slavery, the relative positions of African Americans and Irish in the antebellum north, and the periodic redefinitions of race in America. Shifting the angle to look at how racial formation influenced "white" as well as black labor would also help. These are friendly amendments, consistent with his "call for an end to the complicity of social scientists in the reproduction of racial and ethnic identities" (p. 147).

Noel Ignatiev
Harvard University


This fine book serves two purposes, both of them admirably. It presents Mary Paik Lee's life story, and it provides a context for that life story through Sucheng Chan's introduction and bibliographic essay on Korean and Korean American history. Chan is a leading historian of Asian immigrants to the United States. Lee's son learned of her interest in Asian American immigrant lives and asked her to read his mother's 65 page typed autobiography. Struck by its quality, Chan interviewed Mary Paik Lee to extend the text (to 133 printed pages) and added considerable historiographic material (some 100 pages).

An autobiography contextualized by a scholar, this collaborative effort nicely demonstrates both the benefits and the tensions inherent in such efforts. The text and the context can be read separately, or they can be read together. Chan has written an introduction which can be used not only for this story but for many others, just as her bibliographic essay will be indispensable to scholars working on Korean and Asian American topics. Chan's introduction sets the stage in Korea, yet Lee's story does not always pick up the introductory themes (for example, Korean social structure or Korean political activities either at home or in the United States). When Chan interviewed Lee for more material, she found Lee duplicated 90 percent of the already typed material. (How, then, did the narrative more than double to 133 printed pages?) Chan concludes that Lee’s story is "an act of reconciliation rather than a full disclosure," a "self-conscious testament" (p. 137). This is certainly true—because after reading some books depicting Asian men unfavorably, Lee wanted it known that her father and husband were loving spouses and parents.

Thus, the heart of the book is Lee's story as she wanted it to be told. She begins in Korea, with the Japanese aggression, her grandparents' conversion to Christianity, and their commitment to education for girls. Japanese officers
commandeered their house in 1905, when she was five, and her parents subsequently took her and her older brother to Inchon and then to Hawaii, where her father worked on plantations. Next, they went to Riverside, California, where direct encounters with whites and discrimination greeted them; Lee’s father likened this to the initial treatment of American missionaries by Koreans and exhorted his children to study hard and show they were equal to Americans. In Riverside, the Paiks found people from their village (this was true wherever they went, apparently, although we do not learn how many or who they were) and they settled in a shack alongside “Orientals and others” who had been kept from living in the town. Mary’s mother began cooking for agricultural workers, and the children started school.

Hard conditions sent the family to Claremont, north to Colusa, to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (she describes the vegetable farm there as a heavenly paradise), and then to Idria, where her father worked in a quicksilver mine and ruined his health. Here, Lee and her older brother became eligible for high school and talked hopefully of it, but her brother had to stay and help her father support the family; only Mary could go. After an exhausting high school year in Hollister, working for her room and board with white families, she rejoined her family, now in Willows. In Willows, she met the one white girlfriend named in her autobiography, and that girl’s father secured Lee’s attendance at the local Presbyterian church. Although Mr. Lee was a Presbyterian minister and the two older children had been baptized in Korea by famous missionaries, the family was often not welcomed by white ministers. In Willows Mary also met and married H.M. Lee, who had left Korea for Mexico at the age of fifteen in 1905 and had attended high school there. Foreman of a rice farm, his familiarity with Spanish served his family well as the Lees moved to Los Angeles in 1921 and continued to work in farming, the produce business, and then as owners of apartment buildings.

After her marriage, Mary Paik Lee’s story centers on her own family, but she and her husband provided help to her parents and her nine siblings for years. The marriages and careers of her siblings and three sons are detailed, and there are some spectacular success stories. But the grim facts of prejudice and discrimination dominate Lee’s account of her life. She ends her story by contrasting the early years of grinding poverty with the opportunities open to the fourth generation of young Koreans and, then, in an apparent non sequitur, by referring to the thirty-three Korean patriots who signed the Korean Declaration of Independence in 1919, knowing they would be killed by the Japanese. The linking idea is that of courage and sacrifice, her tribute to the earlier generation of Korean immigrants.

Like Chan, we would like to hear more, although some of Lee’s reticence is understandable (health problems, relationships with relatives). Particularly intriguing are the strong ties of work and friendship with Mexicans and blacks in her later years. But Lee’s moving account vividly evokes the places and cir-
circumstances of her childhood, and we see the little girl assuming adult responsibilities and making mature assessments of those around her in rural California.

Mary Paik Lee’s story could have been presented in several different ways. Sucheng Chan’s goal was “to turn one woman’s memoir into a credible and representative historical record” (p. 138), and therefore she tried to verify the factual statements by checking them against other evidence. Her detailed investigation of American missionary families in Korea, shipping records, census entries, and school, vital statistics, and land records turned up a few minor errors and led to some rephrasing in the edited text. Chan cut out some incidents of discrimination Lee had heard about second hand that were not specific enough to be “verified.” Scholars from other disciplines might have tinkered less with Lee’s “voice,” but the hard work Chan put into this book and the truly collaborative nature of the undertaking deserve great commendation. Without her, we would not have this pioneer Korean immigrant woman’s life story, and we have not only it but a wealth of solid contextual material, as well.

Karen Leonard
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This book provides a synthetic description of the number and characteristics of undocumented Mexicans in the United States circa 1980. The volume has three sections. The first part (chapters 2–4) provides a critical review of studies estimating the stock and flows of undocumented immigrants in the early 1980s and describes the characteristics of this population. The second part (chapters 5–10) reports on a 1981 survey of the parents of 903 babies born in Los Angeles. In these chapters, the socio-economic characteristics of undocumented immigrants are compared to those of (1) legal immigrants and naturalized citizens and (2) citizens born in the United States of Mexican descent. The book concludes with a multivariate analysis of the effect of legal status on employment outcomes and with a discussion of policy options to influence the stock and flows of undocumented immigration (chapters 11–12).

The book has historical value, putting in one place a disparate literature that will provide a useful comparative reference for analysts who intend to use the 1990 Census data to study changes in undocumented immigration to the United States. It is, however, of limited value to inform current policy issues. Since 1981 undocumented immigration has continued to increase and two pieces of legislation have significantly altered the legal and administrative framework governing how many and who can enter and work in the United States: the