions to these women.

This dissertation argues that the history of Southern European picture brides—women from Italy, Armenia, Turkey, and primarily Greece—is not only significant because it is an untold story, but because it provides critical context for understanding the political climate which targeted and eventually excluded Japanese picture marriage as a racialized practice. Further, picture marriage, as a common tradition between cultures, provides an independent variable to show the relational racial formations of immigrant groups in the United States. While European and Asian American immigration histories have long existed in separate fields of scholarship and communities of thought, I argue picture marriage demonstrates how Japanese and Greek racial identities evolved in relation to one another.

This process of what I call "theorizing picture marriage" therefore necessitates a further investigation of marriage as a political and symbolic institution in U.S. culture. Chapters in this dissertation trace the ideological significance of marriage in American discourse and

demonstrate how contributions from eugenics and sexology were critical to producing the idea of romantic love as synonymous with consent, free choice, and democratic partnerships. Far from apolitical, this formulation successfully forged a connection between modern whiteness, citizenship, and reproductive heterosexuality that worked as a dialectical foil to immigrant arranged marriages. Thus, in analyzing popular culture sources depicting romance or picture marriage, I demonstrate the quotidian ways that Americans expressed and learned about the racial, gendered politics of citizenship through the lens of marriage and family.

Acknowledgements

Reflecting on this dissertation project, I must first express deep gratitude to the American Studies Department at the University of Kansas for providing a rich network of people and ideas that have shaped my perspectives of the past and the world around me. American studies as a field of inquiry provided the framework in which I could creatively connect diverse scholarship and topics in new and interesting ways. What resulted from this perspective is a dissertation project that was free to capture a nuanced perspective of immigration history that was attuned to issues of representation, equity, and power.

American studies also provided the framework in which I could interrogate my own place in the world and my connections to the topics and themes on which I write. As I briefly explain in the first part of this dissertation, I settled on the topic of immigrant picture brides in part because of the Greek picture bride women in my family history, including my grandmother who came to the United States from Athens, Greece in 1949. My grandmother Calliope Tavoularis Vaggalis continues to be the motivating factor in my commitment to amplifying the voices and experiences of migrant women and families around the world.

Yet other personal connections and sources of inspiration for this dissertation project are less obvious. In 1975, my father broke with centuries of Greek Orthodox tradition in his family to join the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—more ominously known to his disapproving mother as "The Mormons." This explains in part my *other* family connection: the one on my mother's side that stretches back to the founding of the LDS Church and the pioneer ancestors who established Nauvoo, and later Salt Lake City, and set a family precedent for chronicling history and a passion for genealogy work.

The legacy these two cultures provided in my life shaped many of the questions for this project. Through the guidance of incredible scholar activists in my department—countless

teachers and mentors who have contributed to my education—I viewed issues of racism and colonialism as central to these histories. Yet, in a strange way, both of these groups—Greek Americans and Latter-day Saints—were also once deeply marginalized in U.S. political systems. Consequently, each in their own ways and time struggled up the ladder of economic success through problematic negotiations with American whiteness (*see* chapter 2 of this dissertation and also W. Paul Reeve's excellent monograph *Religion of a Different Color* as examples). I also realized early on the connections between picture marriage and polygamy—both institutions that were heterosexual in nature, yet were staunchly demonized, intensely racialized, and were grounds for legally sanctioned policing and violent exclusionary measures. These examples provided a deep understanding of the general argument for this dissertation long before I ever put words to paper: marriage is yet another privileged symbolic and political institution that has been functionally weaponized to bolster white supremacy in U.S. contexts. This is to say nothing of the benefits of marriage or the many ways it can fulfill peoples' lives but rather a reminder as well as a call to action against the insidious ways that white supremacy and heterosexism are functionally built into our everyday lives.

Though many individuals' contributions have shaped my work, Drs. Jennifer Hamer and David Roediger are owed a special debt of gratitude for seeing me to the completion of my degree. Dr. Hamer, it is impossible to express the level of respect I have for you. Thank you for your mentorship and your exceptional example of strength and grace in leadership. I was incredibly fortunate that you took a chance on me, and I will spend the rest of my career trying to live up to the significance of that choice. Dr. Roediger, you are an intimidatingly prolific scholar and when people ask what it is like working with you, I am proud to say you are one of the kindest people I have ever met, and one who is fiercely committed to the politics and peoples of

which you write. Thank you for your wonderful example and for the countless ways you have helped strengthen our department and supported its students, of which I am but one of many.

I must forever thank Dr. Tanya Hart, my master's advisor, for guiding me to what would become my ultimate dissertation topic. In our time together at the University of Kansas, she provided much in the way of exceptional humor, kindness, patience, and mentorship. Dr. Hart provided refuge and support during a time when it was critically needed and her contribution to my intellectual growth cannot be overstated. I also want to extend special thanks to Dr. Kim Warren for her mentorship as a teacher and dissertation committee member. As many of her students will tell you, Dr. Warren consistently goes above and beyond for her students, and I am so grateful I got to be one of them. My other committee members, Elizabeth Esch and Ray Mizamura-Pence, were also wonderful sources of support and collegiality over the years.

It was Professors Kristin Matthews and Richard Schur that first inspired me to pursue American Studies. I would like to thank each of them for helping me find work that I am passionate about, for providing career advice, and for being exemplars of the type of people and scholars I strive to emulate. Along my research path, I was also fortunate to cross paths with Yiorgos Anagnostou, Koritha Mitchell, Matthew Frye Jacobson, Elaine Thomopoulos, Siobhan Somerville, Suzanne Sinke, Henry Bial, Ben Chappell, Randal Jelks, Ben Looker, Tom Sarmiento, and Terri Rockhold whose kind words and engagement with my work encouraged me to finish my degree. Though I have mentioned only a few here, I owe an incredibly large debt of gratitude to women of color whose scholarship and understandings of race, gender, and sexuality provided the very foundation on which my work builds. Some of my greatest teachers are individuals I have never met: Gloria Anzaldúa, Alice Walker, Patricia Hill Collins, Sara Ahmed, bell hooks, Audre Lorde, Evelyn Nakano Glenn, and far too many others to include here.

Many funding institutions and professional organizations are also to thank for their contributions. My dissertation was funded in part through grants from the American Studies Association, the Modern Greek Studies Association, the Doctoral Student Research Grant from the University of Kansas, the KU Center for Migration Research, and the Hall Center for the Humanities. The Mid-America American Studies Association, the KU Center for Teaching Excellence, and *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* are also to be thanked for providing countless professional opportunities and endlessly supportive colleagues over the years.

Dear friends who read my work, gave feedback, and provided emotional support are also to be thanked: Rachel E. C. Beckley, Robert Schwaller, Sarah Bell, Rachel Denney, John Biersack, Evan Flynn, Patrick Callen, Bobbi Rahder, and Saoussen Cheddadi. I would like to acknowledge a lifetime of support from my beloved family: my parents, Ted and Holly; brothers, Adam and Greg; cousin-brothers Denny Vaggalis and Eric Teply; and my entire Pickett family. Special thanks are owed to Nathan Pickett for his partnership and patience in proofreading endless drafts of everything I have ever written.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to my father who bought me books and took me to feminist poetry readings and let me stay up late to watch Saturday Night Live with him in the nineties. I hope this dissertation makes up in some small part for my refusal to read Plato as a fourth grader. In dedicating this project to my father, I am also in turn dedicating it to the picture bride women of the past and their descendants, of which my father is included. To those women, I say thank you for making hard decisions, for preserving your culture in new places, and for the countless hours of physical and emotional labor you provided sustaining your communities. Thank you for enduring so your children could thrive.

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Introduction: Off-White Brides and the Sanctity of Citizenship: American Marriage and Romantic Love in the Development of Twentieth-Century Immigration Politics

The impetus of this dissertation came years ago in a graduate directed readings seminar on twentieth century immigration. Evelyn Nakano Glenn's 1986 monograph, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service,* was first on my reading list. Nakano Glenn's approach to history, her methodologies, and her personal connection to her subject matter quickly made the book one of my all-time favorites.[1] Herself the granddaughter of Japanese immigrants, Glenn's research took her through dusty archives and hours of oral history interviews with older generations of women. I was particularly struck by the precision of her work; how she managed to honor these women and their accomplishments but in no way romanticized the hardships or heartbreaks they faced along the way. The women Glenn presented were genuine and flawed yet remarkable at the same time. They were living in a broken system but nevertheless supported families, preserved cultural connections, and found moments of joy amidst an overwhelming backdrop of racism and economic exploitation. Her work inspired me professionally as a scholar and also personally as the granddaughter of Greek immigrants in the United States hoping to do similar work on women in my culture.

When I met with my professor to discuss Glenn's text, I gave an overview of the author's section on *Issei* (first-generation) women, of which many came to the United States as picture brides—immigrant women in arranged marriages with men from their home countries. Reading from my scribbled notes, I mentioned aloud that picture marriage was a common practice in many immigrant cultures. The professor, an expert in turn-of-the-century immigration—who like

[1]Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

many scholars associated picture marriage as a uniquely Japanese practice—quickly picked up on this assertion and asked for more context. I told her the story of my grandmother, Calliope, who immigrated from Athens, Greece to the United States in 1949 to marry my grandfather, a man she only knew through letters and the recommendations of family friends. My grandfather's parents married much the same way, a generation before. Great-grandpa Theodore sent for his own picture bride, my great grandmother Mary, in 1911. My father's marriage in the early 1980s to a tall German girl from California—my future mother—would be the first in his line that was not arranged. My grandmother was less than thrilled my father chose a German, but that is another story for another day.

The historical existence of Greek picture brides in the United States was a taken-for-granted piece of knowledge that I never considered remarkable until I found the scholarly literature on them to be almost non-existent. Just like any kid at Orthodox church or Greek school growing up who knew the skeleton details of their family's migration story, Greek scholars similarly mentioned picture brides in passing comments, perhaps too familiar with the phenomenon to consider it interesting or worth further interrogation. But as my investigation into the archives soon revealed, Southern Europeans, and Greeks in particular, were popularly known in U.S. mainstream culture for picture marriage due to prominent news reporting on the subject across America in the 1910s and early 1920s. My immediate questions therefore were 1) how were they forgotten, and 2) why the title of "picture bride" became so attached as to be synonymous with one group—Japanese women—to the exclusion of all others both in scholarly literature and popular culture.[2] Further, what political work was done in either the remembrance

[2] See for an example, the 1995 feature-length film *Picture Bride* about Japanese picture brides in Hawaii, directed by Kay Hatta and produced by Diane Mei Lin Mark and Lisa Onodera (Miramax Films). Alternately, also see *Nyfes*, a Greek-language film about European picture brides on their journey across seas to America, directed by Pantelis Voulgaris (Cappa Defina Productions).

or the forgetting of the practice, both within immigrant communities and their descendants, and in popular culture and historical memory at large?

This dissertation approaches these questions by analyzing the histories of early-twentieth century European immigrant picture brides, who from 1907-1924, were women in arranged marriages with emigrant men from their home countries. Whether they came as wives married by proxy or as fiancées engaged via letters and photographs across seas, picture bride women immigrated to the United States and often met their partners for the first time on American soil. Though picture marriage has become synonymous with Japanese immigration history, the practice was far from unique; it was common in many immigrant groups coming to the United States around the turn of the twentieth century, including Koreans, Chinese, Italians, Armenians, Germans, and most prevalently, Greeks. But though practices were similar, there was a vast difference in the public's reactions to these women.

This dissertation argues that the history of Southern European picture brides is not only significant because it is an untold story, but also because it provides critical context for understanding the political climate which targeted and eventually excluded Japanese picture marriage as a racialized practice. Further, picture marriage, as a common tradition between cultures, provides an independent variable to show the relational racial formations of immigrant groups in the United States. While European and Asian American immigration histories have long existed in separate fields of scholarship and communities of thought, I argue picture marriage demonstrates how Japanese and Greek racial identities evolved in relation to one another.

This process of what I call "theorizing picture marriage" therefore necessitates a further investigation of marriage as a political and symbolic institution in U.S. culture. Chapters in this

dissertation trace the ideological significance of marriage in American discourse and demonstrate how contributions from eugenics and sexology were critical to producing the idea of romantic love as synonymous with consent, free choice, and democratic partnerships. Far from apolitical, this formulation successfully forged a connection between modern whiteness, citizenship, and reproductive heterosexuality that worked as a dialectical foil to immigrant arranged marriages. Thus, in analyzing popular culture sources depicting romance or picture marriage, I demonstrate the quotidian ways that Americans expressed and learned about the racial, gendered politics of citizenship through the lens of marriage and family.

Picture Marriage in Context

Japanese women and Greek women in the early twentieth century experienced migration to the United States in vastly different ways, yet there is perhaps a surprising overlap in their family traditions and marital customs. "Picture marriage" as it became known in U.S. popular culture was an unforeseen result of the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement between the United States and Japan. The agreement was the result of rising anti-Japanese nativism in the U.S. West. President Theodore Roosevelt, feeling pressured by West Coast politicians, sought to pacify his critics by working to control the influx of East Asian laborers coming into the country. Yet Japan had recently risen as a world power after the Russo-Japanese War. Roosevelt feared the international consequences and disfellowship that would ensue in the event of an all-out Japanese immigration ban in the style of the earlier 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. Instead, a negotiation—a "gentlemen's agreement"—ensued between the two countries wherein Japan agreed to stop issuing passports to laborers traveling to the United States in the hope to curtail

the numbers of working-class migrants who had been drawing such negative international attention.

However, the Gentlemen's Agreement did not work as effectively as white American nativists hoped due to a loophole that allowed for family reunification. Because it was expensive and arduous to travel back home (and because men risked inscription into the Japanese military if they stayed too long), Japanese men living in the United States and Canada wrote to their families to find wives, often sending a picture of themselves to show potential fiancées. Picture marriage therefore was an abbreviated version of traditional arranged marriage. Often with the help of a go-between (*nakado*), families negotiated with each other on behalf of their children. Though U.S. rhetoric often discussed the idea of "proxy marriages" wherein a picture stood in place of the groom during a marriage ceremony, in actuality, the bride's name only needed to be entered into the husband's family registry at a ceremonial dinner for the marriage to be legally binding.

Thus, having married while still in Japan, these women—soon to be known as "picture brides"—were able to receive passports and travel to the United States as wives, permissible under the terms of family reunification (in contrast, single Japanese women without family connections in the United States were considered inadmissible). The arrival of these women in greater numbers—which transformed bachelor sojourners into settled family men—quickly caught the ire of American nativists upset at their supposed "undermining of the intention" of the immigration restrictions as agreed upon in the 1907 Act. Though scholars estimate only about 10,000 Japanese women came to the United States as picture brides in the first two decades of the twentieth century, in many ways, picture brides became symbolic of all Japanese immigrant

women in the United States.[3] These women became the popular subject of obsessive nativist rants, major motion films, traveling theater productions, and regular newspaper columns reporting on their arrivals. After World War I, nativist violence against Japanese immigrants in the United States became so severe that the Japanese government instituted the "Ladies Agreement" in 1920. This new agreement prevented picture brides from leaving the country and effectively ended the practice by the following year.

Among picture bride women, feelings about entering arranged marriages understandably ran the gamut. Some Japanese women were overjoyed and thrilled by the idea of an impending adventure in America; others dreaded the journey and the marriage entirely, sometimes going as far as committing suicide to avoid the situation altogether.[4] However, many more women saw it as a pragmatic duty to their parents and cultural practices. Sometimes it was simply a practical solution to poverty or a problematic home life.

As historian Suzanne Sinke writes, "For women, until quite recently, marriage was one of the few options for a reasonable economic existence as an adult [yet it] was often economically advantageous for men as well."[5] Women gained material support from marriages while men benefitted greatly from women's reproductive labor in the home and their unpaid productive labor in small businesses like shops, laundries, or family farms.[6] However, women's labor became a primary focus of intense anti-Japanese criticism. As Immigration Commissioner

[3] Tanaka Kei, "Marriage as Citizen's Privilege: Japanese Picture Marriage and American Social Justice." *Nanzan Review of American Studies* 31 (2009): 131-150, 133.
[4] Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride*, 20.
[5] Suzanne Sinke, "Migration for Labor, Migration for Love: Marriage and Family Formation across Borders." *OAH Magazine of History* 14, no. 1 (Fall 1999): 17-21, 17.
[6] For more on the politicization of productive and reproductive labor, see Silvia Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* (Oakland: PM Press, 2012).

Samuel Backus claimed, immigration officers dealing with picture bride women were merely "admitting Japanese laborers in the guise of wives."[7]

In addition to cultural connections and economic assistance, arranged marriages also solved problems posed by miscegenation laws. Many states prohibited immigrant men—including Southern Europeans—from marrying a partner outside their race. With few Japanese or Greek women living in the United States in the early twentieth century, picture marriage was a pragmatic way to find a spouse and start a family.

Second only to Japanese Americans, Greeks were the group most prominently known for and most commonly practicing picture marriage in the largest numbers. As the *New York Tribune* reported in September 1922,

> There seems to be an epidemic of marriage. The country is chock full of lonely swains. Greek picture brides are arriving on every ship from the Mediterranean ports, and there are Spanish, Italian, Armenian, English, Irish and Scottish lovers among those present, though in smaller proportion than the Greek…The Greeks, available statistics indicate, lead all other European nations in the earnestness and diligence with which they seek for wives among their own people in their native land.[8]

Over half a million Greeks migrated to the United States from 1900-1930, most of which were men. Few Greek women migrated to the United States prior to 1910 and only about 65,000 Greek women came to the United States during the first three decades of the twentieth century.[9] The exact number of Greek picture brides is unknown as immigration records did not classify

[7] Kei Tanaka, "Photographs of Japanese Picture Brides: Visualizing Immigrants and Practicing Immigration Policy in Early Twentieth-Century United States." *American Studies* (Seoul National University) 3, no. 1 (2008): 27-55, 45.
[8] Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating." *New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922.
[9] Evangelia Tastsoglou and George Stubos, "The Pioneer Greek Immigrant in the United States and Canada (1880s-1920s): Survival Strategies of a Traditional Family," *Ethnic Groups* 9 (1992): 175-189, pg. 177.

these women as such. However, archival evidence demonstrates a drastic rise in the number of newspaper articles focusing on Greek and Southern European picture brides from 1920-1924 that corresponds with a jump in the numbers of Greek women migrating to the United States (*see table 1*).

Table 1: Migration numbers by sex for Greek migrants to the United States, 1900-1924

	Greek Migrants to U.S.			Total Migrants to U.S.		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
1900	3,773	3,655	118	448,572	304,148	144,424
1901	5,919	5,754	165	487,918	331,055	15,686
1902	8,115	7,854	261	648,743	466,369	182,374
1903	14,376	13,885	491	613,146	243,900	857,046
1904	12,625	12,106	519	549,100	263,770	812,870
1905	12,144	11,586	558	1,026,499	724,914	301,585
1906	23,127	22,266	861	1,100,735	764,463	336,272
1907	46,283	44,647	1,636	1,285,349	929,976	355,373
1908	28,808	26,972	1,836	782,870	506,912	275,958
1909	20,262	18,738	1,524	751,786	519,969	231,817
1910	39,135	36,580	2,555	1,041,570	736,038	305,532
1911	37,021	34,105	2,916	878,587	570,057	308,530
1912	31,566	28,521	3,045	838,172	529,931	308,241
1913	38,644	35,143	3,501	1,197,892	808,144	389,748
1914	45,881	40,207	5,674	1,218,480	798,747	419,733
1915	15,187	11,740	3,447	326,700	187,021	139,679
1916	26,792	21,093	5,699	298,826	182,229	116,597
1917	25,919	21,124	4,795	295,403	174,479	120,924
1918	2,602	2,149	453	110,618	61,880	48,738
1919	813	696	117	141,132	83,272	57,860
1920	13,998	11,167	2,831	430,001	247,625	182,376
1921	31,828	21,551	10,277	805,228	449,422	355,806
1922	3,821	1,679	2,142	309,556	149,741	158,815
1923	4,177	1,474	2,703	522,919	307,522	215,397
1924	5,252	2,256	2,996	706,896	423,186	283,710

Source: Walter F. Wilcox, "Table X—Distribution of Immigrant Aliens Admitted, By Sex and Race or People, 1899-1924." In International Migrations, Volume I: Statistics. *National Bureau of Economic Research. 1929. Note these numbers only include individuals coming from Greece proper and do not include ethnic Greeks coming from outside Greece. Retrieved from https://www.nber.org/system/files/chapters/c5134/c5134.pdf*

As Greek men settled in the United States permanently, and developed levels of socioeconomic stability, they sent for their wives or fiancées. The men who initially sent for picture brides were those who were financially established enough to support a family. Men would often have to work several years before they could start the process of sending for a bride and settling down. This temporal delay in typical Greek marriage patterns resulted in drastic age gaps between couples. Men would often be ten to fifteen years older than their young wives, who were typically 17 to 25 years of age.[10]

Because of strict gender boundaries and the preoccupation with female chastity, very few women traveled alone or for explicit employment opportunities.[11] Propriety aside, the heartache of leaving family, or the fear of entering—or marrying—the unknown was an intimidating and often lonely process. As I found in my archival work, some picture brides, like Georgia Pantazoupula, made it all the way to Ellis Island after a month-long journey from Greece. Georgia made it to the immigration bureau's interview room, but within minutes begged to be deported; she had done what was required of her by coming, but she desperately wanted to go home and could not face the fiancé waiting to meet her.[12] However, like Japanese women, not all young Greek women were hesitant to emigrate. Historian Helen Zeese Papanikolas recounts that some women wanted "desperately to leave their villages, going as far to fake documents and marriage certificates to escape what was surely a life of poverty and unpaid servitude to their families."[13]

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[10] Papanikolas, *Amulet of Greek Earth*, 119.
[11] Helen Zeese Papanikolas, *Toil and Rage: The Greek Immigrants in Utah* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1970), 142; *see also* Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans, Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 27.
[12] Georgia Pantazoupula, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC: RG 85, File no. 55095-364.
[13] Papanikolas, *Amulet of Greek Earth*, 123.

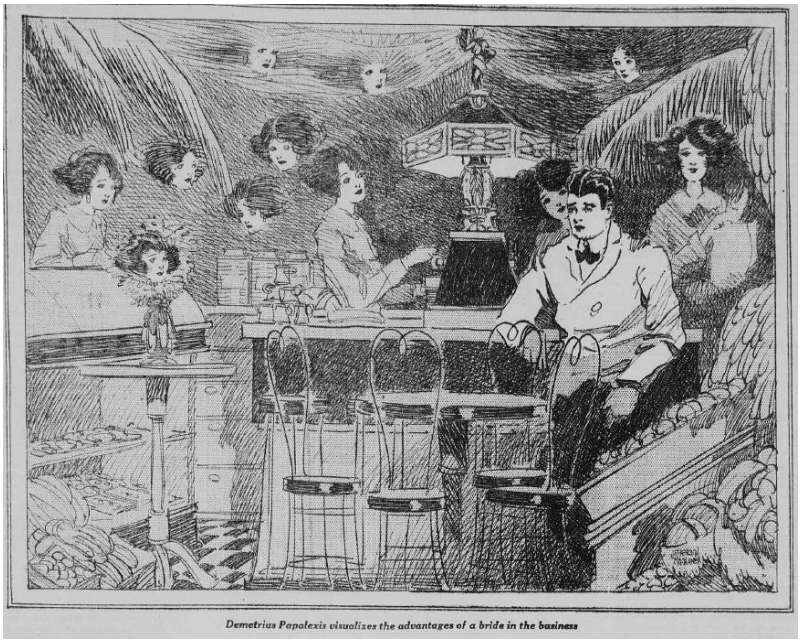

Figure 1: A large illustration featured in Frederick B. Edwards's article on Greek picture brides in the New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922. The illustration by Jefferson Machamer demonstrates the improtance of labor and economic interests in marital decisions.*

While chapter 2 of this dissertation analyzes the discursive use of love and romance in discussing picture marriage in the popular press, the pragmatic benefits of arranged marriage were not missed in these accounts. As one piece written by nationally syndicated journalist Frederick B. Edwards recounts, economic considerations loomed large in marital decisions. Edwards's piece includes a large illustration by Jefferson Machamer of a "hypothetical" Greek man Demetrius Papalexis dreaming of "the advantages of a bride in the business." Demetrius muses,

> …if I but had a wife I would be a happy man indeed. A wife is necessary to a man, especially to a successful man such as I am. A wife would be of great assistance to me in my fine store. She could carefully polish the red apples, and quickly I could teach her

how to turn toward the customers the yellow side of the oranges which are sometimes on one side of a slight green color…to make them look attractive, as the Americans like.

Demetrius's dialogue can be read as a literal account of the necessary labor assistance a wife could provide. But it is also an artful metaphor for immigrant respectability politics; as chapter 2 of this dissertation will detail, the presence of Greek wives signaled a level of civilized virtue that assisted in social mobility. Domestic tempering helped men hide the social blights of their former sojourner bachelor lives—the green side of the orange—and tied them to community and civic life.

Edwards's article in the *New York Tribune* also accounted for the hardships of war and the difficulties of mass emigration on the women left behind in Europe. The First World War, for example, had ravaged the number of young men in Europe. Edwards writes,

> …there is a still larger percentage of widows who are up against it—women who have been left, after a short matrimonial experience, with no income and a small family. To such women as these, matrimony is the only profession open; their entreaties for the address of a suitable husband are just requests for a job; and almost any decent man will do who can provide a living and doesn't object to supporting a dead man's children. There are a pitifully large number of these bewildered widows abroad in the land.[14]

Chapter 3 of this dissertation includes the real-life immigration files of widowed women coming to the United States—of whom many were survivors of the Armenian genocide—and also women coming to marry widowers, whose families' and children's survival depended on the reproductive labor of women in the home.

[14] Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating." *New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922.

Scholars have noted that immigrant arranged marriages also assisted the continuation of cultural heritage overseas.[15] When searching for spouses, immigrants found that common points of origin could help ease the trauma of relocation. Men would often search within their own villages or areas of birth to find women with similar values and traditions. Partners who possessed these qualities had a certain amount of cultural capital that would help gender roles, family management, and homeland traditions be maintained in the new country. Suzanne Sinke writes that in the early twentieth century, a "phenomenon existed of men trying to get someone from the 'Old World' who was not corrupted by American gender ideas."[16] While this was certainly true for some, other men took pride in assisting their spouses to present images of modern, Americanized femininity. Nakano Glenn writes, for instance, that Japanese men often took their wives immediately from the immigration station to be fitted for new clothing at Japanese-owned businesses, trading "the accustomed comfort of kimonos and slippers for constricting western dresses and shoes."[17] Greek American Zoe Marino, in an interview with me in 2013, similarly recalled her father being eager to present a modernized Greek wife to his friends and colleagues in Seattle. Within a few days of his picture bride fiancée's arrival, Zoe's father encouraged Zoe's future mother to cut off her long dark hair in favor of the more stylish short bobs that were popular in America in the 1920s.[18]

In many ways, marriages to women from men's home countries were an attempt to offset the high costs of social reproduction being born by sending countries;[19] the diaspora of the early twentieth century left Greece with imbalanced sex ratios, a dwindling labor force, and an

[15] Lara Mobydeen, "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Mail-Ordered? The Mail-Order Bride Industry and Immigration Law," *The Wayne Law Review* 49, no. 1 (2003): 939-974, 942-943.
[16] Sinke, "Marriage for Labor," 19.
[17] Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride*, 47.
[18] Zoe Marino, Interview with the author, March 21, 2013.
[19] Claude Meillssoux, *Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the Domestic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

inability to provide economic subsistence to a generation of young women whose livelihoods materially and culturally depended on marriage and domestic labor. Fiercely loyal to their families, many Greek men waited until their sisters or female relatives were married and settled before finding wives of their own. Fedra, for example, a female from Southern Greece, was paired with a family friend who had saved her brother's life in the Balkan Wars. Though sometimes informal agreements between families or friends, marriage arrangements often included, as journalist Steve Frangos writes, elaborate "legal documents drawn up by officials at [Consular] offices in San Francisco, New Orleans, Chicago, or New York City…. The bride's family commonly requested testimonies from local parish priests concerning an individual's character, and bank documents showing total net worth and/or clear title on property."[20]

Picture marriage was a practice born out of an increasingly globalized economy wherein workers traveled around the world and created familial networks across borders. But the practice was also made possible by new technologies. This included easier and faster travel by seas and, most ubiquitously, new advances in photography and visual culture. By the turn of the century, the Eastman Kodak Company had made photography accessible to the masses with products like their one-dollar Brownie Camera. Portrait studios around the world—including in Greece and Japan at the time—made it easy and affordable to obtain personal portraits to include in letters to potential partners. Technology of the time also made it easy to manipulate and "retouch" these portraits to make an individual seem younger or more attractive.[21] As historian Yuji Ichioka artfully explains,

[20] Steve Frangos, "The Picture Bride Era." *The National Herald*, March 12, 2005. http://www.pahh.com/frangos/brides.html
[21] Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride*, 46.

> [Japanese American] Men often forwarded photographs taken in their youth or touched-up ones that concealed their real age…Some men had photographs touched up, not just to look youthful but to improve their overall appearance. They had all traces of facial blemishes and baldness removed. Picture-brides understandably were taken aback because such men did not physically correspond with their photographs at all. Suave, handsome appearing gentlemen proved to be pockmarked, country bumpkins.[22]

These accounts are similarly captured in archival evidence. Newspapers reported with amusement the occurrence of disappointed brides or grooms catching the first glimpse of their real-life partners. As *The Evening World* quipped in 1922, "How many of the Greek picture brides, we wonder, are able to 'retouch' themselves on Ellis Island to match the work of the retoucher in a Greek photographic studio?"[23] In some instances, the deception was enough for individuals to refuse their partners altogether.

Historian Kei Tanaka writes that the photographs that Japanese picture brides and grooms exchanged were an important practice of self-representation as many sought to present a "modernized or westernized self-image" of respectability in their portraits.[24] However, these photographs were also used by the U.S. State to surveille picture brides entering the country. Tanaka writes that incoming Chinese and Japanese migrants to Angel Island immigration station—including picture brides—were required to submit their portraits for identification purposes. Many of these photographs can still be found in immigration detention files in the National Archives. Photography, therefore, was utilized as a bureaucratic tool to police, quantify, and make sense of individuals "deviating from the social order." Tanaka continues,

[22] Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko," 347.
[23] *The Evening World,* August 3, 1922.
[24] Tanaka, "Photographs of Japanese Picture Brides," 40.

> Photography was also used at the Ellis Island immigration station in New York to record incoming European immigrants; however, the practice in that case was unofficial and intended to keep ethnographic records of different immigrant groups. European immigrants were examined on the assumption that they would be admitted, unlike Asian immigrants at the Angel Island immigration station, whose entry was systematically restricted. In short, the Asian population became the subject of photography under the U.S. immigration control system, having been categorized as a racial group deviating from the American social order.

The archive supports this contention as seen throughout this dissertation. In chapter 3, for instance, I analyze dozens of European picture bride detention files from Ellis Island. Only one of these files includes a photograph of the woman in question, in the form of a confiscated forged passport.

The archive further supports this contention in the context of popular media as well. In the nearly two hundred articles on picture brides from 1907-1924 that I collected from newspapers across the country, no photographs of Greek or European picture brides are ever included. Yet photographs of Japanese picture brides were commonly published alongside reports of ships arriving to San Francisco and were featured prominently in anti-Japanese propaganda. Chapter 1 of this dissertation provides context for the visual culture of eugenics and the use of photography to demonstrate "types" as a means of public education regarding race, gender, and sexuality.

Ultimately, as I argue in chapter 3, this difference in policing demonstrates Ian Haney Lopez's contention that early-twentieth century court cases and popular culture "treated questions of race as matters of common sense, an approach that naturalized race by insisting it is

part of the reality in which we find ourselves, something observed and easily known to all, and not constructed and dependent on the human knower."[25] No immigration bureau files exist grouping, photographing, or quantifying Southern European picture brides—as was the case with Japanese women. This difference occurred because racial logics, without needing to justify their hypocrisy, did not matter-of-factly find Southern European picture marriage to be as threatening to American democracy as their Asian counterparts. Simply stated, disparate responses to picture marriage across ethnic groups—as clearly evidenced in the historical records—shows authorities unjustly targeted Japanese migrants based solely on race, and not moral, cultural, or sexual grounds as was often claimed.

[25] Ian Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race*. New York: New York University Press, 2006 (115).

Picture Brides Swarming Through the Golden Gate

SCHARZ PHOTO

Some of the 22 Japanese picture brides who arrived here yesterday on the liner Korea.

Figure 2: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: "Picture Brides Swarming Through the Golden Gate," The San Francisco Call, August 14, 1910.

"PICTURE BRIDES" ANOTHER BIG PROBLEM IN CALIFORNIA JAPANESE AGITATION

The arrival of a picture bride in America. Future bride and groom snapped just as they were leaving the steamer after they had identified each other by means of photographs. He was trying to conceal his face when the photographer pressed the bulb.

San Francisco, Cal., April 15.— Ever since the United States abolished the immigration laws which prohibited the immigration of Japanese into California, Washington and Oregon, these three states have

Figure 3: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: "'Picture Brides' Another Big Problem in California Japanese Agitation," *The Day Book,* April 15, 1913

Figure 4: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: El Paso Herald, *April 5-6, 1919.*

Figure 5: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: The Washington Herald, *December 28, 1919.*

Figure 6: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: The Topeka Daily State Journal, *July 27, 1920.*

Figure 7: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: South Bend News-Times, *August 6, 1920.*

JAPANESE PICTURE BRIDES FACE CONGRESSIONAL INQUISITORS. At the immigration station in San Francisco, the would-be-brides are being questioned. The committee is (left to right) Congressmen Siegel, Taylor, Raker (holding passport) and Swope

International.

Figure 8: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: Evening Public Ledger, *July 27, 1920.*

THE BRIDGEPORT TIMES

Problem of the Picture Brides

Japanese Farmer, His Picture Bride and Her Baby

A Photograph Bride

A Bunch of Photograph Brides Undergoing Medical Inspection on Steamship Manchuria

Japanese Truck-Grower and His Family

High-Caste Japanese Riddles

They Have Been Coming From Japan To California In Flocks, and the People of the Golden State Rose Up In Arms Against An Invasion of Rapidly-Multiplying Orientals — Japan Now Promises To Keep the Young Women At Home.

By ROBERT TIGHE

JAPAN has promised to keep the "picture brides" at home. They are no longer to be an article of export from that country to the United States.

Thus a very serious cause of friction between America and Nippon bids fair to be removed.

sirable lands in that State have been passing out of the hands of Americans.

One-third of the births in Los Angeles county (Cal.), in the last year were Japanese. In Placer county twice as many Japanese babies were born as white babies. There are in California six times as many Japanese as there were in that State nineteen years ago. No wonder that the white people rose up in arms, appealing to Congress with a demand that those

them is impossible. The Americans are inevitably driven out.

We Americans know very little about intensive agriculture—the art by which a single acre of land, scientifically tilled, can be made to yield support for a family. The Japanese have developed it wonderfully. Their skill in the production of fruit and garden truck is nothing short of marvelous—which fact presumably accounts to some extent for the circumstance that at the present time in California they grow and send to market 90 per cent. of the strawberries and cantaloupes, 80 per cent. of the onions, asparagus, tomatoes, celery, and lettuce, 40 per cent. of the potatoes, and four-fifths of all the cut flowers.

Under A "Gentlemen's Agreement"

In 1907 we settled with Japan a dispute about immigration by what was called a "gentlemen's agreement," under which the Mikado's Government promised not to issue passports to la-

no binding force so far as he was concerned. The immigration authorities could not compel him to accept her.

Frequently a similar situation has arisen where immigrant women other than Japanese were concerned. For there are also "picture brides" of European nationalities, though only accidental ones, so to speak, and not shipped systematically as a matrimonial commodity. Thus Italians in this country sometimes write home for wives, asking their relatives to pick one out and send along her photograph. Commonly money is sent later to fetch her over.

It may happen that before the original of the photograph arrives the man has changed his mind about marrying, or perhaps he has newly met a girl whom he prefers. In such case the easiest way out of the difficulty is to refrain from meeting the imported fiancee. She arrives, and no husband is on hand.

Figure 9: An example of a photograph of Japanese picture brides that was published in newspapers across the country. Source: The Bridgeport Times and Evening Farmer, *March 3, 1920.*

How the Jap "Picture Brides" Are Japanizing California

Japan Promises to Stop the Ingenious Device by Which They Are Breeding Little Japs and Upsetting the Purpose of the Immigration Exclusion Laws

How the Pretty Jap Picture Bride Looks After She Begins to Work As a Field Laborer.

Two Cute Picture Brides Photographed in Japan

—and—

How the Annual Jap Baby Is Left to Care for Himself While the Mother Is at Work.

Mamma Working in a Garden Patch.

Figure 10: An example of the inflammatory ways photographs of Japanese picture brides could be used in anti-Japanese propaganda. Source: The Washington Times, *January 4, 1920*.

Figure 10-11: Two rare images found in newspaper articles about European picture brides—both cartoons—speak to the downgraded threat of European picture marriage in comparison to the exoticization and scare tactics presented in photographic accounts of Japanese picture brides. Sources: Cordova Daily Times*, July 26, 1920 (left);* New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922 (right)*.

Figure 12: A rare, unattributed image of Greek picture brides on their journey to America, around 1922. This image was not included in any of the archival materials I collected, including immigration files or newspaper articles. Source: The Pappas Post, *October 4, 2019. Retrieved from* [*https://pappaspost.com/when-thousands-greek-women-arrived-as-picture-brides/*](https://pappaspost.com/when-thousands-greek-women-arrived-as-picture-brides/)

Figure 13: Augustus Sherman's famous portrait "Greek Woman [1909]" demonstrates the type of generalized ethnographic photography that took place on Ellis Island. Per Kei Tanaka's earlier assertion, this photography differed drastically from practices at Angel Island, wherein photographs were collected in racially motivated immigration policing. Historians at the University of Southern California (USC) have identified this woman to be Theano Papasotiriou from Salamína, Greece. See the USC "Deanonymizing Sherman and Hine's Photographs" digital humanities project for more information: https://scalar.usc.edu/works/let-me-get-there/greek-woman-1909

Figure 14: Marriage portrait of a Greek picture bride and groom, around 1922, that hangs in the main dining room of the Yanni's Greek Gyros restaurant in Springfield, Missouri (United States). The photograph features the restaurant owner's grandparents on their wedding day, demonstrating the vibrancy of Greek picture marriage history to descendants. Picture taken by author in August 2018.

Historiography

A rich body of scholarship exists on Japanese picture brides detailing their experiences in migration and including analyses of their labor and homelives, the bureaucratic barriers they faced, and the significance of photography, surveillance, and visualization in immigration policy and constructions of race and gender.[26] Of this body of literature, however, only Andrea Geiger's 2015 monograph, *Subverting Exclusion*, mentions the existence of European picture brides, though confined to a footnote. This dissertation to date is the only work analyzing the significance of the two groups' connections.

