

The Asian Diaspora Digest



The Rise
of
Asians Americans

*Roads that lead us to
present-day America*

This is our history.

- 4.23.2021 -

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Welcome Letter

Greetings! Welcome to our April issue of the Asian Diaspora Digest. In this issue, our team continues to explore the Asian diaspora – both past and present. During a period of great austerity for the Asian community, our team did its best to provide informative and current content based on the present issues that face our country now. As of today, it's been recorded by the Stop AAPI Hate organization that over 3,800 Asian hate crimes were committed in the past year in the US.

First, our team chose to discover what it means to be an Asian immigrant through our interviews with Mrs. Drummer and My Truong. These two interviews can provide any reader with an increased level of empathy for the arduous journey all immigrants must face on their journey in the US. And not only that, we discover historical events and timelines that show the actual formation of ethnic enclaves such as Chinatowns across the country through racial discrimination and restrictive laws on immigration. And lastly, our current events speak the truth and provide in-depth insight into the mechanisms behind the recent uptick in Asian hate crimes.

For each of us in our team, we wanted to ensure that all readers can come out with their own conclusions about the diverse Asian Diaspora through our current events, interviews, and historical segments. Therefore, we strived to paint a picture for Asian Americans that was both authentic and light-hearted. It was important for each of us to provide the right message for Asian Americans and inform those who don't understand the various races/ethnic groups outside of their own. Because hate stems from a closed mind, and a closed mind doesn't work like a closed parachute. Especially now, our country must begin to enact monumental changes and strive for increased equality across all genders, races, religions, and ethnicities. It was our duty to provide the best light for Asian Americans in this challenging time. Because the truth is, we are all snowflakes, each different from the next. And finally, we want to conclude with a thank you from our team. It was an honor to create this month's issue, and we look forward to the amount of new insight each of you learns. Enjoy!

~ APA Monthly Staff

Recent Hate Crimes Directed towards Asian Businesses

Reported by Kahmar Byers

Asian-owned businesses have begun to prepare themselves for the worst in the past few months. It's no coincidence Anti-Asian sentiment has grown in the past year because of the roots of the global pandemic in Southern China. However, the effects of targeted Asian violence have had a profound psychological and economic effect on the business owners. According to NBC News, there have been over 3,800 deliberate attacks on Asian Americans in the past year. As of February 28th of this year, there have been 503 recorded crimes committed against Asian Americans.

This anti-Asian-directed crime has also been a prime target for businesses such as ramen shop owner Mike Nguyen. In March, he reported to the Washington Post that his shop windows have been vandalized with phrases such as, Kung Flu, Commie, and Ramen Noodle Flu. He was not only hurt and saddened, but mostly feared for his life as he received more hurtful threats that were not painted on his windows. As this pandemic continues, he mentioned the threats have only become more prevalent and extreme.

What is even more shocking to discover is many threats go unreported because of the stigma within the Asian community. The Stop AAPI Hate has only recorded 3,795 numbers as of earlier this year. However, that has not stopped the most gruesome reports and events to spark a countrywide movement. The most significant anti-Asian crime that has taken place in the past month alone was the attack on the Gold Spa in Georgia. A man walked into an Asian-owned spa and managed to shoot eight women, six of them Asian women. This dreadful event sparked even more outreach and gave a heightened awareness to the recent anti-Asian hate crimes against not only businesses,



People march to Chinatown for a rally against anti-Asian hate in Philadelphia on March 27, 2021

With numbers such as the 3,800 figure the Stop AAPI has reported, many of the targets of the crimes have been not only the elderly and women, but mostly Asian-owned businesses. For the US to pride itself as a nation that believes in freedom but does not practice inclusion is a faulty facade that many of us live under. Through the statistical data from the Stop AAPI hate, the reason the elderly, women, and businesses have been primary targets according to the LA Times has been because of their "vulnerability". The latter makes sense for businesses, they are in one set location and cannot protect themselves from vandalism or racially motivated customers and/or visitors.

It's apparent that the individuals who participate in anti-Asian hate crimes can all be described as weak because of their choices for targets. However, with the recent uptick in Asian American hate crimes, many US citizens are being woken up to the anti-Asian sentiment that has been prevalent in the country for centuries. Moving forward, it's our responsibility to protect these businesses and stand up to any forms of intended verbal or physical abuse directed towards Asian Americans and their businesses.

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The Protest Against Asian Hate

Reported by Jayden Daniels

The year 2020 has been a year filled with heartbreak and trauma for so many people around the world. When COVID-19 was spreading around the globe, the world was filled with fear for what would come of the virus. In America, some people have turned this fear of the virus into horrendous acts of racism towards the Asian American community. There are some Americans that believe the Asian community is to blame for COVID-19, which ultimately stems from the enabling the previous presidential administration had projected. Hate towards the Asian American community is not a new concept; Asian hate has existed in the United States for decades.

