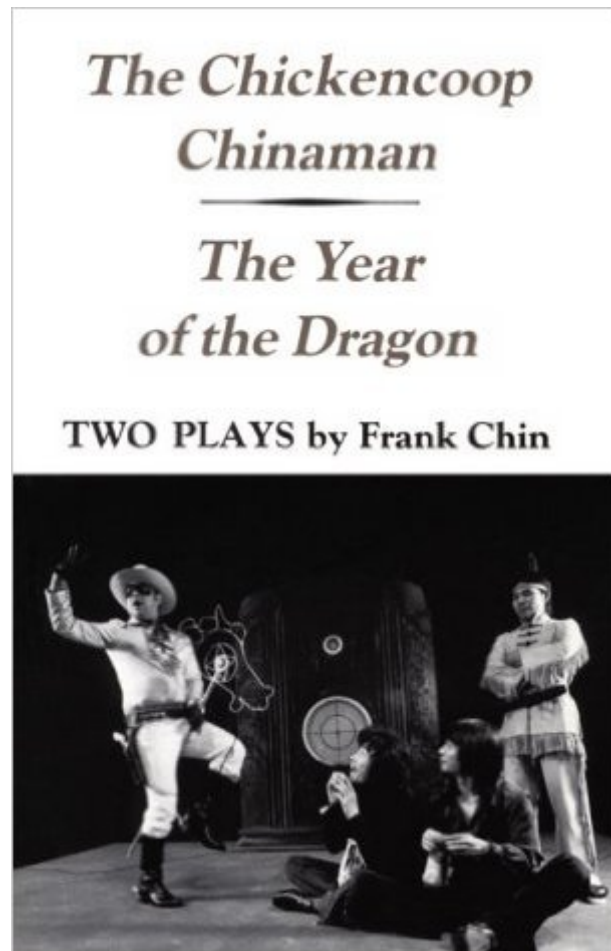


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The Chickencoop Chinaman / The Year Of The Dragon: Two Plays



Synopsis

When first produced in 1972 and 1974, these two plays created an enormous stir. Some critics condemned the playwright, others praised him. In subsequent years his work has had a profound impact on a generation of young Asian American writers. With the publication of this volume, the plays can now be read and debated and enjoyed by a larger audience.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'll give Frank Chin this-- his two plays *The Chickencoop Chinaman* and *The Year of the Dragon* have some important ideas that deserve to be thought about and discussed. What does it mean to be an Asian American? How much is assimilation a part of Asian American culture, and is that good or bad? Where did Chinatowns come from? How do the races get along, and where are there misunderstandings that could be improved upon? All of these are great questions, and they are all addressed in the plays, but two points really hamper the messages for readers now. First, the messages are dated. With the plays first being produced in the early 1970s, cultural relations and ideals have changed, and from the anger and vitriol that appear in these plays, this would appear to be a good thing. Second, it is very hard to care about the characters or what they do. Both plays have rude, obnoxious lead characters who shout a lot but accomplish little. By the time I finished reading the plays, I was exhausted and wishing for a normal conversation with a person who at least tried to understand others. This inability to communicate and feeling of being lost in America may be a main theme of the two plays, but it is not one that is handled in an engaging way. All in all,

while I didn't enjoy these plays, I give them three stars because they are thought-provoking and can lead to some insight into another culture, especially at the time period of the '70s, but even as they have changed over time. A note on the plays: Of the two, *The Year of the Dragon* is more entertaining as it deals with a man's desire to make a better life for himself as long as he can go against his father's will.

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