Few works of scholarship have detailed the history of Greek picture brides. Of these texts, none have made connections to other cultures practicing the tradition nor made theoretical analyses of picture marriage's inherent connection to American ideologies of race, gender, and sexuality. As a general rule, historians of Greek America—admittedly small in number—have been negligent about the roles of women, family, and sexuality in early immigration processes.[27] Within the male-centric field of early Greek immigration history, significant exceptions to this rule exist that were essential in crafting this dissertation. Historian Evangelia Tastsoglou's article on Greek immigrant women in Ontario, for instance, offers much in her attention to women and

[26] Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kei Tanaka, "Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 1, no. 15 (2004): 115-138; Tanaka Kei, "Marriage as Citizen's Privilege: Japanese Picture Marriage and American Social Justice." *Nanzan Review of American Studies* 31 (2009): 131-150; Cecilia M. Tsu, *Garden of the World: Asian Immigrants and the Making of Agriculture in California's Santa Clara Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Yuji Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States, 1900-1924." *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 339-357; Sonia Christina Gomez, "From Picture Brides to War Brides: Race, Gender, and Belonging in the Making of Japanese Ameirca." PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2018; Tomoko Makabe, *Picture Brides: Japanese Women in Canada* (North York, Ont.: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

[27] One of the foundational texts on Greek American immigration written by Charles Moskos in 1989, for instance, mentions that "after 1900, women started arriving—many as picture brides who came from the same or a nearby village as their prospective grooms," but does not go into detail about these women's lives, skills, or experiences beyond their propensity to work as homemakers. *See* Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans,* 12.

family structures. In her work based on thirty-three archival and contemporary interviews, Tastsoglou analyzes the experiences of four generational groups of Greek immigrant women: "the pre-World War II generation, the immediately post-World War II generation (the 1950s), the generation of the late 1960s and 1970s, and those older women who generally emigrated for the purpose of family reunification."[28] However, of the six archival interviews featuring pre-WWII migrants that the author analyzes, only one is of a picture bride.[29]

By and large the majority of academic analysis on first-generation immigrant women leaving Greece from 1900-1930 is by the late Utah historian Hellen Zeese Papanikolas and Illinois historian Elaine Thomopoulos, both the daughters of the immigrant generation they study.[30] Papanikolas's work features the histories of the earliest Greek migrant women who often lived in gendered seclusion as the only women in their husband's respective mining camps in the U.S. West, around 1900-1910, when Greek sojourners came to America for hard labor (and short amounts of time intending to return to their home country). Her work highlights the back breaking domestic and reproductive labor these women endured in isolation and highlights remarkable stories of women like Magerou the midwife.[31] In her book *Amulet of Greek Earth*, Papanikolas takes a closer look at Greek picture brides' stories, traditions, and family values. Thomopoulos's edited collection, *Greek-American Pioneer Women of Illinois*, tells the stories of

[28] Evangelia Tastsoglou, "The Margin at the Centre: Greek Immigrant Women in Ontario." *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 29, no. 1 (1997): 119-160, 122.
[29] Significantly, this educated Greek woman from Asia Minor is actually categorized as a "correspondence bride" by the author. Picture bride is not used in the article except when briefly categorizing one woman from mainland Greece who was married by proxy to an Italian immigrant in the mid-1950s. For an analysis of the differences between "correspondence bride" and "picture bride," see chapter two. For more information on post-WWII Greek picture brides, see this dissertation's conclusion.
[30] Helen Papanikolas, "Greek Immigrant Women in the Intermountain West," Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora 16, no. 1-4 (1989); Helen Papanikolas, An Amulet of Greek Earth: Generations of Immigrant Folk Culture (Athens: Swallow Press, 2002); Elaine Thomopoulos, editor, *Images of America: Greek-American Pioneer Women of Illinois*. Greek Women's University Club (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2000).
[31] See Papanikolas, "Greek Immigrant Women in the Intermountain West."

five pioneer women who migrated to Illinois between 1885-1923. Through extensive archival photographs and oral histories, the authors in this collection challenge assumptions of traditional Greek American women and gender to highlight individuals that "ventured outside of the traditional boundaries of *nikokeeres,* or housewives. Not just supporters or helpers of the men, they played major roles on their own, in some cases despite family and community opposition."[32]

Picture marriage has been under-researched and under-theorized, yet it provides an exceptional framework to view the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality during a time when contemporary notions of white sexual normativity were being consolidated into national frameworks. This project therefore necessitated interdisciplinary methods and builds on the contributions from a variety of fields such as history, American studies, race and ethnicity studies, and gender and sexuality studies. At its broadest point, this dissertation is part of a much larger conversation on immigration history.

Concurrent work in immigration history shows the development of increasingly intersectional analyses of immigration and citizenship over time from a field that was once narrow in its view of immigration as white, European, and male, to one that is more nuanced in accounting for the simultaneity of social identities, systems of power and agency, and ideological influences. Anna Pegler-Gordon defines this process as the "racial turn in U.S. ethnic and immigration history" beginning in the 1980s.[33] Beginning in the late 1960s, scholarship on Black Americans, Latin@s, and Asian Americans had been confined to the field of sociology and ethnic studies. But given the changing demographics of immigration after 1965, the field of immigration history necessarily broadened in the 1980s to include a wider range of histories and

[32] Thomopoulos, *Images of America*, 7.
[33] Anna Pegler-Gordon, "Debating the Racial Turn in U.S. Ethnic and Immigration History." *Journal of American Ethnic Studies* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2017): 40-53, 40.

perspectives. With this infusion of new methodologies and an increasingly diverse academy, immigration historians began to extend burgeoning theories on racial formations in the United States to their own work, recognizing as Pegler-Gordon writes, that "race has and does play a critical role in facilitating the adaptation of certain European newcomers to American society."[34]

In bringing Greek and Japanese histories together, I subvert the scholastic tradition of segregating Asian and European ethnic groups in the literature; while the field of immigration history has classically privileged European immigration as its focus, studies on nonwhite and Asian immigrants have traditionally been assigned to ethnic or Asian American studies.[35] In the 1990s, scholars inverted the traditional narrative of "race = nonwhite" by theorizing a critical approach to the study of whiteness that insisted "on identifying whiteness as a problem to be named and addressed."[36] The social drama of whiteness within immigration history was explored in the works of pioneering scholars in whiteness studies. Having set the foundations for this work in the early 1970s with his monograph *The Indispensable Enemy*, historian Alexander Saxton continued with his 1990 *Rise and Fall of the White Republic* to show the ideological constructions of whiteness as a specific political order in U.S. politics and popular culture.[37] Saxton's methodological foundations can be seen in this dissertation's construction of whiteness in relation to Asianness, a factor that both George Sanchez in 1999 and Anna Pegler-Gordon nearly twenty years later have noted is a significant gap in the literature—and consequently

[34] George Sanchez, "Race and Immigration History." *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. 9 (June/July 1999): 1271-1275, 1272.
[35] Pegler-Gordon, "Debating the Racial Turn," 48; See also Mae Ngai, "Immigration and Ethnic History," in *American History Now*, edited by Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011): 367-68.
[36] David Roediger, "The Racial Turn in Ethnic History." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2017): 54-61, 54.
[37] Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Verso, 2003).

constitutes perhaps the strongest contribution of my research thus far.[38] Yu-Fang Cho's examination of "triangulated racialized labor" in *Uncoupling American Empire* was critical to my ability to conceptualize Asian-white racial formations in the context of marriage and sexuality, and Natalia Molina's excellent work inspired my use of relational analyses as a methodology.[39]

Perhaps most influential to my own studies, the works of David Roediger and Matthew Frye Jacobson demonstrated the anachronistic tendencies of immigration scholars projecting contemporary notions of race (often based on the black/white or white/non-white binary) onto the past. Instead, the work of these two scholars demonstrated how European immigrant identities were not merely considered "ethnicities"—a blank slate or cultural deviation from "Americanness" based on national origins—but were actually understood as separate races.[40] Work from scholars such as Noel Ignatiev, Yiorgos Anagnostou, and Thomas Guglielmo demonstrated the complex, often contradictory processes whereby racialized immigrants were amalgamated into whiteness and sought legal, economic, and social privileges which allowed for a pattern of social mobility and political representation denied to others.[41] By demonstrating that privilege was accorded rather than explicitly earned, it becomes evident that European

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[38] Pegler-Gordon, "Debating the Racial Turn," 43; *See also* George J. Sanchez, "Race, Nation, and Culture in Recent Immigration Studies." *Journal of American Ethnic Studies* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 66-84, 69.
[39] Yu-Fang Cho, *Uncoupling American Empire: Cultural Politics of Deviance and Unequal Difference, 1890-1910* (New York: State University of New York, 2013); Natalia Molina, *How Race is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), 2-3.
[40] Matthew Frye Jacobson, Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).
[41] Yiorgos Anagnostou, Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009); Theodore Allen, The Invention of the White Race (New York: Verso, 1994); Noel Ignatiev, How the Irish Became White (New York: Routledge, 1995); Thomas Guglielmo, White on Arrival: Italians, Race, Color, and Power in Chicago, 1890–1945 (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004); Eric Goldstein, Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). Gary Gerstle, American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001)

integration was not only "at the expense of non-whites, but that they owe their now stabilized and recognized whiteness itself in part to these non-white groups."[42] Most importantly, however, drawing attention to whiteness as an unstable category denaturalizes its power and calls attention to the ways that racial formation is a project or paradigm of power as boundaries are drawn, and redrawn, according to the political needs of its wielders. While the importance of these scholars' work cannot be overstated, it is also necessary to credit, as Roediger meaningfully reminds us in his introduction to *Wages of Whiteness*, that "such writers of color as Du Bois, Cheryl Harris, Vine Deloria Jr, Toni Morrison, Americo Paredes, Leslie Marmon Silko, Cherrie Moraga, and above all, James Baldwin, have produced the most searching inquiries and deep insights into whiteness."[43] Historian Mia Bay's exceptional work *The White Image in the Black Mind,* for instance, gives us an idea of how this long tradition took root in Black American culture.

The work of whiteness studies scholars were integral to my recognition that although picture marriage was a common practice in many cultures, the category of *picture marriage* was not universally applied. Arranged marriage, even in America, was not uncommon up to, and including, the twentieth century.[44] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, men and women seeking partners took out personal ads in newspapers, subscribed to matrimonial periodicals, hired matrimonial agencies like *Cupid's Court*, and met partners through mutual friends and family members.[45] Many European countries such as Germany and Spain also have

[42] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 9.
[43] Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness,* xi.
[44] Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005).
[45] The reference to "Cupid's Court" can be found in Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating," *New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922; *See also* Suzanne M. Sinke, "Marriage through the Mail: North American Correspondence Marriage from Early Print to the Web," in *Letters across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants*, edited by Bruce S. Elliott, David A. Gerber, and Suzanne M. Sinke, 75-94 (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2006), 85-86; Smithsonian National Postal Museum, "How Did Men and Women Meet through the Mail?" https://postalmuseum.si.edu/Mail-OrderBrides/how.html, accessed February 22, 2019; Suzanne H. Jackson, "To Honor and Obey: Trafficking in "Mail-Order Brides," *George Washington Law Review* 70,

documented histories of proxy and correspondence brides. The difference, as this dissertation will demonstrate, lay in racial privilege, the powerful crux subverting the association of picture marriage with groups considered white or northern European.

In the midst of Yellow Peril politics, nativists appropriated the concept of "picture brides" to rile fears of immigrant fecundity and racial danger. In its association with Japanese women, "picture bride" was a racialized concept that acted as a code word for foreign difference, an aberrance of American democratic principles and white middle-class sexuality. In popular English-language newspapers and American political discourse—from mayoral campaigns to Congress—picture marriage was rooted in orientalist assumptions of non-white, deviant sexuality. It was no coincidence that Armenians, Italians, and Greeks, the three predominant groups practicing proxy and transatlantic arranged marriages in Europe, were cast in the symbolic discourse of "picture marriage." As off-white peoples, their racial categorization was an indiscernible blend of cultures. As the famous eugenicist Madison Grant claimed, the Mediterranean race was "so far from being purely European, it is equally African and Asiatic."[46]

Positioned as different from Japanese or Asian women—though how different was up for debate—Southern European women were nebulously in-between racial and social categories. In the American hierarchy of races, Greeks in particular occupied, according to scholar Yiorgos Anagnostou, a "marked and unstable location…placed between unmarked American whiteness and 'the Asiatics' commonly demonized as the 'yellow peril.'"[47] To use the historian Satnam Virdee's invocative expression, Greeks were "racialized outsiders" in U.S. society.[48]

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no. 3 (2002): 475-569; Lara Mobydeen, "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Mail-Ordered? The Mail-Order Bride Industry and Immigration Law," *The Wayne Law Review* 49, no. 1 (2003): 939-974.

[46] Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 214.

[47] Yiorgos Anagnostou, *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), 14 and 48.

[48] Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class, and the Racialized Outsider* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

The dubbing of Southern European women as picture brides was an inherently comparative strategy set up to triangulate the qualities of Mediterranean raciality between non-white foreignness and white American traditions. This liminal position worked as both an obstacle and opportunity to join the ranks of the privileged few. Unlike the vocal rejection of Japanese picture marriage, Greeks' practices, as "off-white" potential citizens, were equally constructed as "off-white." Greek picture marriage was discursively placed outside, yet adjacent to, heteronormative "American" unions. This difference was essential to the hypocritical and contradictory tolerance, and later acceptance, of European family structures and settlement in the United States.

My approach to this history calls attention to the centrality of heteronormativity and American sexual politics to maintenance of whiteness throughout U.S. history. This dissertation forwards notions of white ethnicity as an "acceptable deviation from whiteness," and adds to the field by critically recognizing that white ethnicity was equally premised on an *acceptable deviation from heteronormativity* (or in other words, the time period's notions of romantic love, gender roles, and American marriage). Though their modes were antiquated, European picture marriage unions were eventually seen as having the potential to produce fitting citizens and white families for the body politic.

In terms of sexuality and gender, analyses of whiteness within immigration history still have a long way to go. Examples of monographs doing exceptional work in this field include Kathie Friedman-Kasaba's work on Jewish and Italian women in New York and Karen Brodkin's foundational work on Jewish Americans which demonstrate the ways "race, class, and gender reproduce whiteness as a complexly held political identity and as a stable and powerful system of oppressive economic and political practices that are sustained by opposition to all

manner of nonwhitenesses."[49] Tanya Hart's 2015 work on African American, British West Indian, and Southern Italian women is also an excellent example of recent multicultural historical work showing the intersections of race, gender, and migration in U.S. healthcare programs in the early twentieth century.[50] Writing on the topic of immigrant women's history, Donna Gabaccia and Vicki Ruiz note how "whiteness studies, which focused on how European immigrants acquired white identities, offered an interpretively powerful opportunity to draw together histories of many groups. Unfortunately, among the proliferating studies of Italians, Irish, and Jewish whiteness, only a handful tackled systematically the gendering of racialization itself."[51] Though Gabaccia and Ruiz were discussing the state of the field in 2006, this dissertation is one of the few existing works that critically examines the intersections of gender, sexuality, and whiteness within work on immigration history.

Given these few examples, whiteness studies within the field of immigration history has yet to catch up with scholars in diverse fields writing on the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality. Ruth Frankenberg's 1993 *White Women, Race Matters* was one of the first to examine "white women's places in the racial structure of the United States at the end of the twentieth century and views white women's lives as sites both for the reproduction of racism and for challenges to it."[52] Scholars interrogating gender and whiteness similarly include Louise Michele Newman's superb analysis of the racial origins of feminism in the United States and Thavolia Glymph's impressive work interrogating historical realities of white slaveholding women in the

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[49] Kathie Friedman-Kasaba, *Memories of Migration: Gender, Ethnicity, and Work in the Lives of Jewish and Italian Women in New York, 1870-1924* (New York: SUNY Press, 1996), 9; Karen Brodkin, How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998).
[50] Tanya Hart, *Health in the City: Race, Poverty, and the Negotiation of Women's Health in New York City, 1915-1930.* New York: New York University Press, 2015.
[51] Donna R. Gabaccia and Vicki L. Ruiz, "Migrations and Destinations: Reflections on the Histories of U.S. Immigrant Women." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 26, no.1 (Fall 2006): 3-19, 15.
[52] Ruth Frankenberg, White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 1.

U.S. South.[53] The works of Siobhan Somerville and Julian Carter perhaps stand out as some of the best examples of interdisciplinary analyses of whiteness, gender, and sexuality (particularly heteronormativity), and their work—as readers of this dissertation will surely notice—has been hugely influential to my own.

Intersectional theory has in large part been advanced by feminist and Womanist scholars of color, including Patricia Hill Collns, Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga, bell hooks, Cheryl Harris, and Kimberle Crenshaw.[54] These contributions, in addition to work from immigration historians such as Evelyn Nakano Glenn (mentioned at the beginning of this introduction), Valerie Matsumoto, Cecilia Tsu, and Mae Ngai, are all owed a debt of great gratitude for their examples of keen intersectional analyses that highlight the realities—both in tribulations and triumphs—of immigrants and working-class women around the globe.[55] Immigration historians working on women, marriage, and sexuality in immigration history, are also to be thanked, including the works of Brenda Cossman, Candice Lewis Bredbenner, Martha Gardner, and Eithne Luibhéid.[56] Each contributed vital information for this dissertation's formulations of

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[53] Louis Michele Newman, *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[54] Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherrie Moraga, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2015); bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1981); bell hooks, *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1984); Cheryl I. Harris, "Finding Sojourner's Truth: Race, Gender, and the Institution of Property. *Cardozo Law Review* 18, no. 2 (1996) 309-410; Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1 (1989): 139-167. *See also* Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men: But Some of Us Are Brave* (New York: The City University of New York Press, 2007).

[55] Glenn, *Issei, Nisei War Bride*; Valerie J. Matsumoto, *Farming the Home Place: A Japanese American Community in California, 1919-1982* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). *See also* Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[56] Brenda Cossman, *Sexual Citizens: The Legal and Cultural Regulation of Sex and Belonging* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2007); Candice Lewis Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women,*

marriage across borders. The influence of Margot Canaday's work in *The Straight State* can be seen especially in chapter three of this dissertation and laid the groundwork for how I analyzed picture marriage to be a form of transgressive sexuality policed by the immigration bureau.[57] Finally, the work of Suzanne Sinke was especially influential in formulating ideas of "American" versus "immigrant" marriage in her work on arranged marriages, and she is owed special thanks for her feedback and guidance in getting chapter two of this dissertation published.[58]

Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is divided into three main sections. The first chapter, titled, "The American Bride and Women's Citizenship in Early 20th-Century Popular Culture," deconstructs white femininity as anti-immigrant propaganda. The specter of the immigrant picture bride, as I will show throughout this dissertation, was a haphazardly curated projection formed by the many external forces seeking to define the figure, from both pro- and anti-immigrant activists and journalistic discourse, to testimonies from immigrant communities and leaders. In the construction of this immigrant "other," pundits often compared these women to their Anglo American counterparts, revealing a multitude of competing conceptions regarding femininity, normative sexuality, and political values. This first chapter analyzes the early-twentieth century trope of the "American girl" or "American bride"—what I argue to be a racialized signifier of gendered nationalism—to trace its development alongside immigration discourse in the early-

Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Eithne Luibhéid, *Entry Denied: Controlling Sexuality at the Border* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

[57] Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[58] Suzanne M. Sinke, "The International Marriage Market: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives," in Dirk Hoerder and Jörg Nagler, eds., *People in Transit: German Migration in Comparative Perspective, 1820-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 227-248.

twentieth century, from roughly 1907-1924. The "American girl," I argue, demonstrates the novel ways that burgeoning notions of female sexuality became politically meaningful in early-century immigration policy and popular culture.[59]

Like the "modern girl," the American girl was framed within the rhetoric of modernity, progress, and romance. Yet the American girl's sexuality was firmly rooted in heteronormative nationalist frameworks. Rather than the questionable free sexuality of the modern girl, the American girl desired romantic marriage. Her alternate iteration after marriage—the *American bride*—reflected the mature fulfillment and progress of white, middle-class marriage and domesticity. This chapter will critique this literary device and demonstrate how depictions of the American girl in popular news media and literature of the time worked as nationalist tropes of white supremacy. As sources, I examine novels, short stories, and sensationalist newspaper articles with romantic storylines to establish the cultural contexts of the era that shape the discourse surrounding immigrant traditions and picture marriage. Included in this chapter is an examination of interracial romances and an analysis of author Sui Sin Far's fiction to demonstrate how writers of color engaged these themes in their work by reframing heteronormativity discourse into counter-hegemonic literary devices.

Building on these discussions of white American femininity, Chapter 2 of this dissertation argues that far from deserving to be a mere footnote in Greek American history, picture brides were essential to the process by which Greek Americans navigated their racial

[59] While work has been done on the international figure of the "modern girl" of the 1920s and 1930s, I ground my analysis in the concept of what I term the "American girl," a figure specific to eugenics-based immigration discourses. My use of the word "girl" follows historical usage, archival renderings, and the work of Weinbaum et al. in their edited volume on the "modern girl" writing that "'girl' signifies the contested status of young women, no longer children… [and] strongly suggests the historical emergence of 'girl' as a modern social and representational category and as a style of self-expression largely delinked from biological age." *See* Weinbaum et al., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 9.

position from “in-between” white *other* to ethnic white *American*. In doing so, I add to the canon of white ethnicity studies by documenting the ways sexuality was critical to the processes of twentieth century white pluralism. In this work I trace prominent discourse and imagery in popular newspaper and entertainment sources from 1907-1924, the major years of picture bride migration to the United States. My analysis creates dialogical connections between news reports on picture marriage to popular and scientific literature of the day in order to show the quotidian ways that audiences learned about the politics of race and immigration through seemingly a-political messages about family, marriage, and romantic love.

The final chapter of this dissertation uses Ellis Island immigrant detention records from the National Archives in Washington, DC, to trace the bureaucratic response to Southern European picture bride women from Greece, Armenia, Turkey, and Italy. I argue these files demonstrate what political scientists call the “bureaucratic learning” process in which institutions develop—over time and through experience—the knowledge that informs and bolsters public policies. I argue this process unveils itself in the steady stream of memos and letters back-and-forth between immigration bureau employees and officials, asking for clarification and instructions on how to proceed with these women’s cases. In the process of their bureaucratic education, immigration employees had guidelines for dealing with prostitutes, polygamists, or public charges. But picture bride women and arranged marriages did not necessarily fall within these categories. Nor, given their off-white status, did these immigrants fall within any clearly demarcated racial categories subject to specific regulation. Bureaucratic measures, therefore, often reflected the greater biases of the time and the improvisation of individuals in charge. Inspectors often relied on prejudiced intuition, or their “belief” that an immigrant individual or marriage was either genuine or fraudulent. The history of these women reveals the contradictory,

discriminatory nature of U.S. immigration legislation, but more importantly, highlights the remarkable agency of migrants to navigate and resist xenophobic boundaries.

As the immigrant detention files in chapter 3 demonstrate, authorities used three main strategies to prevent Southern European picture brides from entering the country: literacy restrictions, quota numbers, and the "likely to become a public charge" (LPC) clause, the latter a broad category that historian Martha Gardner notes was disproportionately used against migrants from Southern Europe and Asia.[60] I argue that because all three of these restriction strategies were eugenics-based policy measures intended to specifically target nonwhite, disabled, female, or "degenerate" individuals, their use by immigration bureaus to police European picture brides demonstrates how officials viewed picture marriage as a racial problem to be solved, just as much as a moral, sexual one. Yet even while strict laws were being passed to keep Southern European immigrants out of the country, there is revealed in these cases a contradictory but emerging privilege of whiteness in the ways these immigrants were sometimes able to bend and subvert ideological boundaries. When compared to the experiences of Japanese women at immigration stations such as Angel Island, the immigration bureau's differing treatment of picture marriage practices both within and between ethnic groups represents the institutional establishment of white middle-class sexuality as an American vanguard of immigration policy.

Together, these three chapters demonstrate that early-twentieth century immigration policy was never consistent, never purely ruled by justice or due process, but rather was often carried out by very human individuals working and struggling to navigate an immigration system constantly changing and transforming in light of new ideas on American race, gender, and sexuality. In this dissertation's conclusion, I summarize my findings while offering theoretical

[60] Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen,* 79.

perspectives on the ways European picture marriage is both remembered and forgotten in popular memory and academic scholarship. Finally, I end with future avenues for work on picture marriage that include interdisciplinary methods and theoretical approaches to Japanese picture marriage using queer theory.

My hope is that this dissertation will inspire readers to consider the ways our current world continues to manifest exclusionary measures. This history of double standards, racial stereotypes, and the policing of immigrant families has more implications to the current moment than ever before as the "picture brides" of the past have been replaced by newer racialized, sexual tropes meant to dehumanize migrants and justify their mistreatment. This legacy of violence continues in the perpetuation of discourse villainizing migrants as Mexican rapists, welfare queens, or anchor babies, by lay people and authorities alike. To understand our current moment is to understand an important reality: United States immigration politics are, and always have been, predicated on a system of racist, heterosexist standards that continue to marginalize migrants and uphold the power of white supremacy.

Chapter 1: The American Bride and Women's Citizenship in Early Twentieth-Century Popular Culture

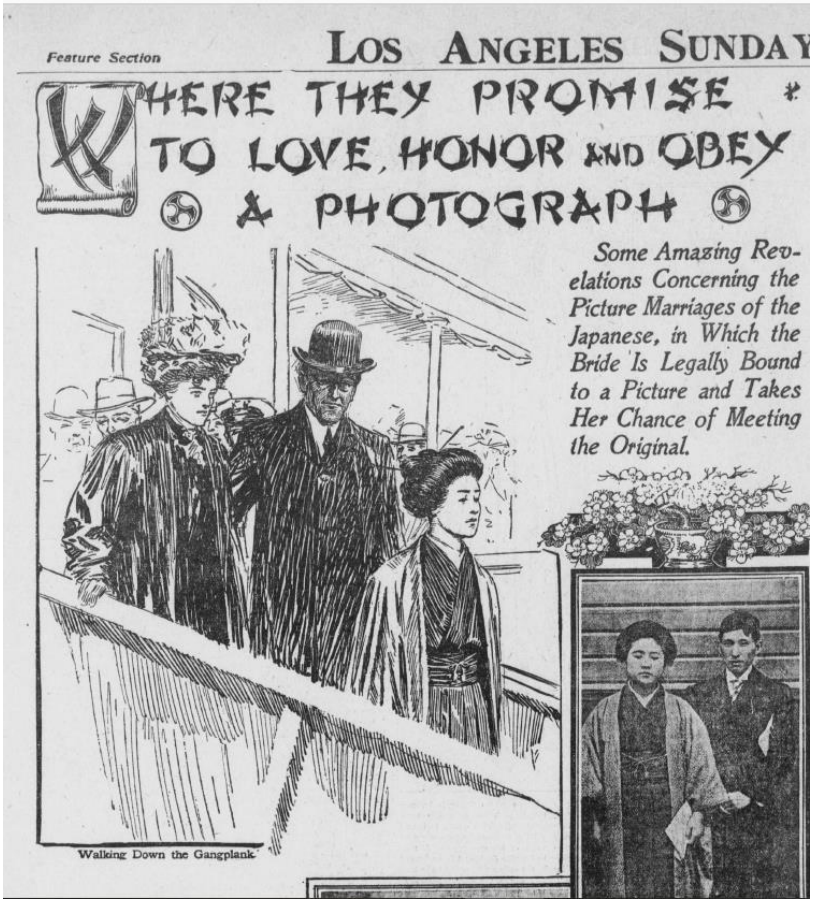

Figure 1: An illustration of a Japanese picture bride debarking off an ocean liner at Angel Island (San Francisco) as the "American girl" looks on. Source: "Where They Promise to Love, Honor, and Obey a Photograph," Los Angeles Sunday Herald*, October 3, 1909.*

"Nothing in the world is so personal as marriage to the American mind," began a full-page spread in a 1922 copy of the *New York Times*. "It therefore is a little difficult to get the viewpoint of a bride who crosses oceans to be met at the dock by a man holding her photograph in his hand, a man whom she never saw before, but who is to be her companion through life." Under the headline "TWO KINDS OF BRIDES," the unnamed author explores the differences

between two types of women: the "American" bride and the immigrant picture bride.[1] Picture marriage was a system of trans-oceanic arranged marriage between immigrant men residing in the United States and women from their home countries. It was a common practice in many immigrant groups coming to the United States around the turn of the twentieth century, including Koreans, Chinese, Italians, Armenians, Germans, and most prevalently and in the largest numbers, Japanese and Greeks.[2] Taken at face value, the 1922 article is an interesting lifestyle piece. But in its dichotomous rendering of "two kinds of brides," the article's oppositional relationship between American values and foreign practices reveals the quotidian ways that Americans expressed and learned about the racial, gendered politics of citizenship through the lens of marriage and family.

The specter of the immigrant picture bride, as I will show in the following chapter, was a haphazardly curated projection formed by the many external forces seeking to define her, from both pro- and anti-immigrant activists and journalistic discourse to testimonies from immigrant communities and leaders. In several places throughout this dissertation, including this chapter, I also deconstruct depictions of "immigrant grooms." In both cases, the depictions of these

[1] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times*, August 27, 1922.

[2] For more information on Japanese picture brides: Tanaka Kei, "Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 1, no. 15 (2004): 115-138; Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); For information on Greek picture brides: Evangelia Tastsoglou,"The Margin at the Centre: Greek Immigrant Women in Ontario," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 29, 1 (1997): 119-160; Steve Frangos, "The Picture Bride Era." *The National Herald* (New York, March 12, 2005); Helen Papanikolas, *An Amulet of Greek Earth: Generations of Immigrant Folk Culture* (Athens: Swallow Press, 2002); Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans, Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980); Alice Scourby, *The Greek Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984). For a general overview on arranged marriage: Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000, 151); Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, "Armenian Refugee Women: The Picture Brides, 1920-1930." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 3, no. 1993 (12): 3-29; Lara Mobydeen, "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Mail-Ordered? The Mail-Order Bride Industry and Immigration Law." *The Wayne Law Review* 49, no. 1 (2003): 939-974; Suzanne H. Jackson, "To Honor and Obey: Trafficking in 'Mail-Order Brides'." *George Washington Law Review*, 70, no. 3 (2002).

immigrant "others" often compared picture marriage couples to their Anglo American counterparts. In this process we see not only the ways immigrants have been racialized in U.S. history, but also the ways that whiteness has changed and evolved over time in relation to the diverse peoples and traditions coming to the United States. In comparisons between "immigrant picture brides" and "American girls," these early-century depictions reveal a multitude of competing conceptions regarding femininity, normative sexuality, and political values. The *New York Times* article, like many of its kind, encapsulates all these ideas in one place:

> How [the picture bride] must feel, coming down the gangplank to meet this strange man is something to make an *American girl's* heart stop. And certainly an *American girl* would find it almost inconceivable that the bride from far-away lands should not experience this revulsion. One [bride] represents the ideal of selection; she must find the right man to marry before all else. The other [bride] places marriage first, whom she is to marry second.[3]

By aligning the "American bride" with the "ideal," the article steps beyond mere reporting to participate in a greater discussion of romance and political performance occurring in early twentieth century America. At the same time, this discourse sets Anglo femininity as the backdrop to its narrative; by framing "American" practices as normative—even virtuous—it elicits a standard narrative foundation from which readers can comfortably encounter picture marriage from a safe distance. But rather than passively reading this construction of white femininity, this work actively centers the trope of the "American girl" to interrogate this seemingly blank template. This chapter deconstructs its layered meanings to reveal the complex

[3] *New York Times*. "Two Kinds of Brides." 1922. Italics mine.

constructions of race, gender, and sexuality at its core, while examining the political work performed in its depiction.

The *Times'* discursive rendering of "Two Kinds of Brides" was written in 1922, a mere two years before immigrant proxy and picture marriages were cited as grounds for exclusion in the 1924 Immigration Act and the practice fell out of favor. At this point in the timeline, the article represents the culmination of over a decades' worth of journalistic methodology in picture bride coverage. This chapter focuses on one half of this equation; in this work I analyze the early-twentieth century trope of the "American girl" or the "American bride"—what I argue to be a racialized signifier of gendered nationalism—to trace its development alongside immigration discourse in the early-twentieth century, from roughly 1907-1924. The "American girl," I argue, demonstrates the novel ways that burgeoning notions of female sexuality became politically meaningful in early-century immigration policy and popular culture. While work has been done on the international figure of the "modern girl" of the 1920s and 1930s,[4] I ground my analysis in the concept of what I term the "American girl," a figure specific to eugenics-based immigration discourses. My use of the word "girl" follows historical usage, archival renderings, and the work of Alys Eve Weinbaum and her associates in their edited volume on the "modern girl" writing that "'girl' signifies the contested status of young women, no longer children… [and] strongly suggests the historical emergence of 'girl' as a modern social and representational category and as a style of self-expression largely delinked from biological age."[5]

The American girl both helped to shape and reflected a gendered, white nationalism via the qualities of performative Anglo female citizenship. The American girl was strategically

[4] *See* Alys Eve Weinbaum et al., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).
[5] Weinbaum, *The Modern Girl Around the World,* 9.

positioned on a spectrum between the Victorian woman of yesteryear, and the modern woman emerging in the 1920s.[6] Like the modern girl, the American girl was framed within the rhetoric of modernity, progress, and romance. Yet the American girl's sexuality was firmly rooted in heteronormative nationalist frameworks. Rather than the questionable free sexuality of the modern girl, the American girl desired romantic marriage. Her alternate iteration—the American bride—reflected the mature fulfillment and progress of white, middle-class marriage and domesticity.

The American girl was imbued with white heteronormative values; she was comfortable in a modern world and independent in her ability to choose and discern a partner. But in her figuration as a "bride," she practiced her modernity to the benefit of the nation by upholding the eugenical tenets of romantic marriage and physical fitness. However, this chapter is not just interested in depictions of the ideal, but also in storylines that act as didactic warnings of what happens when an individual deviates from that path. The American girl emerged during a time of major changes to American marriage. As such, this chapter also analyzes "cautionary tales" featuring white women in interracial relationships with immigrants of color. These didactic stories feature women who, through marriage or romantic relationships with non-white, specifically Asian men, become ruined by, or narrowly escape, sexual and moral deviancy to demonstrate the tenets of sexual normativity, white dominance, and civic duty. Finally, this chapter concludes with an analysis of the work of author of color Sui Sin Far to illuminate how she engaged these themes in her depiction of interracial relationships by reworking

[6] Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005); Thomas J. Schlereth, *Victorian America: Transformations in Everyday Life, 1876-1915* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992); Jessica Foy, *American Home Life, 1880–1930: A Social History of Spaces and Services* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994); Kathy Lee Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, [1986] 2011).

heteronormativity discourse into counter-hegemonic literary devices. Far's work illuminates the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality within the discourse of eugenical romance and complicates any singular notion of the "American girl."

As sources in this chapter, I examine novels, magazines, short stories, and sensationalist newspaper articles with romantic storylines. In my approach to primary documents I follow Matthew Frye Jacobson's observations that race is a "public fiction," best understood with an "analysis of public exchange."[7] The public exchanges which follow set the scene for this dissertation's following chapters by filling in the important cultural contexts of the era that shape the discourse surrounding immigrant traditions and picture marriage.

Constructing the American Bride: The Science of White Nationalism and Romantic Love

In the early twentieth century, arranged marriage was not uncommon even among American Anglos; the idea of choice in marriage was a product of late eighteenth-century revolutionary frameworks which denounced the monarchical power arrangements of Western Europe.[8] Post-revolution marriage in the late-eighteenth century was deemed more egalitarian than in earlier generations, and American iterations of the practice were increasingly associated with free choice, democracy, and personal responsibility. After the first World War, women's role in marriage became politicized in accordance with their developing levels of political sovereignty, having participated widely in war efforts, and coming closer to universal suffrage. However, as historian Louise Newman demonstrates, "white middle-class women's emergence as public actors" in progressive movements of the early twentieth century did little to advance

[7] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 11.
[8] Cott, *Marriage, A History*, 145-146.

egalitarian social structures in the United States. Instead, as echoed in recent work by historian Sarah Bell, white middle-class women "continued to base their own resistance to patriarchy and to protest their exclusion from the franchise on the grounds that they were effective civilizers, every both the equals of white men because of a shared evolutionary history."[9] Further, as scholars such as Zornitsa Keremidchieva and Martha S. Jones have shown, white women's suffrage was ratified on its ability to help counter the votes and interests of immigrants and citizens of color. Thus, white women's suffrage was a means to guard the racial and ideological "purity of the state," as demonstrated by the continued disenfranchisement of black women voters throughout the twentieth century.[10]

As literary scholar Amy Kaplan writes in her foundational article "Manifest Domesticity," "domesticity plays a key role in imagining the nation as home, [and] women, positioned at the center of the home, play a major role in defining the contours of the nation and its shifting borders with the foreign."[11] Kaplan's work keenly analyzes the connection between the home and American pursuits of empire in the context of nineteenth century literature. However, the concepts of the "American girl" and "American bride" show the ways "manifest domesticity" was reimagined in the context of early twentieth-century mass immigration and evolving racial formations.

In the context of new gender mores, white women also experienced new sexual mores. The rise of leisure culture in the 1920s allowed more couples to date unchaperoned, meet at

[9] Louise Michele Newman, *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 14; see also new work on the role of religion within white women's work in the temperance and suffrage movements in Sarah Bell, "Politics on the Platform: The Intersection of Women's Organizations and the Chautauqua Movement, 1874-1919." PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2019.
[10] Zornitsa Keremidchieva, "The Congressional Debates on the 19th Amendment: Jurisdictional Rhetoric and the Assemblage of the US Body Politic." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 99, no. 1 (2013): 51-73, 60. https://www.basicbooks.com/titles/martha-s-jones/vanguard/9781541618619/
[11] Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity." *American Literature* 70, no. 3 (Sep., 1998): 581-606.

dance halls, and attend mixed-sex public entertainment venues.[12] Victorian models of female chastity and husbandly dominion shifted to incorporate mutually erotic sexual desire as an acceptable, even healthy, equalizing force in successful male-female companionships.[13] With these changes, the concept of romantic love bloomed in women's magazines and popular literature. But romance was far from a politically neutral subject. As this chapter will demonstrate, the period's fascination with love and romance was rooted deeply in the influential tenets of eugenics and sexology. In this chapter I argue that romance was about love, but its public proliferation in popular culture was equally about bolstering white nationalism.

While eugenics and sexology have previously been studied as disparate topics, scholars have shown in recent scholarship how the two shared methodologies and doctrines;[14] while sexology sought to study human sexuality in scientific, medical terms, eugenics, was about controlled breeding and the genetic strengthening of future generations. Eugenics therefore required a careful policing of sex, both in encouraging healthy white couples to reproduce, and in halting the proliferation of "polluted" blood lines. With the nation's changing demographics—mass immigration, African American migration from the South, and imperial conquests abroad—early-century minds were formulating new ideas of what it meant to be a "normal" or authentic American (and where they themselves fit within that hierarchy). Eugenics and sexology attempted to calculate, measure, and quantify America's exceptional and deviant bodies alike to define a national scientific norm or average. However, dominant narratives of physiological "normativity" were embedded in white, heterosexual, middle-class identity

[12] For more information on the flapper woman and changing sexual mores in the 1920s, see Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*; Paula S. Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).
[13] Julian Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America*, 1880-1940 (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 6.
[14] Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000)

politics. Whiteness, as an increasingly invisible standard, became encoded in the clinical language of health, sexual fitness, and mental fortitude. In kind, sexual deviancy—be it sodomy, gender inversion, prostitution, or hypersexuality—was patterned as a reciprocal effect of non-white raciality or politically degenerating influences.

As will be shown in the following sections, romance provided a solution whereby mind and body converged in partner choice and thoughtful reproduction. Romance included the ability to feel and emote deeply as a proper measured, physiological response to sexual stimuli. However, it maintained a social order by overcoming instinctive sexual urges in favor of premeditated, controlled, and responsible breeding within the confines of heterosexual marriage. Marriage was therefore centered as essential to the health of the white race while simultaneously being conflated with the health of the nation at large.