Asian hate has continued into 2021 and the community has begun to fight back against the racism they have been experiencing for decades. After the shooting in Atlanta, Georgia; where six out of the eight victims were Asian women, Stop Asian Hate protests have risen in frequency. The people who have been participating in these protests are speaking out against these hate crimes directed towards people in the Asian American community. Protests have taken place in cities across the nation, such as New York City, Los Angeles, Austin, Boston, and many more. New York City and Los Angeles have become a beacon for the Stop Asian Hate protests; the two cities also have the highest Asian American population in the country.

Stop Asian Hate is an organization aimed at fighting against the recent surge in violence towards people of Asian or Pacific Island descent. On their website, <https://stopaapihate.org/about>, the organization states that “The center tracks and response to incidents of hate, violence, harassment, discrimination, shunning, and child bullying against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States”.

"Hate towards the Asian American community is not a new concept; Asian hate has existed in the United States for decades."



The #StopAsianHate has been used by many people on multiple social media platforms, with many celebrities taking part in raising awareness of the racism towards Asians that have been implemented into American society. A hashtag on Twitter or Instagram may not seem like a form of protest, however, the #StopAsianhate has become a significant way in which people are able to show their support towards the Asian American community during the recent rise in hate crimes over the past year. The #StopAsianHate has become a large phrased used on many social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. The hashtag has raised awareness towards the AAPI community for decades that has been prominent in the United States for decades. Many people of the AAPI community are sharing their experience with hate, discrimination, and harassment on these online platforms as a way to show that Asian hate is more normalized than many Americans believe.

Many people do not understand that the hate and discrimination Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are experiencing currently, stems from the normalization of racism towards Asian Americans. Husayn Karimi is one of the event organizers for the Stop Asian Hate Boston protest, says that American society needs to understand the current rise in Asian hate crimes, which stems from U.S. imperialism and U.S. wars. They stated, "...we see the same M.O. and the same story and the same trajectory as soon as the U.S. has a target under its scope". The AAPI community has asked for allies to step up and help fight alongside the organizations in order to help pave a path where Asian hate is taken seriously. This fight against Asian hate is going to be a long battle in order to fix the systemic racism that has been affecting the Black, Asian, Latino/Latina, and Indigenous communities for far too long. If there is an incident to report of a hate crime or discrimination towards a member of the Asian or Pacific Islander community, there are many hotlines or websites to report incidents, such as <https://stopaapihate.org/reportincident/>.

Asking: Ngoc My Truong

Interviewed by Tina Truong

So what led you into this country? Specifically, why this state?

Well, I was a child of an American citizen, who was also a U.S. soldier from the Vietnam War. By law, this meant that I was able to migrate over into the states. When I got notice of this, I was able to leave Vietnam in 1993 and this was where my little journey started. Initially, I stayed in the Philippines for 8 months to learn English, then finally moved into Arizona in 1994. This wasn't by choice, really, it was more like the state was chosen for me.



What made you stay?

By this time, I was used to staying in Arizona. It became my new home, and I couldn't stand the cold. Besides, Arizona's weather was as close to the weather in Vietnam (which I was of course used to). My mom also lives here, so I don't want to leave her alone. I mean, I especially don't want to leave her now because of the rise in Asian hate crimes against the elderly, but I'll talk about that some other time.

"I couldn't do much"

How did you manage to make a living after going overseas?

A group of people helped me obtain a job. I was given government support in healthcare, and even got a job through them.

My first job was in manufacturing stress balls, and it was followed by other odd jobs that paid me very little. I couldn't do much. I just chose the jobs that I was offered to make any sum of money. The least I made was around \$6 an hour, and the most was \$9 per hour from a job that needed help with soldering.

I had to work a different job almost every year as they quickly shut down. So I was forced to leave and look for other odd jobs. Like I said earlier, I was lucky enough to land that \$9 per hour job as a solder for 5 years.

My family and I had to support one another with all that we had, and with housing, the government paid for that for the first year I came into the states; however, after that, I had to find my own apartment with the money I made.

What are some of your experiences living in Arizona? Any good or bad ones in particular?

I'd like to think that I am good with the people around me, so I was lucky enough to establish some good relationships with the people in my life here in Arizona. I never wanted to start problems.

I know that racism is prevalent, but if there were any racism directed toward me, I wouldn't have noticed it anyways. English isn't even my first language.

I lived near many other people of color throughout my whole life here, so it was easy to bond with them based on our shared experiences.

