

hardboiled

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN NEWSMAGAZINE



8.1

OCTOBER 2004

Hawaiian Meth Epidemic
No Love For the API Vote
Measure H
The Rise of Chinese Nationalism
Anna Mae He Injustice

ED NOTE

I lose hope every single day.

Everyday I am faced with some tyrannical ruler who is threatening the peace of the world by placing economic benefits over the general well-being of humanity. There is always a corporation screwing consumers over by convincing people that what they have is never enough and that happiness is only a credit card swipe away. I find myself getting angry when Karamo, the African American housemate on Real World: Philadelphia, gets accosted by police officers at a club because he is black, only to have his white boy roommates dismiss him as an overly emotional being who always pulls out the race card. And, then there is the occasional friend who, when asked how he/she feels about a particularly burning social issue, shuts you down with a prompt "I don't care."

Simply being aware does not seem to be enough at times. In fact, understanding that there is injustice entrenched into most social institutions can be downright depressing. Now this maybe the moment where you ask, why I would start off the first hardboiled issue of the semester on such a hopeless note? Well, the thing is that although I do not have a solution to all the truly unfair things in the world, I have learned to embrace the power that lies in dialogue. How can we strive towards a more tolerant society if we cannot articulate the problems and challenges that lie so directly in our paths?

Well, we can't. I can only hope that hardboiled allows a space where concerns of the API community can be addressed and properly attended to. I believe in the power of the written word as an inevitable tool in bringing about social change. Being able to articulate a struggle is a moving thing. hardboiled began as a means of giving a voice to a population that had been effectively silenced, and even now we are constantly trying to prove that APIs can be loud and socially active. Hopefully, through our efforts we can bring forth our experiences and voices to a place that can be accessed by many others who may share in our history and the future.

And, perhaps we can all prove that collective proactivity is the only way to save all of us.

Trying to keep hope alive everyday,
julie carl
hb story editor

STORY EDITORS

julie "the foodie" carl
julie "the cadet" fischer
allen "the reliable" hong
tina "the doc" pattaratornkosohn

LAYOUT EDITOR

brian "the turd" kato

MANAGING EDITOR

gloria "hb mama" kim

ASST. MANAGING EDITOR

kristopher "the don" capello

CONTRIBUTING STAFF

tuan cao
jeremy chen
king l. choi
kimberly jinsook crawford
alberto gonzalez
angie guan
donna ho
hellen jo
stephen leonard
owen leong
veronica louie
andrea lu
jean park
sean park
patty saji
jericho saria
allen seol
junette sheen
pauline sze
jonathan yip

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 **Hawaii's Methamphetamine Epidemic**

4 **The Rise of Chinese Nationalism**

6 **Harold & Kumar Review**

7 **Broken Bits of Chalk/KA Unity**

8 **Anna Mae He**

10 **Country of Origin**

11 **Measure H**

12 **Tae Guk Ki**

13 **Lost in Transmittance**

14 **Chinese Tourist Beating**

15 **Olympics Fiasco**

16 **Plight of the Disabled**

17 **No Love for the Asians**

18 **The Berlin Experience**

19 **Remaking Asian Cinema**

20 **Comic**

hb eight point one.

GET IN TOUCH

hb meetings

Wednesday 6:30pm
85 Evans
hardboiled@berkeley.edu
for more information

contact us

10 Eshleman Hall MC 4500
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-4500

hardboiled is not an official publication of the Associated Students of the University of California. The views expressed herein are the views of the writers and not necessarily the views of the ASUC or the views of the University of California, Berkeley.

photo courtesy of AP

HAWAIIAN ICE

Hawaii's Methamphetamine Epidemic

by kris capello

Kahealani Indreginal's lifeless body was found on December 13th, 2002. The 11 year old had been missing for three days before her remains were uncovered near a popular hiking trail. The girl had been stabbed and badly beaten to death. Christopher Aki, who was convicted of manslaughter in connection with Kahealani's death, was a crystal meth addict and his addiction was a key aspect of the prosecution's case.

In 1997, Jackie Koja was beaten to death and dumped in a trash bin by Frank Janto. Janto had been on a 3 day ice binge before the murder.

In 1998, Wayman Kaua fired shots at a school and held two women hostage in a standoff with police. The situation lasted for 22 hours, ending when a SWAT sniper wounded Kaua as he stood outside his home, his rifle pointed at his wife's head. Kaua was high on meth at the time of the incident.

In 2000, another man held a woman hostage for 4 hours. The situation ended when the hostage taker committed suicide. His autopsy revealed that he was on crystal meth.

From January to September of 2002, 44.8% of all men arrested in Honolulu tested positive for crystal meth (an increase in 6% from just a year before). In 2002, more people admitted themselves for problems with "ice" (as it is commonly called) than any other drug, including alcohol. Crystal meth use in Hawaii seems to be an epidemic that worsens every year.

