Serve the People
Making Asian America in the Long Sixties
by KAREN L. ISHIZUKA

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— Gary Y. Okihiro, author of American History Unbound: Asians and Pactic Islanders

Until the political ferment of the Long Sixties, there were no Asian Americans. There were only isolated communities of mostly Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos lumped together as “Orientals.” Serve the People tells the story of the social and cultural movement that knit these disparate communities into a political identity, the history of how—and why—the double consciousness of Asian America came to be.

At the same time, Karen Ishizuka’s vivid narrative reveals the personal epiphanies and intimate stories of insurgent movers and shakers and ground-level activists alike. Drawing on more than 120 interviews and illustrated with striking images from guerrilla movement publications, the book evokes the feeling of growing up alien in a society rendered in black and white, and recalls the intricate memories and meanings of the Asian American movement. Serve the People paints a panoramic landscape of a radical time, and is destined to become the definitive history of the making of Asian America.

KAREN L. ISHIZUKA is a third-generation American of Japanese descent who was part of the Asian American movement in Los Angeles. She is the author of Lost and Found: Reclaiming the Japanese American Incarceration, as well as many published articles, and coeditor of Mining the Home Movie: Excavations in Histories and Memories. An award-winning documentary film producer and museum curator, she helped establish the Japanese American National Museum and received her PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles.
Praise for *Serve the People*:

“There was a time, Karen Ishizuka reminds us, when the word ‘Asian American’ was not merely a demographic category, but a fight you were picking with the world.”
– From the foreword by Jeff Chang, author of *Who We Be: A Cultural History of Racial Post-Civil Rights America*

“*Serve the People* describes beautifully not merely the making of a people but an entire era. People of color, women, queer people, students, and the working class altered U.S. history by making the nation more democratic and aware of its imperialism. This is a work of immense significance.”
– Gary Y. Okihiro, author of *American History Unbound: Asians and Pacific Islanders*

“With meticulous research and more than a hundred interviews, Karen Ishizuka traces the links between Yellow Power and other radical movements. This engaging book breaks through to new levels of insight into this still-neglected movement of far-reaching influence.”
– Jesús Treviño, author of *Eyewitness: A Filmmaker’s Memoir of the Chicano Movement*

“Karen Ishizuka has opened a window to an ignored but significant part of American history. I love the captivating cartoons, newspaper and arts sections, but what really enlivens her narrative and adds depth to her work is her personal relationship to this history.”
– Dale Minami, attorney and cofounder, Asian Law Caucus

“As Karen Ishizuka indicates so well, African Americans and Asian Americans have shared a long history of interaction and influence. Her work reminds us of the need to view race through a broader paradigm.”
– Lonnie Bunch, director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture

“We weren’t born ‘Asian American.’ It’s a political identity, forged in the fires of struggle, community and consciousness. Serve the People chronicles the hard-fought history of a new awareness—the story of how we became Asian America.”
– Phil Yu, Angry Asian Man