I wasn't sad living here, to be honest, because I had my family, and even if it was a small family, I was content because at least I wasn't a total, lone foreigner. I do miss Vietnam though, and the family and friends I had back then. There are times when I wish I could visit them, but it can be hard. However, I don't regret moving, but I also wouldn't want to go back living in Vietnam, either.

Finally, What do you miss most about your homeland?

I definitely miss my friends and family there. I also miss the food. There are times when I crave a certain dish, yet fear of eating it because others might look at me as an outsider. But overall, I miss the memories that I made back in Vietnam.

Asking: Mrs. Drummer

Interviewed by Michael Akuoko

Why did you make the pilgrimage?

We did not want to leave the Philippines, but rather we were evacuated by my uncle. My uncle did this because of the state of the country. We did not have the ability to see the news but he did. He realized that the president at the time was crazy and was stealing from the people of the Philippines so he took us to America. We made the move back in 1981.

What benefits have you seen from moving?

Uhhh I'd say the living conditions and sanitation... everything else (in America) is a lot better. I mean I love the food there but....yeah at least living conditions here, and at least we have drainage here, because there they don't. When it rains it floods (in the Philippines). Michael, within ten minutes of raining you'll have, maybe, water up to your knees! Water just stays stagnant, and after a while you have mosquitos just hovering over that's why you have malaria and everything (other diseases) are so common out there. It's easier to live a safe and respectable life here. Everyone thinks we are rich here in the states and it's not necessarily true because you have to work to make some type of living, but there's just not enough jobs there.

What do you miss?

The food! The tropical fruits, the seafood, everything fresh. Vegetables picked from the farmers and the fishermen catching fresh fish everyday. I mean I just love that, I just love the food. Of course I miss my family, but half of them I don't really know.



"Everyone thinks we are rich here in the states and it's not necessarily true..."

After being here for this long, would you like to return?

Only for Vacation. It's so hot! There, it's so hot and humid and my body just is just not used to that. Like as soon as I arrive at the airport my nose starts bleeding, because of the change in conditions. Even when I was there for a week I just couldn't tolerate the heat. You get out of the shower and you're already sweating. I mean I like being on the island, the food and everything is good, and people are friendly. However, for me to live there, I can't! I consider the United States my home now.

Why this state?

Well when we first got here (to America) we moved to California we stayed there, and of course I met Jaylene's dad, he was 18 I was 19. He got his engineering degree and decided he was gonna do dentistry and I finished my LVN. Eventually he got two offers for dentistry in Tucson and Seattle. We went to Tucson first and we kinda liked it. It was because it is just driving distance from all our family members in California, because we were born and raised in California, LA. it's not a city we like, I mean there is really nothing here, cause growing up in LA...it's a bigger city and Tucson is big but not like LA. When we moved to Tucson we got used to the slow pace of things. I kinda like it more than LA because its kinda congested down there

What advice would you give someone who is looking to move to the Philippines?

Well the only type of advice I could give is that if you retire and you have a certain amount of income (USD) over time, whether it's 2 to 3 hundred dollars, it will go a long way in the Philippines because you could live comfortably. Even teachers in the Philippines make a hundred dollars in a month. If you have even 500 dollars in the Philippines you have a comfortable living. We can't survive off of 500 dollars in the states, that's the only advantage. That's if you can get comfortable with the living and the quality of life.

"We did not want to leave..."

Why Early Ethnic Asian Settlements like Chinatown were Formed

Analyzed by Kahmar Byers

In any of the largest metropolitan cities in the US, you could find Koretowns, Chinatowns, Little Tokyo's all over. However, what's the real origin of these ethnic enclaves? Were these enclaves created on principles of cultural acceptance, or were they instead created by the ethnic groups themselves?

The answer lies within the consequences of early US exclusions acts in the 1800s. When Chinese immigrants first arrived in the US, they came in such small numbers they could not gather together and form a significant community. However, when more Chinese and Asian immigrants arrived in the US during the gold rush of the 1850s their population exponentially expanded. So much growth meant more Chinese could congregate and create the first Chinatown in San Francisco.

San Francisco's first Chinatown was created to meet the needs of the new expanded Chinese population in the American West. However, when any prominent non-white community has formed in US history it has always come with backlash and destruction. In the 1870s, there was a growth in anti-Asian sentiment. Therefore, the newly formed Chinatowns received a turbulent start with massacres, riots, and mass evictions.

However, with all of that hate directed towards the Chinese and their ethnic enclaves, the Chinese/Asian community only grew stronger and closer together. Chinatowns would only grow larger across the US because of all of the rural Chinese immigrants who were pushed out of their areas and into urban centers. Even though Chinatowns were the first prominent Asian ethnic enclaves, they would set the example for other Asian ethnicities to form their version.