Whereas the marriage contract had historically been about protecting property, eugenical marriage imbued whiteness with property value by preaching its high yields and relative fragility.[15] As Francis Galton wrote in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1905, modern marriage needed to confront its past captivation with family property and material descent, for "Eugenics deal with what is more valuable than money or lands, namely, the heritage of a high character, capable brains, fine physique, and vigor; in short, with all that is most desirable for a family to possess as a birthright. It aims at the evolution and preservation of high races of men…"[16] This promise was particularly enticing to poor whites and immigrants, whose economic disenfranchisement was somewhat ameliorated by shifting notions of whiteness—a

[15] Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (June 1993): 1709-1791.
[16] Francis Galton, "Studies in Eugenics," *American Journal of Sociology* 11, no. 1 (1905): 11-25, 14

valuable social status—which acted as symbolically powerful compensation to those exploited by American capitalism.[17]

As W. E. B. Du Bois wrote about the early twentieth century, white laborers, "while they received a low wage, were compensated in part by a sort of public and psychological wage." The courts, school systems, elected officials, and newspapers favored white laborers, developing a long-standing system of privilege, while further libeling and marginalizing black and global-majority laborers. What resulted was a vertical capitalist system whereby whites related not to their fellow exploited workers of color (as class equals), but to their exploiters, the elites, in the aspirational hope of *becoming* them. In this context, eugenics offered a rich lineage, a mythological past, and a glorious future by simply maintaining the racial status quo. White supremacy was promoted by Galton and other white intellectuals, and provided "fodder for newspaper discussions, speeches, scientific analysis, novels, sermons, songs, and blackface minstrel shows in which white superiority was phrased as if whiteness in and of itself was naturally a benefit, despite its lack of material advantage."[18]

But one of the most powerful venues of this proliferation of whiteness, was its dissemination through the discourse of love and romance as concepts prominently threaded throughout medical science and popular culture alike. As gender scholar Siobhan Somerville notes, "cultural processes of racialization were inextricably bound to questions of sexual identity … [and were] refracted through each other in literary, scientific, and visual representation" of the time period.[19] Magazines and pamphlets, for instance, introduced the fad of marital eugenics certificates. Collectable postcards celebrated couples' "perfect Physical and Mental Balance and

[17] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: The Free Press, [1935] 1992), 700.
[18] Pem Davidson Buck, "Constructing Race, Creating White Privilege," in *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg, 31-37 (Worth Publishers, New York: 2004), 34.
[19] Somerville, *Queering the Color Line*, 5.

unusually strong Eugenic Love possibilities well fitted to promote the happiness and future welfare of the race." (*see figure 2*). In popular newspaper cartoons, a woman is seen spurning a marriage proposal because her beau does not have a eugenics certificate (*see figure 3*). The long-nosed, balding, limp-wristed man looks on, distressed. But the woman stands proud and confident in her choice, a female steward against degenerating influences.

Figure 2: A collectible eugenics postcard Eugenic Certificate from the Robert Bogdan Collection at the Disability Museum. 1924. Retrieved from https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=2925

Figure 3: A cartoon from the Robert Bogdan Collection at the Disability Museum. 1917. Retrieved from https://www.disabilitymuseum.org/dhm/lib/detail.html?id=2925

Taken from popular sources, these two images represented a rising trend beginning in the 1910s wherein eugenicists and eugenically oriented psychologists in the twentieth century became commonly involved in "marriage counseling, replete with advice about proper mating practices" often at the forefront of "encouraging adherence to strict gender roles in which [white] women's principal roles were viewed as that of breeders and mothers."[20] Scholars situate this transition solidly in the 1930s and 1940s, as eugenics movements transitioned from "preventing procreation of the unfit to promoting the marital and family stability of the white middle class."[21]

[20] Alexandra Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 20. Stern writes that some dating services today still use the insights from eugenicist "experts" on marriage: "More recently, some on-line dating services, which seemingly are driven by individual choice and self-presentation, have incorporated kinds of psychometric instruments to assess personality and compatibility developed by eugenicist early in the 20th century."
[21] Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2001).

My research demonstrates, however, that this transition began much earlier as seen in immigration discourse and the construction of the American bride.

This phenomenon is seen throughout popular culture sources from 1900-1930 like *Vaught's Practical Character Reader*, for example, a classic physiognomy publication out of Chicago. Physiognomy and phrenology pamphlets and pocket books were wildly popular at the turn of the century. Vaught's famous example provided diagrams on everything from honest eyes to antagonistic noses for the "higher purpose" of helping expose the ills of society seen so prominently upon the bodies of "millions of men, women, and children."[22]

In one illustrative section, Vaught advertises to his female audience diagrams of men's head shapes that evince either a "genuine" or "unreliable" husband. According to Vaught, the genuine husband's rounded head shape guaranteed a man would be "natural, kind, and true." Guaranteed by this beautiful head shape was the genuine husband's shining characteristic: prejudice, or the element that according to Vaught gave "one a strong feel for something or somebody and against the opposite."[23] Here Vaught is playing on a classic trope of late-nineteenth century evolutionary science, particularly in what Kyla Schuller writes was Edward Drinker Cope's "notion of 'right feeling,' in which he locates the 'source' of supremacy of U.S. civilization in its ability to…restrain primitive impulses" and "guide the growth of the most advanced" life forms.[24] The conjugal nature of the husband figure speaks to the importance of prejudice in marriage, both in partner choice and sexual restraint. In turn, Vaught relies heavily on eugenicist beliefs in white sentiment as the evolutionary apex of whiteness—the ability to feel intrinsic mental as well as actual corporeal sensations in the face of degenerating influences.

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[22] L. A. Vaught, *Vaught's Practical Character Reader* (Chicago: L. A. Vaught Publisher, 1902), 77.
[23] Vaught, *Vaught's Practical Character Reader*, 28.
[24]Kyla Schuller, "Taxonomies of Feeling: The Epistemology of Sentimentalism in Late-Nineteenth-Century Racial and Sexual Science." *American Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2012): 277-299, 277.

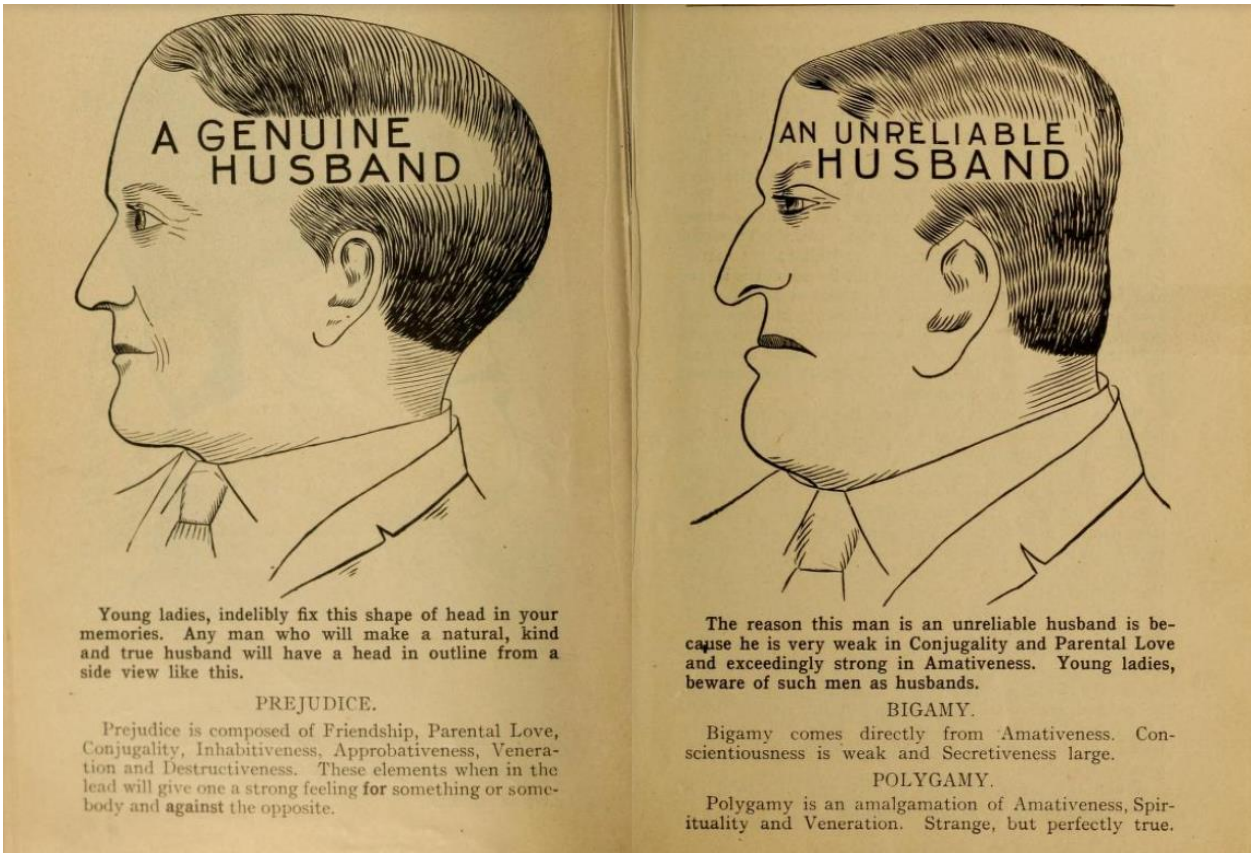

Figure 4: Vaught's formulation of "A Genuine Husband" versus "An Unreliable Husband" which connects marital compatibility to biological expression.

The unreliable husband, on the other hand, lacked "Conjugality and Parental Love;" was "exceedingly strong in Amativeness;" and was particularly prone towards bigamy and polygamy. Though Vaught's text is without mention of race, his formulations convey powerful racial messages. Vaught's depiction of the unreliable husband depends heavily on stereotypical ethnic features of the day including the "long-headed" Mediterranean characteristics of the Southern Italian, the "flattening of the back of the head [that] is noticeable at once in most Armenians, or the "truly Semitic… Jewish nose" later described in the government-sanctioned Dictionary of

Races or Peoples.[25] The points of what Vaught deems the "deceitful ear" conjure nineteenth century racialized depictions of horned [Mormon] Latter-day Saints and, given the context of Mormon polygamy in the nineteenth century, further explain his polyamorous sexual proclivities.[26] Further, Vaught evokes anti-Asian racist tropes in the depiction of the unreliable husband's oblique "deceitful eyes," which the author describes as heavy-lidded, and "not very open."[27]

Vaught's calculation of the relative reliability of husbands everywhere was based on his formula for determining true love. To Vaught, love was a careful balance of friendship and conjugality and included space for erotic love in the facet of amativeness. But most significantly, through the science of physiognomy, love was a biological concept, visible not only in one's behavior, but predetermined in an individual's genetic expression. When an individual lacked "tender, open and sparkling eyes," for example, "passional or amatory love [was] in the lead" and would burn out fast.[28] The same went for full, coarse lips, and skull shapes which were "larger and fuller [in back] than the upper part"—all racialized tropes of "evolutionarily primitive peoples" depicted as having diminished intellectual capacities.

Yet—significantly—Vaught never mentions race or whiteness itself. As cultural historian Julian Carter writes, former ideas of "civilization"—whiteness's core racial value in the nineteenth century—were "redefined in terms of *love*... 'Normality' thus provided a common and deeply sexualized vocabulary through which an increasingly diverse group of whites could

[25] *Dictionary of Races or Peoples*, Immigration Commission, 61st Congress, U.S. Senate (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1913), 82, 16, 74.
[26] Edje Jeter, "Graphical Images of Horned Mormons," *Juvenile Instructor*, November 10, 2013, https://juvenileinstructor.org/graphical-images-of-horned-mormons/; see also W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).
[27] Vaught, *Vaught's Practical Character Reader*, 30.
[28] Vaught, *Vaught's Practical Character Reader*, 30

articulate their common racial and political values to one another."[29] And they could do so, as the unreliable husband demonstrates, without explicit reference to race at all; it was not always necessary to overtly announce the subject for race to be prominent and understood significantly by audiences. In Carter's words, "vague references to heredity and cultural development across generations…[forged] an ostensibly natural, objective, and politically innocent connection between whiteness, reproductive marital heterosexuality, and modern American civilization."[30]

Historian Robert G. Lee further illumines this point by discussing the importance of marriage and family to constructions of U.S. nationalism. He notes the family has long served as the "primary metaphor of the nation" and "a symbol of nationhood structures nationality as fictive kinship, a common ancestry…. The fiction of common ancestry (both biological and cultural) has been made central to the construction of both race and nation."[31] This connection helps to explain in part why discussions on picture marriage focused so intensely on romantic love and normative sexuality as the formation of family signaled political messages about fitness for citizenship itself. Romantic love within this discourse became synonymous with patriotism and love of one's country. Extended further, a model of healthy marriage served to demonstrate a microcosm of democracy.

Marriage historian Nancy Cott writes that early century minds constructed arranged marriage and American love matches to be at odds with one another, a clash "between the Old World and the New, between outdated tradition and modernity…tyranny and freedom." In this manner, Cott finds that when "officials and inspectors at ports dealt with picture brides, they

[29] Carter, *Heart of Whiteness*, 6. Italics mine.
[30] Carter, *Heart of Whiteness*, 15.
[31] Robert Lee, *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1999), 7; *See also* Yu-Fang Cho, *Uncoupling American Empire: Cultural Politics of Deviance and Unequal Difference, 1890-1910* (New York: State University of New York, 2013).

were defending their understanding of marriage as a bargain based on consent."[32] However, this argument needs an important distinction: in defending their notions of love and marriage, American officials were actually strategically defending their understanding of whiteness as a privilege dependent on exclusion. In the midst of Yellow Peril politics, nativists appropriated the concept of "picture brides" to rile fears of immigrant fecundity and racial danger.[33] In its association with Japanese women, "picture bride" was a racialized concept that acted as a code word for foreign difference, an aberrance of American democratic principles and white middle-class morality.[34] The following section will demonstrate how these ideas on race, sexuality, and American identity were widely communicated in popular culture—not just in picture marriage discourse—through a serial in a prominent women's magazine, *Harper's Bazaar*. The story features an iconic representation of the "American girl" turned "American bride" and demonstrates the construction of white, patriotic femininity that was often retooled in picture marriage discourse.

"The American Ambassador": Representations of White American Femininity

Amongst unprecedented waves of migration to the United States, the 1907 Expatriation Act was passed, stripping U.S.-born women of their citizenship if they married non-citizen partners. Despite the growth of women's activism by the turn of the century, the 1907 act both

[32] Cott *Public Vows*, 151.
[33] Yuji Ichioka, "*Amerika Nadeshiko:* Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States 1900-1924," *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 339-357.
[34] For more information on modernization and notions of romantic love in early twentieth century Japan, see Kei Tanaka, "Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 1, no. 15 (2004): 115-138, 118; for an overview of the eugenics movement in Japan, *see* Jennifer Robertson, "Blood Talks: Eugenic Modernity and the Creation of New Japanese." *History and Anthropology* 13, no. 2 (2002): 1919-216; Sumiko Otsubo, "Between Two Worlds: Yamanouchi Shigeo and Eugenics in Early Twentieth Century Japan." *Annals of Science* 62, no. 2 (2005): 205-231.

symbolically and literally connected women's "primary political allegiance to her husband rather than to her nation."[35] Marriage historian Nancy Cott writes that by "punishing American women who introduced foreign elements into the body politic, the act was akin to state laws that criminalized or nullified marriages between whites and people of color."[36] The act therefore revealed legislators' fears of miscegenation and legally codified marriage as an essential conduit for women's relationship to the State.[37] Marriage in this sense could be interpreted as a performance of patriotic duty, or as a treacherous act of impropriety. The Cable Act of 1922 would reverse the expatriation of most married women, but the cultural impact of the 1907 legislation would reverberate for decades.

The fascination with marrying foreign nationals quickly made its way into popular culture. For the next decade and a half, newspapers consistently reported on "American girls" marrying, courting, or proposed to by foreign men, most popularly European titled nobility or destitute royalty looking to marry into wealth.[38] The salacious intrigue of these headlines inspired countless works of fiction, including the silent film, "The Dark Silence," starring Clara Kimball as "a pretty young American girl" studying abroad in Paris who must thwart the advances of the swarthy Dr. Mario Martinez, a Spaniard intent on tricking Mildred into marrying

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[35] Nancy F. Cott, "Marriage and Women's Citizenship in the United States, 1830-1934." *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 5 (December 1998): 1440-1474, 1462.
[36] Cott, "Marriage and Women's Citizenship," 1461.
[37] Candice Lewis Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
[38]Archival examples include, but are certainly not limited to, the following: "American Girl to Wed Marquis," *The Times-Dispatch*, September 23, 1906; "American Girls with Millions Stamp Approval on International Marriages," *The Richmond Palladium and Sun-Telegram*, June 28, 1908; "Gladys Becomes Bride of the Count," *The Detroit Times,* January 27, 1908; "Why Rich Miss Drexel Prefers a Continental Marriage," *The Omaha Sunday Bee Magazine Page*, October 6, 1912; "American Bride will be Honored by King and Queen," *The Day Book,* July 7, 1915; "Girl Who Charmed Russian Duke Makes An American Conquest," *Day Book*, January 16, 1915; "Rich American Girl to Wed Italian Prince," *The Day Book*, October 21, 1916; "Another Royal Price Makes Eyes at an American Girl," *Watertown Weekly Leader,* September 12, 1919; "Lovely American Bride to Brave the Russian Bolsheviki," *Evening Capital News*, May 11, 1919; "An American Girl's Two Remarkable War Romances," *Washington Times*, May 18, 1919; "Which Yankee Heiress Will King Boris Choose?" *The Ogden Standard-Examiner,* October 1, 1922.

him.[39] In literary fiction, serials such as "Lord Loveland Discovers America" wrote about English nobility "going over the list of marriageable American girls with his mother and starting out to discover that strange country, America."[40] These story lines of marriage and romance took on new meanings amidst the intense fusion of patriotism into U.S. cultural texts at the start of World War I.[41]

In 1917, the prominent women's magazine *Harper's Bazaar* ran a six-month-long serial "The American Ambassador," featured from January to June of that year. The story follows the fictional account of Senator John T. Colborne of Colorado, the newly appointed U.S. ambassador to an unnamed French-speaking constitutional monarchy in Europe. Relocating with him to the embassy is his beautiful young wife, Mrs. Jenny Colborne; his adult daughter, Kate; and a handful of advisors, secretaries, and personal assistants.[42] Though published in the midst of America's entry into WWI, the story is absent of war or bloodshed; published in a woman's magazine, the story instead distils patriotic narratives of American supremacy into a tale of romance and intrigue. In doing so, the story reveals much about the gendered, racial politics of early twentieth century nationalism by centering the themes of romantic love and marriage as integral to the family's literal and symbolic duty to represent America and American values.

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[39] "News of the Photoplays: 'The Dark Silence,'" *The Donaldsonville Chief*, November 18, 1916.
[40] "Watch For It: 'Lord Loveland Discovers America,'" *The Harlowton News*, October 7, 1910.
[41] Kathleen Kennedy, *Disloyal Mothers and Scurrilous Citizens: Women and Subversion During World War I.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999.
[42] Ambassadors' daughters seemed to be a prominent thread of gossip in newspapers in the 1910s. Two examples among several I found focused on Lucy Bigelow Dodge, granddaughter of a former American ambassador to France who ran away from her family while living in abroad in London (*See* "Tired of High Society, American Girl Leaves Home in Search of Work," *The Day Book*, October 4, 1913). Similarly, newspapers prominently reported on Katherine Page's engagement and marriage to a Boston man while living abroad. Katherine was the daughter of the American ambassador, Walter H. Page, and newspapers excitedly reported how King George and Queen Mary attended the nuptials. It seems therefore, the character "Kate" in *The Ambassador* is a thinly veiled fictional account of the real-life Katherine Page, who chose an American husband even amidst the bachelor nobility of Europe vied for her attention. For an example, *see* "American Bride Will Be Honored by King and Queen," *The Day Book*, July 7, 1915.

Loosely based on the real-life romance and time abroad of ambassador's daughter Katherine Page, the serial is written in epistolary form via journal entries from the Ambassador's private secretary, a young male New Yorker whose name is never given.[43] Defined by his values of hard work, loyalty, and proclivity to moral ponderings, the secretary is a symbolic everyman. He is at the beginning of his career and as inexperienced in politics as he is in the social habits of romance, gossip, and intrigue. From the beginning, representation evolves as a main theme of the story. It is not only that an ambassador is the literal representative of their country, but the secretary muses extensively on the ways in which John Colborne is the "representative American type…[who] embodies the spirit, the standards, the view-point and the education of the greater number." The secretary writes that his boss has a "a virility, a freshness of interest, and a capacity for accomplishing things which are usually cited as [Americans'] predominating characteristics." The secretary admires Colborne deeply and works diligently to emulate him.[44]

Colborne is a well-respected and well-to-do businessman, but an inexperienced politician who relies on an inner sense of moral decency to guide his political praxis. Whether in his handlebar mustache, transparent way of speaking, or down-to-earth kindness, he embodies the rugged masculinity of a Teddy Roosevelt-esque leader.[45] Though his wife and advisors try to tutor him in the arts of European manners and diplomacy, his stubborn adherence to egalitarian individualism always wins. As the secretary writes, he has "that innate dislike of intrigue and circuitous methods, characteristic of us all [Americans], which the foreigner never understands. I suppose we have lived so long in a country whose government, institutions and industrial life are

[43] See previous note for background on Katherine Page.
[44] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, February 1917, 2.
[45] For an assessment of masculinity and the figure of Theodore Roosevelt, *see* Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

so consistently exposed to the public that we have no patience with anything that is not above-board."[46]

Accordingly, Kate is described as the "young female edition of her father" in both appearance, patriotic zeal, and according to those to whom she is closest, the "same dislike of foreigners."[47] She is everything the "American girl" ought to be: "thoroughly Anglo-Saxon in type, with all the freshness and fragrance that term signifies," with grey-blue eyes, a "clear, fresh complexion, [and] heaps of gleaming blonde hair."[48] Scholars have documented the fetishization of blonde hair in the early twentieth century. Early sociologists such as Edward Alsworth Ross, Lothrop Stoddard, and Madison Grant, for example, classified blondeness as characteristic of "the true American" stock.[49] Further, the description of Kate's features is reminiscent of journalist Alan Riding's findings that for writers, artists, and photographers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, "blondness represented innocence, above all in children. But artistic images of long blonde hair were also charged with hidden eroticism, with the danger of seduction never far away."[50] Thus, in the description of Kate's beauty, the main character achieves the formula for a perfect romantic protagonist (by eugenical standards). Her fair features signify her Anglo racial purity and girlish innocence; yet her alluring beauty simultaneously hints at a womanly sexuality that will soon test her resolve to choose the proper husband, serve her country, and act the part of an honorable representative.

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[46] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, February 1917, 3.
[47] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, February 1917, 4.
[48] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, January 1917, 45.
[49] Joseph W. Bendersky, "The Disappearance of Blonds: Immigration, Race, and the Reemergence of 'Thinking White.'" *Telos* 1995, no. 104 (June 1995): 135-157.
[50] Alan Riding, "Blond Power: Its Siren Call." *The New York Times,* March 8, 2003, https://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/08/books/blond-power-its-siren-call.html

Mrs. Colborne, on the other hand, is "extraordinarily good-looking," but her looks betray the fact that she has little under the surface to complement this "striking physical quality."[51] She is the Ambassador's second wife, and their marital relationship is tainted by Mrs. Colborne's frivolous obsession with clothes, money, and the aristocratic social milieu into which she enters. She uses her demure sexuality to further her husband's career and America's reputation. She flaunts her beauty, making many friends and winning over many allies in the process.

Surrounded by European culture and people, Mrs. Colborne and Kate are set as dichotomous versions of American womanhood. Mrs. Colborne relies on her looks and sexuality to navigate the social world around her, including her relationship to her husband. She is set up at the beginning of the story as flighty and overly concerned with the opinions and customs of the gossipy aristocratic women she eagerly befriends. Kate, on the other hand, is far more stalwart. She is not swayed by European riches or elitism. She displays an egalitarian disregard of social hierarchy and is as warm and kind to the household servants as she is to the country's royals.

In contrast to Mrs. Colborne's sensuality, Kate displays an air of innocence and purity demonstrated in her humble naivety regarding the many men who fall in love with her. She is an exceptional example of young American womanhood; Anglo Saxon, dutiful, patriotic, beautiful, and sexually pure. She is patterned as an American archetype; her accent does not "suggest any special section of the United States," but is "charmingly modulated with a crisp pronunciation of words that is distinguished." As the narrator recounts an earlier meeting with her, he notes her special refinement, recounting that "her carriage and appearance are immensely high-bred; indeed she shows at once gentle breeding." [52]

[51] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, January 1917, 45.
[52] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, January 1917, 7.

This idea of breeding takes on a particularly nuanced role in the story, both in the sense of biological reproduction and the need to curate the self. This theme would be a familiar one to audiences, as five years before the story's serialization, the popularity of Edgar Rice Buroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes* familiarized audiences with eugenical ideas of nature versus nurture.[53] Significantly, the novel's first movie adaptation reached theatres the same year *The American Ambassador* ran in *Harper's Bazaar.* In the Tarzan story, the offspring of British nobility raised by apes establishes himself amongst the jungle animals (and in violent contestation with the black natives who inhabit the region) as superior in physical form and intellect. Finding a primer and books in his parents' abandoned cabin, he teaches himself to read and speak. This cultivation of self-mastery eventually allows him to adapt quickly to the European explorers who come and find him. He falls in love with Jane and reclaims his title as Lord Greystroke.

Breeding in both of these stories has two facets. The narrator's words in *The American Ambassador*—particularly his use of the word "breeding"—reveal the multiple layers on which the story is working. With his emphasis on Kate's fair and lovely features, the narrator implies a dual meaning. Not only is she eugenically pure and well-bred in terms of the good, hearty stock from which she springs, but she has the learned qualities of temperament and decorum that only those dedicated to its craft can summon. Thus, to be well-bred, is both an issue of nature and nurture; as the narrator writes in the attempt to define his term, "I have often known people with atrocious manners who were unmistakably well-bred. Someone has said [breeding] is an attitude. Perhaps so."[54]

[53] See J. David Smith, "Disney's *Tarzan*, Edgar Rice Burroughs' Eugenics, and Visions of Utopian Perfection." *Mental Retardation* 39, no. 3 (2001): 221-225.
[54] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, January 1917, 7.

It is revealed that quality of breeding exists along a spectrum as the story repeatedly touches upon themes of family, loyalty, nationalism, and ethics. While Kate represents the eugenical ideal, Mrs. Colborne, for instance, represents the finest of biological reproduction, but very little cultivation of self beyond her beauty. When the time comes that Kate falls in love, she chooses an equally good-natured man, the Ambassador's personal secretary (and the story's narrator). Their love is humble but exceptional in its foundation of mutuality, respect, and tempered sexuality. The couple represents the perfect eugenical love match. Yet this love is soon complicated by a series of events that test the characters' better natures.

A highly confidential government telegram to the Ambassador is lost and threatens the success of a diplomatic negotiation soon to be ratified in parliament—one of high economic interest to the United States. The telegram is intercepted by the devious Comte de Stanlau, the leader of the Socialist party staunchly against American intervention. Stanlau is a young man from old money, though the family's fortune had dwindled from years of neglect and overindulgence. He is "handsome...tall and gracefully proportioned," but as empty and graceless on the inside as the magnificent crumbling castles of his family's estate. A socialist child of the aristocracy (a seemingly contradictory position?) and "dark, rather Latin in character," the Comte acts as a foil to the Colbornes' American virtues. With the Ambassador's future in his hands, Stanlau makes him a proposition. He will destroy the telegram and ensure the Ambassador's deal makes it through parliament, on the condition that Kate agrees to become his wife.

The Ambassador instantly scoffs at the offer. Though he speaks in terms of American "values," the Ambassador's message is clear. While the Comte's breeding may have included "cultivation [and] refinement,"[55] his racialized foreignness belies his inability to assimilate

[55] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, March 1917, 3.

culturally or biologically. He is technically of a noble bloodline, but much like the state of the family's troubled finances, the de Stanlau line had since come to ruin. The stark contrast between the young Anglo-Saxon beauty and the swarthy Comte on the brink of poverty causes the Anglo father to feel a physical repulsion; his fears conjure the specter of interracial sex.

The Ambassador protests Stanlau's offer, proclaiming Kate would "no more think of marrying anyone but an American than she'd think of jumping in the fire."[56] The Comte tries to entice him with offers of castles, prestige, and titles, but the Ambassador refuses him on the basis of love. Rather than attacking Stanlau personally—a man he has openly admitted to disliking—he constructs the issue to be a much larger one, specifically an irreconcilable difference in their cultural and biological notions of romance and family life. The Ambassador cuttingly criticizes European notions of love and pridefully attests to the superiority of American models. To him, European marriage lacked the egalitarian qualities of American romance. Aristocratic marriage in particular—often arranged to consolidate wealth and power—was even more antithetical to democratic American values. European men were abusive, lorded over their wives, and took lovers on the side. Though his argument lies in American women's agency and ability to choose, he nevertheless speaks on behalf of his daughter, refusing the marriage match. In turn, Stanlau's nefarious defense of European love only provides fuel for the Ambassador's fire: "...the European wife is happier and more of a homemaker than the American….it is because we demand certain things of her. Give a woman too much freedom, either of thought or action, and she is ruined. Her happiness depends upon her subordination. The normal woman wants her husband to be her master." According to the Ambassador, the "right sort of American girl"

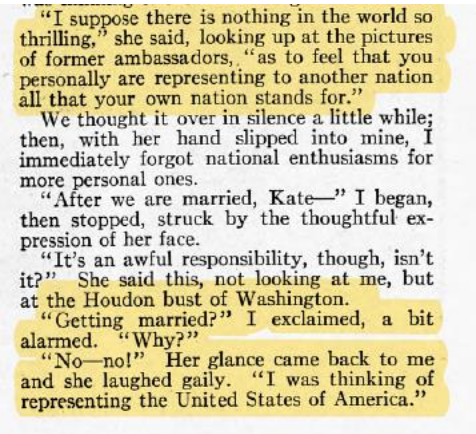
[56] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, April 1917, 97.

would never stand for this abuse; all the American girl wants is "good—honest—faithful love!" [57]

Meanwhile, Kate, who is as stubborn as her father and knows about the missing telegram and the danger it poses to her father's reputation and the security of her homeland, agrees to marry Stanlau and breaks off her relationship with the American secretary. Acting the noble martyr, Kate insists she is marrying the Comte out of love. In agreeing to marry him, she is sacrificing her life for her country and to protect the people she holds dear. Previous to the scandal, Kate was vocal about never marrying a foreigner and swore she would never give up her nationality. Given the well-known policies of the 1907 Expatriation Act, Kate was making the ultimate sacrifice.

As in all good romances, the narrator saves Kate by exposing Stanlau's treachery, saving the Ambassador, and allowing Kate to break off the engagement and confess she still loves him. Lest the storyline not fully show the development of romantic love tied to nationalism and ideas of patriotism and civic duty, its particularly didactic saccharine ending leaves the reader no doubt. As the narrator and Kate stand in the hall of former ambassadors, Kate ruminates on the great responsibility of properly representing one's country. I present the final lines of the serial in its entirety to preserve the full effect of its message.

[57] "The Ambassador," *Harper's Bazaar*, April 1917, 97.



"I suppose there is nothing in the world so thrilling," she said, looking up at the pictures of former ambassadors, "as to feel that you personally are representing to another nation all that your own nation stands for."

We thought it over in silence a little while; then, with her hand slipped into mine, I immediately forgot national enthusiasms for more personal ones.

"After we are married, Kate—" I began, then stopped, struck by the thoughtful expression of her face.

"It's an awful responsibility, though, isn't it?" She said this, not looking at me, but at the Houdon bust of Washington.

"Getting married?" I exclaimed, a bit alarmed. "Why?"

"No—no!" Her glance came back to me and she laughed gaily. "I was thinking of representing the United States of America."

The whimsical misunderstanding between the two lovers symbolizes the blurry line between marriage and service to one's country. Kate, as the embodiment of the "American girl," grows in love, maturity, and patriotic duty, ultimately transitioning into the idealized "American bride." However, this chapter is not only interested in depictions of the ideal—American girls like Kate living up to their eugenical legacies—but also in storylines that act as didactic warnings of what happens when an individual deviates from that path.

Cautionary Tales of Taboo Relationships

As discussed in previous sections, the "American girl" emerged during a time of major changes to American marriage; miscegenation and immigration laws reflected legislators' anxieties of white women marrying non-white or foreign men.[58] For instance, the 1907 Expatriation Act was overturned by the Cable Act of 1922 which restored citizenship to U.S.-born women married to foreign nationals. However, the Cable Act's reinstatement of citizenship did not extend to women married to aliens ineligible for citizenship. Thus, it did not apply to women married to Asian immigrant men. Citizen women—regardless of race—continued to lose

[58] *See* Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (2010).

citizenship status if married to Asian immigrant men until 1931, when legislation ended marital expatriations for all women.[59]

Given this context—where the lines of race, gender, sexuality, and citizenship merge—this chapter looks now to popular "cautionary tales" featuring white women in interracial relationships with non-white, specifically Asian American, men.[60] Historian Henry Yu writes that in the early twentieth century, as Japanese migration numbers rose, there was a "peculiar fascination with sex between 'Orientals' and 'whites,' particularly between 'Oriental' men and 'white' women, which was disproportionate to the small number of publicly reported cases."[61] Nevertheless, they became a source of focused inquiry for social scientists in the 1910s and 1920s. Yu's article focusing on the scholarly interest in interracial sex during this time demonstrates how social scientists formulated their studies on the presumption that individual cases of interracial marriage could speak to greater "truths" on race relations in general, particularly in the ways that "Orientals" at large differed (or not) from "whites" both biologically and philosophically.[62]

Branching from Yu's focus on the academy, I shift attention to popular culture representations and understandings of Asian-white interracial marriages in newspapers during

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[59] For a legal history on the 1907 Expatriation Act and its effect on Asian Americans, *see* Leti Volpp, "Divesting Citizenship: On Asian American History and the Loss of Citizenship Through Marriage." *UCLA Law Review* 53, no. 405 (2005): 405-483, 409.

[60] See essays in Maria P. P. Root, ed., *Racially Mixed People in America* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992); Paul R. Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Colleen Fong and Judy Yung, "In Search of the Right Spouse: Interracial Marriage among Chinese and Japanese Americans," *Amerasia Journal* 21 (1995-96): 77-98.

[61] Henry Yu, "Mixing Bodies and Cultures: The Meaning of America's Fascination with Sex between 'Orientals' and 'Whites,'" in *Sex, Love, Race: Crossing Boundaries in North American History*, Martha Hodes, ed. (New York: New York University, 1999): 444-463, 445.

[62] See Yu, "Mixing Bodies and Cultures," note 5, for an explanation of his use of the term "Oriental." Yu's usage follows the theoretical application of the term in Robert G. Lee's foundational text, *Orientals*. Lee uses the term as a theoretical concept to signify the ways "Asians have been cast as an economic, social, and sexual threat to the American national family throughout their history in the United States" (8). As Yu writes, the application of the term in theoretical frameworks does not "condone its use as a name or marker," but is useful in analysis "because it reflects a specific historical usage and category" (n.5, 459-460).

the first three decades of the twentieth century. In the process of warning women of the dangers of interracial sex, I argue these stories taught their readers the tenets of sexual normativity, white dominance, and civic duty. While some stories featured women like Emma Fong,[63] Caroline Takamine,[64] or Louise Tanaka,[65] who all advocated for interracial marriage by writing op-eds on their happy relationships and "perfect husbands," more often than not, journalists consistently only covered stories of relationships with salacious endings. These didactic stories feature "white" women whose lives are ruined by their relationships with Japanese husbands. Almost without exception, these stories end in one of four ways: divorce, suicide, arrest, insanity, or a combination thereof. Commenting on journalists' tactics, Louise Tanaka wrote in 1921, "[Japanese men] will always be the one to receive community blame if disaster befalls the venture [relationship]." Pointing out in an interview in *The Seattle Star* (*see figure 5*), Louise incisively noted that even though divorce was becoming increasingly more common amongst all couples, "arousing" headlines "justified" journalists' existence "at the expense of intermarriage and its catastrophes." According to Louise, "Permanent and happy inter-racial unions are never chronicled."[66]

[63] For more on Emma Fong, see introduction of Yu's "Mixing Bodies and Culture."
[64] For archival instances, refer to the following piece that was circulated in newspapers around the country: "Japanese Husbands Are the Best in the World," *The Age-Herald*, April 25, 1909.
[65] Louise Gebhard Cann (Mrs. Yasushi Tanaka), "Seattle Woman, Wife of Japanese Artist, Champions Intermarriage," *The Seattle Star*, August 29, 1919.
[66] Ibid.

Section Two

The Seattle Star

Pages 13 to 24

SEATTLE, WASH., FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 1919.

SEATTLE WOMAN, WIFE OF JAPANESE ARTIST, CHAMPIONS INTERMARRIAGE

"To the Right Woman, Japanese Is a Perfect Husband, Homemaker"

BY LOUISE GEBHARD CANN
(Mrs. Yasushi Tanaka)

The editor of The Star asks me to give my opinion on intermarriage between Americans and Japanese. The sentiment among the anti-Japanese faction of the community seems to be that on this issue depends the possibility of assimilation.

Judging by my own experience, I should say that intermarriage, given the essential conditions of happy conjugal life, may work out successfully. Indeed, I believe that the Japanese may be assimilated—would be, in fact, were we a less isolated and racially prejudiced community. To my mind, there is no greater obstacle to the assimilation of the Japanese by means of intermarriage than of the assimilation by the same means of the Russian, the Italian, the French, the Scandinavian, or the various nationalities of Jews.

The failure of intermarriage as we have witnessed it on the Pacific Coast, where one party to the contract is an American woman, is primarily due to the effect of hostile environment on the wife. The fact of the hostile environment also causes the more personal reason for the disaster of these unions; for there are, generally speaking, but two kinds of women who are able or willing to oppose public opinion by marrying out of their race.

The first kind I shall dismiss for the present, for its minority renders it almost negligible in the discussion—I refer to the superior woman of high education who regards individuals, not races, and who is incapable of race or color prejudice, as such—and I take up the usual case of the silly, weak-minded or degraded woman who marries a Japanese for foolishly romantic reasons, or for sordid reasons, or for the reason that she is ineligible in her own race. It

Mr. and Mrs. Yasushi Tanaka in Seattle Home

"We Have a Few Solid Friends; No Difficulty With Our Neighobrs"

assures me with utter geniality that he will earn more money, so I need not worry.

In fact, I never worry; for I am rendered most confident and secure by his attitude. I know that he will always take good care of me, that I am economical because I wish to be, not because he insists on it, and that he is willing to provide more of the material things of life if I want them, and is quite capable of doing so.

The basis of this reliability in him is loyalty. He comes of the old Samurai, or military, class that cultivated bushido or loyalty ethics. This sense of duty is ingrained in him as it is in many of his countrymen. With such a man, were his wife even false, he would remain true to his principle of responsibility for her welfare. I am convinced that this is likely because I know of actual cases among this class of Japanese where great hardship is endured, or even death, for sake of fidelity to principle. This ethics gives the Japanese power to resist and overcome adverse circumstance; it makes him an exceptional friend, and it endows him with that strength of devotion in fatherhood and family ties that enables the genuine home.

For, as we Americans recognize in our welfare propaganda, that home where the "head of the house" fails to do his loving and thoughtful part, is but half a home. Indeed, it is often much less; and its sorrows sometimes foster a species of rebellion really dangerous to established society. I speak from personal observation merely, so, of course, my following contention may not be just, which is that the American man has little talent for sharing the pleasures of the home with his family but that the Japanese man has a veritable gift for co-operating with his wife in making home the most desirable place on earth.

