Housewives or Prostitutes?
Chinese Women in Washington & other North-Western States before 1910

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Photo credit: NARA, Seattle
Margaret Chin with papa and mama
Dong Oy in Seattle, 1907
And then Mr. Chin Lern (papa) went to the Register General and he tell them that he don't like ma to come back and he wouldn't give any money for mamma and I to spend when I'm sick at Hong Kong. And then took no home back to him Ting and went away. He put me and I in a house and no-body there. When the water ruin and it nearly drowned us, and

Margaret Chin’s letter to the Immigrant Inspector, Seattle on April 3, 1909
Prostitutes
Leong Shi

1913. Deported, 27 y-old
1908. Landed
1907. Married in China
Annie Kum Chee

1907. Deported, 34 y-old
1905. Arrested in Montana.
1903. Re-married.
1897. Left husband.
1892. Baptized.
1880. Landed in SF. 7 y-old
Demographics -

Over 70% of child bearing age

How Old Were They?

- Age 0-14: 7%
- Age 15-29: 9%
- Age 30-44: 42%
- Age 45-59: 5%
- Unknown: 37%

Age 30-44
Age 15-29
Demographics – Right to Vote

Chinese Women in the NW

- US-born
- China-born

Age Groups

- 20 or <
- 21 or >

No. of Women
Education - Over 60% illiteracy rate

Could They Read or Write?

US-born  China-born

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Bilingual</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US-born</td>
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<td>China-born</td>
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US-Born Childhood – Limited parental care

Years with Parents Before 18 Years Old

- Both Parents
- Single Parent
- Without Parent

Individual Women

No. of Years
Lee Kin Tin, 17 y-old
Tung Youk, 38 y-old,
Married in Port Townsend, 1900.

Lee Tin, 17 y-old
Hing Lung, age unknown
Married in Port Townsend 1897
Times Married: women x men

- 56% 1st x 1st
- 28% 1st x 2nd
- 12% 1st x 3rd
- 4% 2nd x 2nd
Spousal Togetherness

![Bar chart showing the number of women living together by quarter and birthplace (US-born vs. China-born). The chart indicates that the majority of women live together for the entire period (100%).]
Lee See How

1878.
A new bride, China.

With husband Lew King and six children, Seattle. 1900

Richard Kay Photo.Collections
Lee See How

Richard Kay Photo.Collections
Inter-racial Families

Bertha Selmon and daughter Ruth Selmon

Eng & Mar Kin Chung

Baby Ruby
Not a typical housewife …

Dong Oy, Mother
Maggie Chin, daughter
Chin Lem, Father
Thank you

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