“As early as the 1970's, ice was a problem mainly in the lower income areas of Oahu, but the issue has only caught the full attention of the government and media during the last few years... The disparity of wealth in Hawaii (like the rest of the United States) is great, so when the problem was relegated to the poor, few cared.”

As early as the 1970's, ice was a problem mainly in the lower income areas of Oahu, but the issue has only caught the full attention of the government and media during the last few years. Recently, there has been a full on media blitz covering the problem. Dramatic crimes linked to the drug have led to sensationalist media treatments that have left the people of Hawaii demanding government action. But the problem obviously is not new. The disparity of wealth in Hawaii (like the rest of the United States) is great, so when the problem was relegated to the poor, few cared. But now, people from every social and economic class have been affected. Gone are the days when the drug resided only in the housing projects of the islands. Meth has infiltrated every layer of Hawaii's community. ice related incidents in the news are no longer solely violent acts.

The drug is also bringing down high-ranking members of society. A recent news story caught many by total surprise. On September 14th 2004, Tiffini Hercules and her husband were arrested in a drug bust. Tiffini was the winner of the 1998 Ms. Hawaii pageant and a model student during high school. She was on the fast track to success, with several academic scholarship offers to various universities. But 3 years ago, she began abusing ice and became addicted. Recently, she began dealing the drug to support her habit, a move that once again put her in the local spotlight.

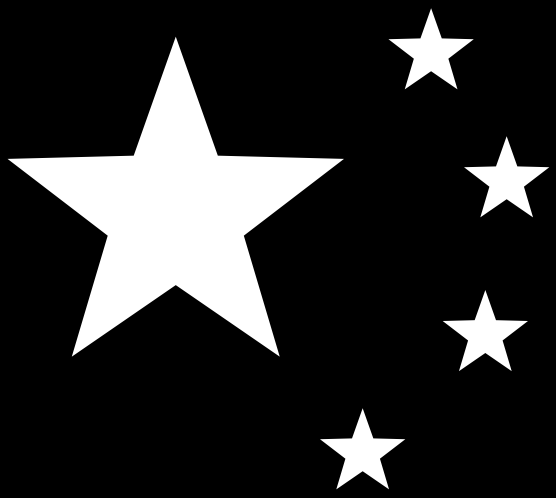
Ice, in its smokable form, is also known as crystal, crank, and glass. This type of crystal methamphetamine is by far the most commonly used form in Hawaii. The ice epidemic is the worst drug problem Hawaii has ever seen. There are far more ice users than there ever were cocaine or heroin addicts. Many have attempted to explain why the drug has so dramatically affected Hawaii.

Most mainstream voices claim that drug users in Hawaii simply have a distaste of needles and chose the drug because it only needed to be smoked. Other anti-drug advocates attribute widespread marijuana use as the reason for the epidemic: they claim that smoking ice is a natural next step from marijuana. The other side of the debate has marijuana legalization proponents arguing that Hawaii's crackdown on cannabis use and cultivation is the cause. People, they say, are seeking out a drug to replace increasingly pricey marijuana. Ice happens to be the most convenient. They claim that the heightened vigilance concerning cannabis needs to be toned down so people can again have easy access to marijuana. If people can have their weed they won't need the ice, or so their proposal claims. All of these claims have serious logical holes and must be looked at with skepticism. They seem to presuppose a drug problem instead of looking at the causes of addiction in the first place. Additionally, every voice is looking to further a political agenda, whether it is the police looking for increased ability to infringe on people's civil rights or marijuana growers wanting to boost their profits. What is agreed upon is that Hawaii's position as a transshipment point for the drug between Asia and the mainland US has made the drug readily available and relatively inexpensive in Hawaii. Because little quantities of meth are actually made in Hawaii, the vast majority of it is introduced to the islands as a result of this trade. Unfortunately, drug traffickers are shrewd and efficient and despite the federal "War on Drugs," the international drug trade is still strong. As long as Hawaii remains a shipment point for meth, the problem looks to continue, no matter what the state legislature does.

“They are concerned about the so-called meth-warrior users who become stronger than usual due to extremely elevated levels of adrenaline. Meth-warriors are often those who commit the violent crimes.”

The police of Hawaii have been one of the most vocal groups demanding government action. The effects of ice have the police feeling increasingly under attack. They are concerned about the so-called meth-warrior users who become stronger than usual due to extremely elevated levels of adrenaline. Meth-warriors are often those who commit the violent crimes. A combination of long periods of sleeplessness and a heightened sense of paranoia lead to dangerous aggression. These users often exhibit no signs of fear and often threaten police. In some cases, even gunfire does not subdue the user. Police have requested tougher drug laws and increased funding for investigating the sources of the ice. The state legislature and Governor made meth a major political talking point, but little has actually been done. Since a 1996 law establishing mandatory minimums for methamphetamine users and distributors, the problem actually worsened. Current governor Linda Lingle promised a 2,000-bed treatment facility in her campaign and appointed Lt. Governor James "Duke" Aiona to lead a task force in an attempt to address the problem. Likewise, the state legislature has also formed a joint committee to begin drafting drug law legislation. The next year or two will see how well these actions work.