The Japanese are a characteristically mild people. Their very sensitive, high-spirited natures are always held in

Figure 5: Louise Tanaka's op-ed in a 1921 copy of The Seattle Star*, featuring a portrait of Louise and her artist husband Yasushi. In this piece, Tanaka protests the salacious headlines portraying interracial marriage while "permanent and happy inter-racial unions are never chronicled."*

The assumption of disastrous ends for interracial couples is echoed in the racist projections of authors writing about Japanese picture marriage, and thus, I purposely choose to analyze stories of "white" women married specifically to Japanese men as a way to deconstruct the racial formations of Japanese sexuality in picture marriage journalism. As one article asks, "What *American girl* would tolerate the bringing into her household of concubines, or face the possibility of her child being sold into slavery at the instance of the male parent. Yet such things happen."[67] And as for the reason why Japanese men needed to bring over wives from Japan, one author wrote, "No worthwhile *American girl* would accept him as a husband; and the chances are that he prefers one of his own race any way."[68]

[67] "Hawaii and the Japanese Question," *The Garden Island*, March 15, 1921.
[68] "Problem of the Picture Brides," *The Bridgeport Times*, March 18, 1920.

This question, "What kind of girl…" tracks with Yu's findings regarding social scientists' attempts to codify the motivations for interracial relationships. Yu writes that when Stanford sociologists developed questionnaires on race relations, they purposely included questions about interracial marriage to capitalize on the public's fascination and elicit donations for the project. It worked. The questionnaire was wildly popular and included the following questions,

> Of what height and coloring is the American woman married to an Oriental? Is it a type closely approximating that of the Oriental women? What kind of Oriental man does the American woman marry? Is he American in appearance? What seems to be the basis of the physical attraction? Are the American women who have married Orientals wholesome and conventional people? Do any of them belong to marked psychological types, the romantic, the neurotic, etc.?[69]

Reflecting the public's interest in the topic, this social science methodology can be seen in popular culture accounts of interracial marriage in journalists' descriptions of "American girls" and their immigrant husbands. Articles often detailed the phenotypic features of each partner—as to communicate racial cues—and gave details of the couples' education, economic background, accomplishments, and homelives—all seemingly providing evidence for readers to make their own opinions on the racial or psychological "types" involved. We see in these depictions the dual meaning of "breeding" discussed in "The Ambassador" storyline above. While these "white" women may be racially pure by eugenical standards, they are often the result of "bad breeding" because they do not culturally adhere to the rules of endogamous marriage.

[69] Yu, "Mixing Bodies and Culture," 452.

In 1910, for instance, reports circulated on the marriage in Omaha, Nebraska between Matsuzo Shofu,[70] a recent graduate from Stanford University, and Miss Dorothy Miller, "a pretty and well-connected white girl of Chicago."[71] The journalist's inclusion that she is pretty excludes the logic that perhaps she could find no other suitors. The two are reported to have met "at the home of her mother in Chicago where she was introduced to him by a Japanese servant." This seemingly matter-of-fact detail, however, is made significant when contextualized against what Glenna Matthews notes was the concurrent "servant problem" thematically prevalent in women's magazines at the turn of the century.[72] From 1870 to 1920, domestic labor had transitioned from domestic farm girls to female Irish immigrants, who were eventually replaced by Chinese and Japanese men. In this transition, didactic literature of the time unevenly warned readers to keep domestic laborers at arm's length. As historian Robert G. Lee writes, women were warned to "be careful not to allow [Oriental] servants to assume positions within the private realm of the family as surrogate family members" so as not to exert undue influence on their "innocent" white families.[73] In Dorothy's case, meeting her future husband in her parent's house signaled that her family had been too familiar with "the help" and that they had let their daughter be seduced by a Japanese man in their very home ("bad breeding"). The article ends with a quote from Dorothy claiming that she loves Matsuzo "as much as if his skin was pure white." With her mother

[70] In Japan, China, and Korea, an individual's first name follows their surname or family name. For consistency, I have maintained all names as they appear in my primary documents and archival materials.
I use names as they appear in the articles
[71] It is important to note that besides the couple's cultural differences, nothing is particularly unique or interesting about them. They are not wealthy, prominent, or particularly accomplished. It is clear they only made the news because they were an interracial couple.
[72] Glenna Matthews, *Just A Housewife: The Rise and Fall of Domesticity in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 92. For an evaluation of the "servant problem" regarding Asian American domestic workers, *see* Chapter 3 of Robert G. Lee's *Orientals*.
[73] Lee, *Orientals*, 98.

approving of the match, it is confirmed that parental negligence is to be credited for Dorothy's life choices.[74]

Articles often cite where and how the couple met as to map the point of initial racial contact. The tracing of initial contact is significant in eugenicist formulations of race and space, wherein eugenicists proposed the sensitivity of the white body could be physically or mentally affected (contaminated) by the mere presence of nonwhite people in shared spaces.[75] In 1919, *The Richmond Palladium* reported on the recent suicide of Ruby Stivers, a small-town girl seduced by Cleveland's bustling city. Ruby, "a pretty young girl, dark eyed and dainty," became transfixed one day by a gleaming shop front, with "fancies in the shaded windows…They aroused in her a strain of dark mysticism, never far below the surface." It was in this shop that Ruby met the "quiet olive skinned clerk" who would become her husband and fell in "love at first sight." Through Orientalized descriptions of the sensuous shop and its enticing "dark mysticism," the article attributes Ruby's downfall—her eventual suicide—to her entrance into nonwhite spaces and her high level of impressionability given her life as an ignorant country girl unable to guard against seductive forces. Eventually, "the strain of dark mysticism [rose] beyond her control." Ruby started hearing voices and imagining she was being followed. When she could take it no longer, "she shot herself at the door of the rooming house where she and her Japanese husband lived."[76]

"Insanity" or "madness" is a common trope in these depictions.[77] For instance, Ruby's reported condition—as she became paranoid and lonely towards the end of her life—was

[74] "Chicago Girl Weds Japanese," *Evening Bulletin,* July 26, 1910.
[75] Schuller, "Taxonomies of Feeling," 280.
[76] "Loneliness Overcame American Bride of Japanese Husband," *The Richmond Palladium and Sun-Telegram,* December 11, 1919.
[77] My interrogation of the portrayal of "insanity" in propagandistic literature on interracial sex follows disability studies theorists' conception of "madness." As Sander L. Gilman writes, "Madness has for centuries had legal and medical meanings, which today are more tangled and subject to political and ideological pressures than ever in light

referred to as an "odd mental twist." Insanity was treated as both a cause and effect of interracial marriage. Similar reports of women driven to the brink of suicide by their Japanese lovers told the story of a Denver woman, Pearl Nokayama, who swallowed poison in jail "because she would rather die than testify against her Japanese husband."[78] Pearl swallowed "two bichloride tablets secreted in her trunk" after being held for two months on white slavery charges. In a bizarre follow up piece for *The Alaska Citizen* a month later (the poison did not actually kill Pearl), reporter Mae Bradley relies on madness tropes to write about Pearl's imprisonment on charges of white slavery. Weeping and crying out in jail, rattling the bars of her cell, Pearl is described as a "Spanish girl riotous with primitive instinct and untamed blood of a languorous southern climate [who] has no control of emotions." Bradley writes that Pearl's "Oriental husband" abused her, driving her mad with his indifference. Pearl is quoted as supposedly saying,

> After five months we were married, and three days later he told me that I must make him money and so I sold my body for love of him, and I did it gladly and willingly. Oh, do you think he still loves me as I do him? I'm so afraid that his is tired of me. He tried just a week ago in Fort Lupton to divorce me…My love is like fire. It burns, it scorches me, and leaves me all a tremble with a great joy, half mixed with pain. Never for anyone else in the wide world would I go through the torments of scarlet sin through which I have gone, to hold the love of my Japanese husband.

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of the framing of madness as a type of disability. For now madness has to figure itself not only in relation to ideas about competency, moral ability, curability, and so forth but also in relation to questions of access, stigma, and advocacy" (114). *See* Sander L. Gilman, "Madness." In *Keywords for Disability Studies*, Rachel Adams, Benjamin Reiss, and David Serlin, eds., (New York: New York University Press, 2015): 114-119, 114.

[78] "Denver," *Day Book*, September 23, 1912.

Yoshiro Nokayama, held in the same jail as Pearl, is thus patterned as cold and calculating, and is portrayed as the impetus for Pearl's sexual impropriety and insanity—both in her decision to marry him and pursuing sex work thereafter. In declaring, "I would do anything for him," Pearl's depiction paints her as a woman so lovesick and desperate for affection, that she throws her entire life away.[79]

The emotional imbalance between the couple plays into white supremacist tropes of the emotionless or unfeeling Asian, and echoes throughout all the depictions of Asian-white marriages I found. These depictions rely on eugenicist assumptions of the superiority of white sentiment and feeling. As Kyla Schuller writes,

> Fiction writers and physiologists alike theorized 'sensibility' as the faculty of receiving impressions, or 'an organic sensitivity dependent on brain and nerves.' In this 'impression theory of sensation,' the more refined and delicate…the individual, the greater the organism's capacity for impressibility…Those of the higher classes, especially women, were thought to have highly responsive natures and a correlated delicacy... By contrast….'unimpressible, and little sensitive' constitutions characterized the capacious category of the 'primitive.[80]

Therefore, according to eugenical tenets, the ability to emote and feel deeply, including physical or emotional pain, was an inheritable quality of civilized races. This ability, or the lack thereof, was consequently a political stance indicating an individual's level of civilization and self-governance. In depictions of Japanese picture marriage, for instance, feeling and emotion—or lack thereof—provided a eugenics-based body of evidence for why picture marriage was racially

[79] Mae Bradley, "White Slave Pleads for Jap Gladly She Suffers Scarlet Sin," *The Alaska Citizen,* October 7, 1912.
[80] Schuller 281

deviant, or immoral. Newspapers and popular fiction reflected this trope as seen most vividly in descriptions of the "unfeeling" picture bride.

To counter these depictions, authors included sensitive, civilized "American girls" for comparison, thus the basis of this chapter. In newspaper accounts from the 1910s and early 1920s, Japanese picture brides are commonly portrayed with a resignation of fate biologically determined by their race. In describing the differences between "American" and "foreign" brides, picture marriage bristled against the standards of white middle-class femininity. According to one unidentified author in the *New York Times*, the idea of marrying a stranger was supposedly enough to make an "American girl's heart stop." [81] A *Los Angeles Herald* article similarly described somatic reactions to picture marriage as serving "to arouse in the native American breast emotions difficult to describe."[82] These descriptions highlight the neo-Lamarckian concept of the racial impressionability of white bodies. Prejudice—or the embodied sentiment of fear, agency, and the ability to emote deeply—was key to the standards of white raciality so often preached in eugenics frameworks. The authors' choice of words can be taken both symbolically and literally. When it came to love, white somatic responses demonstrated that Americans inherently understood it as a core value of their identities and way of life. These effects—hearts stopping and emotions beyond description—spoke to a seemingly greater universal truth: picture marriage was not only foreign, but it was also dangerous.

In stark contrast to the fictional reactions of white women, articles often racialized Japanese immigrant women by describing their stoic faces and seemingly defenseless acceptance of fate. In one representative example in 1909, John H. Clark, the U.S. Commissioner of Immigration for Canada wrote an expose on picture brides for the *New York Herald* that was

[81] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times,* August 27, 1922.
[82] "Where They Promise to Love, Honor, and Obey a Photograph." *Los Angeles Herald,* October 3, 1909.

reproduced across the country, including the full-page illustrated spread reprinted in the *Los Angeles Sunday Herald* that following October. As Clark opined about his experience policing these women, he watched "this tiny representative of womanhood [this Japanese picture bride] without a friend or adviser…to observe the composure with which she met every requirement of the law, and the entire absence of doubt or fear when in the presence of the examining officers she looked into the face of her future husband for the first time…" As set in opposition to American whiteness—and Clark's own emotional response at the sight—these women's willingness to enter arranged partnerships signaled an inherent racial deviancy; their emotionality—or lack thereof—offered paltry but nevertheless effective evidence of a cultural and biological difference between the races. For after all, as Clark petitions his readers: "Can we imagine any *American girl* of the same age, in like circumstances, starting on a similar journey with a corresponding object in view?" [83]

Lack of emotionality is translated to Asian men in depictions of interracial marriage, but instead of balancing the refined emotionality of the "American girl," instead exasperates her ability to control herself, until she is forced to divorce him or end her life, as was the case for Ruby and Pearl. In a 1909 Associated Press article out of Chicago, a recent divorcee Mrs. Greta Cho Yo is quoted as saying, "Japanese husbands….are cruel. American girls should never marry orientals [*sic*]…because they cannot understand the American temperament."[84] It is important to note however, that her husband, Professor Kazen Cho Yo a former scholar and instructor at the University of Tokyo, is given no opportunity to give *his* opinion on white women and white wives.

[83] "Where They Promise to Love, Honor, and Obey a Photograph." *Los Angeles Herald*, October 3, 1909.
[84] "White Girls Warned to Draw the Line," *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, November 2, 1909.

When headlines declared that Mrs. Manzo Goto "forsakes home and country to become Mikado subject" after her announced plan to join her recently deported husband in Japan, papers commented how: "At the peril of her life she must harden her heart like rock or metal" to survive being a wife in Japan.[85] In leaving, she was giving up "home ties, paternal love, love of country, love of friend, and, most important of all, her rights as a free born American." In essence, neglecting her patriotic duty as an "American girl." Before she could board the boat to Japan, however, her mother intercepted her plan and had her arrested by authorities on white slavery charges to prevent her from leaving the country.[86]

[85] "Japanese White Bride Forsakes Home and Country to Become Mikado Subject," *Chicago Day Book,* June 15, 1914.
[86] "White Wife Will Follow Japanese to the Orient," *Honolulu Star-Bulletin,* July 10, 1914.

JAPANESE WHITE BRIDE FORSAKES HOME AND COUNTRY TO BECOME MIKADO SUBJECT

Mrs. Manzo Goto, American wife of a Japanese chauffeur, who will follow her husband to Japan, thereby sacrificing her American citizenship by automatically becoming a subject of the Mikado.

San Francisco, Cal., June 15.—Mrs. Manzo Goto, American, wife of a Japanese, is going to Japan.

Her husband, Manzo Goto, Japanese chauffeur, is going to Japan, too—because he married Mrs. Manzo Goto, an American, which in America is not permissible, according to Uncle Sam.

And Mrs. Manzo Goto, because she is his wife, will follow Manzo Goto to Japan.

She will leave behind her all that is near and dear—home ties, paternal love, love of country, love of friends, and, most important of all, her rights as a free born American and her Occidental ways. But she says she

Figure 6: Mrs. Manzo Goto featured in the Chicago Day Book*, June 15, 1914.*

The unfeeling husband is seen once again in the *New York Times* report of Kiyoshi Hosokawa who found his wife, "the fair-haired, divine Elsie, and American girl," dead from intentional gas poisoning. According to the report, Elsie had been emotionally volatile in the midst of her husband's frequent absences and gambling habits. Kiyoshi supposedly responded dispassionately to her pain, unable to comprehend the issue: Elsie was "a golden-haired divinity [who] was incomprehensible and [he] did not worry about what he could not understand." The article provides a particularly lurid description of the scene that met Kiyoshi as he walked in the front door of their home:

> Elsie sat facing him as he opened the door. Her blue eyes were staring straight at him and in the spell of their magic [he] was oblivious to a rank and significant odor which also enveloped him. He saw only the silent figure in the chair and that it was clad in the regal kimono of cream-colored silk for which he had sent to Japan.

Elsie's blue eyes and fair-haired beauty—the symbol of her whiteness—hypnotize Kiyoshi to such an extent that he fails to notice she is dead, much like he failed to notice her emotional downturn in life. By describing the gruesome scene as such, the article implies Kiyoshi's sexual attraction to his wife superseded any real meaningful connection. Elsie's corpse is wrapped in a Japanese kimono, a sign she tried to conform to his Japanese lifestyle, but ultimately a symbol of failed assimilation.[87]

Report after report depict Japanese men as unable to take care of white women's needs, whether emotional or material. The Associated Press out of Jacksonville, Florida, reported that Mrs. F. Awa, "a beautiful American girl of a good Boston family," was left humiliated, pleading for help to locate "her Japanese husband, who is said to have deserted her and their seven-months-old baby, to accompany a woman of his own nationality."[88] In 1915, *The Cairo Bulletin* reported that a local heiress, Miss Ollie Buckner, was filing for divorce from her husband, the Reverend Yutaki Minakuchi, for failing to support her and her young son. The article recounts how twelve years prior, Ollie "was easily the reigning bell of the 'Blue Grass' region of Kentucky" but turned away all suitors when she fell in love "at first sight…when she looked into the slanting eyes of the young student." They married in 1903 "against the wishes and advice of her relatives and friends," signaling the union was doomed from the start.[89]

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[87] "American Bride of Japanese Ends Her Life After Quarrel," *New York Tribune*, March 25, 1921.
[88] "Her Jap Husband Was No Good," *Lakeland Evening Telegram*, February 19, 1914.
[89] "Yutaki is Sued for Divorce By American Wife," *The Cairo Bulletin*, January 6, 1915.

Some stories of divorce highlighted the intense difficulties and scrutiny surrounding such marriages. When Gladys Emery, a daughter of an Arch Deacon of the Episcopal Diocese of California, married Gunjiro Aoki in 1909, one paper claimed, "The marriage caused international gossip owing to the prominence of the young woman, who is beautiful and accomplished and did not even cease after the young lady herself stated that it was of her own making and perfectly satisfactory."[90] Amongst the well documented protest from family and friends, the couple was forced to travel to Seattle from Oakland before they could find an Episcopal reverend to marry them. Their intended divorce was prominently chronicled in papers in May of 1910.[91] But a month later, headlines "startled the American public" when the couple announced they were "settling all their marital difficulties and resuming their marriage relations in the face of vigorous opposition." What seems highly likely, as corroborated in a quote claiming the couple "place[d] all the blame for their troubles upon the manner in which the newspapers have published their affairs," the young couple understandably crumbled under the extreme pressures of family, friends, and the intense scrutiny of the media.[92]

[90] "Mrs. Gunjiro Aoki A Resident of this City," *Carson City Daily Appeal,* May 26, 1910.
[91] "Gladys Emery Aoki, Who Tired of her Japanese Husband," *Palestine Daily Herald,* January 13, 1910.
[92] "Aoki Family Is Reconciled," *Tonopah Daily Bonanza*, June 16, 1910; "Divorce Suit Withdrawn," *Bemidji Daily Pioneer*, June 15, 1910.


GLADYS EMERY AOKI, WHO TIRED OF HER JAPANESE HUSBAND

Gladys Emery, daughter of Dr. John Emery, archdeacon of San Francisco, was not long in tiring of her Japanese husband, whom she married last March

Figure 7: A photograph of Gladys Emery Aoki which ran in newspapers across the country, providing readers a glimpse of the "type" of woman who marries a Japanese man. January 1910.

All of these stories discussed in this section feature “white” women whose lives are ruined by their relationships with Japanese husbands, each ending in disastrous circumstances: divorce, suicide, arrest, insanity, or a combination thereof. But what happens when these same discourses are used for antiracist work? The conclusion to this chapter analyzes the work of author of color Sui Sin Far to illuminate how she engaged these themes in her depiction of interracial relationships by reworking heteronormativity discourse into counter-hegemonic literary devices.

Sentiment and Love in Transgressive Literary Depictions of Race

Born Edith Maude in 1865 to a Chinese mother and an English father, Sui Sin Far was an early twentieth century author of short stories and novels on Chinese American life. As historians have noted, racist stereotypes of Japanese Americans were often rooted in earlier ideas of anti-Chinese propaganda. Thus, in her depictions of the racial struggles of Chinese migrants confronting racist stereotypes and violence, we glean important context for contemporary discussions on race, gender, sexuality, marriage, and migration. Far's literature demonstrates the prevalence of racial logic in popular fiction of the era, but most importantly shows the transverse ways racial discourse can be used to subvert white supremacy and maintain cultural traditions.[93]

In a collection of her written work published under the title, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance* in 1912, Far includes "The Story of One White Woman Who Married a Chinese," and its sequel "Her Chinese Husband."[94] These two stories about a loving couple working through their cultural differences holds much relevance for the previous section and readers should refer to these tales for the ways Far subverts racial boundaries of interracial marriage. This section, however, will look at another lesser-examined short story in the collection that illuminates the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality within the discourse of eugenical romance and complicates any singular notion of the "American girl."

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[93] I do not intend to conflate East Asian identities by presenting a Chinese author after discussing Japanese racial formations. However, given the widely accepted contention that, as historian Roger Daniels writes, "The Anti-Japanese movement was in many ways merely a continuation of the long-standing agitation against the Chinese which began in the early 1850's," scholars have demonstrated that American nativist ideas of "Asianness" share similar theories and methodologies (although always inconsistently applied), including as I demonstrate here, the racist trope of the "unfeeling Asian." In addition to being credited as one of the first and earliest Asian American authors (though born in England and a Canadian citizen through parentage), Sui Sin Far was chosen for this chapter for her brilliant and particularly keen portrayal of race, gender, and society. For a specific history on American nativism and Asian racial formations surrounding labor and class struggles, *see* Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[94] Edith Maude Eaton/Sui Sin Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, Hsuan L. Hsu, ed. (Ontario: Broadview Editions, [1912] 2011).

This short story, "Its Wavering Image," is a tale that has been lauded for its bold confrontation of the political and cultural pressures of biraciality in early-twentieth-century America.[95] But scholarly attention has neglected the importance of the popular story's poignant depiction of romance as a key element of racial knowledge and self-identity. The story's main character is a half-Chinese, half-white teenager named Pan who was born and raised in San Francisco Chinatown. As such, she embodies the cultural and biological characteristic of each group. By simultaneously embodying specters of both the "American girl" and the Orientalized woman seen in picture bride discourse, Pan demonstrates how the lines between the two vacillate amidst the inconsistent racial logics of the time period.

The characters' ideas of love, which connect whiteness, romance, and sentiment throughout the story, reveal the influence of eugenical logic in both the enforcement and subversion of racist modes of thinking. Pan begins the story as a sheltered and naïve young woman; that is, until a romantic encounter heralds her into exploring how her identity, as both white and Chinese, informs her place in the world. As she is increasingly forced to confront her duality in the presence of a white suitor, Pan comes to ponder the hypocrisy of whiteness, love, and racial inheritance, and in turn, develops a subversive dedication to love and family that is tied to community loyalty and radical self-acceptance.

Pan grew up in San Francisco's Chinatown with her widower father above his shop on DuPont Street. She is described by the author as a "Bohemian" living an unconventional, nonconformist lifestyle.[96] Pan's liminal existence defies traditional categorization. Her age and

[95] While some work has analyzed this particular short story, it has failed to acknowledge the influence of eugenics and sexology in the formulation of Far's portrayal of race. For a general analysis of race and gender in "Its Wavering Image," *see* Julie Goodspeed-Chadwick, "Identity Politics in Sui Sin Far's *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*: Race and Gender Dynamics in 'The Sing Song Woman' and 'Its Wavering Image'." *Ethnic Studies Review* 39 (Winter 2016): 165-173.
[96] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 81.

race position her on the boundary of white and Chinese, child and adult. Having been raised by her father without a maternal presence, her outspoken, tomboyish ways muddy the lines between gendered performances of masculinity and femininity. As Sin Far writes, she was "exempt from the conventional restrictions imposed upon either the white or Chinese woman," and grew up happily in her father's house, sheltered from the conundrums of racial politics.

One day, Mark Carson, a white journalist for a local newspaper, enters the shop and is immediately attracted to the young girl. His fascination is stoked by her physical beauty, and Mark immediately portends to conquer the mystery of her exoticized, racial ambiguity. "What is she? Chinese or white?" he asks his colleague. But contradicting any easy categorization, Pan's sense of self is not so easily calculable.

Pan had existed happily in Chinatown, giving "little thought" to the ways she was different from those around her. Experience had told her that it was only in the presence of white people that the question of her identity mattered; the residents of Chinatown never alienated her or questioned her authenticity or belonging. Far writes, with "her father's people she was natural and at home; but in the presence of her [white] mother's [people] she felt strange and constrained, shrinking from their curious scrutiny as she would from the sharp edge of a sword."[97] In Pan's experience, "curious scrutiny," or the obsession with hybridity, was a concern reserved for white, Western thinking.

Over time, Pan and Mark develop a slow courtship, and it is under Mark's occidental gaze that "the mystery of [Pan's] nature [begins] to trouble her."[98] Whether it is in the way she looks, or the way she talks, Mark is convinced Pan is more white than Chinese, and sets out to prove it. In Mark's worldview, whiteness is a choice Pan can make, as much as a biological fact.

[97] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 80-81.
[98] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 80.

With “delicate tact and subtlety,” Mark seeks to convince Pan that her envelopment in Chinatown, with people supposedly unlike herself, has meant a lonely existence. Mark’s romantic advances offer her companionship and an enticing solution to a supposed misfit life of false attachments. So convincing is Mark’s arguments, that Pan begins to believe him, and it “seemed at times as if her white self must entirely dominate and trample under foot her Chinese.”[99]

The couple grows closer as they tour Chinatown together, and the sharp edges of Pan’s personality soften as she experiences the vulnerability of first love. Wanting to invite him into her world, Pan acts as a tour guide and cultural ambassador. She opens herself and Chinatown up to him “in full trust and confidence” and leads him through the town “initiating him into the simple mystery and history of many things...enabling him not only to see but to take part in a ceremony in which no American had ever before participated.” Mark receives these tours with enjoyment and curiosity but dispels any notion he could ever love or understand the town’s “foreign, peculiar ways.”[100]

On a “cool, quiet evening,” on top of a gilded rooftop restaurant on busy DuPont Street, Pan and Mark serenely take in the view of a full moon shining down on Chinatown. Mark interrupts the moment by bitterly remarking, “How beautiful above! How unbeautiful below!” Pan’s becomes emotional at the slight to the place she calls home. But Mark cuts her off:“Pan!” he cries, “You do not belong here. You are white—*white*.”[101]

Pan protests, but Mark presses on; Mark tells her to denounce her Chinese heritage and embrace her true whiteness. In Mark’s dichotomy, of either being Chinese and alone, or being

[99] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 81.
[100] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 81.
[101] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 83.

white and loved, romance is both the vehicle and producer of whiteness. After the moment is interrupted by a Chinese waiter bringing tea and saffron cakes, Mark pauses in the moonlight, his hand on Pan's shoulder, and sings a verse of lyric poetry:

And forever, and forever,

As long as the river flows,

As long as the heart has passions,

As long as life has woes,

The moon and its broken reflection,

And its shadows shall appear,

As the symbol of love in heaven,

And its wavering image here.

Mark's words are the last stanzas of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's infamous poem "The Bridge" (1845), written after the tragic death of the poet's wife. In the ode, Longfellow walks a bridge, a crossing point—a liminal space neither water nor land—at the midnight hour, neither night nor day. He has walked upon this bridge many times before on days when his heart was heavy and burdened with loss and woe. He stares at the water below, wishing to be swallowed up and relieved of his pain. Yet, the moon high in the sky, reflects on the water's surface, an imperfect, broken reflection of heavenly grace on earth. The reflection permeates the viewer's grief. Its light cracks the solemn resolve to give into life's depressions. As long as mourners remember this shining reminder and "its wavering image," there is hope to rise above one's circumstances.

Pan is moved to tears at the poem's elegance, and she weeps at Mark's "irresistible voice singing her heart away."[102] Like the poem's protagonist, Pan, too, was on a symbolic bridge between competing forces—Chinese and white, youth and maturity, love and loneliness, feminine resolve and boyish fun. Mark's words reverberate, "How beautiful above! How unbeautiful below!" as he projects Longfellow's words into the literal and metaphorical worlds Pan must navigate.

Chinatown, literally below them as they stand on the rooftop restaurant, becomes symbolically beneath Pan as the performance of her whiteness continues to emerge under Mark's tutelage. Like Longfellow's tumultuous waters, Chinatown had lured Pan in with its comfort and ease, threatening to swallow her whole. Pan had but to look up to whiteness to reach a higher standard. Mark literalizes these thoughts as he bids her to take her tear-stained eyes off the street and look up at him. "Oh, Pan! Pan!" he says, "These tears prove that you are white," and as Pan lifts her wet face, they kiss for the first time.[103] In this moment, Pan's tears move beyond mere feeling, to a deeply politicized display of emotion. Mark wields the language of love and romance to communicate ideas of white supremacy. In direct contradiction to stereotypes of the "unfeeling Asian," Mark interprets her ability to feel deeply to be a standing testament to her whiteness; she has learned and exhibited the refined sentiment of civilized bodies bestowed by her white heritage and declared legitimate by Mark's authority.[104] The kiss acts as ritual, a narrative crescendo to Mark's obstinate insistence in Pan's whiteness; her participation in the romantic gesture acts as a silent submission to his will. In the act of falling in love, and in

[102] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 83.
[103] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 84.
[104] For an analysis on the sentimental education of Sui Sin Far's characters in *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* see: June Howard, "Sui Sin Far's American Words." *Comparative American Studies: An International Journal* 6, no. 2 (2008): 144-160.

actively choosing Mark as her romantic partner, Pan plays to mental as well as biological constructs of white raciality.

Mark has become a significant figure in her life. Pan experiences the vulnerability of not only her first romantic relationship, but a closeness for the first time with a white man and the cultural construction of whiteness. Over the course of their relationship, romantic love—in a Western, heteronormative, mutually-erotic framework—works to whiten Pan's worldview and conception of self. Where racial scrutiny in the past had felt like "the sharp edge of a sword," Pan is coaxed into deeper introspection, walking the liminal edge of the blade, the deeper she falls in love with him.

Vulnerability leads to disaster, however, as Mark soon betrays Pan. Using the knowledges Pan divulged on their tours of Chinatown, Mark writes a scathing newspaper exposé on Chinatown customs. The betrayal "burnt red hot," but unlike the tenderness of the rooftop kiss, Pan's wrath courses through her "unassuaged by tears."[105] She feels the sting of guilt, knowing that in revealing her secrets to Mark, she had in turn betrayed the people she loved in the only home she has ever known. The "sharp edge of the sword," anesthetized by the trappings of romance, had cut her deeply while she let down her guard.

Mark, meanwhile, shrugs off any potential insult. In another scene, as he recalls moments with Pan, he thinks of her fondly. Walking to meet her in Chinatown, he muses, "Why should a white woman care about such things? Her true self was above it all." His inner thoughts reveal a new racialized gendering of her. She embodies white femininity. She is small and clever and properly heteronormative in her attentive displays of affection. In Mark's view, "Dear little Pan… [pretty, clever, amusing] Pan who was always so frankly glad to have him come to her; so

[105] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 84.

eager to hear all that he was doing; so appreciative, so inspiring, so loving." Even if she was offended, love would act as a "healing balm, a wizard's oil which none knew so well as he how to apply" in his advanced sentiment and intellectual capacities.[106]

As he spans the hill where Pan is waiting, Mark explains to her his benevolence in writing the article: "It is mere superstition anyway. These things have got to be exposed and done away with." Mark's words are met with calculated silence. Gone were the displays of affection, the smiles, the gleeful chatter he assumed were trophies of Pan's whiteness. In its place, quiet "little" Pan was different tonight; standing tall in a deliberate show of resistance, Pan "wore the Chinese costume," eschewing the "American dress" which Mark was accustomed to seeing. Mark balks, feeling "strangely chilled." When he questions her radical change, Pan boldly declares: "Because I am a Chinese woman."[107]

Mark refuses this information. He had proof: "You are not...You cannot say that now, Pan. You are a white woman—white. Did your kiss not promise me that?" (85). In the construction of a kiss equating whiteness, Mark's insistence demonstrates the assumed connection between whiteness, sentiment, and romantic love. Pan spurns his logic. If Mark was indeed a representation of whiteness—in his disloyal and unfeeling disregard of others—Pan wanted nothing to do with the institution: "I would not be a white woman for all the world. You are a white man. And what is a promise to a white man!"[108] Pan dismantles the illusion of white romantic love to reveal its hypocritical mechanisms. Her voice echoes, "rising high and clear to the stars above them," shattering Mark's poetic illusion of whiteness as a celestial, otherworldly standard. Pan's calm resolve and lack of tears is a reclaiming of her Chinese identity in a radical

[106] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 84.
[107] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 85.
[108] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance,* 85.

reimagining of not biological inferiority, but moral superiority, resilience, and strength. Pan wears her calm as a shield against Mark's penetrating white gaze.

As she moves on from the experience in the weeks to come, time does not diminish the bitterness of Mark's betrayal. Pan continues to be consumed with rage and is transformed in her ire. Innocence and naivety are swept aside, "the element of Fire having raged so fiercely within her that it had almost shriveled up the childish frame." However, an opportunity for healing comes when one afternoon a Chinese friend brings her little toddler over for a visit. The young child presses "her head upon the sick girl's bosom. The feel of that little head brought tears" to Pan's eyes. This time, her tears were not a political symbol of whiteness, not a feminine display of civilized advancement, but an authentic expression of self and human connection. The tears which seemed a betrayal in their earlier connection to whiteness, were now a deeply personal moment of mourning for innocence lost, represented by the young child. The mother tenderly confides, "Thou wilt bear a child thyself some day, and all the bitterness of this will pass away."[109]

In this promise—a future of familial love and the transmission of culture across generations—the substance of Mark's appeals become more hollow than ever. To him, the cure for loneliness was to forsake all she knew and loved. Mark's love was a betrayal from the beginning, not just at the moment of his traitorous publication. "Love" had been a hollow, cruel vehicle for deception. His love knew no loyalty; it was exclusive, destructive, and conditional. Mark's version of romance, so obsessively concerned with whiteness and its own superiority, was never more than a calculated tool to diminish the power and legitimacy of Pan as a Chinese woman and the dignity of all those who knew and truly loved her.

[109] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 86.

As Pan sat in the living room, it was not romance that the mother of the toddler promised; it was family and love in its truest, most innocent form—the love of a child. Community love—the love of her people—was authentic love. Cultural love meant choosing family and the group of friends and mentors who had supported and accepted her her entire life, never making her choose one side of her identity over the other. In her imagining of future motherhood, Pan finds a gendered, venerated place in her community. Love was, perhaps, an inherited trait, but never a possession of whiteness. The story draws to an end with a single, stand-alone line: "And Pan, *being a Chinese woman*, was comforted."[110]

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced and analyzed the concept of the "American girl," a figure specific to eugenics-based immigration discourses. As seen in the novels, magazines, short stories, and sensationalist newspaper articles I analyzed, the American girl both reflected and helped shape a gendered, white nationalism via the qualities of performative Anglo female citizenship. Like the modern girl, the American girl was framed within the rhetoric of modernity, progress, and romance. Yet the American girl's sexuality—as seen in the character Kate from the Harpers Bazaar's serial—was firmly rooted in heteronormative nationalist frameworks. Rather than the questionable free sexuality of the modern girl, the American girl desired romantic marriage. Her alternate iteration—the American bride—reflected the mature fulfillment and progress of white, middle-class marriage and domesticity.

The American girl was imbued with white heteronormative values; she was comfortable in a modern world and independent in her ability to choose and discern a partner. But in her

[110] Far, *Mrs. Spring Fragrance*, 86. Italics mine.

figuration as a “bride,” she practiced her modernity to the benefit of the nation by upholding the eugenical tenets of romantic marriage and physical fitness. Future work on the figure of the American girl would benefit from an analysis of its mechanics—not just the discursive symbolic construction as discussed in this chapter, but a study into the ways the American girl reflected (or not) the actual lives of politically-minded white women in this era. Further, while this chapter demonstrated the cultural texts wherein the American girl was made prominently available to female audiences, future work on this trope must also take into account white women’s roles in either dismantling or perpetuating this gendered form of white supremacy. These two avenues of future research will continue to illuminate the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality within the discourse of eugenical romance and will complicate further any singular notion of “American” womanhood.

Chapter 2: Off-White Romantics: Cross-cultural Histories of Immigrant Picture Brides and the Process of US Race Making

In early January 1920, the *Washington Times* ran a scathing headline echoing the vitriolic fervor of rising anti-Asian sentiment in the American West. "Jap picture brides," they warned, were a silent threat, the supposed "ingenious device by which they are breeding little Japs and upsetting the purpose of the immigration exclusion law.[1] Named for the pictures couples from the same home country exchanged via mail, picture brides were women in arranged marriages with emigrant men from their home countries. The brides were either first married in their home country in ceremonies without the groom present or they came to the United States as fiancées. Either way, these women immigrated to the United States and often met their partners for the first time on American soil. Arranged marriages were a long-practiced cultural tradition, and marriage ceremonies at home to men overseas provided women a rare opportunity to circumvent prejudicial travel restrictions by entering the United States as permissible wives, rather than as inadmissible single women. But nativists doubted the authenticity of these unions and denigrated the practice as a disguised form of contracted labor, slavery, or prostitution. By the 1910s, the "Jap picture bride" became a popular symbolic trope representing the demise of white America and Christian democracy brought on by the proliferation of Japanese families. By 1920, anti-Japanese sentiment had risen to such an extent that the Japanese government (to protect its people and address increasing pressure from the US government) agreed to stop issuing passports to picture bride women in a policy known as the Ladies Agreement, effectively ending the practice by the following year.

[1] "How the Jap 'Picture Brides' are Japanizing California," *The Washington Times*, January 4, 1920.

Though picture marriage has become synonymous with Japanese immigration history, the practice was far from unique; it was common in many immigrant groups coming to the United States around the turn of the twentieth century, including Koreans, Chinese, Italians, Armenians, Germans, and Greeks.[2] But although practices were similar, there was a vast difference in the American public's reactions to these women. In a stark contrast to previous takes on picture marriage, for example, in March 1920—a mere two months after papers had criticized picture marriage as an "ingenious device"—a San Francisco headline hailed the arrival of the "new picture brides from Europe" who would "take the place of the now prohibited Oriental picture brides of Japan." *The Sausalito News* reported the picture bride system was a "fair deal to foreign girls who wish to follow their fiancés to the United States" and was even endorsed by the leading immigrant charity organization, the Traveler's Aid Society.[3] In fact, these "new" picture brides would be an asset to the country, opening up a "thriving industry in matrimonial agencies in seaport towns."[4]

[2] For information on Japanese picture brides: Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kei Tanaka, "Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 1, no. 15 (2004): 115-38; Cecilia M. Tsu, *Garden of the World: Asian Immigrants and the Making of Agriculture in California's Santa Clara Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013). For information on Greek picture brides: Evangelia Tastsoglou, "The Margin at the Centre: Greek Immigrant Women in Ontario," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 29, no. 1 (1997): 119-60; Steve Frangos, "The Picture Bride Era," *The National Herald*, March 12, 2005; Helen Papanikolas, *An Amulet of Greek Earth: Generations of Immigrant Folk Culture* (Athens: Swallow Press, 2002).

[3] My use of the word "girl" throughout this essay follows archival renderings of the term and the work of Weinbaum et al. (2008) in their edited volume on the "modern girl" of the early twentieth century. The editors write that "'girl' signifies the contested status of young women, no longer children . . . [and] strongly suggests the historical emergence of 'girl' as a modern social and representational category and as a style of self-expression largely delinked from biological age" (9). Alys Eve Weinbaum et al., *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

[4] "Picture Brides from Europe, Woman's Idea," *Sausalito News*, March 27, 1920.

The gross hypocrisy of this contrast was not lost. In a poignant response to the *New York Times'* latest report of seven hundred picture brides arriving from Greece, Japanese reader G. K. Hachy wrote to the editor:

> When Japanese residing in this country were marrying through the exchange of pictures, some Americans severely attacked the method. They said that marriage should be based on love . . . and therefore Japanese marrying by pictures were running counter to the American ideal of marriage . . . Now "picture brides" from Near Eastern countries are swarming to this side of the Atlantic. Where are those Americans who bitterly attacked Japanese picture brides but a few years ago? Why do they not come out and declare war against this new invasion of picture brides?[5]

Calling out the "Psuedo-Puritans" who had made life so difficult for Japanese Americans, Hachy's letter proved a critical point: ideologies of love, marriage, and the family stood as thinly veiled excuses for America's racist agenda.

