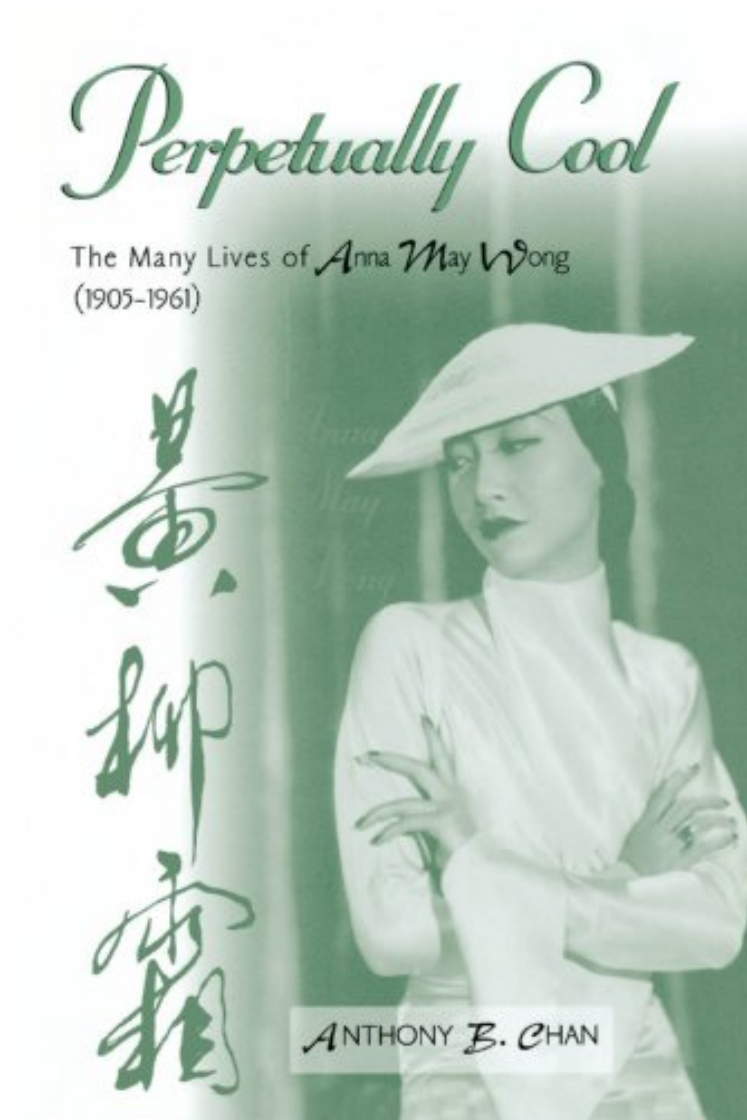


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Perpetually Cool: The Many Lives of Anna May Wong (1905-1961) (The Scarecrow Filmmakers Series)

Anthony B. Chan

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Anthony B. Chan : Perpetually Cool: The Many Lives of Anna May Wong (1905-1961) (The Scarecrow Filmmakers Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Perpetually Cool: The Many Lives of Anna May Wong (1905-1961) (The Scarecrow Filmmakers Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very nice biographyBy chaoswebAnna May Wong is a someone who should be famous, but is not. This work is clearly a work of love, and does a great service to the Hollywood

community, elaborating on a cultural/historical past that is quickly fading into obscurity because of time. The accomplishments and struggles she went through are a testament to her strength, and something that should be remembered by today's Asian minority actors and actresses struggling in Hollywood. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing episodic, poorly edited. By CommithePigScattered poorly edited. Only for Anna May Wong fans. 40 of 43 people found the following review helpful. High Priced for Misinformation. By Chei Mi Lane. Mr. Chan seems to have a rather noteworthy career in Chinese-American History, and he drew a lot from that to add into his book on Anna May Wong. I don't know that 'Perpetually Cool' relates to Anna May by those that have researched her at length. He titles one chapter, "The Journey Ends Halfway" based on his believing that Anna May was in an episode of "Danger Man", known in America as "Secret Agent", which was called, "The Journey Ends Halfway". I have viewed this episode, and the Anna May Wong that was in this was not the Anna May Wong of whom he writes. An Anna May Wong appeared in a few movies and TV shows, but was a much younger person, perhaps capitalizing on the name of the more famous one. To title a chapter based on an error, when there are so many other choices he could have used, shows poor research. Omissions on a star are one thing. Erroneous info is another. Having researched Anna May Wong for over thirty years I was disappointed at the direction he took. In a Wyatt Earp TV episode, he calls her part an 'Antiracist Activist'. What a euphemism!! Anna May played China Mary, who was the feared leader of the Chinese community in Tombstone. She tried to protect Chinese criminals from white justice. Activist is someone who is part of or leads campaigns. The Chinese Community in days of old did everything they could to prosper quietly in a white world. In short, he seems to have slanted Anna May's life to his thinking and beliefs. A caption under a publicity photo of her says "Daoist Mood", as if he knew what was on her mind or the photographer's. It's a publicity photo. Nothing more. Nothing less. This kind of thought pattern runs throughout. Anna was a follower of Christian Science. \$45.00 is a lot to pay for a book with 16 photos, none of which broke any new ground, though I enjoyed the shot of Anna in London's Limehouse district. He did a lot of superficial research, which rang of "Round up the usual suspects." Some of the articles he based his bio on had erroneous facts in it, which upon digging deeper, he would have found. Though I am critical of his work, it is welcome.