With crystal meth problems intensifying on the mainland in places like San Diego and parts of Arizona, perhaps more studies can be done to find a way to help the people who have been affected by ice. Before much can be done, clear and complete information must be gathered or attempts to stem the tide will be for naught. For now, Hawaii is being ravaged by ice. From pregnant mothers on welfare to banking executives, it is affecting everyone. Asian Americans, African Americans, Hawaiians, and Caucasians are all victim to the drug in ethnically diverse Hawaii.



The Rise of Chinese Nationalism

by veronica louie

Beginning in the 1980s the citizens of China finally had their voices heard as the rising discontent with the Communist Government took its toll. The government was forced to change its platform from a firm stance of absolute Communism to a more lenient support of soft Communism based on economic reform, improving the lives of citizens, and bringing wealth to the country. The Chinese economy went from being completely controlled by the government where companies had to meet predetermined quotas to a system with more economic leniency. A more open market economy was paired with agricultural reforms to further improve the overall quality of life for the average Chinese citizen. Collective farming was replaced with the household responsibility system, which gave people more freedom to farm as they pleased. The government had good intentions of changing China for the better through a different economy based on an open market, but the only catch was that they did not have plans to change the way politics was done.

After compromising the image of a communist state, the government turned to nationalism and promoted it as the new face of China. It was adopted as an ideal by which the Chinese citizens could rally behind. Propaganda advocating nationalism rather than Communism, Socialism, or Marxism, circulated throughout the country. Nationalism really began to soar as the economic reforms became a success. The Chinese economy rapidly improved, giving the Chinese a solid reason to be proud of their homeland. The government had gained a sense of legitimacy by modernizing the economic world and because of this there was little pressure by the constituency to change political practices. According to the CNN money report published on August 2004, for the first half of the year China had phenomenal GDP growth of approximately 10% while the United States only achieved 3%.

China has also taken it upon itself to be an endorser of peace to some parts of Asia, and is making its presence known as a powerful force in the region. China recently signed a treaty with the Association of South East Asian Nations, which contains ten member countries, to strive for amity and cooperation. This gesture suggests that these South East Asian nations will not have to worry about trade conflicts and aggression over control of land as China becomes more powerful. China has also signed a code of conduct to reduce the risk of fighting over territorial disputes in the South China Sea. A new security forum has been designed called the Shanghai Co-operation Organization, and its purpose is to strengthen the border security around the country and counter Islamic extremism within these boundaries. It seems as though China is taking measures to ensure peace and the protection of its people and some of neighbors; it is earning more validity and favor in the international community, which brings in foreign investors. Lastly, China is hosting six-nation talks to resolve the nuclear weapons issue with North Korea. This is a bold step for China because it is acting as an intermediary by negotiating and initiating compromise with other Asian nations. It seems as though China is achieving impressive success with its economic progress and international relations on its

own terms. The country is modernizing without political reform, and proceeding without fully adopting the model of the western world.

Attempts have been made by leaders to reform the political system, but they have proven to be futile. In 1987, Zhao Zhiyang tried to legitimize political opposition within the country where political parties would be legal and they could have an ideology other than Communist, but his efforts failed. Mostly though, the government has not pushed for political change for a number of reasons. Communist party leaders want to maintain the strong hold that they have over the people and the government in China. They can effectively do this by making all other views illegal, making competition nonexistent. The economic success of recent years has made China a legitimate competitor in the world of relations, and this was all accomplished without democracy. Introducing full democracy to China's poor majority could be detrimental to the government because the Chinese have never before experienced democracy. By granting all citizens the right to vote, they may not know how to educate themselves before voting. Another problem that has been prevalent in Asian countries that have democracy is corruption and vote buying. Political machines, leaders, or people with power and money can persuade local people to vote as they see fit. Chinese citizens may not know any better, and cannot foresee the full effects of the corruption spreading into the upper levels of government. China seems to have decided on gradual reform, if any, for the political system rather than a sudden change to democracy.

"According to the CNN money report published on August 2004, for the first half of the year China had phenomenal GDP growth of approximately 10% while the United States only achieved 3%"