While a rich body of literature addresses the lives and politics of Japanese picture marriage, little to no work has addressed their European counterparts or their intercultural connections within the history of American racial formations.[6] This paper puts Greek and Japanese histories in context as a reparative response to past scholarly traditions of segregating Asian and European ethnic groups in the literature.[7] This separation has obscured the intricate ways that Greeks and Japanese were politically linked by the racial mechanisms of Americans'

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[5] G. K. Hachy, "The Wifeless Japanese," *The New York Times*, July 22, 1922.
[6] Omi Howard and Michael Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1986), 10.
[7] Jon Gjerde, "New Growth on Old Vines—The State of the Field: The Social History of Immigration to and Ethnicity in the United States," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 4 (1999): 40-65; Erika Lee, "A Part and Apart: Asian American and Immigration History," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (2015): 28-42; George J. Sanchez, "Race and Immigration History," *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. 9 (1999): 1271-75; Anna Pegler-Gordon, "Debating the Racial Turn in U.S. Ethnic and Immigration History," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 36, no. 2 (2017): 40-53.

conceptions of marriage and national belonging; further, by not contextualizing picture marriage as occurring across a diverse racial hierarchy, scholarship has eclipsed the violent ways that white supremacy acts in contradictory, often hypocritical ways, excluding some groups while excusing and including others.

By viewing these groups as relational rather than comparative, I follow historian Natalia Molina's assertion that race does not exist in a vacuum. As Molina writes, early twentieth-century minds worked relationally when conceptualizing immigration, and this same relational approach must be taken in our contemporary interpretations of the past. Molina writes,

> . . .they perceived races in hierarchies, and they made their decisions about which groups to admit and which to restrict based on their past knowledge and experience with immigrants from various lands. A comparative treatment of race compares and contrasts groups, treating them as independent of one another; a relational treatment recognizes that race is a mutually constitutive process and thus attends to how, when, where, and to what extent groups intersect. It recognizes that there are limits to examining racialized groups in isolation.[8]

Picture marriage therefore acts as an independent variable in the great experiment of American race making. Relating the disparate experiences of its practitioners provides an exceptional lens to trace the ways white, middle-class sexuality became institutionalized in early immigration politics and nationalist discourses of citizenship and social belonging. In my analysis of this process, my study builds on the work of race and ethnicity scholars who have demonstrated the

[8] Natalia Molina, *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 2-3.

intricate ways gender and sexuality are critical to the maintenance of whiteness as a political order.[9]

Historians have been slower to incorporate interdisciplinary contributions of sexuality and queer studies; in turn, most of this work has been aligned along a black-white color divide.[10] Picture marriage as a lens allows immigration historians to respond to calls to integrate, as Erika Lee writes, "more insights from a broad range of fields"—including ethnic, women, gender, and sexuality studies—"to ask new questions . . .and make connections (across groups and between past and present) where before we might have only seen divisions."[11] In this work I trace prominent picture marriage discourse and imagery in popular newspapers from 1907 to 1924, the major years of picture bride migration to the United States, to demonstrate the quotidian ways that audiences learned about the politics of race and immigration through seemingly apolitical messages about family, marriage, and romantic love. In my approach to primary documents I follow Matthew Frye Jacobson's observations that race is a "public fiction," best understood with an "analysis of public exchange."[12]

[9] Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in *Region, Race, and Reconstruction*, ed. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).
[10] Brenda Cossman, *Sexual Citizens: The Legal and Cultural Regulation of Sex and Belonging* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); David Roediger, "The Racial Turn in Ethnic History," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 36, no. 2 (2017): 56; Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 7; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012).
[11] Erika Lee, "A Part and Apart," 39.
[12] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 11.

This study works as a supplement to the rich body of work on Japanese picture brides[13] by giving necessary context to the history of Greek Americans, the European or "off-white" group most prevalently known for picture marriage in the early twentieth century. With the exception of Helen Papanikolas's exceptional work on the US West, historians of Greek America have been negligent about the roles of women, family, and sexuality in early immigration processes.[14] This work argues that far from being a mere footnote in Greek American history, picture brides were critical signifiers of Greeks' transition from "in-between" white *others* to ethnic white *Americans*. In doing so, I add to the canon of white ethnicity studies by documenting the ways sexuality was critical to the processes of twentieth-century white pluralism.[15]

A Note on Terminology

Within immigration history, the stories of European picture brides have been neglected within the context of marriage as part of racial formations related to immigration. Martha Gardner's work on woman immigrants includes fascinating contributions on European "correspondence brides," including those from Germany, Portugal, and Spain.[16] However

[13] See also Catherine Lee, "Prostitutes and Picture Brides: Chinese and Japanese Immigration, Settlement, and American Nation-Building, 1870-1920," The Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, working paper 70, February 2003; Yukari Takai, "Recrafting Marriage in Meiji Hawai'i, 1885-1913," *Gender & History* 31, no. 3 (October 2019): 646-64; Kei Tanaka, "Japanese Picture Marriage in 1900-1924 California: Construction of Japanese Race and Gender" (PhD diss., Rutgers University, 2002).
[14] Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980); Alice Scourby, *The Greek Americans* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984).
[15] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White, The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Ian Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996).
[16] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Gardner's European correspondence brides and Japanese picture brides remain categorically separated by their titles and points of origin. But as my archival work will show, the title of "picture bride" was prominently and popularly applied to Southern European and Japanese women alike as a politically charged, racialized signifier that provides nuance to the complex yet fluid racial hierarchies of the early twentieth century.

In this context, a note on terminology is important. Armenians, Italians, and Greeks were the three predominant groups known for and practicing picture marriage in Europe.[17] In the case of Southern European couples, picture marriage encompassed a variety of practices. Some women were married by proxy in their home countries, others came to the United States as fiancées to marry men they only knew through pictures and letters. Nevertheless, these women—along with their East Asian counterparts—were grouped together and colloquially nicknamed "picture brides" in US media and political discourse.

The categorization of these women as picture brides was politically significant. Unlike the Japanese literal translation of *shashin kekkon,* or *photograph marriage*, "picture marriage" was not present vernacularly in most native European languages. Migrants did not bring the term with them. The application of the term "picture bride" to European women by the American public was a recycled usage of a Japanese concept with a specific racialized meaning in America. In the case of European women, picture bride was a borrowed concept with redefined parameters in light of the "new" sending countries, inherently connecting the two groups' histories and experiences.

[17] Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, "Armenian Refugee Women: The Picture Brides, 1920-1930," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1993): 3. Susanna Scarparo, "Italian Proxy Brides in Australia," *Revista Internazionale di Studi Sulle Migrazioni Italiane nel Mondo,* nos. 38-39 (2009): 85-108.

It is important to note the category of "picture marriage" was not universally applied. Arranged marriage, even in America, was not uncommon up to, and including, the twentieth century.[18] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, men and women seeking partners took out personal ads in newspapers, subscribed to matrimonial periodicals, hired matrimonial agencies like *Cupid's Court*, and met partners through mutual friends and family members.[19] Many European countries such as Germany and Spain also have documented histories of proxy and correspondence brides. The difference, however, lay in racial privilege, the powerful crux that subverted the association of "picture marriage" with groups considered white or northern European.

Marriage historian Nancy Cott writes that early century minds constructed arranged marriage and American love matches to be at odds with one another, a clash "between the Old World and the New, between outdated tradition and modernity . . .tyranny and freedom." In this manner, Cott continues that as "officials and inspectors at ports dealt with picture brides, they were defending their understanding of marriage as a bargain based on consent."[20] However, this argument needs an important distinction: in defending their notions of love and marriage, American officials were in reality strategically defending their understanding of whiteness as a

[18] Nancy Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).
[19] Suzanne M. Sinke, "Marriage through the Mail: North American Correspondence Marriage from Early Print to the Web," in *Letters across Borders: The Epistolary Practices of International Migrants*, ed. Bruce S. Elliott, David A. Gerber, and Suzanne M. Sinke (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2006), 75-94; Suzanne Sinke, "Moved to Marry: Connecting Marriage and Cross-Border Migration in the History of the United States," *L'Homme: Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 25, no. 1 (January 2014): 11-29; Smithsonian National Postal Museum, "How Did Men and Women Meet through the Mail?" https://postalmuseum.si.edu/Mail-OrderBrides/how.html, accessed February 22, 2019; Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating," *New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922; Suzanne H. Jackson, "To Honor and Obey: Trafficking in "Mail-Order Brides," *George Washington Law Review* 70, no. 3 (2002): 475-569; Lara Mobydeen, "Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Mail-Ordered? The Mail-Order Bride Industry and Immigration Law," *The Wayne Law Review* 49, no. 1 (2003): 939-74; Marcia Zug, *Buying a Bride: An Engaging History of Mail-Order Matches* (New York: New York University Press, 2016).
[20] Cott, *Public Vows*, 151.

privilege dependent on exclusion. In the midst of Yellow Peril politics, nativists appropriated the concept of "picture brides" to rile fears of immigrant fecundity and racial danger.[21] In its association with Japanese women, "picture bride" was a racialized concept that acted as a code word for foreign difference, an aberrance of American democratic principles and white middle-class morality.[22] In popular English-language newspapers and American political discourse—from mayoral campaigns to Congress—picture marriage was rooted in Orientalist assumptions of non-white, deviant sexuality. It was no coincidence then that Armenians, Italians, and Greeks, the three predominant groups practicing proxy and transatlantic arranged marriages in Europe, were cast in the symbolic discourse of "picture marriage." Yet the small body of existing scholarship on these women has neglected the racial connotations of both the title and the practice.

As off-white peoples, Southern Europeans' racial categorization was an indiscernible blend of cultures. As the famous eugenicist Madison Grant claimed, the Mediterranean race was "so far from being purely European, it is equally African and Asiatic."[23] Positioned as different from Japanese or Asian women—though how different was up for debate—Southern European women were nebulously in between racial and social categories. While as noted, picture bride women came from a variety of countries and cultures, because many of them came on Greek ocean liners leaving Piraeus, the picture brides arriving in US ports were often conflated—whether they were Italian proxy brides or ethnic Armenians fleeing genocide—as Greek (though certainly ethnic Greek picture brides came in the highest numbers). Greeks and Japanese

[21] Yuji Ichioka, "*Amerika Nadeshiko*: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States 1900-1924," *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 339-57.
[22] For more information on modernization and notions of romantic love in early twentieth-century Japan, see Tanaka, "Image of Immigrant Women," 118.
[23] Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), 214.

therefore became the two groups most prominently known for picture marriage and depicted as picture brides in popular media. As the *New York Tribune* claimed in a 1922 article titled "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating," the "Greeks, available statistics indicate, lead all other European nations in the earnestness and diligence with which they seek for wives among their own people in their native land."[24]

In the American hierarchy of races, Greeks in particular occupied, according to historian Yiorgos Anagnostou, a "marked and unstable location . . . placed between unmarked American whiteness and 'the Asiatics' commonly demonized as the 'yellow peril.'"[25] The dubbing of Southern European women as picture brides was an inherently comparative strategy set up to triangulate the qualities of Mediterranean raciality between non-white foreignness and white American traditions. This liminal position worked as both an obstacle and opportunity to join the ranks of the privileged. Unlike the vocal rejection of Japanese picture marriage, Greeks' practices, as "off-white" potential citizens, were similarly constructed as "off-white." Greek picture marriage was discursively placed outside, yet adjacent to, heteronormative "American" unions. This difference was essential to the hypocritical and contradictory tolerance, and later acceptance, of European family structures and settlement in the United States.

Romantic Love: Whiteness's Greatest Quality

With the nation's changing demographics—mass immigration, African American migration from the South, and imperial conquests abroad—early-century minds were formulating new ideas of what it meant to be an "authentic" American. Eugenics and sexology

[24] Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long-Distance Mating." *New York Tribune,* September 17, 1922.
[25] Yiorgos Anagnostou, *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009), 14, 48.

assisted this project; each sought to calculate, measure, and quantify America's exceptional and deviant bodies alike to define a national scientific norm or average. However, dominant narratives of physiological "normativity" were embedded in white, heterosexual, middle-class identity politics.[26] Whiteness, as an increasingly invisible standard, became encoded in the clinical language of health, sexual fitness, and mental fortitude. In kind, sexual deviancy—be it same-sex intercourse, gender inversion, prostitution, or hypersexuality—was patterned as a reciprocal effect of non-white raciality or politically degenerating influences.[27]

As discussed in chapter 1 of this dissertation, romance provided a solution whereby mind and body converged in eugenical partner choice and thoughtful reproduction. Romance included the ability to feel and emote deeply as a proper measured, physiological response to sexual stimuli. It maintained a social order by overcoming instinctive animalistic sex in favor of premeditated, controlled, and responsible breeding within the confines of heterosexual marriage. Marriage was therefore centered as essential to the health of the white race while simultaneously being conflated with the health of the nation at large.

Whereas the marriage contract had historically been about protecting property, eugenical marriage imbued whiteness with property value by preaching its high yields and relative fragility.[28]As Francis Galton wrote in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1905, modern marriage needed to confront its past captivation with family property and material descent, for "Eugenics deal with what is more valuable than money or lands, namely, the heritage of a high character, capable brains, fine physique, and vigor; in short, with all that is most desirable for a

[26] Elizabeth Stephens and Peter Cryle, "Eugenics and the Normal Body: The Role of Visual Images and Intelligence Testing in Framing the Treatment of People with Disabilities in the Early Twentieth Century." *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* (2017): DOI 10.1080/10304312.2016.1275126
[27] Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line,* Chapter 1.
[28] Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," *Harvard Law Review* 106, no. 8 (1993): 6-35.

family to possess as a birthright. It aims at the evolution and preservation of high races of men . . .”[29] This promise was particularly enticing to poor whites and immigrants, whose economic disenfranchisement was somewhat ameliorated by shifting notions of whiteness—an increasingly valuable social status—which acted as symbolically powerful compensation to those exploited by American capitalism.[30] Eugenics offered a mythological past and a glorious future for those whites who maintained the racial status quo. As a result, white supremacy, as proliferated by eugenicists and other white intellectuals, crept into lay culture, providing “fodder for newspaper discussions, speeches, scientific analysis, novels, sermons, songs, and blackface minstrel shows. . . .”[31]

Since, as historian Siobhan Somerville notes, “cultural processes of racialization were inextricably bound to questions of sexual identity,”[32] romance, as a status and signifier of whiteness, was also threaded throughout medical science and popular culture alike. Romance communicated powerful messages, often without mentioning race at all, because as Julian Carter writes, former ideas of “civilization”—whiteness’s core racial value in the nineteenth century—were “redefined in terms of *love* . . . ‘Normality’ thus provided a common and deeply sexualized vocabulary through which an increasingly diverse group of whites could articulate their common racial and political values to one another.”[33] It was not always necessary to overtly announce race for it to be prominent and understood by early twentieth-century audiences. In Carter’s words, “vague references to heredity and cultural development across generations . . .[forged] an

[29] Francis Galton, “Studies in Eugenics,” *American Journal of Sociology* 11, no. 1 (1905): 14
[30] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (1935; New York: The Free Press, 1992), 700.
[31] Pem Davidson Buck, “Constructing Race, Creating White Privilege,” in *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, ed. Paula S. Rothenberg(Worth Publishers, New York: 2004), 31-37 (quote: 34).
[32] Somerville, *Queering the Color Line*, 81.
[33]Julian Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America, 1880-1940* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 6, italics added.

ostensibly natural, objective, and politically innocent connection between whiteness, reproductive marital heterosexuality, and modern American civilization."[34]

That explains why, in 1922, for example, when the *New York Times* interviewed the Italian Vice Consul about picture brides, the reporter's questions were met with such resistance. Refusing at first to engage the subject, the Vice Consul protested, "the term picture bride is very unfortunate when applied to Italians." While he admitted that, yes, technically "Italian ships are bringing Italian girls whose prospective husbands recognize them by their pictures," it did not automatically group them in with those associated with the term. Interestingly, love was the Vice Consul's first line of defense against the racial connotation of picture marriage. He scolded the reporter, "Surely you understand that love is as necessary to the Latin temperament as rain is to the soil." Since love was the cultural, even biological essence of Italian life—and to love was to be white—the Vice Consul begged, "How, then, speak of a picture bride for Italians?"[35]

Coloring Picture Marriage in the Popular US Media

If picture marriage was indeed an aberrance of white middle-class sexuality and democratic partnerships (whether that reflected everyday realities or not), then historical discussions of picture marriage act as a litmus test for immigrants' changing racial status over time. Articles on picture marriage, both Asian and European, were prominent after World War I as anti-immigrant fervor surged and the post-conflict economy settled.[36] Articles ranged from simple reports on women's arrivals—with numbers, locations, and descriptions of hairstyles, skin colors, clothing, and luggage—to lifestyle pieces, investigative journalism, and moral

[34] Carter, *Heart of Whiteness*, 15.
[35] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times*, August 27, 1922.
[36] Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

ponderings. Articles featured input from a wide spectrum of "experts," including psychotherapists, politicians, consul generals, immigrant aid societies, and immigrants themselves (though mostly men). Readers wrote letters to newspapers, eager to add their opinions to the mix. Some readers supported the young picture brides. Others, as one reader letter to the *New York Times* shared, felt that "On the whole, American marriages are more in agreement with the spirit of progress and based on juster [*sic*] economic arrangements and certainly more inducive to social welfare."[37]

News accounts of picture marriage reveal the ways that Americans expressed and learned about the racial, gendered politics of citizenship through the lens of marriage and family. In one prominent *Times* article, headlined "TWO KINDS OF BRIDES," the unnamed author explores the differences between two types of women: the "American" love bride and the immigrant picture bride, of which Greeks and Japanese were included. As if to solve a great racial conundrum, the article triangulates the qualities of ethnic picture marriage between two set points: non-white foreignness and white American tradition. In describing the differences between American and immigrant brides, picture marriage bristled against the standards of white middle-class femininity. "*Nothing in the world is so personal as marriage to the American mind*," claimed the author. "It therefore is a little difficult to get the viewpoint of a bride who crosses oceans to be met at the dock by a man holding her photograph in his hand, a man whom she never saw before, but who is to be her companion through life."[38]

According to the author, the idea of marrying a stranger was supposedly enough to make an American "girl's heart stop." A *Los Angeles Herald* article similarly described somatic reactions to picture marriage as serving "to arouse in the native American breast emotions

[37] G. Sarantides, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, August 30, 1922.
[38] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times*, August 27, 1922.

difficult to describe."[39] These descriptions highlight the neo-Lamarckian concept of the racial impressionability of white bodies. Prejudice—or the embodied sentiment of fear, agency, and the ability to emote deeply—was key to the standards of white raciality so often preached in eugenics frameworks. The authors' choice of words can be taken both symbolically and literally. When it came to love, white somatic responses demonstrated Americans inherently understood it as a core value of their identities and way of life. These effects—hearts stopping and emotions beyond description—spoke to a seemingly greater universal truth: picture marriage was not only foreign, it was also dangerous.

In stark contrast, articles often racialized Japanese immigrant women by describing their stoic faces and seemingly defenseless acceptance of fate: "To watch this tiny representative of womanhood without a friend or adviser . . .to observe the composure with which she met every requirement of the law, and the entire absence of doubt or fear when in the presence of the examining officers she looked into the face of her future husband for the first time . . ."[40] As set in opposition to American whiteness, these women's willingness to enter these partnerships signaled an inherent racial deviancy; their emotionality—or lack thereof—offered paltry but nevertheless significant evidence of a cultural and biological difference between the races.

According to one 1920 article, "Everything in Japanese domestic life seems to reverse American conditions." While brides may arrive in San Francisco with a happy smile, they do so unaware "of the cruel fate that condemns her to be the slave of an unknown husband." Japanese men were accused of contracting picture brides as free labor "toiling for their masters," producing a child yearly, and being essentially servants "who cannot run away because she has

[39] "Where They Promise to Love, Honor, and Obey a Photograph," *Los Angeles Herald*, October 3, 1909.
[40] Ibid.

no clothes, no money and no friends."[41] Illuminating these arguments sheds light on the comparative portrayals of Greek immigrants in the popular press and reveals their racial gradations.

Greeks, though white enough to enter the country, were considered "in-between" or "probationary" whites.[42] Depictions of Greek picture marriage in popular newspapers demonstrated this liminal position. It was simultaneously different and potentially threatening—but seemingly less so in comparison to Japanese practitioners. Often, writers cast suspicion on men's intentions, reflected in the common trope of Greek women being at the mercy of Greek men's stereotypical passions, emotional volatility, and physical aggression.[43] This male stereotype was rooted in homoerotic representations of the overwhelmingly male bachelor immigrant populations, from laborers in mining camps in the US West to the crowded tenement houses of the East Coast. Only about 65,000 Greek women came to the United States during the first three decades of the twentieth century. Sociologists Evangelia Tastsoglou and George Stubos write that "comparative figures between immigrants from Greece and other nations indicate that, while the proportion between men and women for all immigrant groups in the U.S. was 1.21 to 1, for Greeks the proportion was 4.43 to 1."[44] Sociologist Charles Moskos reiterates of the approximate 400,000 Greeks coming to the United States during the early twentieth century, less than 5 percent of those arriving between 1900 and 1910 were women, only 20 percent between 1910 and 1920, and a still disproportionate ratio of 2.8 men to one woman in 1930.[45] Without women as civilizing influences, as early-twentieth-century sociologist Henry

[41] "How the Jap 'Picture Brides' are Japanizing California," *The Washington Times*, January 4, 1920.
[42] See Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, and Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*.
[43] Anagnostou, *Contours of White Ethnicity*, 14.
[44] Evangelia Tastsoglou and George Stubos, "The Pioneer Greek Immigrant in the United States and Canada (1880s-1920s): Survival Strategies of a Traditional Family," *Ethnic Groups* 9 (1992): 175-89, 177.
[45] Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 65.

Pratt Fairchild claimed in 1911, Greek men were widely known as "a quarrelsome, treacherous, filthy, low-living lot."[46] Fairchild argued the lack of Greek women and home life left tenement buildings suffering from an "overcrowding of the men, a tendency to slovenliness in the care of the apartments and many social vices,"[47] including elevated passions and their "frequent expression in such vices as sodomy."[48]

Men's tendency to gather in traditional male spaces like Greek coffee houses, while "drinking Greek whiskey and Turkish coffee," further lent Greek men a reputation for volatile tempers, gambling, and boisterous arguments.[49] Greeks' supposed deviancy was reciprocally tied to their racialized status and both explained and helped to prove nativists' complaints about their presence and controversial labor efforts in America.[50] In Utah, newspapers slandered Greeks as "ignorant, depraved, and brutal foreigners . . . a vicious element unfit for citizenship."[51] Greeks faced violence and lynchings from the Ku Klux Klan in the US South and West.[52] In 1909, for example, the Greek Town in Omaha, Nebraska, was looted and burned to the ground after accusations that a Greek man had inappropriate relations with a white woman.[53] Newspaper depictions of aggressive Greek men therefore were especially effective in communicating a

[46] Henry Pratt Fairchild, *Greek Immigration to the United States* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1911), 144.
[47] Ibid., 137.
[48] Ibid., 39.
[49] Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 27.
[50] Gunther Peck, "Padrones and Protest: 'Old' Radicals and 'New' Immigrants in Bingham, Utah 1905-1912," *Western Historical Quarterly* 24, no. 2 (1993): 157-78; Dan Georgakas, *Greek America at Work* (New York: Greek American Labor Council, 1992).
[51] Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 16.
[52] Ann Flesor Beck, "Greek Immigration to, and Settlement in, Central Illinois, 1880-1930" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014); Steven Gerontakis, "AHEPA vs. the KKK: Greek Americans on the Path to Whiteness" (thesis, University of North Carolina at Asheville, 2012).
[53] John G. Bitzes, "The Anti-Greek Riot of 1909—South Omaha," *Nebraska History* 51 (1970): 199-224.

racial, cultural deviancy tied to the homosocial lifestyles imposed by migration and—if not *de jure*, then *de facto*—miscegenation restrictions.[54]

In March 1921, the *New York Tribune* reported that Greek picture brides were "swarming [Brooklyn docks] in scores." The so-called epidemic of picture brides was one that supposedly threatened to "rival the typhus scare at the docks." In addition to their supposed infestation-level numbers, the women's problematic presence more significantly set off the nefarious, animal-like tendencies of the Greek men coming to meet them. Like sharks waiting for their prey, the men "circled around [the ocean liner] in launches and dories, eager for the first glimpse of their unknown helpmeets." The harbor police were called to keep the rowdy bachelors from "mobbing the boat."[55]

In the *Evening Telegram's* report of three hundred brides arriving on the ocean liner *Megalli Hellas* a few months prior, Greek men were again causing problems. Before the ship could dock, it was "met by scores of small boats containing the soon-to-be husbands." After the women landed, the "police reserves were called to keep [the men] from breaking down the gates leading to the gang plank."[56] Oftentimes these women would come in groups, traveling as sisters, friends, or cousins. With them, Helen Papanikolas writes, were sometimes men returning from Greece with their brides—and extras for their friends or brothers. Immigration inspectors were immediately weary of the swarthy men who came back to the States with a seeming harem on their arm, going as far as sending undercover "women detectives [to] follow these groups from Ellis Island, suspicious that the women were being brought for prostitution, the white slavery of

[54] Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[55] "Rush of Picture Brides Keeps 'Marrying Parsons' on the Jump," *New York Tribune*, March 4, 1921.
[56] "Jawbreaker,' Greek Game, and Picture Brides Here on Liner," *The Evening Telegram*, January 20, 1921.

lurid yellow journalism."[57] Agents would tail picture bride couples from New York to as far as San Francisco to determine their moral turpitude.

In addition to police and immigration authorities, local immigrant charities and aid associations were also on hand to contain the men's passions and protect any vulnerable young brides. One representative from the Travelers' Aid Society (TAS) in the summer of 1922 recounted her efforts to prevent what the article deemed a "cave man scheme to kidnap" a young picture bride woman on the docks. In the agent's account of the "cave man" Nikoli Calipo, Nikoli represents the evolutionarily backwards and ill-behaved nature of male sexual predation—one that required careful policing. Nikoli had planned what the TAS agent deemed to be a night of scandalous moral impropriety: a date night at Coney Island. Proudly intercepting him, the woman recounted her victory to the *Tribune*: had the Society not been there to "warn him of his duty" to marry her at Ellis Island, who knew what would have become of that poor woman's virtue? But the tale of Nikoli Calipo presents a contradiction. With one of the greatest critiques of picture marriage being its unfamiliar practitioners—marriages lacking romance or free choice—Nikoli's very possibly innocent (and culturally American) intention of taking his unnamed bride on a date would seemingly be the preferable option to those wary of the authenticity of these unions, especially those espousing a woman's right to choose her partner. Yet Nikoli's racialization casts a deviant light on what otherwise would be deemed the trappings of young romance.[58]

This trope continued in national news coverage in which Greek women were portrayed as victims to male desire. The classic connotation of "buying a bride," also popularly associated

[57] Helen Papanikolas, "Greek Immigrant Women in the Intermountain West," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 16, nos. 1-4 (1989): 25
[58] "Greek Meets Greek Picture Bride, but Rough Stuff Is Out," *New York Tribune*, July 4, 1922.

with Japanese unions, cast picture marriage with connotations of impropriety and prostitution. Since Greeks' arrival in greater numbers at the turn of the century, critics had focused on Greeks' supposed old-world customs that enabled female exploitation. Greek men were stereotyped as having little regard for women's happiness or wellbeing, especially when it came time to find them a suitable mate. A scathing headline in a 1915 issue of the *El Paso Herald*, for example, claimed that Greek "matrimony in almost every case is commercial." Supposedly, "the open disparagement of women, which is characteristic of Greek society, and which greatly shocks modern ideas of gallantry" could be attributed to antiquated marital practices such as the dowry. Since Greek fathers had to "pay men" to marry their daughters, they allegedly focused only on which "suitor is to make the best bargain" without regard for women's welfare. In fact, according to the article, the "girl's consent is not essential" and the "wife who has been forced into such a union" is abused and bodily chastised.[59] As dowries went out of fashion (as many families simply could no longer afford them), the picture bride system shifted the exchange of goods associated with dowries. Now rather than accept money from their intended's family, men sent money for women's travel expenses, thus "buying a bride." Mocking the idea of ordering Greek women by mail, nationally syndicated journalist Frederick Edwards mused, "How Sears-Roebuck came to overlook this one, goodness only knows!"[60]

But in more grievous reports, women were property to be bought by the highest bidder. In 1918, *The Meridian Times* in Idaho ran a later nationally syndicated story of a "Pocatello Greek" who was offered $2,000 to deliver his "pretty 15-year-old daughter in marriage to another Greek" until police officials intervened when the girl caused a scene.[61] Other articles

[59] "Greek Marriages Mercenary," *El Paso Herald*, January 23-24, 1915.
[60] Frederick B. Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long-Distance Mating," *New York Tribune*, September 17, 1922.
[61] Editorial, *Meridian Times*, 1918.

emphasized women's exploitation by commenting on the terrible conditions that women were exposed to while traveling to America. One article claimed the young brides, who were allegedly relegated to steerage like "cargo," were forced to face a series of what the author artfully called "windstorms and brainstorms" as the trip was burdened by unusually violent weather and grotesque political "contests between rival factions" of Greek men heatedly debating politics.[62] Mocking these rough voyages and the ill appearances of arriving sea-sick travelers, the New York *Evening World* quipped, "How many of the Greek picture brides, we wonder, are able to 'retouch' themselves on Ellis Island to match the work of the retoucher in a Greek photographic studio?"[63]

However, these depictions of racialized danger noticeably reach a turning point as the Japanese government stopped issuing passports to Japanese picture brides, stunting the practice on the West Coast. In 1920, amid vitriolic anti-Japanese agitation, California newspapers pitted the categorical picture brides against each other, seeking to elevate Greek women above their Japanese counterparts. Citing the recent deportation of a "Greek girl who crossed the water to marry her fiancé in San Francisco," an agent of a San Francisco immigrant aid foundation protested the immigration literacy restrictions enacted by the US government three years prior that caused illiterate migrants to be turned away at immigration centers. The agent, S. G. Gomez, claimed immigration restrictions unfairly targeted European women. This was true given the high rates of female illiteracy in Greece at the time. But without acknowledging the fact that Japanese picture brides were now wholly prohibited from coming to the United States under the recent Ladies Agreement, Gomez actually insisted the law *favored* Asian women: "Girls are continually being turned back at Ellis Island because they cannot read . . .because the marriage

[62] "300 Photo Brides in Beauty Cargo on Big Greek Liner," *The Evening World*, January 20, 1921.
[63] Editorial, *The Evening World*, August 4, 1922.

has not taken place before the woman lands, she is deported if she is illiterate, while Oriental brides, no matter how illiterate, are admitted." The article also reveals a fascinating, if not obscured, opinion on the racial characteristics of these European women. Citing that Greek picture bride women's presence in the country would pose competition to "American girls" looking for husbands—competition to secure the same immigrant suitors that picture brides were taking—the author implicitly implies the respectability of white women marrying immigrant men.[64]

This tacit acceptance was characteristic of the US West at the time, where "whiteness functioned in a way that deflected much of the racialized anti-immigrant sentiment away from southern and eastern European immigrants" as native whites in California bonded with European immigrants over their mutual distrust of non-white migrants and black labor.[65] But it took several years, concentrated in areas where Southern European immigration was heavy, for newspapers from New England to the Midwest to reflect the growing acceptance of Mediterraneans as white and upwardly mobile.

Picture Marriage and "Love at First Sight"

After 1921—the year the Ladies Agreement prevented Japanese picture brides from coming to the United States—Greek picture marriages were increasingly painted with dignity, romance, and virtue and can be used to trace the symbolic "whitening" of Greek Americans. A 1922 article in the *New York Times*, for example, praised the "prospective husbands [who] were all there, dressed in their best" wearing "white flowers in their buttonholes as well as smiles to

[64] "Picture Brides from Europe, Woman's Idea," *Sausalito News*, March 27, 1920.
[65] Erika Lee, "The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21, no. 3 (2002): 40; George P. Daskarolis, "San Francisco's Greek Colony: Evolution of an Ethnic Community, 1890-1945," *California History* 60, no. 2 (1981): 114-33.

welcome the brides they had never seen before except through the camera man's art."[66] Other reports described the "boxes of candy and bouquets in profusion [that] were hurled aboard the Greek vessel by the happy grooms-to-be."[67] Couples "walked away, hand in hand, smiling happily, decorously chaperoned by representatives of the Travelers' Aid Society or other organizations concerned with the safety of immigrants."[68] Rather than focusing on Greek men as barbaric and Greek women as victims, coverage transformed picture brides into civilizing, virtuous influences on Greek (now) *American* men.

One article hailed the recent arrivals of Greek picture brides as "a busy day for Cupid on Pier 22." With all the "Greek Romeos" lining up at the docks, the "peanut, candy and shoe black business in Brooklyn" took a hit from all the men hurriedly prepping to meet their future wives.[69] In August 1922, Dr. S. A. Tannenbaum, editor of what the *Times* claimed to be an "international journal of psychoanalysis, psychotherapeutics and applied psychology," helped to reframe the narrative further. What was previously touted as a potentially dangerous gamble (marrying a stranger) was now described in terms of "love at first sight." According to the author, "if you are inclined to doubt the possibility of love at first sight you should have been present when the [Greek ocean liner] King Alexander brides first met their future husbands. The warmth of the welcome—the resounding kisses and enthusiastic hugs were enough to convince even the most skeptical." Gone were the aggressive Greek men ominously lurking around boats while they waited for their mates. Instead, Dr. Tannenbaum—and his scientific credentials—offered an alternative narrative: picture marriage was a healthy, affectionate union, worthy of the public's

[66] "200 Picture Brides Come Here to Wed," *The New York Times*, August 3, 1922.
[67] "231 Picture Brides on Wedding Liner: Grooms-to-Be Say It with Candy and Flowers at Quarantine," *The New York Times*, July 3, 1922.
[68] Clara Savage Little-Dale, "Picture-Brides and Love at First Sight," *The New York Times*, August 20, 1922.
[69] "Shipload of Greek Photo Brides Arrive," *The Press and Banner* (Abbeville, SC), April 4, 1921.

support. In his professional opinion, like any relationship, picture marriage was a risk "worth taking."[70]

The infusion of romance into accounts of picture marriage signaled a significant change in the shifting racial character of Greek Americans. As probationary whites, Greeks argued for their political inclusion on the premise that they were exceptional paragons of civic and family life. Greeks utilized eugenicist logic to cite their blood lineage to ancient Greek democracy as evidence of their fitness to citizenship and dedication to the uplift of civic life.[71] Supposedly, Greeks were a strong and healthy stock. According to one article, the average Greek picture bride was a "pretty girl, and strong, healthy girl," for "the Greeks do not admire a woman who is sick all the time."[72] Greek women, therefore, fit the normative eugenic standard—healthy, hearty stock capable of bearing healthy, hearty offspring.

In time, depictions of Greek women were accorded more individualism and seemingly more control over their lives. They were painted with less ascription to fate and more agency in their life choices. And the transition from "Greek brides" to "Hellenic women" signaled their connection to the ancient world and thereby conveyed powerful messages about Greeks' potential for American physical or cultural assimilation. Though Greek migrants were the literal descendants of their country's ancient democratic tradition, eugenicists at the turn of the twentieth century attempted to distance them from their glorious past by explaining that their political and cultural "downfall" was the result of bad breeding. Henry Pratt Fairchild in 1911 referred to it as the "checkered career of the Greek race in the last twenty centuries." Fairchild believed the Greek stock of Plato's time had been all but eradicated because the Greek people

[70] Little-Dale, "Picture Brides."
[71] Steven Gerontakis, "AHEPA vs. the KKK," 2.
[72] Edwards, "Picture Brides and Long Distance Mating."

had "allowed" themselves to be conquered; they effectively diluted their racial and cultural purity with the "'admixtures of foreign blood' from Asia Minor." His words were both a rebuttal of Greeks' political power and a warning to other whites: democracy and the birthplace of civilization had succumbed to defeat through racial amalgamation, and it could happen again.[73] American whites instead claimed the heritage as their own; ownership of ancient traditions was an essential feature of European and American imperialism (and continues to be a powerful symbol wielded by neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups in the twenty-first century).[74] Thus, by the early 1920s, Greek picture brides' transition to "Hellenic" women signaled a racial reclaiming of history itself.

In newspaper stories, Greek women were becoming more fully developed characters than flat tropes. Rather than merely titled "picture brides," women were given names, histories, and voices, even if they were hypothetical, fictional, or from a male perspective. In a 1922 report of two hundred picture brides arriving at Ellis Island, the young women were donning "their best frocks in honor of the event." Men called out names like Mary, Helen, and Iona. And while they are described multiple times as brunette brides with "Near East" customs, they were attractive and emotive, waving happily to the men on shore.[75]

The women were coming from an old world, where romanticized "pepper trees flourish and heavily laden currant bushes line the roadside," but America would make them into modern women.[76] One such brunette bride, Daphne from Corinth, brought as dowry a "huge saddle for her husband which had descended to her from her great-grandfather." But this gift was met

[73] Henry Pratt Fairchild, *Greek Immigration to the United States*, 15.
[74] Denise Eileen McCoskey, "Beware of Greeks Bearing Gifts: How Neo-Nazis and Ancient Greeks Met in Charlottesville," *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective* 11, no. 11 (August 2018). Retrieved from http://origins.osu.edu/article/beware-greeks-bearing-gifts-how-neo-nazis-and-ancient-greeks-met-charlottesville
[75] "200 Picture Brides Come Here to Wed," *New York Times*, August 3, 1922.
[76] Ibid.

comically by the husband, who "proved to be a well-to-do Kansas farmer who, like most of his kind in the West at the present time, transacts all his business in an automobile and never indulges in horse riding." The description of the social class, modernity, and gentility of the Kansas farmer painted a picture of the white middle-class respectability waiting for the bride on her journey west. This association with modernity increased as the article dubbed Greek picture brides to be "the Athenian Sister of the Flapper."[77] Their appearance, previously mocked as Old World and windswept, seemingly became less important, as one report on personal shopper services in New York demonstrated. According to the head of a Fifth Avenue specialty shop, "I took a frowsy little Greek bride rolled up in a shawl and a Mother Hubbard and wearing old canvas heelless [*sic*] shoes, and piloted her around . . . buying everything from shoes to hat. I showed her how to put them on and arrange her hair becomingly and when we had finished, you'd have thought she had stepped out of a fashion sheet." According to the article, in America, anybody could be modern—and chic!—for less than seventy dollars.[78]

Other more unfortunate tales included women abandoned on sight by their "hard-to-please men," as they stood emotional and "sad-eyed" on the docks, facing deportation.[79] Tales of "unclaimed brides"—picture marriages gone bad—were not met with usual derision, but with an air of empathy at the poor women's plights. *The Evening World* reported that while "America doesn't entirely approve of the 'picture courtships' that lead to picture-bride marriages . . .it can only have lively sympathy for those who do not win through when once they have started." And lest readers harshly judge the man who would do such a thing, the paper defends him. There were many reasons why "even an ardent bridegroom may fail to claim his bride."

[77] "200 'Picture Brides' Arrive from Greece," *Richmond Palladium and Sun -Telegram* (Associated Press), August 3, 1922.
[78] "Beauty Now is Selling Cheap in Gotham," *The Leader*, August 15, 1922.
[79] "200 Picture Brides Come Here to Wed," *New York Times*, August 3, 1922.

