



Name in English: Sucheng Chan

Name in Chinese: 陈素真 [陳素真]

Name in Pinyin: Chén Sùzhēn

Gender: Female

Birth Year: 1941

Birth Place: Shanghai, China

Current location: Santa Barbara, California

Ethnic Studies Pioneer & Historian

Profession(s): Author, Historian, Scholar, Professor

Education: B.S., Economics, 1963, Swarthmore College; M.A., Asian Studies, 1965, University of Hawaii; Ph.D., Political Science, 1973, University of California at Berkeley

Awards:

1978, Distinguished Teaching Award, University of California at Berkeley; 1986, Theodore Saloutos Memorial Book Award; 1987, Pacific Coast Branch Book Award, American Historical Association; 1988, Outstanding Book Award, Association for Asian American Studies; 1992, Outstanding Book Award, Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Civil Rights; 1994, Margaret T. Getman to Students Award, University of California at Santa Barbara; 1997, Lifetime Achievement Award, Association for Asian American Studies; 1998, Asian American Faculty and Staff Association's Distinguished Lecturer Award, University of California at Santa Barbara; 2001, History and Social Science Book Award, Association for Asian American Studies; 2004, History Book Award, Association for Asian American Studies; 2005, Outstanding Academic Title Award, Choice Magazine

Contribution (s): Although she completed degrees in economics, Asian studies, and political science, it was only when Dr. Sucheng Chan began her first teaching job did she realize that many issues and questions involving Asian studies could only be answered by studying history. She immediately trained herself to become a historian, reading all the major history journals for the past decade. In time, she has become one of the most influential historians and scholars in the field of Asian American studies. She also played an integral part of the movement creating ethnic studies as a legitimate field of university study.

Dr. Chan started her teaching career as an assistant professor of ethnic studies at California State University at Sonoma from 1971 to 1973. She later became an assistant professor of Asian American studies at the University of California at Berkeley in 1974, where she quickly became an associate professor. In 1984, Dr. Chan was hired professor of history and American studies and also as provost of Oakes College of the University of California at Santa Cruz, the first Asian American woman in the entire UC system to hold the title. One of her key accomplishments at Santa Cruz was revitalizing Oakes College as the multicultural center of the university. In 1988, Dr. Chan accepted the position of professor of history and Asian American studies at UC Santa Barbara. Chan

eventually chaired its Asian American studies department, earning the distinction of chair of the first Department of Asian American Studies at a major U.S. research university. A beloved teacher, Dr. Chan has won several awards for teaching.

A prolific author and historian, Dr. Chan has written or edited over 17 books and is the founding editor of the 21-volume Asian American History and Culture Series, investigating the history of different groups of Asian Americans in the U.S. including Chinese, Koreans, Hmong, Cambodians, Laotians, and the Vietnamese. Dr. Chan has made an immeasurable impact on the historiography of Asian Americans and illuminated the understanding of the history of many ethnic groups. Chan has served as on the board of editors of several history publications and as a consultant on numerous films, oral history, and museum projects about Asian American communities.

When she was four, Dr. Chan contracted and survived both polio and pneumonia. Since 1988, she has suffered from post-polio syndrome that has limited her abilities. This has caused Dr. Chan to decline many public lectures and withdraw from many professional activities, focusing instead on her writing and research.

Publications/Patents: Chan is the author or editor of over 17 books, including:
1986, "This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910"
1989, "Social and Gender Boundaries in the United States"
1990, "Income and Status Differences Between White and Minority Americans: A Persistent Inequality"
1991, "Asian Americans: An Interpretive History"
1991, "Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943"
1993, "Peoples of Color in the American West"
1994, "Hmong Means Free: Life in Laos and America"
1996, "Major Problems in California History"
2003, "Not Just Victims: Conversations with Cambodian Community Leaders in the United States"
2003, "Remapping Asian American History"
2004, "Survivors: Cambodian Refugees in the United States"
2005, "Chinese American Transnationalism: The Flow of People, Resources"
2005, "In Defense of Asian American Studies: The Politics of Teaching and Program Building"
2006, "The Vietnamese American 1.5 Generation: Stories of War, Revolution, Flight, and New Beginnings"
2008, "Chinese Americans and the Politics of Race and Culture"

External Links:

<http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/articles/pages/4564/Chan-Sucheng-1941.html>

Kim, Hyung-chan. (1999). *Distinguished Asian Americans*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group.