Nihonmachi, which translates to "JapanTown", was the name of areas where Japanese immigrants would congregate to form their form of an ethnic enclave. These would spread into metropolitan cities all across the US and still be prominent tourist attractions today.

The next time any of us are immersed within an Asian ethnic enclave such as a "Koreatown", we should understand that area was created on the basis of anti-Asian sentiment and exclusion. Asian immigrants didn't feel accepted in a new and foreign environment, therefore, they had to congregate together and form their version of themselves in the US through the medium of ethnic enclaves. Even though any tourist now does not see the hardships any one of these enclaves had to endure, they only see an area that thrives on cultural acceptance. We must celebrate these enclaves and give all of our support to them because they are indeed special.



The History Behind Asian Geography in America

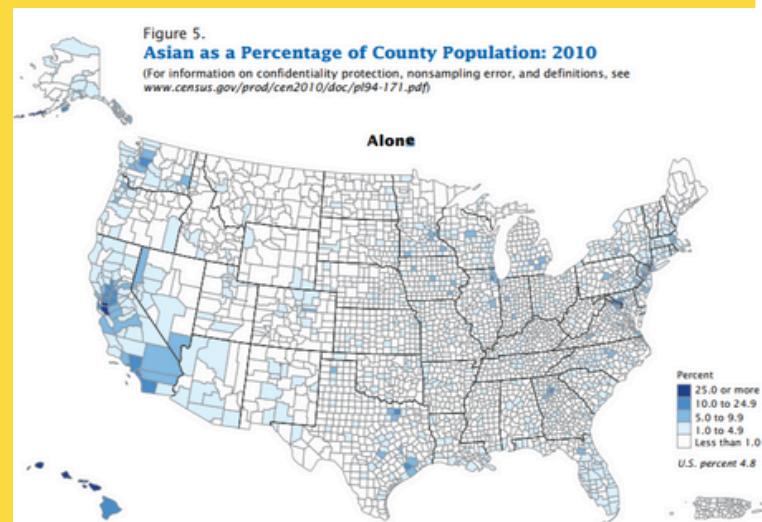
Reported by Alex Wong

In modern America, Asians Americans are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group spanning from 2000 to 2019. During this time, the Asian population grew 81%, going from 10.5 million to a new 18.9 million high (Budiman, "Asian Americans"). The states with the largest Asian growth are California, Texas, New York and Washington, and the US Census from 2010 states that upwards of three quarters of Asians living in America live in the states of: California, New York, Texas, New Jersey, Hawaii, Illinois, Washington, Florida, Virginia, and Pennsylvania. (US Census 2010).

Things weren't always like this though. During the 19th century, the first wave of Asian Americans to come in significant numbers were the Chinese. (Lee, "A New History of Asian America", 29). At first about 400 immigrants ended up in Hawaii, where they would labor on plantations or sometimes work as merchants or sugar masters. This population grew significantly in 1870's where it started at 3,800 and grew to over 36,000.

At the same time, the majority (77%) of Chinese in America lived in California, where they also represented 25% of the entire workforce as they were hired to work as laborers or on the Transcontinental Railroad. However they also lived in places like New England, and New York as they worked as mariners and in production (Lee, 37). Some Japanese also came to America and the west coast after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, bringing 80,000 Japanese by 1910. Koreans, Indians, and Filipinos made their way to the States during and after this time as well.

During the 1880's to 1920's, many laws and acts were passed to outlaw the immigration of Asian immigrants including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, and Immigration Act of 1924. These laws made it difficult for Asians to immigrate to the United States for decades, until the 1950's and 1960's where these Acts were changed allowing Asians to immigrate to America legally. After this, many Asians from other countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka started to come too, settling in long welcomed places for Asians such as California and New Jersey, but also in places with newer Asian communities like Georgia and North Carolina.



The US Census report on the overall Asian population from 2010. Majority of the population has been shown to migrate more toward the western side of the state

After these laws were passed a new wave of Asian immigrants arrived, these people coming to busy cities like Hong Kong and Taiwan, having a different perspective on life from those who came from rural provinces and villages. They settled in cities and helped grow the already formed Asian communities in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York City, but also helped create new communities in Boston, Washington DC, and Chicago.

Most of these communities started when Asian immigrants started to settle down or while they were working. San Francisco, New York, Seattle, and Portland are big hubs because it's where most Asians first arrive. Many Asians also started communities where they happened to be while working, Los Angeles with the California gold rush and Chicago with the transcontinental railroad. Many states also have their own Chinatowns and other Asian American enclaves such as Chinatowns in Massachusetts and Washington, causing other immigrants to settle there as well. Asians also tend to value education as shown with Asians over 25 are more likely to have a bachelor's degree than other ethnicities, there may be a causation with states having good education systems and Asians choosing to move there.



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