Marginal improvements on the political scene have been limited to certain groups of people, while administrative and legal reforms have gone underway. For example, changes have been made in the tax administration and tax revenues have been successfully raised in the country. A country's ability to tax its citizens usually gives it a valid form of legitimacy because the citizens have to be more or less willing to pay the taxes. The Chinese government has possibly gained more trust than it had before. To refrain from being too optimistic though, the government may just be imposing its will on the people. There is always room for violence, force, and coercion. Open democratic elections have been held at street, district, and village levels, but have not yet spread to county or higher offices. And more importantly, these low level elections are not held everywhere, creating a disparity among citizens. The system works with constituents electing low level officials, who in turn elect



members to the People's Congress. These members vote, using their own discretion, on legislation and determine who holds the offices at the highest levels of government. Also, businessmen who have normally been excluded from joining the Communist Party have recently been eligible to join as party members. In addition to these improvements, economic reform has provided for even more accomplishment giving the Chinese a reason to be proud of their country. The rapid economic growth has spurred an increase in foreign investment as other countries also take advantage of China's success. Stronger economic and civil rights litigation for mainland Chinese has surfaced because of the modernization of the market. China has been slowly opening up to western ideas which in the past would have instantly been rejected. For example, the ownership of private property has been legalized. Overall, a larger, open economy has brought China wealth it possibly could not have obtained under pure Communism. For example, the next Olympics are to be held in Beijing and this is yet another symbol of China's rise of status in the international community.

Despite the pretty picture of the rise of a poor country from rags to riches united by a front of solidarity and nationalism, there is more to the story of China's accomplishment that needs to be explained. Are Chinese people really better off with this new way of life? From the Chinese perspective this answer may be "no," especially for those who are not beneficiaries of an open market. According to student Connie Wu's observations on her trip to Beijing, under Communism everyone more or less lived a poor, but stable life; there was the government and then the people. Modernization has brought a new lifestyle to China, one plagued with classes based on wealth. Society went from a socialist equality under Communism, to a drastic inequality where worth is equivalent to dollar amounts. Those who were lucky enough to take advantage of the open market opportunity early in its inception have greatly benefited, while those who clung to job security watched in the background as their friends gained insurmountable wealth. The richer get richer and the poor get poorer with China's recent economic reform. Consequently, there has been growing envy against those who are achieving success. An open market has certain costs: the sacrifice of social security, guaranteed food, universal healthcare, and job security in return for economic improvement and a few more freedoms. Many citizens have associated these changes with discrimination and alienation which is damaging for the national moral, government legitimacy, and the future possibility of democracy in China. From far away the country seems to be a success story, but internal conflict among the poor has a potential to cause catastrophic damages to the recent achievements the government has acquired.

Some of these domestic problems are taking form in human rights issues. The Chinese government has adamantly rejected Western human rights values and has clung to the idea of "Asian values." The Chinese culture teaches children at a young age to respect their elders. Even in politics this same philosophy is applied, where the government is an entity that should not be questioned. The Tiananmen Square Massacre in 1989 is a memorable event in Chinese history where the government killed thousands of peaceful protestors in Beijing because they went against authority. Most of these

people were university students who spoke out about corruption in the government, a lack of freedom, and harsh censorship. They wanted democracy and other supporters joined the students in their protests. To quell the masses of people the government declared martial law, brought in soldiers and tanks, and allowed them to "remove" those who would not leave the square. The dead bodies were hidden and the square was quickly cleaned up; this atrocity was witnessed all over the world and showed how far the government was willing to go to secure its power over its people.

The relationship between China and Taiwan is another potential setback for the government that is not going away any time soon. Taiwan has threatened to rewrite its constitution in defiance to China to declare its independence. The island nation is also supplied with United States weapons and support

if China ever attacks; this acts as a way for America to deny the legitimacy of Communism. Some might even say that the U.S. is only helping Taiwan to preserve its own interests as a world super power. Hostilities remain between the two countries where Taiwan is passive aggressive in its relations towards China and the mainland has decided not to put on a front of friendliness but to prepare for the worst. For example, Taiwan has initiated goodwill actions towards China despite its history with the mainland. It has opened transportation between the two, the postal service, trade, allowed financial institutions to open office in China, and the importation of mainland products. China has not reciprocated the same generosity, and has basically dismissed the Taiwanese attempts. The government has also decided not to renounce the use of force against Taiwan. Military deployments have increased across the Taiwan Strait, missiles are pointed at them, and

the Chinese have been practicing strategies on how to attack the island. The mainland's only offer is one of "one China with two systems" where Taiwan would have its own administration but under the jurisdiction of the Chinese, in other words a puppet government. War could be on the horizon for these two countries if China and Taiwan remain unwilling to compromise.

Another issue that appears with Chinese Nationalism is its significance in relation to the United States. Some analysts argue that China's newfound success may pose a threat to the United States in the future because it contends with the long held belief that the Western ideal of democracy and modernization is the best and provides for the most success. It is claimed by some that the template by which America follows is the reason for it being a world power and maintaining its power. But China is climbing the ladder of success without following the structure provided, but with their own alternative model to Western values and ideals. For the Chinese tend to believe that their people are linked by their culture of "Asian Values," Confucianism, family social authority, and trust in the government. China challenges that the Western way may not be the only way, thus undermining the strong hold the United States has over the rest of the world. If China succeeds in its attainment of prosperity without true democracy, it will challenge the foundation for which the world bases its ideas on how a country should be governed and run.

"Those who were lucky enough to take advantage of the open market opportunity early in its inception have greatly benefited, while those who clung to job security watched in the background as their friends gained insurmountable wealth. The richer get richer and the poor get poorer with China's recent economic reform."