Communication across seas was slow, and before she even arrived, "he may be killed, injured, or ill," or have legal or financial issues making marriage suddenly impossible.[80] In other words, these Greek men were like any other man—fallible to circumstances outside their control. But it was significantly posed in terms of *fallibility*, not *culpability*. Highlighting the man's transition to whiteness is a lack of blame for his circumstances. Unlike the vilified Japanese man whose misfortunes were the intrinsic result of his own shortcomings, Greek men were simply human.

Disappointed women also had the option of declining marriage, as the *New York Tribune* described, creating autonomous female figures. When one "girl had arrived, seen and been disappointed," she refused to marry her suitor. "Tearfully she took a firm stand" and declared she would rather "go to work" than be a Greek housewife.[81] The *New York Herald* even reported that three young Greek picture brides fell in love with "fellow voyagers who had wooed them on the trip from Piraeus," leaving three "Americanized Greeks" waiting for them disappointed.[82]

A further example of female agency ran in a December 1922 Associated Press story, headlined "GREEK PICTURE BRIDE SUES RICH DETROITER." The short but significant column covers the story of Penelope Papanastasopoulos, a woman from Athens who traveled to Detroit to marry Zissis Zissis, a wealthy Greek furrier. Penelope was suing Zissis for $50,000 (nearly three-quarters of a million dollars in today's cash) for "breach of promise and betrayal." According to Penelope, after proposing marriage upon her arrival, Zissis took her to public "dinners and entertainments as his fiancée." But on March 11, 1922, he "invited her to a dinner dance at the Adison hotel." Instead of the festivities, however, Zissis "took her to a hotel on Second Blvd., on the pretense that he had a picture in his room that he wanted to show her."

[80] "Unclaimed Brides," *The Evening World*, August 4, 1922.
[81] "Rush of Picture Brides Keeps 'Marrying Parsons' on the Jump," *New York Tribune*, March 4, 1921.
[82] "Ellis Island Handles Thousand Immigrants," *The New York Herald*, July 4, 1922.

When they arrived in the room, Zissis attacked her, leaving her unconscious, unprotected, and vulnerable to her attacker's nonconsensual advances. The irony in the article is not lost; enticed into coming to the country as a *picture* bride, it was the pretense of yet another picture that was her undoing. The story of Penelope Papanastasopoulos is significant not only for its novelty, but also for the agency she demonstrates in vocally protesting her situation—publicly so—and utilizing civic resources to seek justice. The article mentions that Penelope connected with Zissis via her brother's acquaintance, but it is not her brother who (at least publicly) pursued the legal action on her behalf. Classic Greek paternalism is missing from the account. Penelope demonstrated that Greek women were not victims to an exploitative system, but rather active agents in their own lives.[83]

But while Penelope's case made headlines, Greek paternalism was prevalent in Greek community efforts to improve their public image. Popular Greek officials bragged that Greek marriages were exceptional templates of sexual morality and civic responsibility. Unlike many immigrant groups—particularly Japanese women who were involved in agricultural labor alongside their husbands—Greek women rarely traveled to the United States with the intent to work outside the home.[84] In essence, Greeks claimed their women adhered to standards of white female domesticity and family values, and their husbands were exemplary in their work ethic to take care of them.

Japanese women, on the other hand, were consistently represented as deviating away from white domesticity.[85] Historian Cecilia Tsu writes that women's labor became a key talking

[83] "Greek Picture Bride Sues Rich Detroiter," *The South Bend News-Times*, December 6, 1922 (10).
[84] Moskos, *Greek Americans*, 12; Papanikolas, *An Amulet of Greek Earth*.
[85] On the intersection of gender and labor, Jeanne Boydston's work details the American process whereby women's reproductive, domestic labor was redefined from being a critical life-sustaining force in the early republic's economy to being its opposite: the economically-neutral work of private-sphere "dependents" in contrast to employed, wage-earning men. This devaluation of labor in turn bolstered white patriarchy, but in prescribing men as breadwinners and devaluing non-white labor, set crippling standards by which even white Americans could not

point in immigration debates surrounding the politics of the family farm. While late nineteenth-century white agriculturalists in California depended on the entire family's labor, "by 1920, they accused Japanese farm families of denigrating Japanese women and exploiting their children by employing them in the fields, castigating such practices as decidedly 'Asiatic' and aberrant. Thus popular perceptions of Asian immigrants incorporated a belief in their inability to adhere to notions of proper American family ideology."[86] Even though the common realities of farm life necessitated the cooperative labor of the entire family unit, white supremacists—even while their own wives worked alongside them in the fields—retooled Japanese women's labor to be evidence of their racial deviancy.

Modeling Greek picture brides as domestic wives and mothers was a politically powerful strategy. Greek men's ability to support their wives and families relayed a civilized white respectability that Greek Americans molded into political legitimacy as they set themselves above other groups as exemplars of American values. Increasingly, Greek Americans were reaching economic mobility, buying homes, and owning private restaurants and businesses. The Chicago Greek media used this fact to argue that—unlike other groups including the Southern Italians they cited by name—Greeks should be exempt from pending immigrant quota laws because of the quality of families that Greek immigrants were producing: "It is a well-known fact and a matter that should be brought to the attention of the legislative and immigration authorities that the Greek girls who came into this country do not engage in any work or business except that of keeping house for their relatives, who support them." By this logic, women's labor outside the home threatened American life. As an ideal, if not a reality, Greek families protected

measure up; except for privileged classes (mainly white women) in times of peace or economic prosperity, women throughout US history have necessarily worked outside the home. See Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[86] Cecilia Tsu, *Garden of the World*, 7.

a paternalistic system where white women's labor did not compete with that of men. In essence, the Greek press was agreeing that American minds were right to worry about immigration; but Greeks "above all other nations" produced the quality of men, women, and families that were an asset to the nation and white, middle-class values at large.[87]

In 1922, the *Times* interviewed George C. Dracopoulo, Consul General of Greece, for his take on the picture bride phenomenon. Dracopoulo claimed solidarity with the picture brides "coming to this country in large numbers from Greece, Servia, Jugoslavia [*sic*] and Italy" but quickly distanced himself from "other" practitioners: "You must differentiate between the classes of so-called picture brides," he urged the reporter. "You must define your terms." For one, Greeks were proud of their picture brides, because, as Dracopoulo weaved into a clever patriotic narrative, these women were proof of the American dream. After all, where else could a poor young shepherd immigrate, work hard to earn money and status, and be able to marry a girl from his home country "from an old aristocratic family . . .whose hem he formerly could not have touched"? The picture bride of Dracopoulo's narrative was not the simple village girl of popular imagination, but rather represented a "union with an ancient family." In Dracopoulo's tale, picture marriages did not just produce stable families, they perpetuated the noble bloodlines of the ancient Greeks. Greek women were implicitly patterned as the literal and symbolic wombs of democracy.[88]

The Travelers' Aid Society in New York echoed this strategy, appealing to Hellenism to explain why "the term 'picture bride' is hardly applicable to" Greek women. According to one representative, arranged marriage was "an ancient Greek custom." Greek families would take special care to make the arrangements and "the young man, who then commences a

[87] "Greeks Oppose Immigrant Bar," *Chicago Daily Journal*, February 18, 1924.
[88] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times*, August 27, 1922.

correspondence with the young woman," would "woo her by mail."[89] Similarly, Dracopoulo also emphasized that family was an important part of the matchmaking process. He claimed that unlike other cultures, Greeks did not have paid matchmakers or agencies producing these couplings. Greek women were no victims—they were rarely forced into marriage, he claimed, and instead married because they were wise enough to trust in their elders' decisions. Separating his own race from others, and contrasting the Greek picture bride with what he called the American "love bride" (or one who marries for love), the Consul General declared Greek marriages were stronger than all others because Greek matrimony was built on the "feeling of responsibility, of the sanctity of the home, of the family, of tradition." He stressed that Greek marriages and families were proof of citizen loyalty, virtue, and commitment to America. Arranged marriage did not reflect an unassimilable loyalty to the "Old World" but rather a loyalty to families and civic life at large.[90] But in wielding the discourse of white heteronormativity to claim political legitimacy, his political efforts worked to bolster white heterosexist supremacy rather than dismantling it.

The "Probationary" Bride Ascends to Whiteness

Little scholarship exists on Greek picture brides, but far from deserving to be a mere footnote in Greek American history,[91] picture brides were essential to the process by which Greek Americans navigated their racial position from "in-between" white *other* to ethnic white *American*. The period's racial formations and burgeoning notions of heteronormativity therefore provide exceptional opportunities to view whiteness in a fractured state. The later inclusion of

[89] "16 Picture Brides Married, 195 Left," *New York Times,* August 4, 1922.
[90] "Two Kinds of Brides," *New York Times,* August 27, 1922.
[91] Moskos, *Greek Americans,* 11-12.

probationary whites—Jews, Italians, Greeks, Armenians, and others—into sanctioned *whiteness* depended on a multitude of factors.[92] Beginning in the early 1920s, immigration restrictions and annual quotas soothed though hardly nullified nativists' apprehension towards the country's newcomers.[93] It is not surprising, then, that positive public perception of picture marriage surfaced in news reports around 1922, the year of the country's first draconian immigration quota law, and the immediate years following Japanese women's *de facto* exclusion from the country. Where newspapers prior to 1922, for example, reported the hundreds of Greek picture brides "swarming" US docks daily, after immigration quotas went into place, reporters' hyperbolic language became pacified as they accounted each month's quota fulfilment, signaling to readers the flow of migrants was in control.[94]

Secondly, whiteness was a game of comparisons. As 1.5 million African Americans migrated out from the US South during the Great Migration from 1910-1945, the Greeks or Italians who seemed so dark to nativists the day before—to recall Natalie Molina's work—metaphorically paled in comparison to the presence of black bodies in white towns and neighborhoods. In essence, Southern Europeans' acceptance into popular notions of whiteness and citizenship was predicated on the exclusion of others. Greek picture marriage, in turn, was marginally acceptable because they had a non-white counterpart seemingly more "foreign" to American minds than themselves.

To account for the vast differences in demographics within the newly expansive idea of American "whiteness" burgeoning in the 1920s, white *ethnicity* as a concept served to broaden

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[92] See Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White*, and Karen Brodkin, *How Jews Became White Folks*.
[93] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 12.
[94] As one 1922 Associated Press article expressively claimed, "No difficulty is expected in permitting the entrance of the members of the hymenial [*sic*] argosy, as quotah [*sic*] from Greece allowed by the immigration restriction act are as yet unfilled." See "200 'Picture Brides' Arrive from Greece," *Richmond Palladium and Sun -Telegram* (Associated Press), August 3, 1922.

the category in a way which legitimized its own hypocrisy; the cultural diversity of Southern European groups was reframed to be an "acceptable deviation" from Anglo racial purity.[95] Non-white cultural practices continued to be denigrated. But groups like Greeks unproblematically retained non-Anglo cultural practices because their burgeoning racial privilege cast their white ethnic traditions—languages, festivals, folklore, foods, and, as I argue, *picture marriage*—as acceptable deviations from the broad umbrella category of whiteness. In contrast to the normative backdrop of seemingly "pure" American whiteness, white ethnicity became a compatible offshoot that allowed for the survival of culture and previously "non-American" traditions.[96] Picture marriage itself was curious, but in the case of Greek immigrants, it was merely a stepping stone toward American assimilation—a step leading formerly barbaric Greek bachelors to married, domestic civility.

Picture marriage provides a lens to see the ways that Greeks navigated their racial position from "in-between" white *other* to ethnic white *American* and restores the centrality of heteronormativity and American sexual politics to this process. This chapter forwards notions of white ethnicity as an "acceptable deviation from whiteness," to demonstrate that white ethnicity was equally premised on an acceptable deviation from *heteronormativity*—notions of romantic love, gender roles, and American marriage. Though their modes were antiquated, picture marriage unions were eventually seen as having the potential to produce fitting citizens and white families for the body politic.

These histories defy the bootstrap narrative of immigrant success. Immigrants' accomplishments and acculturation in the United States were not won on merit alone. In the process from in-between whites to American Caucasians, Greeks' histories reveal the ways that

[95] Anagnostou, *Contours of White Ethnicity*, 9.
[96] Dan Georgakas, "On Being Greek in America: Identities," *Journal of Modern Hellenism* 29 (2013): 45-65.

sexual *deviancy* can be reformulated as acceptable *deviation*, accounting for the reasons why Greeks and Greek cultural practices like picture marriage were subsumed into whiteness—continuing well into the second half of the twentieth century—while Japanese picture marriage was dissolved in the early 1920s. This history of double standards, racial stereotypes, and policing immigrant families has more implications to the current moment than ever before. The "picture brides" of the past have been replaced by newer racialized, sexual tropes meant to dehumanize migrants and justify their mistreatment. This legacy of violence continues in the perpetuation of discourse villainizing migrants as Mexican rapists, welfare queens, and anchor babies, by lay people and authorities alike.[97] To understand our current moment is to understand an important truth: United States immigration politics are, and always have been, predicated on a system of racist, heterosexist standards that continue to marginalize migrants and uphold the power of white supremacy.

[97] Carly Hayden Foster, "Anchor Babies and Welfare Queens: An Essay on Political Rhetoric, Gendered Racism, and Marginalization," *Women, Gender, and Families of Color* 5, no. 2 (2017): 50-72.

Chapter 3: The Picture Brides from Europe

In March 1920, headlines out of San Francisco hailed the arrival of the "picture brides from Europe" who would "take the place of the now prohibited Oriental picture brides of Japan."[1] Endorsed by the Travelers' Aid Society as a "fair deal to foreign girls who wish to follow their fiancés to the United States," these "new" picture brides would be an asset to the country, opening up a "thriving industry in matrimonial agencies in seaport towns," and helping to "Europeanize America and furnish more hungry children for the millowner."[2] The praise of these "foreign girls" and their children is striking in comparison to the public vitriol only two months earlier when headlines warned readers of the "Jap picture brides" who were detrimentally "Japanizing California" and "breeding" children to subvert and break the law.[3]

Though highly contested by immigrant groups in the United States, the Japanese state reacted to American xenophobia by deciding to stop issuing passports to picture bride women in December 1919, thus ebbing the flow of women leaving Japan in the hopes of ameliorating political tensions between the two countries. But as European brides began to increasingly arrive in greater numbers after 1920, the hypocrisy in treatment towards European and Asian picture

[1] *Sausalito News*. "Picture Brides from Europe, Woman's Idea." Vol. 36, No. 13, March 27, 1920.
[2] Just what is meant by the term "Europeanize America" can certainly be debated given American perceptions of European immigrants and racial hierarchies of the time. Given the positive tone of the article towards European women, however, and the ways that "Europeanize" is juxtaposed by more common uses of the pejorative term "Japanize," it seems the author may be referencing the influence of European culture capital, rather than its racial character. Further, while their children could potentially stress food supplies in the United States (referencing the mill owner in the article), the author seems to instead implicate that these children would provide economic opportunities for the mill owner, rather than conjuring images of resource competition as is the case in reports on Japanese immigrants' children. This tacit acceptance of European immigrants and influence was characteristic of the U.S. West at the time, where, as historian Erika Lee writes, "whiteness functioned in a way that deflected much of the racialized anti-immigrant sentiment away from southern and eastern European immigrants" as native whites in California bonded with European immigrants over their mutual distrust of non-white migrants and black labor. *See* Lee's article, "The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21, no. 3 (2002): 40.
[3] *The Washington Times*. "How the Jap 'Picture Brides' are Japanizing California." January 4, 1920.

brides became stark. Representatives in the Japanese consul sought to diplomatically take actions calling attention to the issue. On March 4, 1921, six months after the Ladies Agreement effectively ended the arrival of Japanese picture brides to the United States, Vice Consul of Japan Haruhiko Nishi wrote to Frederick Wallis, Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island, to inquire about the "Europeans married under the proxy laws of their own country" who were admitted into the United States. Seemingly their marriages were not contested like the many Japanese proxy marriages that required couples to remarry at American ports. "I would deem it a great favor," Nishi wrote, "if you would kindly let me know whether such is the case, and how many such brides (or bride-grooms) are coming yearly from Europe." In parentheses, he added, "Kindly classify the statistics by nationality."[4]

Though Nishi's letter possessed the polite distance of diplomacy, his request was politically significant. American immigration officials had been obsessed with quantifying and surveilling Japanese picture bride women as they came into the country. Nishi's request for Ellis Island officials to provide the same statistics tracking for European women revealed the severe double standard that existed in the racialized policing of borders.

Nishi's letter was passed through the ranks of the immigration bureau. A week later, Assistant Commissioner General Byron A. Uhl explained the immigration station's official stance on the issue: "You are advised that the Bureau has some recollection of some two or three cases coming up before the Department…. Of the so-called 'proxy' wives of aliens residing in the United States" but that the bureau had "no distinct recollection of the nationalities of these aliens." In his flippant response, it seemed the Bureau was having a memory problem: "It does

[4] H. Nishi, Vice Consul, Consulate General of Japan, to Frederick A. Wallis, Commissioner of Immigration, Ellis Island, New York, 4 May 1921. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC, [hereafter referenced as NARA in future citations], RG 85, File no. 52424-13.

not recall the names of these aliens, hence it would not be possible to locate the records… Neither does it recollect just what action the Department took with respect to them." Uhl claimed they were isolated cases, and therefore, though these cases may have occurred, "there is no likelihood that the Department presented the matter of their coming to the local diplomatic representatives of the governments concerned, although there is every reason to believe that [the Bureau] would take such action should the coming of 'proxy wives' from any country assume large proportions."[5]

Nishi's correspondence resides in a congested, unorganized file on Japanese picture brides at the National Archives in Washington, DC. Contradicting Commissioner Uhl's response are the extant immigration bureau records of potentially thousands of proxy and "picture brides" from all over Europe—from Italy, Greece, Armenia, Germany, Albania, Portugal, and more. Nearly a hundred years later after Nishi's letter was received at Ellis Island, I was able to visit the Immigration and Naturalization Service's record group and do what Nishi could not in his own time—find evidence of these European proxy brides—popularly known as picture brides in U.S. culture—and the bureaucratic responses to them. Nishi and Uhl's correspondence demonstrates the removal of these Southern European women from institutional memory, in what I initially hypothesized to be a politically motivated bout of amnesia and plausible deniability.

When I arrived at the National Archives for the first time in 2016, I came prepared to request the "picture bride" files listed on the finding aids for the Immigration and Naturalization Service's record group. What I found in the specific boxes containing information on "picture brides" was a collection of investigative materials on the practice including examples of

[5] Byron A. Uhl, Assistant Commissioner General, Ellis Island, May 12, 1921. NARA, RG 85, File no. 52424/13-C.

immigration records, photographs, internal memos, newspaper clippings, legislations and regulations, and other ephemera on Japanese immigrants. No European women or couples were included or mentioned outside of the correspondence I found between Nishi and Uhl.

When I went back to (the incredibly patient) archivist to ask for the "European picture bride" files, I was given a broad overview of how the INS record group was collected and collated over the years. It was rare that files existed in categories or groups, and there was no way to look up specific names of immigrants or bureau employees. Instead, files—be they immigrant detention records, ship manifests, or latrine duty schedules—were all filed mixed-up together, in roughly chronological order. Given the massive size of the record group and the paucity of topical finding aid resources, I was up for the quite the challenge. I spent nearly half a day of my precious archival time simply cross-referencing information from dozens of vague finding aids with the dates of incoming ships bringing picture brides to New York (as reported in old newspaper clippings I had previously found as part of my preliminary research).

After combing through countless boxes completely bereft of any relevant information to my project, I soon came across files [within files] containing immigrant names listed on their front pages. I knew from my previous archival work that picture bride women, who often appeared in daily news reports in the 1910s and 1920s, had come primarily from Italy, Turkey, Greece, and Armenia. And though I wish I could report a more scientific or complex method, I simply started scanning each file for names of those specific ethnicities. When one Greek woman's file revealed she was coming to the United States "to marry a man she has not yet met," I was utterly delighted that my rudimentary system had worked. Giddy with the serotonin-adrenaline rush that only the truly nerdiest of historians can understand, I sat in the near-silent reading room amidst half a dozen serious-faced researchers, wishing I could share my good

fortune and wondering if anybody else was finding historical treasures of their own. To this day, I still wish that reading rooms in archives had tiny bells researchers could ring every time they made a life changing discovery or finally found the one morsel of information they had spent weeks looking for.

The dozens of files I found that week, and the thirty more I collected on a follow up trip in 2018, are the sources used in this chapter: previously unaccessed immigration records from the Immigration and Naturalization Service record group at the National Archives in Washington, DC. These extant files include the details of investigations on picture brides that were, as was often the case, stopped or detained by immigration officials to verify the legitimacy of their marriages or engagements and eligibility to enter the United States. Though varying in their degree of completion or length, files include an abundance of details, including interviews with the woman and her fiancé or spouse; testimonials from priests, acquaintances, and employers; bureau memos, correspondence, passports, bond papers, and financial documents. Personal and often humiliating questions interrogated women about their sexual histories, number of partners, participation in prostitution, or other "acts of baseness, vileness, or depravity."[6] These records provide a glimpse at the bureaucratic barriers that picture bride women and their families had to navigate. Though not ideal circumstances, the interviews and information they contain restore these women's voices and testimonies to the historical record.

As these thick files show—some nearly sixty pages long and spanning years' worth of investigations and follow ups—immigration officials at Ellis Island were very much aware of European picture brides and communicated at length with each other regarding how to deal with them. I had gained ample archival evidence proving authorities knew about these women at a

[6] Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010 (53).

federal bureaucratic level. But why then—given the height of political attention on Japanese picture brides—was Nishi's letter so seemingly unique? Why were there not more discussions, letters, and petitions to be found either supporting or protesting these Southern European women based on the contemporaneous political reactions to Japanese picture brides? Besides the articles in popular American newspapers where reporters compared different "types" of brides, why were the two groups not more frequently compared or discussed in relation to one another in political discourse regarding picture brides and picture marriage at large? Why were they policed so differently even though the two groups shared the same practice?

One very plausible answer is that the records may not have survived. Maybe I just have yet to find them, or maybe they were destroyed after Nishi's letter got bureau employees worried they would be exposed of a double standard. But after reading the Ellis Island detention files of these Southern European picture brides—particularly how they spoke to, dealt with, and processed these women—I realized the silence in the archive was not due to record organization issues or political sabotage, but rather this silence spoke volumes about the racial logics of the early twentieth century.

Perhaps there were not more institutional protests to Southern European picture brides because—though they held an "off-white" status as discussed in the previous chapter—authorities simply did not code their presence as the racial threat that Japanese migrants posed. Though rhetoric of the time (as seen throughout this dissertation) scathingly critiqued picture marriage as an immoral practice, it never was about the marriage practice itself, but rather its comparative practitioners. Ian Haney Lopez writes that in early-twentieth century court cases and legislative systems, authorities "treated questions of race as matters of common sense, an approach that naturalized race by insisting it is part of the reality in which we find ourselves,

something observed and easily known to all, and not constructed and dependent on the human knower."[7] No abundant files existed grouping, listing, or quantifying Southern European picture brides because racial logics, without needing to justify their hypocrisy, did not matter-of-factly find Southern European picture marriage to be as destructive to American democracy as their Asian counterparts. Simply stated, disparate responses to picture marriage across ethnic groups, as clearly evidenced in bureaucratic records, shows authorities unjustly targeted Japanese migrants based solely on race, and not moral, cultural, or sexual grounds as was often claimed.

In this chapter, I use Ellis Island immigration detention files to demonstrate how immigration authorities relied on this "common sense" approach to create biased assumptions based on observable evidence to manage incoming migrants and dictate their ultimate outcomes. These case files not only tell the story of changing immigration policies across time, but record their abundant inconsistencies, and reveal the very human, uncertain process by which bureau employees executed regulatory actions. These files demonstrate what political scientists call the "bureaucratic learning" process in which institutions develop—over time and through experience—the knowledge that informs and bolsters public policies.[8] I argue this process unveils itself in the steady stream of memos and letters back-and-forth between immigration bureau employees and officials, asking for clarification and instructions on how to proceed with these women's cases. Many of the internal memos are pragmatic and straightforward. Some are generously concerned about a woman's dire circumstances; others, more callously impatient or unsympathetic.[9]

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[7] Ian Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race*. New York: New York University Press, 2006 (115).

[8] Michael J. Lacey and Mary O. Furner. *The State and Social Investigation in Britain and the United States.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 (3); Margot Canaday. *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

[9] This chapter's methodology was modeled after, and owes a debt of gratitude to, historical work using similar analyses of government documents, including Susan Porter Benson's analysis of women's bureau cases in her text,

In the process of their bureaucratic education, immigration employees had guidelines for dealing with prostitutes, polygamists, or public charges. But picture bride women and arranged marriages did not necessarily fall within these categories. Nor, given their off-white status, did they fall within any clearly demarcated racial categories subject to specific regulation. Bureaucratic measures, therefore, often reflected the greater biases of the time and the improvisation of individuals in charge. Inspectors often relied on prejudiced intuition, or their "belief" that an immigrant or marriage was either genuine or fraudulent. As Martha Gardner writes, "appearance often became reality as inspectors evaluated which immigrants appeared morally respectable, racially eligible, or economically self-sufficient."[10] What results from their investigations is an inside look at the ways both immigrants and the immigration bureau navigated the country's most pressing issues.

As a case study, this work focuses on the stories of the European women most prevalently practicing arranged marriage by mail: Greek, Italian, Armenian, and Turkish women, not only linked by their geographical or cultural practices, but facing similar issues of genocide, poverty, strict gender codes, and racial discrimination. The history of these women reveals the contradictory, discriminatory nature of U.S. immigration legislation, but more importantly, highlights the remarkable agency of migrants to navigate and resist xenophobic boundaries. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, few works address European picture brides at all, much less detail the processes of racialization at play in their settlement and reception. Race is nearly absent in

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Household Accounts: Working-Class Family Economies in the Interwar United States (Ithaka, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015), as well as immigration historians such as Martha Gardner in *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) and Margot Canaday in *The Straight State*. Gardner and Canaday's work inspired me to visit the National Archives to seek out detention files for picture bride women as a way to access their stories and the barriers they faced. These authors' analytical models, in turn, provided critical examples of how to write about and gain information from these sources.

[10] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen,* 6.

existing histories of European picture or correspondence brides.[11] However, in demonstrating the ways U.S. immigration officials worked to create policies capable of categorizing, policing, and eventually excluding European picture bride women from the country, this chapter exposes the ways racial logics played into bureau employees' ultimate decisions on whether to admit or exclude these women from the country.

As the immigrant detention files in this chapter will show, authorities used three main strategies to prevent Southern European picture brides from entering the country: literacy restrictions, quota numbers, and the "likely to become a public charge" (LPC) clause, the latter a broad category that historian Martha Gardner notes was disproportionately used against migrants from Southern Europe and Asia.[12] I argue that because all three of these restriction strategies were eugenics-based policy measures intended to specifically target nonwhite, disabled, female, or "degenerate" individuals, their use by immigration bureaus to police European picture brides demonstrates how officials viewed picture marriage as a racial problem to be solved, just as much as a moral, sexual one. Yet even while strict laws were being passed to keep Southern European immigrants out of the country, there is revealed in these cases a contradictory but

[11] For an example of work on Greek picture brides that analyzes intersections of race, gender, and sexuality, see Kathryn Vaggalis, "Off-White Romantics: Cross-cultural Histories of Immigrant Picture Brides and the Process of U.S. Race Making." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 40, no. 3 (2021): 43-69. For previous work on Southern European picture brides that provides context on these women's lives, *see* Evangelia Tatsoglou, "The Margin at the Centre: Greek Immigrant Women in Ontario," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 29, no. 1 (1997): 119-60; Steve Frangos, "The Picture Bride Era," *The National Herald*, March 12, 2005; Helen Papanikolas, *An Amulet of Greek Earth: Generations of Immigrant Folk Culture* (Athens: Swallow Press, 2002); Helen Papanikolas, "Greek Women in the Intermountain West." *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 16, nos. 1-4 (1989): 17-35. For brief mentions in foundational work, *see* Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980). For work on Italian or Armenian picture brides, *see* Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill, "Armenian Refugee Women: The Picture Brides, 1920-1930," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1993): 3-29; Susanna Scarparo, "Italian Proxy Brides in Australia," *Revista Internazionale di Studi Sulle Migrazioni Italiane nel Mondo*, nos. 38-39 (2009): 85-108; Suzanne Sinke, "Moved to Marry: Connecting Marriage and Cross-Border Migration in the History of the United States," *L'Homme: Zeitschrift für Feministische Geschichtswissenschaft* 25, no. 1 (January 2014): 11-29; for information on European correspondence brides, see Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen.*

[12] Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen,* 79.

emerging privilege of whiteness in the ways these immigrants were sometimes able to bend and subvert ideological boundaries. When compared to the experiences of Japanese women in earlier chapters of this dissertation, the immigration bureau's differing treatment of picture marriage practices both within and between ethnic groups represents the institutional establishment of white middle-class sexuality as an American vanguard of immigration policy. The following sections show how early-twentieth century immigration policy was never consistent, never purely ruled by justice or due process, but rather was often carried out by very human individuals working and struggling to navigate an immigration system constantly changing and transforming in light of new ideas on American race, gender, and sexuality.

A Note on Terminology

Armenians, Italians, and ethnic Greeks (including those from Asia Minor) were the four predominant European groups known for and practicing what Americans called "picture marriage." In the case of Southern European couples, picture marriage encompassed a variety of practices. Some women were married by proxy in their home countries; others came to the United States as fiancées of men they only knew through pictures and letters. Nevertheless, these women were grouped together and colloquially nicknamed *picture brides* in U.S. media and political discourse. The political importance of this appropriated, racialized title is discussed in the previous chapter. It is important to note here that while immigration bureau officials overtly referred to Japanese women as "picture brides" in files and internal memos, these same officials did not use this terminology to refer to European women coming under similar circumstances. This double standard strongly demonstrates how immigration officials managed to dehumanize their subjects by referring to them as a singular title or assigning them a category (picture

bride)—thus conflating diverse experiences down to a racial and universalized trope—while registering empathy for European women by using their names or personal details from their migration stories to allocate resources or assistance. In this explicit example of differing treatment, the State shows its power to regulate and define bodies in calculated measures that preserve its racial boundaries and accord differing privileges to is members.[13]

The Bureaucratic Learning Process of Policing Foreign Brides

In her work on Greek immigrants in the Intermountain West, historian Helen Zeese Papanikolas recounts how some men, with the money and resources to do so, traveled to Greece to marry their wives and would sometimes bring back women for their relatives or friends. These traveling parties—made up of single men surrounded by multiple women—precipitated grave suspicion from immigration inspectors. After interrogations, administrators would send detectives to "follow these groups from Ellis Island," sometimes as far as Utah, Idaho, and California, "suspicious that the women were being brought for prostitution." [14]

Papanikolas is the only scholar to make this assertion, but that is not surprising given the dearth of scholarship on early pioneering Greek women in America. Papanikolas was the daughter of Greek immigrants born in Carbon County, Utah in 1917. Receiving a bachelor's

[13] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* New York: Vintage Books, 1995. See my earlier discussion of language and the bureaucratic use of "picture bride" as immigration category in Chapter 2 of this dissertation in Louis Post's letter to Seattle Washington immigration employees.

[14] Papanikolas, "Greek Immigrant Women in the Intermountain West," 25. Gunther Peck writes that prostitution was seen as an "element of fraternal manhood's egalitarian rights and privileges" among male laborers in the padrone system (137). Whether they partook or not, Greek men (who were stereotyped for gambling, arguing, drinking, and general debauchery in the early-twentieth century) may have attracted extra attention from immigration inspectors suspecting them of impropriety because of Greek men's early connections to contracted labor and fraternal forms of entertainment in all-bachelor labor camps. Additionally, gambling and prostitution were two highly lucrative services sought by famous labor agent Leon Skliris for profits in the U.S. West in the 1910s. However, Peck writes his profits could never match that of female brothel owners like Stella Poulos, a Greek woman in Pocatello, Idaho. See Peck, *Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000 (151, 158).

degree from the University of Utah in 1939, she dedicated her life to documenting early Greek American community history in the state, receiving an honorary doctorate from her alma mater in 1984. Her story about the Ellis Island detectives following picture brides to their new homes between 1912-1924 lacks a footnote for further investigation but was no doubt the product of either a personal memory or one recounted to her in the dozens of oral histories she collected throughout her life.

Papanikolas's story of detectives pursuing picture bride women brings two salient points to mind; firstly, it speaks to historian Mae Ngai's observations that borders are porous, and that immigrant policing has never been contained to geographic boundaries or ports of entry.[15] In many ways, the Ellis Island files in this chapter represent merely the beginning of a long physical and emotional journey marked by bureaucracy, legality, and acclimation. Secondly, Papanikolas's approach to history demonstrates that historical knowledge about Greek picture brides mostly exists in the stories passed down to their descendants. Jim Angert, for example, a grandson of picture bride Sophia Silima, told me in a correspondence that family stories recount remarkable snapshots of her journey to America: how she resented coming to America, was married in a New York courthouse within hours of leaving Ellis Island, was only detained at the immigration detention center for twenty minutes (a fact I verified in archival records), and was helped into the country by a Women's Christian Temperance Union missionary named Athena Marmaroff.[16] Descendants have become the greatest archive for picture bride history. But stories get passed on, distilled down, lose their meanings, and gain new ones in the process. A goal for this dissertation therefore, was to bridge the gap between community memory and academic

[15] Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
[16] Jim Angert, personal correspondence with the author (email), July 7, 2021.

scholarship, finding evidence of these women in official records to gain new perspectives on their experiences as situated within the political contexts in which they arrived.

Without the footnote to Papanikolas's story about the immigration detectives, I sought out to find archival evidence of the immigration bureau's documented history of interrogating, surveilling, and following picture bride women. The bureau's investigation tactics no doubt took time and great resources especially given the rising number of new immigrants arriving each new day. The records I found in the archive documenting this process show how, in seeking measures to determine immigrants' intentions regarding novel issues such as picture marriage beginning in the 1910s, immigration authorities scrambled for methods to determine immigrants' intentions, often improvising as they went. For example, beyond laws in place banning prostitutes and polygamists—which U.S. agents could not prove picture brides were—what measures did the bureau have to evaluate immigrant marriage and sexuality? This process developed over time as the following case of a young Greek woman in 1912 demonstrates. Her file shows the lengthy, in-depth investigations the immigration bureau underwent to police women's sexual propriety, even after migrants left the immigration station, and as far as San Francisco and Seattle in this particular case. Ending nearly two years after she arrived in New York, the young woman's extensive case file demonstrates how officials struggled to categorize and define immigrants' actions and personal life choices within existing paradigms of race, gender, and sexuality. The case further demonstrates how the immigration bureau was still very much a work in progress. The exhaustion, disgust, and frustration expressed by the case workers belie not only their own prejudices but demonstrate how difficult it was to take administrative action without ample policies in place.

Sometimes the immigration bureau's worries of female exploitation were warranted, as in the case of Angeliki Herginopulou, a young woman from Greece, who came to the United States in October 1912, and was tricked into marrying under false pretenses.[17] Angeliki was among the early waves of Greek picture brides coming to the United States in a time when few Greek women were leaving the country. Angeliki's story, told through extensive interviews with immigration agents, elucidates not only her own bravery for making the journey, but the tendency of immigration officials to distrust the stories of immigrant women; additionally, it demonstrates the prejudiced idea that immigrant men—as was often assumed and sometimes rightfully so—were abusing immigration systems and contracting women for deviant reasons. But as the case file from her investigation reveals, the laws and systems in place did not assist trafficked females, but rather assigned blame and punishment to victims for their situations.

Thinking she was arriving to a new job in the United States, Angeliki was tricked into marrying a man she did not know. Rather than protect her or ensure her safety, the immigration bureau opened an investigation, juggled around a variety of possible accusations, and pursued her deportation on charges that did not fit her situation but rather reflected the early immigration bureau's scant resources and effective policies. Passed back-and-forth between immigration authorities, the bureau's internal memos and interviews reveal the uncertainties and guesswork that went into categorizing and policing immigrant behavior.

Angeliki's story begins when a female acquaintance in Greece spoke of her brother, Andrew Kostifas, who owned a candy store in the United States. The friend told Angeliki that Andrew wanted to offer some young lady a job—not a marriage proposal—and Angeliki eagerly accepted. Andrew met her at Ellis Island, and took her west to Spokane, Washington, where his

[17] Angeliki Herginopulou. immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 53510-410.

deception soon became evident. As Angeliki arrived at Andrew's business, she was disappointed to find Andrew did not own the flourishing candy store his sister had claimed, but a notoriously rowdy Greek coffee house full of boisterous men,[18] and not a single woman in sight. With no other options, Angeliki stayed, working long hours in the coffee shop by day, and living in a little room above the coffee house by night. Working sometimes late into the evening, Angeliki was thrust into a boisterous and morally questionable male sphere, where Andrew abused her and refused to compensate her for her work.

Ten days after their arrival in Spokane, Andrew took Angeliki to Coeur d'Lane, Idaho, on the promises of making her an American citizen. In her later interview with the immigration inspectors, Angeliki claimed Andrew took her before an official, and told her to raise her hand. Speaking no English, Angeliki was led to believe she was taking a citizenship oath. To her later dismay, she found out the process was not a naturalization ceremony, but a *marriage* ceremony. Angeliki claimed she was tricked and, in response to the bureau's persistent questions, insisted that the marriage was never consummated. In the six months she spent in Spokane, Angeliki testified she lived alone; she never shared a room with Andrew.

Andrew, however, shared a room—and a bed—with his business partner, George Vlahos. After a disagreement, George confronted Andrew over his treatment of Angeliki. Angered, George sold his share of the business and left. Angeliki followed him and together, they traveled to Seattle to escape the mad world of the coffee house business. In Seattle, Angeliki and George shared a room in a Japanese hotel for one week before marrying in San Francisco. In her testimony, Angeliki insisted she married George without him knowing about her previous

[18] Charles Moskos writes that Greek coffee houses gained notoriety for male debauchery in the early twentieth century. Men's tendency to gather in traditional male spaces like Greek coffee houses, while "drinking Greek whiskey and Turkish coffee," lent Greek men a reputation for volatile tempers, gambling, and boisterous arguments. See Moskos, *Greek-Americans*, 27.

marriage to Andrew. She supplied a marriage certificate as proof of her legitimate union, but inspectors informed her that the marriage document she supplied was merely a license; no actual ceremony or registration had taken place. It is unclear if George knew about her marriage to Andrew.

Andrew's testimony of the situation was much different and the immigration bureau, interviewing Andrew and Angeliki in separate rooms, pitted the couple against each other. According to him, he sent abroad for the girl explicitly intending on marrying her and gave proof of their marriage certificate. A friend, and proprietress of the Spokana building where they lived, corroborated Andrew's claims that he and Angeliki lived together in the same room after their marriage until he "caught George in bed with his… wife and they had a fight.

Inspectors did not hide their suspicions of Angeliki's moral character and pursued investigations for evidence of prostitution. Only two years before Angeliki's arrival in 1912, the government had passed updated policies to address the rising concerns of white slavery and sex trafficking amongst arriving immigrants. Under the 1907 and 1910 immigration acts, Angeliki was subject to deportation as "any alien woman or girl for the purpose of prostitution, or for any other immoral purpose," including those individuals responsible for their presence and support in the country, were eligible for deportation up to three years after the migrant's arrival.[19] The 1910 Immigration Act amended this clause further, expanding the jurisdiction of immigration violations to any district in which acts of immorality occurred, allowing the immigration bureau

[19] Dillingham Commission, quoting the Immigration Act of February 20, 1907, in William Paul Dillingham, "Reports of the Immigration Commission: Steerage Conditions." Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1911 (58).

access to the West Coast case. The Act explicitly named, and placed equal culpability on houses of prostitution as they did "music or dance halls," and other places of "amusement."[20]

Greek coffee houses like the one Andrew Kostifas owned, which were infamous for their male debauchery, would have signaled proof of an already existing deviancy, a biased foundation for the immigrant inspectors' suspicion.[21] Adding fuel to the fire, inspectors learned that the hotel to which Angeliki and George escaped, and were currently residing, was run by a former brothel owner. On June 18, 1913, Angeliki and George were arrested under charges of prostitution and violation of the Mann Act. However, sentencing found no proof of "commercial immorality" on Angeliki or George's part, and the charges were dropped.[22] Immigration Commissioner Samuel Backus dismissed the case as a "family quarrel" in which Angeliki came to marry Andrew, but fell in love with another man.

