

## “Hidden Figures”: Greek American Women in Context

Admittedly, the contribution of Greek Americans to US society, economy, politics, and culture has been studied and documented to date: from Theodore Saloutos’ classic account *The Greeks of the United States* (1964), Charles Moskos’ *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success* (2001), Alice Scourby’s *The Greek Americans* (1984) and, recently, *The Vanishing Greek Americans* (2020), Yiorgos Anagnostou’s *Contours of White Ethnicity: Popular Ethnography and the Making of Usable Pasts in Greek America* (2009), the 1998 documentary *The Greek Americans* (Dir. George Veras), Maria Iliou’s documentary *The Journey* (2012), the 2014 episode of *Finding your Roots with Henry Louis Gates* featuring Tina Fey, George Stephanopoulos, and David Sedaris, to the 2020 documentary *The New Greek Americans* (Dir. Anna Giannotis). These are some of the numerous examples of both academic and popular work on the Greek diaspora in the US.

Nevertheless, while the history and accomplishments of Greek Americans as a whole have been sufficiently researched and discussed, the story of Greek American women, in particular has received significantly less attention. With the exception of work by, for instance, Helen Papanikolas, Elaine Thomopoulos, Yiorgos Anagnostou, Eleftheria Arapoglou, Yiorgos Kalogeras, Martha Klironomos, Artemis Leontis, and Theodora Patrona, there is no comprehensive account bearing witness to the rich heritage and significant contributions of Greek American women to the overall American cultural production. In fact, surveys of Greek American life—from the work of scholars to popular accounts—have looked at Greek American women’s experiences as a side-note, mostly underlining their domesticity and self-effacement for their family [see Xenides (1922), Kourvetaris (1997), and Voulgaris (2004)], while blatantly overlooking the diverse socio-historical and cultural factors shaping their gender and ethnic identity, which is often enacted as a result of cultural oscillation. The time has come for Greek American women to be closely examined as important social, political, economic, and cultural agents that deserve a comprehensive (and contextualizing) assessment.

With the haven of the family home as their launching pad, how have women of Greek origin in the US channeled their energy and drive outside the confines of the private sphere and of familial ethnic bonds? Have they followed, transgressed, or reinvented traditional gender roles? There is significant evidence that indicates that Greek American women, even upon their arrival in America, ventured far beyond the realm of their home and immediate community, into the public sphere, even intelligentsia circles, by means of their community service, activism, entrepreneurship, and artistic endeavors. Who are these women and what is their legacy? What boundaries did they have to cross? How are they represented in Greek American historiography? Why has their work not received the attention it deserves?

This volume seeks to foreground the multifaceted presence of Greek American women in US society from the perspectives of anthropology, folklore, history, language, literature, and cultural studies, including film, ethnomusicology, and biography. We are specifically interested in identifying themes, but also differences and intersections, across the historical experiences of Greek American women.

We are looking for papers which are theoretically informed and ethnohistorically grounded. They must engage with key theoretical concepts associated with transcultural studies, and must be written in a compelling and accessible prose. Length should not exceed 6,000 words, including bibliography.

*All submissions will undergo peer review.*

**Topics may include (but are not limited to):**

- Gender Identity and sexuality
- Family life and community work
- Greek American Women in historiography
- Language and cultural identity
- Folk dance and cultural heritage
- Social activism / Philanthropy
- Greek American women and the (ethnic) workplace

- Greek American women and the press
- Filmic representations of Greek American women
- Media, creative expression, and representation
- Greek American women and the Greek Orthodox church
- Women and Space: from Astoria to “ethnoburbs”
- Greek American women and interethnic solidarities

### **Timeline**

Please send a well-developed, 350-500 word abstract, and a curriculum vitae to Theodora Patrona (tpatrona@gmail.com) by **January 5, 2022**. The abstract must outline the author’s theoretical framework and identify the aims of the work. It must include relevant bibliography.

Formal invitation to contribute to the volume by **February 15, 2022**.

Deadline for the submission of the book chapter, **June 30, 2022**.

Projected date of publication **TBA**

Eleftheria Arapoglou and Theodora Patrona

Editors