Harold & Kumar

by jericho saria

What do you get when you mix twenty-something Asian-Americans, marijuana, and late-night food quests? My weekends, usually! But you also get the movie *Harold and Kumar Go To White Castle*, which is funny as hell!

The movie stars John Cho who plays, uh, was it Kumar? No, Harold, an uptight investment banker who lives with Kumar, a smart-mouthed stoner intellectual, played by Kal Penn. Harold is saddled with weekend paperwork, Kumar has to prepare for a medical school interview set up by his father, but instead they smoke out. The munchies descend upon them and they set off on a titular adventure. Their efforts are thwarted by obstacles like their asshole-extreme sports-neighbors, flatulent babes, a “business hippie,” a stowaway raccoon, an emergency room surgery, an Inspector-Javert-like cop, a weirdo named “Freakshow,” an escaped cheetah, and Neil Patrick Harris on ecstasy!

The only theater showing *Harold and Kumar* was The Parkway in Oakland. That place is awesome. They show second-run movies on the cheap, and they serve pizza, beer, and popcorn with real butter, which you can enjoy on their couches if you get there early enough. I had my car-owning Korean buddy Alex take me. Fellow Korean person Hellen came along too. The theater was hot from the bodies of the packed house, the fresh food being served, and the blazes of weed pipes scattered about. Being gentlemen, Alex and I smoked out before we came.

“The theater was hot from the bodies of the packed house, the fresh food being served, and the blazes of weed pipes scattered about. Being gentlemen, Alex and I smoked out before we came.”

The movie was laugh-out-loud funny. It was laugh-out-loud-for-minutes-at-a-time funny. It was laugh-out-loud-and-then-talk-out-loud-to-your-peeps-next-to-you-about-how-funny-it-was-to-the-annoyance-of-the-people-in-front-of-you funny. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed it. Its pedigree gave it the potential to be another dumb, juvenile, sausage-fest flick: John Cho has been in the lame *American Pie* movies, Kal Penn had the undignified role of the Indian nerd in the piece-of-crap *Van Wilder*, and director Danny Leiner gave the world *Dude, Where's My Car?* But the movie was genuinely hilarious, and believe it or not, intelligent.

The plot is simple, but cleverly disguised in the title: They are going to White Castle. There is no room for contrived plot developments rife in other comparable movies like *Happy Gilmore*, the *American Pies*, *Van Wilder*, and even the enjoyable *Old School*, to name a few. Actually, these movies often have vomit-inducing moments of sappiness. I term it the “Take Stock” moment, when the party animal’s antics cause harm to others he cares for, forcing him to “take stock” of his life,

realize how irresponsible he is, and fix whatever he’s broken, but using his same crazy antics toward a constructive path. I’m sure you can think of countless examples on your own. There is none of that bullshit in *Harold and Kumar*. They develop from the injustices incurred from the obstacles they face, rather than from a plot-convenient turn of seriousness three-fourths of the way through. The timid Harold grows most, repeatedly being told by the more self-assured Kumar to stand up for himself, to not take the shit the world constantly piles on top of him, be it overtime work, Neil Patrick Harris stealing his car, or getting some fuckin’ White Castle burgers!

“What’s best about the movie, though, is its enlightened take on race. It does not skirt the issue and portray Harold and Kumar as just everyday guys who just so happen not to be white.”

The movie, then, relies on its characters. Thankfully Cho and Penn are great actor-comedians who make Harold and Kumar goofy, affable, and intelligent, instead of obnoxious, moronic, and cocky, or, Kutcher-esque, if you will. The movie is also buoyed by moments of comedic inspiration, in particular a fantasy scene between Kumar and an anthropomorphized sack of weed—a scene that can stand next to Cheech and Chong’s “Dave’s Not Here, Man” routine in the annals of stoner comedy.

What’s best about the movie, though, is its enlightened take on race. It does not skirt the issue and portray Harold and Kumar as just everyday guys who just so happen not to be white. One is Korean, one is Indian, and that’s not just some characteristic existing in an inert environment. Their world is racist, and they are subjected to treatment based on their race. The movie doesn’t stoop to cheap racial humor either. Harold is not Long Duk Dong. And Kumar is not the nerd from *Van Wilder*. The movie doesn’t shy away from stereotypes, though. It plays with them, even turning the tables on white characters. Harold and Kumar’s neighbors are caricatures of extreme-sports-loving meatheads. And the “business hippie,” a wimpy pot dealer with the body of a chihuahua, serves as a comedic whipping boy throughout.

And we—er, I mean—Harold, gets the girl in the end! And she ain’t white! She’s his sexy Latina neighbor, Maria. They’re full-on making out! Alex and I embraced and said, “Finally!” And then me and Hellen shared a solemn fist in the air. Then after the movie we were remembering our favorite parts, like when the Korean nerds mentioned their mom’s kim-chee chicken. Then the movie reminded me of this one time, when me and my friend Phuc went to Krispy Kreme so baked, and we were up there with the salesperson, deciding what to get for, like, fifteen minutes! Oh man...