It could have ended there, but other inspectors insisted on pursuing the case, intent on exposing Angeliki's impropriety or fraud. Inspectors interviewed her multiple times, intent on knowing all the details of her sexual history.

Q: Do you still insist that you were never married to Kotsifas?

A: Not that I know of; I never was married to him.

Q: Do you still insist that you never cohabited with him?

A: I swear that I never lived with him.

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[20] Dillingham Commission citing Act of March 26, 1910 in Dillingham, "Report of the Immigration Commission," 58.

[21] Paradoxically, in the name of protecting "authentic" marriage, the Act also declared that spouses' testimonies were not protected, explaining Andrew's ability to provide evidence against his wife. According to the Act, in "all prosecutions…the testimony of a husband or wife shall be admissible and competent evidence against a wife or husband." Dillingham, "Report of the Immigration Commission," 59.

[22] Commissioner-General of Immigration Samuel W. Backus, Dept. of Commerce and Labor, July 24, 1913. NARA DC, RG 85, File no. 53510-410.

Q: And yet you were willing as soon as you left Spokane and went away with the man you now call your husband, knowing that you were not married to him, to live with him immediately. Is that true?

A: I thought I was not married to Kotsifas and so I went to live with George Vlahos.

Q: …Have you ever had intercourse with any other men except the one that you now claim as your husband?

A: No, nobody except George Vlahos.

Angeliki, now three months pregnant, defended herself, ingeniously turning the conversation to Andrew's depravities. In addition to beating her, Andrew had tried to sell her to men that came into the coffee house—demands she refused multiple times. And while she may have cohabitated with Vlahos before marriage, Andrew had his own moral improprieties: "…he was taking up young boys to his room. The whole of Spokane knew of it."

With this revelation, the layers of intrigue grew deeper, and the question of Andrew and George's relationship—and shared bed—came under scrutiny. Immigrant inspectors interviewed a friend, Theros Kocadis, who lived at the Spokana building with Angeliki and the men. Testifying that he knew where Andrew and George lived, Theros admitted he would visit them in their room.

Q: What time did you visit them?

A: About 11 or 12 o'clock at night after they closed…

Q: How often did you go to their room?

A: Nearly every night.

Q: Do you know whether George Vlahos and Andrew Kotsifas slept together in room 113?

A: Yes, sir…

Q: Did you see him sleeping with George Vlahos many times?

A: Yes, sir…

Q: How did it come that you were going to this man's room at 11 or 12 o'clock at night as you have testified?

A: Well, I knew them very well, they were friends of mine and we went to talk up there…

As if to ascertain whether Theros himself had ever spent the night, the inspector asked him what time the men got up for work in the morning. Theros didn't know, but the inspector's following question confirms his suspicions: "Was there any door between your room and 112? A: No."

As Margot Canaday's work attests, immigration restrictions against homosexuality would not be instituted until midcentury. At this early stage in immigration policy, "immigration officials generally did not conceive of homosexuality as a discrete identity, but instead lumped together aliens who exhibited gender inversion, had anatomical defects, or engaged in sodomy as *degenerates*. Degeneracy was a racial and economic construct that explained 'the immorality of the poor,' and this helped to give the public charge clause some of its power over sexuality deviant aliens."[23] It is not surprising therefore, that in addition to prostitution charges, officials sought to deport the three resident aliens as "likely to become a public charge" cases.

Frustrated with the case, immigration inspectors pursued Angeliki's deportation, filing a series of charges and arrest warrants. However, Angeliki's immigration hearing was deferred for further review and she was saved from immediate deportation because the charges of prostitution

[23] Canaday, *The Straight State*, 22.

could not be proven. In internal memos, immigration inspectors expressed their distaste of the Greek drama that was enfolding.

> I have held this case for some time in order to give it careful consideration. I get the impression that the aliens are "bad actors"… If the woman is deported, possibly one or both of the men may leave the country also. It would be a good thing to rid the country of all of them if possible.

In November 1913, thirteen months after her arrival to the United States, an official, who according to his own letter desperately "desired to rid the country of this woman, if possible," pursued a new arrest warrant for Angeliki on charges of contractual labor and "assisted alien." However, days later, Acting Secretary Louis F. Post, writing from Ellis Island, denied their request, and reprimanded their biased disdain of the woman and her partner.

> To turn this case into an "assisted alien" or "contract labor" case as a last resorted [*sic*] after failure to make out a case of l.c.p. [LPC] or of immorality, does not seem to me to be a defensible administrative policy…the purpose of resorting to it for the expulsion of this alien would almost certainly appear to be only to thrust out of this country a person presumed to be "undesirable" for other reasons, but for whose expulsion for those reasons there is no authority under the law…a makeshift for accomplishing by indirection purposes other than its intended ones.[24]

That November, Angeliki's petition to the Superior Court at San Francisco to have her marriage to Andrew annulled, was granted. With her marriage to George Vlahos pending, and her pregnancy in advanced stages, immigration officials ruled she could stay in the country and closed the case.

[24] Louis F. Post, Department of Labor Acting Secretary. Washington, DC. November 10, 1913. NARA DC, RG 85, File no. 53510-410.

Likely to Become a Public Charge: Methods of Policing Sexual Impropriety through Imperfect Measures

CW: The following section includes women's accounts of genocide, rape and sexual assault

Louis Post's words hauntingly characterize the history of U.S. immigration policy, and foreshadow changes to come: "a makeshift for accomplishing by indirection purposes other than its intended ones." When it came to authorities applying LPC charges, the following case study demonstrates just how accurate Post's words are. Haiganoushe Koltchakian came to the United States on October 20, 1920 with her three young children—two girls, Eranki and Sizarouche, aged ten and nine, and a small one-year-old boy, Archaleuse. Haiganoushe had survived the trauma of Turkish genocide in Armenia, reunited with her children at a Red Cross refugee camp in Aleppo, and sailed to America. When she failed the literacy test at Ellis Island, Haiganoushe was detained. Her particularly agonizing interview with immigration inspectors shows the humiliating and compassionless milieu of these investigations.[25] Further, Haiganoushe's case file is an exceptional example of how inspectors policed Southern European women's sexuality by using the "likely to become a public charge" clause when no other policies regarding racial or sexual status could apply. The biases of immigration inspectors in this case are clear.

Haiganoushe was perhaps an atypical picture bride compared to many of the Greek and Italian women coming to Ellis Island at the time; she was previously married, older, and had children. But as historian Isabel Kaprielian-Churchill writes, Armenian picture bride women often came to the United States as widows or with children due to the genocidal destruction of families and the prevalent rape of Armenian women by Turkish soldiers.[26] Two years prior to

[25] Haiganoushe Koltchakian, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 54960.
[26] Kaprielian-Churchill, "Armenian Refugee Women," 4.

Haiganoushe's arrival in 1920, Turkish soldiers had entered her predominantly-Christian village, killed the men—including her husband and two brothers—and captured the women for sexual slavery. In her interview with the board of special inquiry, the immigration inspector spared no time delving into her traumatic past. After Haiganouse told of her husband's death years previous, the inspector shrewdly interrogated her about her one-year-old son's paternity. Haiganoushe explained, "My sister, myself and other women were all locked up together in one room for a year." The women were tied up and repeatedly raped. But rather than take her at her word, the inspector pressed for further details, testing her honesty and insinuating moral impropriety: "Did you even try to run away? Why did you stay?" Haiganoushe's rapist is repeatedly referred to as the "father of your child" throughout the interview.

Inspectors peppered her with questions, forcing Haiganoushe to repeat herself, checking her answers for consistency. Though she told the story of her abduction, they prodded further: "Under what conditions did you cohabit with him [your captor]?" *Cohabit.* Note the inspector's terminology: not survive, not endure, but *willingly* live with. The inspector doubled down, asking multiple times: "Did you live with him voluntarily?" Though Haiganoushe revealed the horrific details of her life story, the inspector repeatedly tried to get her to reveal that her pregnancy was due to a life of sexual promiscuity and bad choices, not due to forced abduction and rape as she claimed.

The investigators' suspicion regarding Haiganoushe's sexual history worked not only to diagnose her moral character, but also her racial one. Armenian American whiteness had been a much-disputed point of legal contention since the turn of the century. Massachusetts *in re Halladjian* (1909) was the first in a series of court cases begrudgingly conceding Armenians' Caucasian status (after four Armenian immigrants were denied citizenship on the basis of race).

Literary scholar Janice Okoomian writes that this case established a connection to whiteness not based on bodily appearance, as the judge rejected in the case of Armenians that there was a "visually-readable" mode of determination. Rather, legal petitioners claimed whiteness by relying on the discursive opposition of Armenian Christianity to Turkish Islam, wherein Armenians were poised as Western Europeans against "an exaggerated Asian difference."[27]

Haiganoushe's case is remarkable from the Greek and Italian files I collected for how gratuitous the language is surrounding her sexual and reproductive history—a trend reflecting the inspectors' ideas of racialized sexual deviancy. As the interrogation reads:

> Q: During the year which you state you lived with this man who is father of your youngest child, did you ever attempt to escape or run away from him?
>
> A: I did not stay with him one year. A few months only. After that I ran away and worked as a servant.
>
> Q: Under what conditions did you cohabit with him?
>
> A: They killed all the men and took all the women. All the women were locked up and could not run away.
>
> Q: Was it under threat or violence?
>
> A: Yes, we could not run away—we would have been killed, if we attempted it.
>
> Q: In how many harems were you?
>
> A: They were all big places—barracks—where they had the soldiers.
>
> Q: Were the soldiers, or those who did the killing, who, after they killed the men, the ones who remained with the women afterwards—lived with them?

[27] Janice Okoomian pg 9

A: The Turks came from different villages and after killing the men they lived with the women. All the Christian men were killed.

Q: These women who were kept (for instance in your case, 9 months) did they keep guard over you all the time?

A: They tied up all the women so they could not run away. We were tied up two by two and three by three.

Q: Were you tied up 9 months?

A: Yes. There were 10 to 30 tied together.

To test the truthfulness of her statement, the inspector asked for proof: were there any marks on her body to prove she had been tied? Haiganoushe responded: "There were some but it is now 2 or 3 years and they have disappeared."

In telling her story, Haiganoushe is viewed as racially illegible not only because of her Armenian heritage, but in her (forced) sexual contact with Turkish men—men who were culturally and legally codified as non-white and ineligible for citizenship. Inspectors ask about her past sexual partners. Had she ever had multiple male partners at a time? Did your male sexual partner (rapist) have sexual relations with other women? In other words, was she a prostitute? Was she a polygamist? Did she fall into any explicit categories for exclusion?

Though Haiganoushe had both a citizen brother and a brother-in-law living in the United States who both testified they would take care of her until she remarried, the immigration inspectors inexplicably denied her entrance, writing:

The Board is of the Opinion that this alien and her children are PERSONS LIKELY TO BECOME PUBLIC CHARGES for the following, among other, reasons: They arrive with a small amount of money and have no one in the United States legally obligated for

their support in case of need; the board does not believe that the mother, handicapped as she is by three helpless children, will be able to earn sufficient to support her family. They are excluded…EXCLUDED AND ORDERED TO BE DEPORTED.

Yet crucially, the inspectors never asked Haiganoushe about her employment status during her interview, nor her plans for work, employment history, special skills, or ability to earn a living. Her entire interview with immigration inspectors only focused on her sexual history. Haiganoushe's case therefore demonstrates how inspectors used the "likely to become a public charge" clause as what historian Margot Canaday calls "a rudimentary apparatus to detect and manage [deviant sexuality] among immigrants...that was pervasive in state efforts to exclude or deport aliens for sexual perversion."[28] Canaday further notes the Progressive-era association between poverty and immorality—wherein "degeneracy was a racial and economic construct"—helped to justify the ways inspectors used the LPC charge to exclude immigrants on the grounds of their either provable or assumed sexual impropriety.[29]

After a lengthy appeal process assisted in part by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Haiganoushe and her three children were released to her brother's care on $500 bonds for one year. After she left the immigration station, Haiganoushe married naturalized citizen Dick Bosian. Writing to request the bonds be cancelled, the family's lawyer reveals the ways race may have also played a role in her initial exclusion. In his letter, the lawyer emphasizes the citizenship marriage laws apply specifically to "the class or race who might be lawfully naturalized," and regardless of her phenotypical features, "the woman is a native of Armenia and comes within that class of persons who may be lawfully naturalized, and she therefore became a citizen immediately upon her marriage to Bosian." The Assistant Secretary of the Department of

[28] Canaday, *The Straight State*, 22.
[29] Canaday, *The Straight State*, 23.

Labor approved the bond cancellation, though amending the record by including a handwritten note citing his "mild reservations" doing so.

Literacy Restrictions

While picture bride women were detained for suspicion of moral impropriety or LPC charges regularly, the majority of detention files for picture bride women in the 1910s and 1920s demonstrate how literacy restrictions were extremely effective—if not always enforced—at holding immigrant women in detention long enough to determine their turpitude. In 1917, congress passed immigrant literacy restrictions based on the recommendation of prominent eugenicists claiming the restrictions would protect the American citizenry by improving the quality of persons entering the country. The restrictions proved remarkably effective at targeting picture brides as few women were literate in impoverished Mediterranean countries in the early 20th century.[30] Many picture bride women were held in immigration detention centers for periods of days and even months awaiting final decision on their cases.

But as restrictive as the literacy requirement seemed, it was sometimes indiscriminately enforced, and migrants found ways to circumvent the law. In June 1921, 21-year-old Epstater Rousi traveled to the United States to meet and marry her fiancé, John Shinas, a 31-year-old Greek leatherworker in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.[31] John was a friend of Epstater's brother, Peter, and was from the same village in Greece. The couple had corresponded by mail but had never met in real life.

Epstater was detained at Ellis Island after failing the literacy test. She appealed the Bureau's decision and her brother secured a lawyer to represent her. Writing to the immigration

[30] Papanikolas, "Greek Women of the Intermountain West," 19.
[31] Epstateer Rousi, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55095-311.

officials, their lawyer attested to both Peter and John's gainful employment and fiscal responsibility. Her brother appealed the Bureau for a temporary admission of six months, during which he promised to provide for Epstater and enroll her in school to learn how to read. Peter would personally pay the bond himself. He was Epstater's only living relative, and their appeal for temporary stay was approved on the precedent that—as an internal Department of Labor correspondence claimed—"it has always been the policy of the Department *to use freely* the power of temporary admission where the applicants are unmarried females who come to blood relatives and have no relatives abroad to whom they may look for protection and, if need be, for support."[32]

This internal correspondence is particularly riling given the previous example of the Armenian refugee woman whom officials refused to release to her brother or family. Due to her children and, as I argued, her problematic sexual history and trauma, Haiganoushe was judged as likely to become a public charge. Yet Epstater was released on a $1000 bond from the National Surety Company in Manhattan (over $12,000 USD in today's currency and a testament to the privilege of financial resources). Bonds attesting "that an alien shall not become a public charge" due to illiteracy were common enough in granting temporary stays. But with prices ranging from $250 to $1000, it was only an option for immigrants with means or extended family networks who could front the money. The immigration bureau gave Epstater six months before she had to return to Greece, but within a few weeks, she married John as initially intended, and as the wife of an American citizen, circumvented any literacy restrictions that formerly applied to her as a single woman. In an internal memo to the Secretary of Labor, Special Assistant F. H. Larned disdainfully commented, "This woman took advantage of the temporary admission granted her

[32] Hugh Reid to Secretary of Labor, Dept. of Labor, Washington, DC, June 28, 2921. NARA DC, RG85 (55095-311). Italics added.

and married in order to defeat deportation."[33] Nevertheless, he called to cancel her bond and recommended the money be returned to its owner.

Epstater's case is remarkably similar to dozens of other women's files in the National Archives, including Elene Djanidkaki, a Greek woman traveling to the United States from Smyrna, Turkey in 1920.[34] Elene was engaged to Peter Theodore. Intending to marry him soon after arrival, Elene was held at the immigration detention center after failing the literacy test. Acting Secretary Mahony of the Department of Labor took pity on the young woman, noting the political violence of her homeland, and wrote, "In view of the chaotic conditions in Turkey I am not inclined to send this woman back there at the present time."[35] Fortunately, Elene had a married friend (note: not a blood relative) in New York City, Atyonosia Yealousoki, who would act as the young woman's chaperone. Immigration agents allowed Elene a temporary stay of six months in the country on a bond of $500—paid for by her fiancé Peter—wherein Elene had to legally marry Peter, and Peter had to become a naturalized citizen, if she wanted to stay.[36] Loopholes to the law existed in polarity; either a woman needed connections and resources to bond her temporary stay, or her situation had to be especially bleak and wholly without, to have a chance.

Some women faked proxy marriages as a way to subvert literacy restrictions, as I found to be the case for Filomena Maranao, a 42-year-old woman from Atripalda, Adelino, Italy. In December 1920, Filomena was caught with a fake passport and documents attesting her marriage to Pasquale Sarno two years prior.[37] In separate rooms, Pasquale testified that he married

[33] NARA DC, RG85 (55095-311).
[34] Elene Djanidkaki, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 54866-639.
[35] T. B. Mahony, Acting Secretary, Department of Labor. In re: Eleni Djanidkaki. August 24, 1920. Ibid.
[36] C. D. Hondros to United States Department of Labor. April 11, 1921. Ibid.
[37] Filomena Maranao, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 54872-122.

Filomena by proxy; he had never met Filomena before and had not been out of the country in over twenty years. According to Pasquale, "This girl [Filomena] who came from Italy now she got a sister in New York and through her I communicated with her relatives in Italy and I communicated with them asking them to find a girl for me and they picked out this girl." His brother had stood in for him at the wedding.

In the board of immigration interview, inspectors asked him repeatedly about the ceremony and his reasons for choosing a proxy marriage. Pasquale explained he was a widower with six children, and he simply could not make the journey all the way back to Italy and leave his children behind: "I couldn't get along without a woman so I sent for her and she will take care of me." This very pragmatic reason for marriage demonstrates the importance of social reproduction to economic subsistence. As Suzanne Sinke writes, "For women, until quite recently, marriage was one of the few options for a reasonable economic existence as an adult [yet it] was often economically advantageous for men as well."[38] The survival of Pasquale's family depended on the unpaid domestic labor that a wife could provide. Romance, in this case, was simply a luxury he could not afford.

The pragmatic nature of the relationship is seen in just how little the couple knew about each other. Filomena's interview, for example, shows how the two strangers had no time to corroborate their stories. Filomena's account of their relationship was vastly different from Pasquale's and reflects a common theme among women's protocol in the interview room. Women were aware that immigration inspectors were weary of arranged marriages, and women often lied about the level of intimacy or familiarity they shared with their partners. Filomena claimed that she had met and married Pasquale two years prior in Italy and had lived with him

[38] Suzanne Sinke, "Migration for Labor, Migration for Love: Marriage and Family Formation across Borders." *OAH Magazine of History* 14, no. 1 (Fall 1999): 17-21, 17.

there for a year and a half before he came to America; he had no children and neither she nor him had been previously married. Perhaps due to the pressure or anxiety of the situation, Filomena confused dates and times and names, switching between stories, obviously unprepared for the intense interrogation and no doubt flustered by the intense pressure of getting possibly life-altering questions correct. When finally confronted, Filomena confessed:

> Q: Are all the statements that you have made previously except that which pertains to you coming to join Pasquali Sarno untrue?
>
> A: His father and sister advised me to say that and I told them I would get all mixed up. I never married him, I never knew him this is the first time I met him…
>
> Q: What is your purpose in coming to the U.S. at this time?
>
> A: To get married… [repeats question, to same answer]
>
> Q: If you were permitted to enter the U.S. today would you go on and live with Pasquali Sarno? As man and wife?
>
> A: No, I would go to his sister first and then go to him…
>
> Q: Who advised you to make these false statement under oath here?
>
> A: His own mother and sister… His own relatives drew all the papers for me.
>
> Q: Who arranged for the securing of this passport for you?
>
> A: Sabine Palmitella, he is a subagent…
>
> Q: Did the steamship agent test you in reading?
>
> A: No, I wasn't tested, because I passed as a married woman.
>
> Q: Were you ever sick in a hospital or institution?
>
> A: No.

Filomena was ordered deported and inspectors called to open up investigations on her fraudulent Italian visa and passport. Her forged documents still remain in her immigration file in DC as seen in the following images.

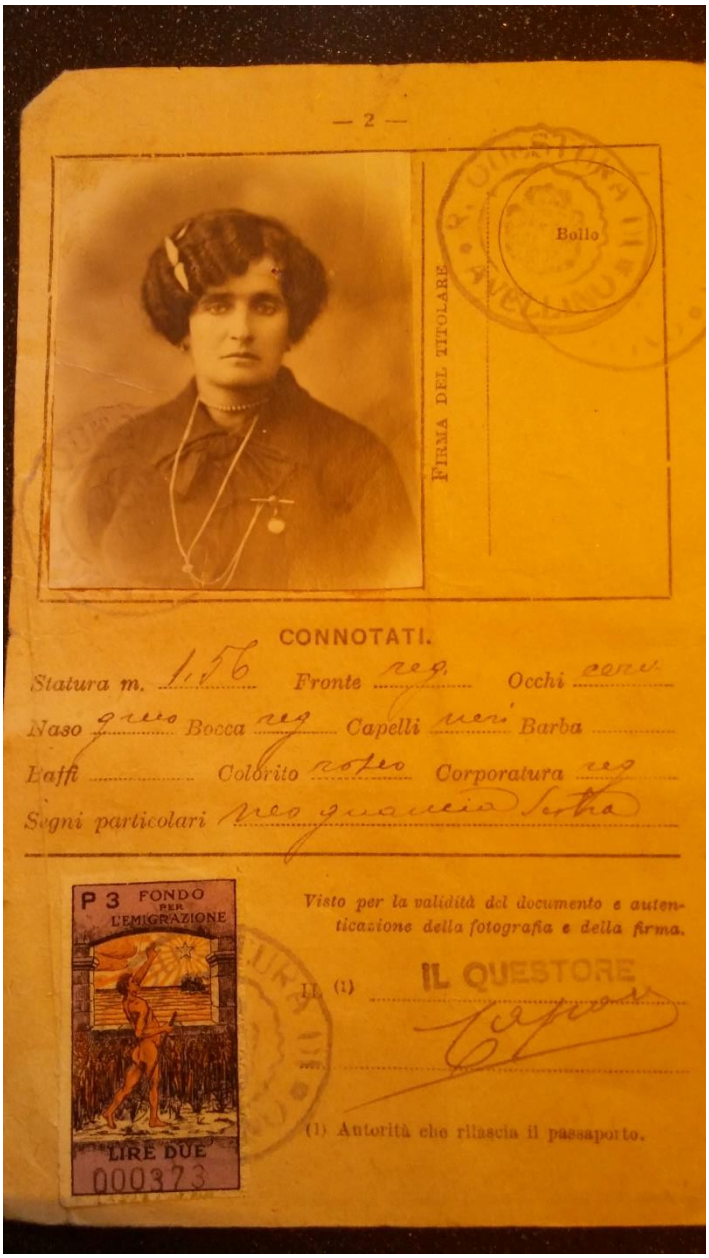

Figure 1: An example of a fraudulent Italian passport seized by immigration officials at Ellis Island.

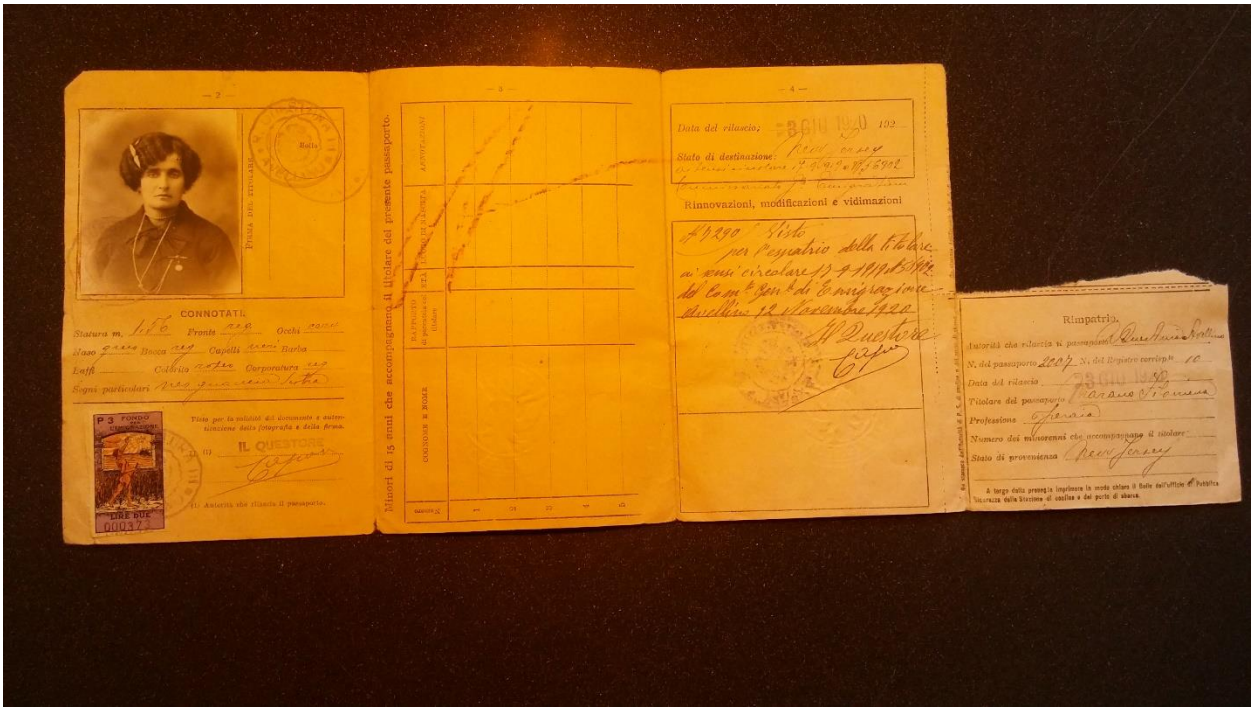

Figure 25: An example of a fraudulent Italian passport seized by immigration officials at Ellis Island.

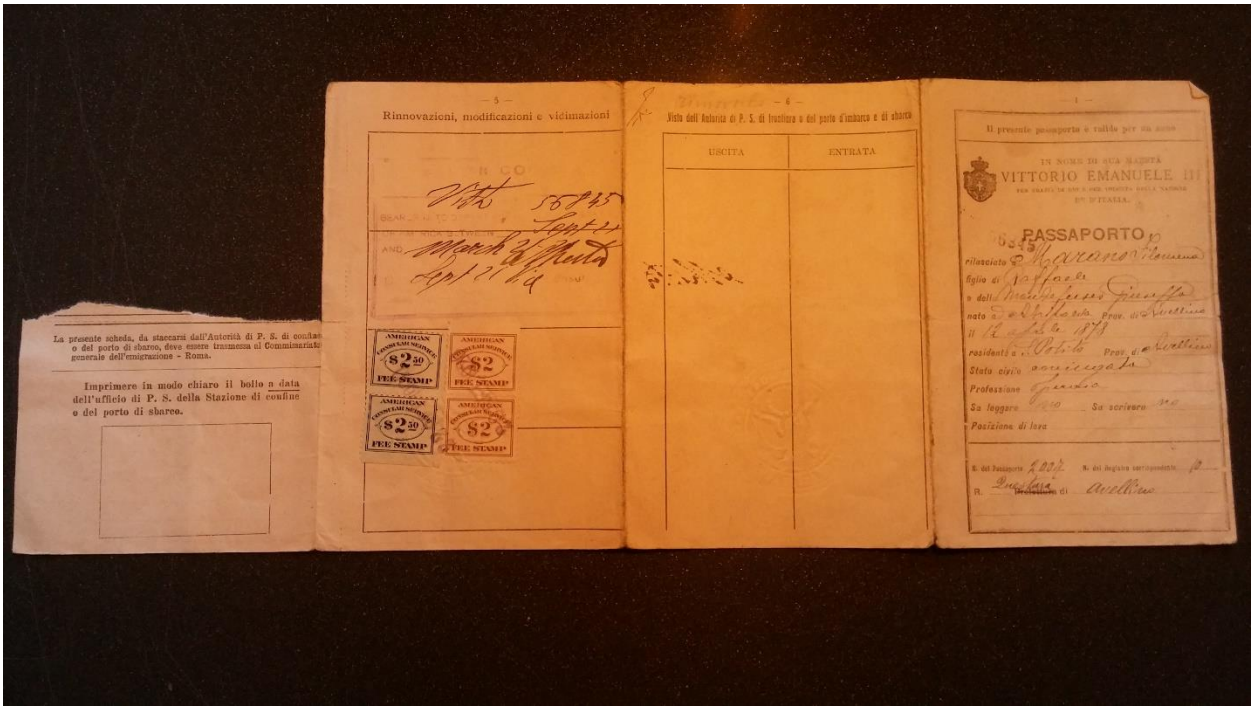

Figure 3: An example of a fraudulent Italian passport seized by immigration officials at Ellis Island.

Giving the difficulties of literacy restrictions, in 1920, new legislation being passed through congress to ease the ability of fiancées to enter the country became an opportunity of which many picture brides and their partners eagerly took advantage. Intended to "encourage matrimony abroad," congress proposed to amend literacy restrictions for the fiancées of veteran citizens as a reward for their service.[39] The amendment would essentially grant the privileges of marriage to engaged immigrant women, as wives were exempt from reading tests. The move was an official act that added a measure of legitimacy to immigrant marriages, but it set exclusive parameters, as to only include migrants who had shown patriotic valor to their country. Men had to be both veterans *and* citizens, thus excluding, amongst others, Asian Americans (regardless of military service) as aliens ineligible for citizenship, or men with disabilities that precluded them from being drafted. Both in purpose and function, the veteran bride amendment was to assist "white" able-bodied citizens only. And not all military experience was created equal. In the case of Evanghelia Vagareli's fiancé Yiorgos, his six-year long service in the Greek Army from 1913-1919 during World War I did not count.[40] Even if the two countries were allies, the veteran's service had to be in the United States military. Evanghelia was deported.

Italian immigrant Alfonso Mastrodi and his fiancée, Maria Iacomini, inspired the 1920 legislation and made headlines as the new public face of immigrant romance in America, demonstrating immigrants' ability to change policy and change the tide of public opinion. Maria arrived at Ellis Island in late 1919 from Aquila, Italy, the couple's home village where Alfonso remembered meeting Maria as a child.[41] Not being able to read, Maria was detained and scheduled for deportation. Alfonso quickly secured a lawyer and appealed the decision, getting

[39] United States Congress, "Proceedings and Debates of the Second Session of the Sixty-Sixth Congress of the United States." Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1362.
[40] Evanghelia Vagareli, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55175.
[41] Maria Iacomini, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 54670-629.

the media and politicians to support his cause (though how he did so remains unclear). As Maria lay waiting at the detention center, New York Senator William M. Calder proposed the veteran bride act to congress. On January 12, Calder introduced the bill by telling the couple's story:

> Mr. President…I have been prompted to introduce the bill by the fact that a soldier of Italian birth who had lived in the country for 10 years, who fought in our Army in Europe and was wounded…sent back to Italy for the girl he proposed to marry. She arrived here…but can not [sic] under the law be allowed to enter this country to marry him, and must accordingly go back to Italy…it seems to me we ought to permit the literacy test to be waived in cases such as I have outlined. [42]

Not desiring, as one senator said, "to enforce that kind of a trip in these hard times," Calder believed the service of immigrant citizen veterans should be honored by granting admission to their brides. The bill was passed unanimously in the Senate, giving hope to Maria and the eleven other women like her who sailed from Italy on the S.S. Belvedere—all still held at Ellis Island pending the passage of the bill through the House.

Maria was in the detention center at Ellis Island for months. It is unclear why she was forced to stay while other women, like Elene and Epstater, were quickly granted release on bond. Unable to stand the poor conditions of her stay any longer, in mid-February, a desperate Maria petitioned the secretary commissioner-general of immigration to be released on bond to her sister living in New York.

> I have been kept in the detention pen at Ellis Island, N. Y., where I am confined indoors and not allowed to go out for air, and am deprived of the ordinary conveniences and comforts of life. That this place is not adapted to prolonged detention…I have become

[42] United States Congress, "Proceedings and Debates of the Second Session of the Sixty-Sixth Congress of the United States." Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1362.

> nervous and ill, suffering from headaches, nausea, mental depressions and fits of despondency that make life almost unbearable; my health is failing, and I am no longer able to stand the confinement.[43]

With Senator Calder's urging, the bureau agreed to a temporary release on a $500 bond stipulating the following conditions: Maria had to sign a sworn affidavit promising that she would a) not get married while on release as to uphold immigration law, and b) update the bureau every fifteen days to report her activities, location, and "parties with whom she is residing."

Newspapers around the country ran the couple's story, headlining, the "Italian hero [who] may win his bride by act of congress" and the beautiful "soldier sweetheart," who knew the depths of domestic arts but "nothing of the mystery of the printed page."[44] Newspapers featured cartoons of an impatient mustachioed Alfonso sweating and pulling his hair while a bespectled Congressman worked nonplussed on the "bill to exempt foreign fiancees [*sic*]".[45] A dark-haired cartoonish Maria, looking agitated, stands on the congressman's right, "reading" a primer upside down (a reference to her inability to read which detained her in the first place. Upon word of the bill's passage, Maria and Alfonso married the next month on March 7, 1920. While it was a victory for Calder and the Italian immigrants he fought for, not everybody was happy about its passing.

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[43] Maria Iacomini letter from Ellis Island during detention to Secretary of Commerce and Labor and Commissioner-General of Immigration, Washington, DC. February 1920. While the letter may reflect Maria's feelings, the document would have been written by a lawyer or other representative as Maria did not speak English nor know how to read or write (the reason for her detention in the first place). NARA, RG 85, File no. 54670-629.
[44] "Italian Hero May Win His Bride by Act of Congress," *New York Tribune*, February 2, 1920, pg. 9; "Solder's Sweetheart is Permitted to Enter U.S.," *New York Tribune*, March 4, 1920.
[45] "Of All Sad Words of Tongue or Pen, the Forty," *Cordova Daily Times*, July 26, 1920, pg. 6.

Figure 4: Cartoon featuring an illiterate Maria and a flustered Alfonso in the *Cordova Daily Times*, July 26, 1920.

The veteran bride act was subsequently put to the test by hundreds of ensuing picture brides using it to negotiate their own entries. Vasiliki Sideri was detained at Ellis Island for illiteracy at the same time as Maria Iacomini.[46] But in contrast to Maria and Alfonso's romantic-tragedy-turned-American-dream, Vasiliki came to the United States to marry a man she had never met. Vasiliki knew immigration inspectors were skeptical of these marriages and subsequently devised a story that she and Nick Margus were not strangers—they had met three years ago in their hometown in Greece where Nick proposed. Not having enough time to get their stories straight, Nick, in a separate interview room, admitted the truth; he only knew Vasiliki through an arrangement made by his sister and brother. He did not serve in the war and had not left the country for ten years. When re-questioned as to the impossibility of meeting a man three years ago in Greece who by his account had never left the country, Vasiliki, perhaps

[46] Vasiliki Sideri, immigrant detention filed, Ellis Island, New York. NARA RG 85, File no. 54766-304.

tongue-in-cheek, replied, "I met his photograph." Citing the couple's perjury, the acting commissioner signed her deportation papers.

What followed, in the struggle to get Vasiliki released, was a complex bureaucratic dance featuring a cast of key political characters of the time. Like Alfonso Mastroni who inspired veteran bride act, Nick had friends in high places; Congressman William F. Kirby; Charles H. Brough, governor of Arkansas; Senators Hoke Smith and Henderson Jacoway; and even prominent lawyer and future Ku Klux Klan Grand Dragon James A. Comer of Arkansas, all wrote to the immigration bureau on Nick's behalf.[47] Hoke Smith even offered to pay out of his own pocket for a teacher to come to Ellis Island to teach Vasiliki to read (his request was denied).

When Vasiliki arrived in late February 1920, it was at the height of Maria Iacomini's notoriety in U.S. newspapers. Her lawyer, citing the publicity surrounding the twelve illiterate Italian "girls" marrying soldiers in the news of late, asked the commissioner general if a "similar arrangement" might be made for Vasiliki. The bureau did not oblige his request but the combined political power of all Nick's many appeals did get Vasiliki a second chance at the reading test. Regretfully, she failed a second time, and was deported on May 9, 1920. After that date, I was unable to find records of Nick Margus from Little Rock, Arkansas either in local or state directories or on ancestry.com records. With the possibility of him having changed his much longer Greek surname after immigration, I was also unable to find records of his entrance to the United States. Directories do show the restaurant in which he invested was closed less than two years later. The facts are scant after Vasiliki's embarkment home, but having no other

[47] While Comer does not identify as a member of the Klan in his support letter, Charles C. Alexander writes of Comer's role as Grand Dragon in his article, "The Ku Klux Klan in Arkansas, 1922-1924." *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 22, no. 3 (1963): 199.

options, Nick may simply have been one of the many men in the early twentieth century who repatriated to Greece. It is unknown if they were ever married.

What is significant about Vasiliki's story is not merely her deportation, but the indiscriminate ways that cases like hers were enforced. Later that same year in December, another Greek woman with the same first name, Vasiliki Mentepoulos, engaged to a non-veteran, was similarly detained after failing the literacy test. But in Mentepoulos's case she was admitted temporarily on bond to her brother, giving her both time to learn how to read and marry her fiancé. With the presentation of her marriage certificate to the bureau, Vasiliki was granted permanent residence. But as the number of these cases went up, where women were bypassing temporary visas by marrying and therefore allowed to stay under their new status of "wife," there appear to be mixed messages about the legality and bureaucratic acceptance of this practice.

After dealing with the immigration bureau on a case regarding a 22-year-old Italian woman named Rosa DiGiovanni, a lawyer wrote to confirm the information he received that "the Immigration Bureau would have no objection to her marriage within the next sixty days" while she was on bond.[48] In their official response, the assistant commissioner-general wrote that "with regard to her proposed marriage, the Bureau has to advise that this would be construed as an attempt to evade the law, and it could not be a party to such an action…it is possible that the Secretary might look with favor upon her status in [the event of her marriage], but upon this the Bureau cannot rule in advance." When Rosa did get married, the Bureau approved her stay—but not without the ire of one bureau employee in a department memorandum: "This is distinctly contumacious, and the Bureau believes that such action is warranted as will impress these aliens and the attorney with the knowledge that the Department's orders are not to be flouted."

[48] Rosa DiGiovanni, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55095-414.

Imbued with the rhetoric of American nationalism, the enforcement of the veteran bride act made the connection between matrimonial rights and the privileges of citizenship more overt than ever. But the law backfired in some respects. Rather than merely rewarding veteran citizens—those men who were lauded as having fought nobly and dedicating their lives and loyalty to the country—the wording of the law also encouraged men who were never previously interested in American citizenship to apply for naturalization in order to wed. In fact, as historian David Roediger notes, "in 1920 almost 83 percent of immigrants from Greece were not naturalized" and that Southern Italians were "particularly unlikely to take out citizenship papers."[49] Given this phenomena, bureaucrats questioned immigrants' loyalty to their new country, and in turn protested the perverse logic of what seemed to be a cheapened patriotic commitment made solely in the effort to "win a bride."

