

In the late nineteenth century, nursery stock and other agricultural products were shipped from Japan to meet the growing demand for exotics in the United States. The increasing traffic of transpacific plants, insects, and peoples raised fears of a “biological yellow peril,” and over the next fifty years, these crossings transformed conceptions of race and migration, played a central role in the establishment of the US empire and its government agencies, and shaped the fields of horticulture, invasion biology, entomology, and plant pathology. In *Biotic Borders*, Jeannie N. Shinozuka uncovers the emergence of biological nativism that fueled American imperialism and spurred anti-Asian racism that remains with us today.

Shinozuka provides an eye-opening look at biotic exchanges that not only altered the lives of Japanese in America but transformed American society more broadly. She shows how the modern fixation on panic about foreign species created a linguistic and conceptual arsenal for anti-immigration movements that flourished in the early twentieth century. Xenophobia inspired concerns about biodiversity, prompting new categories of “native” and “invasive” species that defined groups as bio-invasions to be regulated—or annihilated. By highlighting these connections, Shinozuka shows us that this story cannot be told about humans alone—the plants and animals that crossed with them are central to Japanese American and Asian American history. The rise of economic entomology and plant pathology in concert with public health and anti-immigration movements reveals these entangled histories of xenophobia, racism, and species invasions.

“An original, important, and exciting scholarly work. Shinozuka supports her thesis and its claims with abundant examples scoured from an extensive collection of archives. But this is no mere empirical study. It is a highly readable book with a powerful argument, and a story about the Japanese American experience that needs to be told.”

VASSILIKI BETTY SMOCOVITIS, University of Florida

“This provocative study reveals the connections between humans and other life forms, science and society, and discourse and materiality. During the noonday of US imperialism in the Pacific, xenophobia and nativism informed and were informed by debates in science over biodiversity and native and invasive species and by calls for legal, environmental, and public health protections from foreign pests and pathogens. ‘Invasion biology’ and white and Christian nationalisms are in dialogue, as this remarkable book shows.”

GARY Y. OKIHIRO, author of *Third World Studies: Theorizing Liberation*

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