Broken Bits of Chalk: the lonely trek of ethnic studies students

by jeremy chen

Have you ever been in a classroom that had no aisles? If you showed up late to class you would have to bashfully excuse yourself as you clumsily tried to squeeze your seemingly lard-laden legs through the interstices between the seat in front of you and the desktop of the seat that you are trying to get by. It's a gauntlet of overstuffed backpacks, contorted legs, and stink-eyed angry stares. Well that's what you get for being late. Suck it up and force your way through or risk being a bloodily trampled fire hazard as you surrender to sitting in the side aisles.

Have you ever faced this scenario of classroom hell? Of course you have; everyone has. I have, and that hell is 160 Kroeber. There are no windows, no natural light, no ventilation, and no space to sit. Although the nature of a classroom cannot be helped, it's infuriating when you are switched from a well-lit, spacious, and architecturally gorgeous classroom in the Hearst Mining building to the "vintage" classrooms of Kroeber.

The life of an Ethnic Studies student is tough. No one respects what is being taught or the issues being discussed in the department. When posed the question, "So, what are you majoring in?" I respond Asian American Studies. The typical response I get is, "What are you going to do with that?" This is always accompanied by an arrogant smirk, as if they know something about my future that I don't. As anyone can tell, Ethnic Studies students at Berkeley are not thought very highly of, and what is worse is that the University administration is joining in on the fun.

Budget cuts have drastically lowered the quality of classrooms on campus, but most affected are those of the humanities departments. The buildings mainly used by Ethnic Studies classes are Barrows, Dwinelle, and Wheeler, and these buildings are some of the oldest buildings on campus. Ethnic Studies Professor Patricia Hilden described the classrooms in Barrows to be "mostly intolerable." Many classrooms go for extended periods of time without maintenance, while some are inadequately supplied with basic essentials such as readily accessible audio-visual equipment, chalk, and desks. Asian American Studies professor Harvey Dong noted that a classroom he was once assigned was consistently short of desks, but was remedied with students arriving to class with desks raided from neighboring classrooms.

Some non-Ethnic Studies students argue that humanities classes are held in the worst buildings because the buildings themselves are older, and therefore naturally worse than the newer sciences buildings. However this argument does not explain why the retrofitting and renovation of Barrows, failed to make the classrooms even minutely comparable to classrooms in Haas or the Genetics and Plant Biology building. The larger lecture halls in Barrows have giant pillars in between the students and lecturer, leaving many without sight of who they are listening to speak. Professor Hilden's criticism of Barrows can be safely assumed to sum up the feelings of the Ethnic Studies students: "I don't know who designed this hideous building or its equally awful renovation and earthquake retrofitting...[but] I could have done a better job."



Sometimes Ethnic Studies classes are assigned to locations that are away from the central location of the Barrows, Dwinelle, and Wheeler region where most Ethnic Studies classes are held. What makes these classes inconvenient is that they are usually on the extremes of the campus, such as Kroeber and Mulford. These buildings are a long sweaty walk away from where most classes are held. While this is an equally common plight of any Berkeley student, it seems suspect that classes not held in the Ethnic Studies central region, are usually held in the older less desirable buildings.

Although Barrows is the location of the Ethnic Studies Department, it is shared with other rapidly growing departments, such as Political Science and Sociology. Ethnic Studies students feel they are without a place to call their own, as their share of space within Barrows decreases.

Buildings where classes are held are important to students because they create a sense of pride, belonging, and importance. When that building is ill-equipped, it affects student enthusiasm and morale. It is frustrating to be in a classroom with no air-conditioning, stale air, and mind numbing fluorescent lights. Personally I often find myself tempted to throw a desk through a window and jump to freedom, or to my death (if need be). Upon a cruel twist of fate, there actually aren't any windows in many of the classrooms that I have described.

Many Ethnic Studies classes are located in environments which are "not conducive to learning and often stifle discussion because of the lowered morale that they cause." A fourth year Asian American Studies major, Betty Dong stated that community colleges in San Jose were "better equipped and maintained." Inadequate classrooms lead Ethnic Studies students to feel that they are just an "afterthought" of the UC administration.

Classroom assignments often seem to be in places wherever there is space to fit Ethnic Studies classes into. A fourth year Ethnic Studies major complained of having a class in the Pacific Film Archive Theatre. Although the environment was very comfortable, it was inappropriate for an Ethnic Studies class because it had low theatre lighting that was insufficient for note taking. Additionally the theatre did not have a chalkboard, and the audio/visual equipment could only be operated by a theatre technician.

It is a common complaint among many Ethnic Studies students that they feel like second-class students. Many would venture to say that it is the fault of the severe budget cuts, but why is it that all of the humanities building are all in such pitiful condition, while newer science buildings and Haas are so nice that you are served caviar and brie as students walk in? Ok, I am exaggerating, but it would be nice to be in a classroom where there is enough ventilation so that incoming students are unable to tell how long the lecture of the previous class was by the funk in the air.

