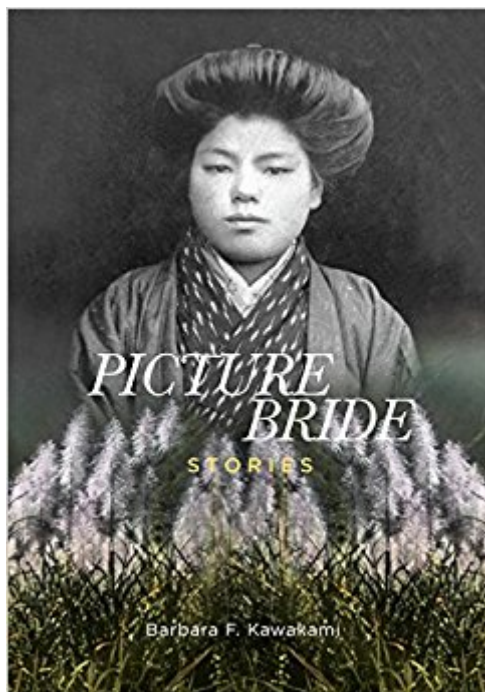


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Picture Bride Stories



Synopsis

During the 1885 to 1924 immigration period of plantation laborers from Japan to Hawaii, more than 200,000 Japanese, mostly single men, made the long journey by ship to the Hawaiian Islands. As it became apparent that they would never return to Japan, many of the men sent for brides to join them in their adopted home. More than 20,000 of these "picture brides" immigrated from Japan and Okinawa to Hawaii to marry husbands whom they knew only through photographs exchanged between them or their families. Based on Barbara Kawakami's first-hand interviews with sixteen of these women, *Picture Bride Stories* is a poignant collection that recounts the diverse circumstances that led them to marry strangers, their voyages to Hawaii, the surprises and trials that they encountered upon arriving, and the lives they led upon settling in a strange new land. Many found hardship, yet persevered and endured the difficult conditions of the sugarcane and pineapple plantations for the sake of their children. As they acclimated to a foreign place and forged new relationships, they overcame challenges and eventually prospered in a better life. The stories of the issei women exemplify the importance of friendships and familial networks in coping with poverty and economic security. Although these remarkable women are gone, their legacy lives on in their children, grandchildren, and succeeding generations. In addition to the oral histories, the author provides substantial background on marriage customs and labor practices on the plantations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This engrossing book continues Kawakami's exploration of this part of the American story to include

a group not much previously noticed. She carries out her research and presentation with a courageous, individualized, and sensitive attention to amazing variations within this particular ethnic group. Highly recommended.--R. B. Lyman Jr. "CHOICE"By letting her subjects, all issei (first-generation immigrant) women, tell their stories in their own words, taken from 250 hours of interviews she recorded with them, Kawakami gives voice to the silence-riddled history of picture brides in Hawaii and the reader feels an instant connection to them. . . . Picture Bride Stories is a scrapbook of memory and a treasure of local Japanese history. Along with their voices, the legacies of these women endure in these pages.--Misty-Lynn Sanico "Honolulu Star-Advertiser"

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Excellent book. This is part of many of us in Hawaii so it hits close to home.

Wonderful women I had the pleasure to grow up with..."Hana but ta days"! I've a better respect of their strength and endurance to overcome...

The information in this book will be helpful to me in the writing of my novel.

I'm so grateful that Barbara Kawakami undertook this project. She captured the voices of a generation of women who otherwise had no voice. Some of the stories made me cry but more than anything they bring to light the story of America -- how hard work, perseverance, sacrificing for the next generation -- this is what America is about. This is my family's story, too! Now I have a better understanding of what my grandmothers endured. I am motivated to hear my Nisei mother's stories so that I can pass them on to my daughters.

Barbara's documentation of the personal accounts of this generation of Japanese women immigrating to Hawaii is incredible! She finely weaves history with personal stories in a captivating way.

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