Margot Canaday writes that the immigration bureau perceived so-called sexual perversion as "inversely related to one's desirability for citizenship."[50] The early-century welding of sexual normativity and nationalism similarly discussed by Julian Carter[51] sheds light on immigration inspectors' struggles to believe many immigrant men's claims to citizenship when sexual impropriety was suspected (as was often the case with picture marriage couples). In one case, this juxtaposition is made particularly clear. Johannis Mayroniannahis brought his fiancée to America from Greece in 1921. He had lived in the country for nine years but had never sought out U.S. citizenship until he learned about the 1920 veteran bride act. On the same day his fiancée Maria Hadjidaki arrived at Ellis Island, Johannis ran to a local court to declare his

[49] David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs.* Cambridge, MA: Basic Books, [2005] 2018 (122). Here Roediger cites the work of Desmond King in *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000 (102).
[50] Canaday, *The Straight State*, 23.
[51] Julian Carter, *The Heart of Whiteness: Normal Sexuality and Race in America*, 1880-1940. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

intention of becoming a citizen. Maria was initially detained, but was later granted admittance—that is, until the decision was contested by bureau employees who suspected Johannis of impure intentions. Writing to the Commissioner General, Special Assistant Larned questioned the ethical implications of Johannis's actions. Was his application for citizenship a genuine commitment to the nation, or merely a ruse to import a bride? He writes,

> Of course, we do not want aliens to subscribe to an oath of allegiance to our country and to become a part of our citizenry if they are not disposed to come forward freely and voluntarily, out of an honest desire to be vested with that inestimable privilege."[52]

In Larned's protests, he rankled that Johannis had never considered being a citizen until supposedly,

> some friend or relative whispered in his ear…that he could accomplish the landing of this inadmissible girl if he would only go before the clerk of a local court of record and declare his intention of becoming a citizen, which act would cost him but $1.00. Such a man can not [s*ic*] have a very firm attachment for the principles of our Government or for its institutions, and the Bureau is very decidedly of the opinion that he is not deserving of any lenient consideration whatever in connection with the case.

Larned's words reveal his belief that citizenship itself was cheapened by the 1920 immigration amendment. For the price of a mere dollar and a whim, Johannis was not only able to claim the highest right in the country—a sacred rite and privilege—but did so in a manner which undermined the bureau's authority, and immigration policy at large. In many cases, as long as the man had at least declared his intention for citizenship, authorities would grant access to their partners. Whiteness was of course a precondition for this privilege. But in Johannis's case,

[52] Maria Hadjidaki, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55180-56.

Larned represents the bureau's authority to make life-changing decisions based on the feelings or opinions of their in-house operatives. Simply put, Larned did not like the *way* Johannis became a citizen. Therefore, the legitimacy of his citizenship was subverted. While Maria was eventually admitted two months later, Larned's two-page typed memo protesting the couple's circumstances—and begging his boss to reconsider her admittance—demonstrates that immigration officials had principled and very emotional reactions to the cases they were working, even debating amongst each other when circumstances flared personal passions.

Picture Brides and Quota Laws

From 1920 to 1924, the Immigration Bureau was inundated with requests for the entrance of fiancées from Greece and Italy.[53] But the leniency of the 1920 veterans act was curbed by the introduction of immigration quotas in 1921. In what John Higham calls the act that "proved in the long run the most important turning-point in American immigration policy,"[54] the Emergency Quota Act cut the numbers of admitted migrants per country to a mere three percent of their number living in the United States in 1910 according to U.S. Census numbers [see table 1]. The harsh limitations imposed by congress further enforced the Asiatic barred zone and merely gave preference—rather than allowing uncapped family reunification—to "wives, parents, brothers, sisters, children under eighteen years of age, and fiancées."[55] Quota numbers per country were divided monthly into sub-quotas, and as Kerry Abrams writes, "were filled on a first-come, first-

[53] The "Subject Index to Correspondence and Case Files of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1903-1959," a finding aid created by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, contains list of arriving vessels by name, with subcategories for detention files on some passengers. When scanning the names of passengers, you can find lists of names wherein some women are marked "fiancée" with corresponding requests from men to Ellis Island for more updates on their arriving fiancées. Finding aid hosted by ancestry.com.
[54] John Higham. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, [1963] 2011 (311).
[55]U.S. 67th Congress. "An Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens into the United States." Session I, Chapter 8. 1921 (6).

serve basis, which sometimes resulted in collisions as steamships raced to dock first."[56] Over the course of the next two years, European picture brides still ventured to the United States, but with numbers being as low as 3,063 Greeks allowed in the country per year, they were often turned away once the monthly or yearly quotas for their respective country was up.[57]

Anastasia Gika, a 22-year-old woman from Vodena, Greece (modern-day Edessa), was detained on August 17, 1921 after Greece's monthly quota numbers had been filled.[58] Without connections or financial resources, Anastasia would have quickly been turned away and sent back home. But Anastasia's fiancé, 37-year-old Nicola Gatsou, was a well-connected businessman from Ohio with friends in high places and a good lawyer on retainer.

Nicola's lawyer argued that Anastasia was Bulgarian by birth and therefore should be allowed entrance under the still-open Bulgarian quota. His argument was in line with the stipulations of the 1921 Quota Act which qualified that "nationality shall be determined by country of birth."[59] But according to bureau correspondence, Anastasia's Greek residence and Greek passport invalidated the status of her natal home. If the lawyer read further, the 1921 Act clarified "aliens born in the area included in any such new country shall be considered as having been born in such country, and aliens born in any territory so transferred shall be considered as having been born in the country to which such territory was transferred."[60]

His lawyer had little success arguing her Bulgarian ancestry, but Nicola's connections proved invaluable in his struggle to release his future wife. Nicola was a well-regarded businessman in one of the country's most politically influential locations of the time—U.S.

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[56] Kerry Abrams, "Peaceful Penetration: Proxy Marriage, Same-Sex Marriage, and Recognition." *Michigan State Law Revue* 141 (2011): 156
[57] U.S. 67th Congress, "1921 Emergency Quota Act: An Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens into the United States." Pub. L. 67-5. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1921.
[58] Anastasia Gika, immigrant detention file, Ellis Island, New York. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55175-71.
[59] 1921 Quota Law, Section 2b, page 5.
[60] 1921 Quota Law, Section 2c, page 6.

President Warren Harding's home state of Ohio. Harding notoriously (and controversially) favored his Ohio colleagues, placing many of his friends and acquaintances in federal positions, including Harry Daugherty, the Attorney General. Anastasia's file reads as a complex web of the Ohio political hierarchy of the time. On September 21, Osa F. Ott, of the American Trust and Savings Bank, wrote to Newton Fairbanks, an influential businessman from a prominent Ohio family, for assistance, testifying of Nicola's character and financial assets.

> Mr. Gatsoff [*sic*] has many friends here in Springfield who are anxious to help him in this matter and say they are willing to give any reasonable bond to insure the U.S. against her becoming a charge on this country etc….Mr Gatseff [*sic*] is worth about $7000 and it is his intention to marry the girl as soon as she is released from Ellis Island."[61]

In response, Fairbanks—whose influential brother Charles was vice president to Theodore Roosevelt—telegraphed Attorney General Daugherty requesting his help in the situation. Daugherty in turn wrote to Secretary of Labor James Davis, head of immigration affairs.

Newton Fairbanks was vice-president of the Fairbanks Company Grey Iron Founders that employed a number of Greek laborers. In addition to Daugherty, Fairbanks also contacted Frank B. Willis, the influential Ohio senator and former governor. Fairbanks's letter to Willis pleads on behalf of the Greek community for Anastasia's release: "Anything you can do in this connection to detain the girl and get her through will be greatly appreciated by the Greek Colony in this section. Mr. Gatsoff [*sic*] is a prominent member of the Colony here. Thanking you in advance and with cordial good wishes…N. H. Fairbanks." Willis followed through on his request. On September 24, he submitted their correspondence as official evidence—and testament of Nicola's character—to the Board of Special Inquiry at Ellis Island.

[61] About $86,000 in 2018 currency.

Fred Remsberg, an Ohio businessman and close friend to Warren Harding, also threw his hat in the ring. Taking the case to the country's highest authority, he wrote to the president himself to plea on the couple's behalf. Testifying that Nicola was "financially capable of taking proper care of this woman if permitted to enter and marry him as prearrangement made by their parents years ago," Remsberg added that Nicola had an extended network of "influential friends" in Ohio. To the president he begged, "use your influence in effort to have her released at an early date."

Remsberg's petition worked. True to his presidential precedent, Harding came to the assistance of his colleagues back home.[62] But even without the persuasion of the "Ohio Gang," Harding's involvement in the immigrant's case was not necessarily out of the ordinary. According to Harding biographers, the president believed the quota laws to be necessary, but insisted on their humane praxis.[63] Together with secretary of labor James Davis (himself an immigrant) the president assisted in many hardship cases, "and to the displeasure of strict restrictionists, Harding frequently made exceptions, saving almost a thousand immigrants from deportation."[64] On September 30, the president's secretary George Christian sent a letter to Davis, who had already been contacted by Willis the week prior. Anastasia's remarkable file, as one of Harding's "hardship cases," offers a glimpse into this presidential process not widely known to historians.

On October 5, 1921, after two months in detention at Ellis Island, the bureau finally granted Anastasia a temporary bond of admission until November 1, on which day she would be

[62] For more on Warren G. Harding's connections to Ohio and involvement with his powerful associates nicknamed the "Ohio Gang," see Charles L. Mee, *The Ohio Gang: The World of Warren G. Harding*. Lanham, Maryland: M Evans, 1981.
[63] John Dean, *Warren G. Harding.* New York: Macmillan, 2004 (102).
[64] Dean, *Warren G. Harding*, 102.

given first preference in the November quota allotment. But the couple did not wait that long; they married on October 19 and wrote to the Secretary of Labor to have their bond money returned. Special Assistant Larned—once again riled by picture marriage hijinks—intercepted the communication. Lest there be any uncertainty about the precedent this case was making, Larned clarified in an official correspondence back to Nicola that marriage—as stipulated in the bond—was not a reason for its cancellation. Larned made it clear the bureau had upheld the law; they were not circumventing its parameters nor doing Nicola a favor; rather they were "making effective the provision" of the quota law as "giving preference to certain classes, to one of which this girl was found to belong."

Special Assistant Larned chaffed at the ways the bureau was handling picture bride cases and making allowances outside official law for non-quota women to enter the country. On September 22, 1921, as Anastasia Gika's case was making waves, an in-house "general instruction" went out to all immigration bureau employees suggesting the easing of quota restrictions and encouraging giving "special consideration" to the preferred classes listed under the law—the wives, parents, siblings, children, and fiancées of 1) citizens, 2) aliens who have applied for citizenship, or 3) persons eligible to citizenship with prior U.S. military service.[65] In other words, at their discretion, and in the cases of the aforementioned persons, bureau employees could intervene and override the policy on a case-by-case basis. Historian Yuki Oda writes that "the department of Labor gave conflicting instructions on whether citizens' wives would be excluded once quotas were exhausted"[66] and though not addressed in immigration scholarship, the same held true for European men's fiancées. Scholar Bredbenner explains this

[65] Letter from Special Assistant Larned to Theodore G. Risley, Ellis Island, New York, to Acting Secretary of the Department of Labor, Washington DC. October 28, 1921. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55180-563.
[66] Yuki Oda, "Family Unity in U.S. Immigration Policy, 1921-1978. PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014 (27).

leniency: “Resident male laborers’ wives and minor children were unlikely competitors for most American men’s jobs, a reality that partially explained the government’s willingness to assist the admission of citizens’ or declarants’ wives.”[67]

True to his temperament, Larned protested what he referred to as the “September 22 general instruction” easing quota policy. Dealing with several picture bride files at once, Larned intercepted what he deemed a far too lenient admittance decision on the acting secretary’s part, refusing to pass the paperwork on until the commissioner general clarified. Incensed, he wrote: The Bureau can not [*sic*] understand on just what theory of law, or under just what Departmental exception, you based your decision… As to the girl, she was inadmissible at the time of her arrival and, in the Bureau’s view, should be regarded as equally inadmissible now.”[68] With only two weeks before another woman’s deportation, Larned withheld the paperwork and refused its transfer. The acting secretary received the two-page complaint, and rather than engage Larned’s rant, wrote on the letter, “Noted,” and passed it to his secretary to file away.

The 1924 Johnson-Reed Act further slashed the numbers of admitted immigrants by setting the quota at two percent of the 1890 Census numbers. While the new quota did not restrict wives and family members like its predecessor, fiancées were no longer counted as preferred or non-quota immigrants; in defining its terms in the official act of the sixty-eighth congress, the law pointedly declared, “The terms ‘wife’ and ‘husband’ [in reference to family reunification] do not include a wife or husband by reason of a proxy or picture marriage.”[69]

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[67] Candice Lewis Bredbenner, *A Nationality of Her Own: Women, Marriage, and the Law of Citizenship.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998 (117).
[68] Letter from Special Assistant Larned, Ellis Island, New York, to Theodore G. Risley, Acting Secretary of the Department of Labor, Washington, DC. October 28, 1921. NARA, RG 85, File no. 55180-563.
[69] Sixty-eighth Congress. “Immigration Act of 1924: An Act to Limit the Immigration of Aliens into the United States, and for Other Purposes.” Session I, Chapter 190, 1924 (169).

With a mere 100 Greeks allowed in the country per year, Greek men found themselves with limited options; they could make the expensive and exhausting trip all the way back to Greece to marry, they could marry an American woman if racial mores of the region allowed, or, as many men experienced due to the great expense, forgo marriage entirely.

Conclusion

The case files of these Southern European picture brides are remarkable testaments to the resiliency, creativity, struggles, and sometimes privilege of picture marriage couples in the early-twentieth century. These case files not only tell the story of changing immigration policies across time, but record their abundant inconsistencies, and reveal the very human, uncertain process by which bureau employees executed regulatory actions. Their existence further demonstrates an immigration system imperfect in its conception and inconsistent in its policies. This glimpse into immigration procedures urges us to take a closer look at America's immigration system today as the country continues to struggle with equitable and accessible services for migrants across lines of race, gender, and sexuality. In *Deportation Nation,* historian Daniel Kanstroom has demonstrated the ways historical inconsistencies in immigration law continue today, including continued broad discretion of individuals judging deportation cases. Kanstroom writes that deportation is "a powerful tool of discretionary social control" that acts as a "fulcrum on which majoritarian power is brought to bear against a discrete, marginalized segment of our society."[70] While the examples of immigration cases in this chapter are nearly a century old, our society is still struggling to understand and reform a functioning immigration system that lives up to America's promise of egalitarian safety.

[70] Daniel Kanstroom, *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007 (5, x).

Conclusion: Directions for Future Work on Immigrant Picture Brides Within and Beyond the Field of Immigration History

CLIMAX TO AIR-MAIL ROMANCE—Congratulating a couple he married Saturday after their year-long air mail courtship, District Judge Harry Spencer is shown shaking hands with Mr. and Mrs. Vassilios "Bill" Vagalis. Mrs. Vagalis, the former Callope Tavoulari flew to the U. S. from Piraeus, Greece. (Staff Poto.)

Figure 1: The author's grandparents featured in The Lincoln Star, *January 22, 1949.*

While writing this dissertation, a bit of family lore has crept into my mind from time to time. I am reminded in particular of a January 22, 1949 issue of *The Lincoln Star* which ran a front-page story on my grandparent's courthouse wedding. Headlining, "'Airmail' Romance Climaxed by Simple Wedding Here," the short piece told the story of a "20-year-old Greek girl" named Calliope Tavoularis who had recently arrived from Piraeus, Greece to marry Vassilios Vaggalis, a Greek American man living in Nebraska who she only knew through letters and the

recommendation of family friends. Supposedly "Flashing a smile of happiness for reporters, the brown-eyed Calliope blushed profoundly during the 20-minute ceremony." When the reporter asked about a honeymoon, an "exchange of Greek between the couple brought the added explanation from the bride via a friend: 'She thinks America is enough honeymoon.'" [1]

Given the primacy of marriage to ideological notions of the nation, this last line—the likening of America to a honeymoon—reverberates through my mind for its symbolic potential. But I will get to the significance of this piece in just a moment. First, I would like to go back to the beginning of this dissertation, where I posed two significant questions about picture marriage history: 1) how were "white" picture brides forgotten, and 2) why the title of "picture bride" became so attached as to be synonymous with one group—Japanese women—to the exclusion of all others both in scholarly literature and popular culture. Further, I posed the question, what political work was done in either the remembrance or the forgetting of the practice, both within immigrant communities and their descendants, and in popular culture and historical memory at large?

After writing this dissertation, to the first question, I would answer that they were never actually forgotten. Scholars such as Martha Gardner and Suzanne Sinke have written about European "correspondence brides" in the context of global marriage traditions and the limits of derivative citizenship for migrant wives.[2] But as chapter 2 of this dissertation demonstrates, the categorization of Southern European women as "correspondence brides"—wholly separate from Japanese "picture brides"—whitewashes this history. The term "picture bride"—as was applied

[1] "'Airmail' Romance Climaxed By Simple Wedding Here," *The Lincoln Star*, January 22, 1949.
[2] Martha Gardner, *The Qualities of a Citizen: Women, Immigration, and Citizenship, 1870-1965* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005); Suzanne M. Sinke, "The International Marriage Market: Theoretical and Historical Perspectives," in Dirk Hoerder and Jörg Nagler, eds., *People in Transit: German Migration in Comparative Perspective, 1820-1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 227-248.

to multiple, intersecting groups—was in fact a politically charged, racialized signifier that provides nuance to the complex yet fluid racial hierarchies of the early twentieth century.

Further proving these women were never actually forgotten are the many descendants of picture brides who know the story of how their families started in the United States. By far one of the most rewarding aspects of pursuing this project over the years has been the number of individuals reaching out to me to tell their families' stories. In their eager requests to learn more, I am reminded of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's contention that historians "grossly underestimate the size, the relevance, and the complexity of the overlapping sites where history is produced, notably outside of academia" and communicated through a "variety of narrators."[3]

I am also reminded of a moment following my presentation at the Modern Greek Studies Association conference in November 2013. Presenting what was then a largely exploratory project, I had several immigration historians come up to me to offer their thoughts on the elision of Greek picture brides from scholarship on Greek Americans. One older man in particular, whose name now escapes me, told me that Greeks did not like to talk about picture marriage because it was controversial, and they avoided the subject as means to "protect the women." I balked at his contention then, writing it off as grating Greek paternalism. But after years of being immersed in the vitriolic rhetoric of American nativists attacking picture marriage in the 1910s and 1920s, I now understand this logic. Part of survival in a new place sometimes means just keeping your head down and not attracting attention.

This question also speaks to the field of Greek American studies itself though. As I have previously contended, Greek American women's history has by and large only been done by women. The field has been shaped predominantly by masculinist histories that present—almost

[3] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 19.

fetishize—heteronormative family structures and performative gender roles. Charles Moskos' foundational text *Greek Americans*, for instance, mentions that "after 1900, women started arriving—many as picture brides who came from the same or a nearby village as their prospective grooms," but Moskos does not go into detail about these women's lives, skills, or experiences beyond their propensity to work as homemakers. Women take a secondary role in his text. It is precisely because of assertions to the following that I began my work in the first place; Moskos writes that, "In time, as women arrived from the old country, a normal family life was made possible, which further accentuated middle-class aspirations."[4] My work seeks to disrupt the notion of any one "normal" way of family life, instead insisting upon the structural institutions and discourses that shape marriage, family, and sexuality, and make invisible their connections to race, class, and citizenship.

My work, as demonstrated in chapter two, argues that far from deserving to be a mere footnote in Greek American history as Moskos paints them to be, picture brides were essential to the processes by which Greek Americans navigated their racial position from "in-between" white *other* to ethnic white *American*. So as to that first question that I posed in my introduction, I again contend, that *no*, these women were not forgotten, but the important social context of their journeys were. By forgetting the racial transience of early Greek pioneers in America, Greek Americans were able to rewrite a history that was consistent with contemporary white respectability politics—what Yiorgos Anagnostou writes is a "usable ethnic past"—wherein the once racialized and sexualized parameters of cultural traditions like picture marriage, become instead "acceptable deviations from whiteness," rather than damning evidence of racial inferiority.

[4] Charles C. Moskos, *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), 17.

This is why, in 1949 when reporters wrote about my grandparent's arranged marriage, they deemed it an "airmail romance." Without airing all my family's laundry in this forum, I can testify that there was nothing romantic about my grandmother's journey to America. It was a pragmatic partnership motivated by the political violence and unrest in Greece after World War II from which my grandmother was escaping. The America she met was no honeymoon either. She worked hard long hours in bakeries to make ends meet and eventually divorced my abusive grandfather in 1971, becoming a single mother of four children in the process. But, significantly, the mere assumption of "romance" in her union was a historically remarkable assumption of whiteness. A sign that she was welcome in America, that her traditions were acceptable, that Greekness no longer communicated racial tarnish.

In this same logic, the association of "picture bride" with Japanese women has endured because this same racial privilege never manifested for Japanese Americans, who were just a few years out from internment when my grandmother arrived in New York. Further, Asian women in the United States and Europe continue to struggle against racialized and sexualized projections and stereotypes, of which picture bride was the first of many, including dragon women, tiger moms, and lotus blossoms.[5] But far and above, the history of Japanese picture brides has an enduring legacy thanks to the contributions of Asian American scholars in the 1980s who produced stunning work that recorded these women's experiences and oral histories, eventually reclaiming the title of "picture bride" to be a respected moniker for the pioneering women who fought so hard and gave so much.

[5] For more on the exoticization of Asian American women in popular culture, see the work of Renee Tajima in "Lotus Blossoms Don't Bleed: Images of Asian Women," in *Making Waves: An Anthology of Writings by and about Asian American Women*, edited by Asian Women United of California (Boston: Beacon, 1989), 308-17.

This dissertation works as a similar act of reclamation, though one only in the beginning stages. By and large, this dissertation has looked at the U.S. State and processes of racialization. It is primarily a story told from the top-down. However, I remain dedicated to future scholarship capturing these women's voices and lived experiences. In the interim to future projects, I hope readers will take seriously this dissertation's analysis of increasing privilege over time and the historical failures of some people to stand with fellow migrants amid self-interested pursuits of whiteness. In reflection, I hope readers will commit to finding ways to make the current moment more equitable to break global cycles of racist violence, xenophobia, and discrimination.

The following section will detail the future work I will pursue in this line of inquiry. The following section proposes adding more theoretical contributions to Japanese picture bride history that further illumine the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality in the construction of American belonging. In my proposal for the application of queer theory to understanding picture marriage, I demonstrate how work in immigration history can be reanalyzed and understood anew in light of interdisciplinary contributions.[6]

A Queer History of Picture Marriage: Further Directions for the Field

Hisano Akagi, exited the long deck of the *Manchuria* liner and stepped foot on Angel Island, the new American immigration station located in the San Francisco harbor. It was 1914 and Hisano, a native of Hiroshima, Japan, was stepping onto American soil for the first time. Among her few possessions was a photograph, a crinkled likeness of a man she had never met; a

[6] Donna Gabaccia, "Comment: Ins and Outs: Who Is an Immigration Historian?" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 126-135.

man to whom she was already married. Understandably anxious of the unknown fate ahead of her, she "desperately wanted to return home," but knew there was no turning back.[7]

Hisano was one of an estimated 10,000 Japanese picture brides who came through San Francisco's immigration station from 1907-1920.[8] Like other picture bride women, Hisano came to the United States to join the man with whom she had recently entered into marriage back home. Due to strict immigration and financial restrictions, her husband, a Japanese immigrant living in the United States, was unable to travel back to Japan and perform the traditional marriage ritual in person. His situation was common, however. Because of increasingly stringent immigration restrictions after the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan, and the financial burdens of international travel, picture marriage provided an opportunity for many Japanese men to marry and start families in their new country. When the time had come that Yoshio was able to support a wife, their families—with the help of a local matchmaker—would have orchestrated the arrangement with the couples' consent. Arranged marriages were a long-practiced cultural tradition. Organizing the matches in Japan provided women a rare opportunity to circumvent prejudicial travel restrictions by entering the United States as permissible wives (according to family reunification allowances), rather than as inadmissible single women.

Hisano and her husband Yoshio—ten years her senior—worked in Alameda, California for most of their lives. Almost seventy-five years later, Hisano could still recall moments of poignant hardship in her long life—the children who "would throw eggs and tomatoes" at Yoshio as he "rode to work in the streetcar…just because he was Japanese." Or worst yet, the

[7] Sharon Yamato Danley, "Art Imitates Life in 'Picture Brides': Local Women Are Among Dwindling Pool Who Lived Story Told in Film." *Los Angeles Times*, May 14, 1995. https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-05-14-ci-608-story.html

[8] Tanaka Kei, "Marriage as Citizen's Privilege: Japanese Picture Marriage and American Social Justice." *Nanzan Review of American Studies* 31 (2009): 131-150, 133.

painful memory of a "twenty-two-year-old son [who] died of scarlet fever while in a World War II internment camp." However, despite these traumas, Hisano summarized her life as having been "more happy than not." When asked if she had ever "considered leaving her husband and finding another man," she smiled and answered, "A person who thinks that way, her heart is a little crooked." [9]

In 1995, Hisano, then 97 years old, was interviewed in the *Los Angeles Times* after she and two other women represented extant picture brides at the Hollywood premiere of the film "Picture Bride," directed by Kayo Hatta. In the article, journalist Sharon Yamato Danley treats Hisano's story with a reverent respect, interwoven by charming commentary provided by Hisano herself. Written almost one hundred years after picture brides started entering the country, the article marks a drastic change in the picture bride story the *Los Angeles Times* might once have told.

In the past, papers throughout California and the West Coast told stories of racialized deviance, berating picture brides, picture marriage, and Japanese families. By the 1910s, what became known as the "Jap picture bride" became a popular symbolic trope representing the demise of white America and Christian democracy.[10] By 1920 anti-Japanese sentiment had risen to such an extent that the Japanese government (to protect its people and address increasing pressure from the U.S. government) agreed to stop issuing passports to picture bride women, a policy known as the Ladies Agreement which effectively ended the practice by the following year.

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[9] Sharon Yamato Danley, "Japanese Picture Brides Recall Hardships of American Life." *Los Angeles Times,* May 11, 1995. https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1995-05-11-cb-64865-story.html

[10] See for example "How the Jap 'Picture Brides' are Japanizing California," *The Washington Times*, January 4, 1920.

While numerous articles and monographs have detailed the history of Japanese picture bride women,[11] it is the discursive history of picture marriage—how people talked about the practice and why—that my future work will address. This project will combine historical methods with queer theory to argue the connection between eugenics, sexology, and popular media depictions of picture brides in newspaper articles, illustrations, and photography from 1907-1924, the major years of picture bride migration and eventual exclusion. Rooted within these forums, I argue, were strategic uses of the "queer bride," a term I deploy to analyze the symbolic trope of the Japanese picture bride created within journalistic and political discourse for the explicit purpose of conceptualizing, defining, and eventually condemning the presence of Japanese women and their sexual autonomy in the United States. Following Siobhan Somerville's assertion that the turn of the century was a time "of cultural desperation regarding rights in language and the control of language over the social construction of identity,"[12] this work will also demonstrate that it was not just nativists who wielded the racial logics of eugenics, but immigrants themselves and other activists arguing *for* Asian American rights and inclusion. Finally, even as nativists rejected picture marriage and placed it outside the prescriptive contexts of healthy, heteronormative American marriage, this chapter demonstrates that picture marriage also existed as an autonomous "third space," formed out of the strict

[11] Erika Lee and Judy Yung, *Angel Island: Immigrant Gateway to America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kei Tanaka, "Japanese Picture Marriage and the Image of Immigrant Women in Early Twentieth-Century California," *The Japanese Journal of American Studies* 1, no. 15 (2004): 115-138; Tanaka Kei, "Marriage as Citizen's Privilege: Japanese Picture Marriage and American Social Justice." *Nanzan Review of American Studies* 31 (2009): 131-150; Cecilia M. Tsu, *Garden of the World: Asian Immigrants and the Making of Agriculture in California's Santa Clara Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Yuji Ichioka, "Amerika Nadeshiko: Japanese Immigrant Women in the United States, 1900-1924." *Pacific Historical Review* 49, no. 2 (May 1980): 339-357; Sonia Christina Gomez, "From Picture Brides to War Brides: Race, Gender, and Belonging in the Making of Japanese Ameirca." PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2018; Tomoko Makabe, *Picture Brides: Japanese Women in Canada* (North York, Ont.: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

[12] Siobhan Somerville, *Queering the Color Line: Race and the Invention of Homosexuality in American Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 9.

confines of exclusionary immigration policies. Defying slanderous depictions of victimhood or immorality, picture marriages were powerful acts of agency that enabled the formation of Japanese families, culture, and communities in the United States. Following Matthew Frye Jacobson's observations that race is a "public fiction," best understood with an "analysis of public exchange," this future project will analyze three discursive strategies individuals took when discussing picture marriage, namely comparative anatomy, racial impressionability, and sexual differentiation.

As a note, my use of the concept "queer," comes from David Halperin's assertion that queer is by "definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant… [It] demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-á-vis the normative…"[13] While scholars debate the primary functions and political qualities of "queer" as an analytical category, my use of the word answers the call to, as anthropologists Evelyn Blackwood and Mark Johnson write, "trouble the fixity of the various subject positions people occupy and recognizes the bodily consequences of people's habitations and movements between and across those different and sometimes discrepant positions."[14]Queer as a category opens up spaces to vocalize marginalized or nonbinary sexual, gendered identities, and as a methodology illumines the processes and power structures involved.

A queer reading of picture marriage demonstrates the contradictory ways groups are positioned as outside the norm and captures "the multiple border crossings of gay and straight subjects alike, and the ways in which these border crossings are reconstituting the borders, the

[13] Quoted in Nickki Sullivan. *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory*. New York: New York University Press, 2003 (5).
[14] Evelyn Blackwood and Mark Johnson, "Queer Asian Subjects: Transgressive Sexualities and Heteronormative Meanings." *Asian Studies Review* 36 (December 2012): 441-451, 442.

citizens, and the meaning of belonging."[15] As a methodological choice, my use of queer theory questions the stability of categories—specifically white heteronormativity—to dismantle these ideas which are typically viewed as common sense or seemingly logical concepts. Instead, this work's queer analysis demonstrates the dysfunctional, hypocritical, and often violent premises upon which white heteronormativity is built. The ensuing analysis of queer subjects, therefore, as Asian studies scholars write, demonstrates the "relative instabilities inherent in and productive of both normative and transgressive bodies and practices."[16]

These instabilities are perhaps best revealed in the ways early twentieth century processes of sexualization were refracted through the discourse of race. This inconsistent process in many ways accounts for the particularly vitriolic attention Japanese migrants received for participating in picture marriage, especially considering the large group of European immigrants likewise utilizing the practice to much less condemnation (see Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation for more information). As I will argue, critics of the practice who based their critiques on moral foundations of sexual propriety and "American" values, were in reality fighting to uphold white supremacy and protect white economic interests.

As a key strategy in immigration discourse, the queer bride—what I argue to be the specter of the Japanese picture bride in popular media—was set in opposition to prevailing ideas of white, middle-class femininity and domesticity to express a racially specific form of sexual deviancy. Critiques of picture marriage placed these unions—which were technically heterosexual, reproductive relationships—outside the bounds of normative, acceptable family formations, and in the process, helped to set Japanese Americans at large outside the bounds of

[15] Cossman, Brenda. *Sexual Citizens: The Legal and Cultural Regulation of Sex and Belonging* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 10.
[16] Blackwood and Mark Johnson, "Queer Asian Subjects," 442.

national belonging. The presence of these strategies within anti-Japanese rhetoric, therefore, ultimately tells the story of how burgeoning notions of white heteronormativity—which redefined prescriptions of American sexual norms, marriage, and family—became an ideological form of nationalism that reflexively shaped the nation's views of race and immigration. This history reveals the ways that dominant discourses of heterosexuality and the "American family" were diverse, inconsistent, and contradictory. If heterosexuality were a consistent or coherent category, picture marriage couples would necessarily fall within its boundaries of privilege. Yet the compulsion to exclude immigrants on racial grounds required the practice to fall outside these lines.

Writing about the use of queer approaches in Asian American studies scholarship, Martin Manalansan IV writes that queer analysis has been used as a

> theoretical, methodological, and conceptual scaffolding from which to conceptualize and engage with the historical, cultural, economic, and political exigencies, realities, and paradoxes that have beset Asian Americans. The queer approach in Asian American studies has also invigorated enduring fieldwide conversations about the erased/invisible, marginalized, and abject histories and communities of Asian America.[17]

While I will show in the next section how Asian America and immigration historians have artfully interrogated gender and sexuality in their work, queer theoretical perspectives are missing entirely from work done on the early twentieth century. My departure from immigration history literature, as I will show, builds on newer historical work integrating racial and ethnic history with sexuality and queer theory such as Siobhan Somerville's monograph *Queering the Color Line*. However, most of the small canon upon which this chapter's methodology is based,

[17] Martin F. Manalansan IV. "Queer." *Keywords for Asian American Studies*, edited by Cathy J. Schlund-Vials, Linda Trinh Vo, and K. Scott Wong (New York: New York University Press, 2015): 197-201, 197.

primarily focuses on the black/white color divide. It is critical to extend historical research beyond bifurcated models of race to deconstruct the ways that a broader group of peoples experienced politically significant racialization and sexualization that affected their reception and adaptation in the United States and around the globe. Picture marriage as a lens allows immigration historians to respond to calls to integrate, as Erika Lee writes, "more insights from a broad range of fields"—including ethnic, women, gender, and sexuality studies—"to ask new questions…and make connections (across groups and between past and present) where before we might have only seen divisions."[18]

Implications for the Current Moment

Seen within the notion of queer as "an ongoing and necessarily unfixed site of engagement and contestation,"[19] the queering of picture marriage can reveal the engagement of its practitioners in meaningful political projects to claim self-representation and agency. As a

[18] Erika Lee, "A Part and Apart: Asian American and Immigration History," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 34, no. 4 (2015): 28-42, 39. As an important note to this methodology of examining picture marriage through the lens of queer theory, this work is not meant to obscure the work done by or about LGBTQIA+ Asian Americans. Queer Asian American studies has grown in the past decade, based on the critical contributions of what Dana Y. Takagi writes was a "generation of radical queer Asians [who] outed themselves nationally in the 1980s when they joined other queer women of color writers in documenting and publishing their experiences at the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality in short stories, poems, and polemical writings" (2). In a 1994 issue of *Amerasia Journal* dedicated to LGBTQ scholarship, Dana Y. Takagi helped to establish the field in her seminal essay, "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity Politics in Asian America." Takagi's call to consider sexuality in Asian American history has inspired a breadth of multi-disciplinary intersectional work analyzing queer contributions, performances, and identity work in literature, the social sciences, and beyond. The field of history has had its own strong, yet fewer in number, contributions to queer Asian American studies including Amy Sueyoshi's analysis of same-sex sexuality of Issei Yone Noguchi in the late nineteenth century, and Judy Wu's work on Margaret Chung, a Chinese physician and surgeon in early 1920s San Francisco Chinatown (*see* Sueyoshi, "Why Queer Asian American Studies," 271). Rather than obscure this work, my work seeks to amplify this body of literature written for and about LGBTQIA+ Asian Americans and owes a debt of gratitude to the scholars in this field for opening up conversations on race and sexuality which positively reorient our scholarship into more inclusive and intellectually rigorous pathways. *See* Amy Sueyoshi, "Why Queer Asian American Studies? Implications for Japanese America." *Pan-Japan* 12, nos. 1 and 2 (Spring/Fall 2016): 267-278, 271; Dana Y. Takagi, "Maiden Voyage: Excursion into Sexuality and Identity Politics in Asian America." *Amerasia Journal* 20, no. 1 (1994): 1-18.

[19] Nikki Sullivan, *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 4.

solution to discriminatory immigration policies, picture marriage allowed immigrant couples to have a relative level of control over their sexual, reproductive lives that immigration restrictions, xenophobia, and miscegenation laws sought to take away. Japanese families, though confronted with mounting physical and political violences, navigated the power structures in place and enacted productive opposition by engaging within a third space--what I ultimately argue is picture marriage—outside and around the oppressive boundaries of racism.[20] Japanese immigrants and government officials actively resisted family oppression. By analyzing the discourse of Japanese communities and government officials, the concept of the queer bride can be re-orientated from a violent white construction into a symbol of agency and political resistance through their reworking of heteronormativity discourse as counter-hegemonic devices. Japanese groups utilized heteronormativity discourse to invert the queer bride's differences as forms of exceptional femininity that white women did not live up to. Others wrote that picture marriage more closely demonstrated a commitment to civic life. Campaigns in the United States and in Japan stressed Japanese modernity and commitment to the future. What I hope to find in the future is more evidence of Andrea Geiger's assertation that after 1920 "Japanese diplomats had grown more assertive in invoking comparisons between Japanese and Europeans and in mounting direct challenges to the inequitable treatment of Japanese immigrants," and used picture marriage as a platform to expose the hypocrisy of racist legislation.[21] Thus, within this framework, the analytical trope of the "queer bride" is twofold. It can first be conceptualized as the product of anti-immigrant violence and propaganda, but more importantly, it can act as a

[20] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).
[21] Andrea Geiger, *Subverting Exclusion: Transpacific Encounters with Race, Caste, and Borders, 1885-1928* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015): 176.

metaphor of resistance through the subversive reconfiguration of cultural traditions in global contexts.

In its simplest intention, this future work is a retelling of immigrant picture marriage that provides a fuller perspective on the ways the practice worked both logistically and symbolically in American culture and in immigrant communities participating in the tradition. In that way, this future work aligns with the goals I set out for this dissertation. I knew that Southern European picture brides existed and I set out to document their experiences through examinations of bureaucratic systems, popular culture texts, and scientific and political discourses. This approach to theorizing picture marriage in turn queers citizenship by demonstrating its mutable boundaries and denaturalizes the seemingly stable categories of white/nonwhite, hetero-/homosexual, male/female, and citizen/alien. This critical intervention ultimately suggests that these struggles are not simply an issue of the past, as the hegemonic narratives of white, heteronormative citizenship persist; *de jure* citizens still wrestle for full inclusion and legal recognition. Legal parameters placed on queer individuals and/or persons of color suggest that contemporary hot-button topics such as gay marriage and adoption or "welfare mothers" are not simply a fight over morality or the sanctity of marriage and families, but rather the sanctity of citizenship, a manifestation of a long tradition of keeping marginalized bodies disenfranchised and out of power.

Naming the abundant contradictions in the story of Asian and European picture brides denaturalizes notions of whiteness and heterosexuality as stable categories. Indeed, as seen in discussions on eugenical marriage in the early-twentieth century, white heteronormativity was not a natural political order; rather, it was a reactionary tactic that worked to narrow the boundaries of citizenship and maintain white supremacy as a global order. This conclusion

ultimately demonstrates that though the struggles of immigrant families change over time, xenophobic and heterosexist practices are not simply issues of the past. The mythic construction of the national family—both inherently white and heterosexual—has continued to fuel a legacy of exclusion and violence against nonwhite, queer, and dis- and differently abled bodied peoples. Further avenues of research must show, as Stuart Hall writes, how "ideologies of racism remain contradictory structures, which can function both as the vehicles for the imposition of dominant ideologies, and as the elementary forms for the cultures of resistance."[22]

[22] Stuart Hall, "Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance," in *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), 342.

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