I am not trying to create a rift between students of different departments. All that I am asking is if we can borrow some of your desks, and possibly some broken bits of chalk?



DYSFUNCTION JUNCTION: KOREAN UNITY?

by junette sheen

Ever heard of the one that goes, "Let's make like a Korean church and split!"? This joke only makes sense if you know that Presbyterian Korean churches are infamous for splitting whenever there are differences in opinion in the congregation. However, this tendency reverberates throughout many aspects of the KA community. The number of first-generation Korean American community organizations is senselessly large.

Interestingly, the much smaller world of Berkeley is emblematic of the larger KA community. According to Berkeley's Office of Student Research, approximately 4.6% of the student population, both undergraduate and graduate, classify themselves as Korean or Korean American. Yet there are over 10 organizations that serve the KA students' interests. Comparatively, 1.5% of all registered students consider themselves Japanese or Japanese American. There are about two Japanese-related organizations on campus.

Looking at the numbers proportionately, there are almost two times as many organizations for KA students as there are for JA students. Although a variety of student organizations can provide a useful network for KA students, there is an obvious lack of cohesion at Cal which is reflected in the presence of two separate Korean American undergraduate student organizations, KASO and KSA.

Back in 1998, KASO was created after there was dissatisfaction with KSA. It would seem beneficial for both organizations to collaborate, but even as a proud member of KASO, I believe both organizations are at fault for not doing so.

Last year, K.W. Lee came to speak at our school, but before Lee spoke the two presidents of KASO and KSA proudly told the audience that this was the first time in history that the two clubs had come together to sponsor an event. I thought this seemed a little ridiculous and certainly not something of which to be proud. It had taken too many years for the two organizations to join

together for the benefit of the wider Korean American student population. Lee lauded us numerous times during his talk for our unity, but he did not even realize that his praise was so undeserved.

During the beginning of each school year, there is a comical scrambling to "win" over the incoming Korean freshmen to join KASO as opposed to KSA, and vice versa. Moreover, there is an even larger division between the students who take part in these organizations and those who choose not to partake in a culturally defined organization. I know this gap also exists at other universities in which the general stigma is that you can be "very Korean" and join a KA club, or you can become "white-washed" and never meet another KA for the rest of your time at that college.

September 13-16 was "North Korea Awareness Week" at Cal. I had anticipated the events that were to take place, such as documentary viewings, a defector testimony, a panel of speakers, and a daily exhibit. Instead, I was disappointed in the lack of enthusiasm and the missing buzz about NK Awareness Week. Several KA organizations worked on the week including, CKS, LiNK, Criket, and most prominently KSA, one of the two big KA student organizations.

It is funny that the Korean pop concert that took place on the 17th garnered more attention and participants than all of NK awareness week. KASO and KSA both publicized for the concert, while North Korea Awareness week was a "KSA event." Although KASO was not a formal sponsor of this event, shouldn't they have felt the urge to help out in this important issue that affects so many KA's? After all, about one in three KAs have a family member who is in North Korea, and I would bet that no one in North Korea cares to differentiate whether we belong to KSA or KASO.

Hopefully, the second-generation KAs can lose our notoriety for infighting. It can only be hoped that the legacy of dissonance from our past generations will not be passed down, but rather that our generation will be able to unite and start a new legacy of our own.



by allen hong

Cracks in America

Heartbreak for the Pa



For years, the He family pursued legal means to reunite with their daughter Anna Mae, but the family lost all parental rights in a recent court ruling in Memphis, Tennessee. The Bakers, a white family that initially agreed to temporary foster care, denied them further contact with their child and sued them so they could gain legal custody of Anna Mae. Again and again, the bonds between parent and child became severed as the Bakers took more extreme measures to claim the child. The story behind the Anna Mae He custody case is a long, painful one that dates all the way back to her birth in 1999.

Life certainly wasn't perfect for the Hes when Anna Mae was born. Anna's mother Casey He delivered prematurely and was temporarily weakened by the birth. Her husband Jack He had troubles of his own. The former university professor from China recently lost his student visa, his scholarship, and his stipend as a research assistant after being falsely accused of sexual assault by another student at the University of Memphis. Even though he was acquitted of all charges, the damage had been done. The university expelled him and did not allow him to finish his doctorate. With no other option than to start at the bottom, the two worked in various Chinese restaurants to make a living.

Because of the severity of their financial troubles, the couple sought help from local agencies and entered agreements with the local court. The family chose Mid-South Christian Services because of their faith and entered in an agreement for the temporary custody of their child. The agency failed to advise the Hes to seek legal representation when they signed the papers. It turned out that Anna's return after the "temporary" arrangement would require the approval of a judge and the consent of the foster family. Soon, the couple was introduced to Jerry and Louise Baker, who signed up for foster care with the full intent of adopting a child.