Anna May Wong was an extraordinary Asian American woman who became the country's most famous film actress of Chinese descent. From small parts in silent films to starring roles in Hollywood and across the Atlantic, Wong made an impression on audiences of all persuasions. In *Perpetually Cool*, Anthony Chan takes the reader on a compelling journey through Wong's early years in Los Angeles and her first Hollywood pictures. Chan also examines the scope and nature of race, gender, and power and their impact on Wong's personal growth as a Chinese American. *Perpetually Cool* is not only the captivating story of a cinematic career, but also of roots and identity, as it recounts Wong's desire to connect with her heritage in the United States and in China. Chan provides extensive textual analyses of Wong's signature films, especially *The Toll of the Sea* (1922), *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924) with Douglas Fairbanks, and her most famous role as Hui Fei in *Shanghai Express* (1932), opposite Marlene Dietrich. *Perpetually Cool* is a fitting tribute to the influence of this Chinese American icon.

A welcome edition to any library's Asian American and film collections and would be appropriate for both undergraduate and graduate students. (Asian Affairs) Anthony B. Chan helps a new generation discover the phenomenon of Anna May Wong. With a historian's flair for social context, Professor Chan not only conveys the complexity of this singular Asian American actress, but he also shows how she was both constrained and emboldened by the times into which she was born. This book is a fitting tribute to a woman whose perpetually cool style was at least matched, if not exceeded, by her shrewd ability to beat the odds. (Kevin Kawamoto, Media Scholar) Chan's book details the life and career of an important Chinese-American actress whose work has been neglected. Like Lena Horne and Dorothy Dandridge, Anna May Wong was a talented, beautiful woman of color limited by the restrictions of the Hollywood film industry. Her personal and professional story is an engrossing read for anyone interested in our social and cultural history. (Al Sampson, SIMA Institute of Media Arts) Chan's take on Anna May Wong is a breath of fresh air! *Perpetually Cool* shines the spotlight on the woman behind the myth. Chan's portrayal of Anna May Wong as an ancestral forerunner of overseas Chinese feminism is a real tour de force. This book is spicy, intoxicating and journalistically sound, a welcome addition to our growing canon of East-West stories. (Christina M. Wong, regular contributor to CBC Radio) *Perpetually Cool* is more analytical and more concerned with placing Wong in the context of Chinese and Chinese American history. As the title suggests (Chan) sees her as an innate hipster and compares her performance in *Piccadilly* to Marlon Brando's turn in *The Wild One*. (J. Hoberman Village Voice) *Perpetually Cool* celebrates the determination and style of Anna May Wong, whose strength of character has inspired me in my passion as a designer. Through Ms. Wong's universally understood story, this book provides an astounding portrayal of the Chinese American experience. With clarity, passion, and integrity, Professor Chan helps us to understand the enigma that is Ms. Wong (Maggie Norris, Designer)... tantalizingly intriguing... (Seattle Weekly) [A] detailed analyses of some of Wong's most famous films. Each chapter could stand alone as a scholarly discussion of film and cultural theory as well as a biographical account of the actress's life.... sheds new light on this remarkable woman. (Foreword s) It [is]

most interesting when instructing us on how early Chinese-American immigrants made their way and on the legal and social restraints under which they lived. (Robert Gottlieb, author of *Global Cities: Urban Environments in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and China* The New York Of Books)...passionately explores...themes from a distinctively Asian American perspective...sets [Wong's] story in the context of the history of Chinese-Americans. (Richard James Havis Cineaste)...suitable in collections extending to the culture of film. (CHOICE)Winsome and willowy, Wong made an unforgettable impact on Hollywood with her portrayals of dragon ladies and lotus blossoms during a time when racism raged and Asians were rarely seen in American movies. Criticized by Chinese for her scanty outfits and for perpetuating stereotypes, Wong was also revered for daring to demand parity with her white counterparts. During her illustrious career, she appeared in more than 60 features, making the transition from silent films to talkies to, later, television. She also performed in stage plays and vaudeville, and acted in three languages. No other Asian American actor before or since has matched her accomplishments. (Northwest Asian Weekly)Anthony B. Chan...[divides] his book into three sections. One is a bio spanning childhood in L.A.'s Chinese community to her stardom in silent and sound films in Hollywood and Europe. Another addresses everything from Wong's attitudes toward Asian cultures to her Taoist religious beliefs. The third dissects Wong's work in her most celebrated roles, including *Toll of the Sea* and *Shanghai Express*. (Variety)Born Wong Liu Tsong in Los Angeles in 1905, Anna May Wong became Hollywood's first Chinese-American movie star. In this biography, independent filmmaker Chan (communication, U. of Washington) tells the story of Wong's life and examines the effects of racist ideologies on her career. The volume concludes with textual analyses of Wong's signature films, including *The Thief of Bagdad*(1924) and *Shanghai Express*(1932). This is the first paperback edition of a volume first published in 2003. (Reference and Research Book News, May 2007)About the AuthorAnthony B. Chan is Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Washington, Seattle, and the author of *Arming The Chinese* (1982), *Gold Mountain* (1983), *Li Ka-shing: Hong Kong's Elusive Billionaire* (1996), and co-editor of *People to People* (1997). He was a Senior Producer and Anchor of *Focus* at T.V.B., Hong Kong, and a television journalist at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Currently an independent filmmaker, his four part series on Asian Americans in Vietnam includes *American Nurse* (1993), *Sweat Heat* (1998), and *The Insanity of It All* (2002).