



# Seeing the Light: Four Decades in Chinatown

*Dean Wong*

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Photojournalist Dean Wong has been chronicling life in America's Chinatowns for four decades. His sensitive eye and man-of-the-people interviews bring these ghettos disguised as tourist traps to life. Through Wong, we meet the drag queen deciding to stop his medications and die of AIDS with dignity; the elderly Chinese American facing eviction as the neighborhood gentrifies; the artist told by the city that his shop is a fire hazard, and the man who challenged Bruce Lee to a fight . . . and lost. Wong focuses his attention on the Chinatowns of Seattle, San Francisco, Vancouver, and New York. He reveals how "Chinatown" is sometimes a misnomer because these neighborhoods often include large pockets of Vietnamese, Japanese, and other Asian American families. He also chronicles the celebratory side of life in these communities, from the events around Lunar New Year to a much-anticipated visit by the Dalai Lama. Building on the groundwork of Bonnie Tsui's *American Chinatown* (2009), *Seeing the Light* exposes an oft overlooked American community and reminds the reader that these neighborhoods are filled with much more than good places to get dim sum.

**Dean Wong** is an award-winning photojournalist who has been chronicling Asian American life for nearly forty years. The city of Seattle and King County, Washington, declared March 8, 1995, Dean Wong Day to honor his efforts documenting the Asian and Pacific American community.

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