The two families enjoyed a friendly relationship at the outset. The Hes visited regularly and at one point mentioned their plan to send Anna to live with relatives in China after the 90-day agreement was over. Mr. He thought that it would be best for his daughter to be cared for by family members in China while he and his wife got back on their feet.

"Believing China could only offer a life of hardship for a young daughter, the Bakers thought it would be best to keep Anna away from her biological parents and raise her themselves."

Almost overnight the Bakers started showing signs of resistance to Anna's return to the Hes. Fears of gender discrimination in China and the desire to keep Anna consumed them. Believing China could only offer a life of hardship for a young daughter, the Bakers thought it would be best to keep Anna away from her biological parents and raise her themselves.

They believed that practices in Chinese society only dehumanized women after reading *The Lost Daughters of China*, by Karin Evans. But as an expatriate in China wrote in a letter to the *New York*

Times, daughters of Chinese professors face no more discrimination in China than they do in the United States. In fact, the child would stand to gain from educated parents.

The Bakers eventually sweet-talked the family into an ill-fated extension of the agreement, with verbal promises of continued visits. Neither the agency nor the Bakers told the Chinese couple that four months without parental care, along with the failure to provide child support, constituted willful abandonment. In her secret journal titled "Visits from Jack and Casey," Louise Baker wrote down a telling note at that pivotal moment of their relationship. "Gained custody" was what she wrote down.

Understandably, the Hes were surprised that they were no longer welcomed by the Bakers. Unsure what to do about the situation, the family came up with a simple plan. Mr. He would confront Mr. Baker and thank him, pay him back for his services, and demand the return of his daughter. Mr. Baker then made up some bullshit reason about how he could not mention it to the then-pregnant Mrs. Baker because it would cause her to have a miscarriage. The Hes relented for the time being, but sensed that something was deeply wrong.

"The court ruling, which was delivered this May, devastated the family and sadly terminated their parental rights. The judge declared the family unfit to take care of their five-year-old daughter, giving complete custody to the Bakers."

Later on, tensions soared as the He family informed the Bakers that they were going to take a family picture at a local studio for Anna's second birthday. When the Hes arrived for the special occasion, the Bakers claimed Anna could not see them because she was sick and needed to go to the doctor. The Hes became incredibly upset by the incident, but by then the Bakers decided to call the police.

The lengthy court case that emerged from the growing conflict between the two families took a toll on both families, but nothing could compare to the fate of the Hes. The court ruling, which was delivered this May, devastated the family and sadly terminated their parental rights. The judge declared the family unfit to take care of their five-year-old daughter, giving complete custody to the Bakers. The judge ignored the best interests of the child and relied on problematic evidence to reach his ruling for the case. The due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment prevents states from terminating parental rights without convincing evidence that such parents are unfit to maintain custody, but his legal line was crossed with the problematic ruling.

A relentless series of legal maneuvers and character attacks on the Hes left them vulnerable in court. On top of their legal troubles, the Hes realized that they faced a deportation order because

Anna's Legal System

Parents of Anna Mae He



Anna Mae's parents and younger sister, photo courtesy of the New York Times

Mr. He's student visa was revoked. The attorney for the Bakers repeatedly called the INS to demand the immediate deportation of the Chinese couple. With this shameless attack, the Bakers sought to circumvent the law. The court allowed the family to stay for the ruling, but the moves by the Bakers were enough to make the judge suspicious of the Hes.

In the text of the ruling, the judge claimed that "the Hes only sought custody of AMH [Anna Mae He] to prevent the Hes' deportation." With little consideration for the family's push for reunification, the judge portrayed the Hes as parasitic immigrants who took advantage of the system and held little regard for their daughter. The judge's decision dangerously relied on this construed image of the Hes rather than solid, indisputable facts.

"They [the Bakers] were strongly convinced that Anna would experience less hardship by living with a white suburban family. However, this was the same family that declared bankruptcy on two occasions and had two parents without college degrees."

In court, the Bakers and their attorneys proceeded to destroy the character of the Hes by calling them "hysterical," "untrustworthy," and "animals." They were strongly convinced that Anna would experience less hardship by living with a white suburban family. However, this was the same family that declared bankruptcy on two occasions and had two parents without college degrees.

According to their views, Anna would simply be abandoned in China because she was female. Mrs. Baker reportedly said, "To me, if Casey truly loved her daughter, she would leave her with us." The Bakers had the audacity to say that they knew what was best for Anna and believed they were doing "God's work" by bringing the child into a white, American home. They paid no attention to the fact that Mr. He recently received a job offer from China and would make enough for her to have a comfortable life. She would also benefit from the care of a well-to-do, educated, extended family.

In the ruling, the judge once again sided with the testimony of the Bakers, almost acting as if the Hes had never even delivered their statements. Both Hes were described as people who would do or say anything to achieve their desired goals and did not see themselves bound by the rule of law: "Since 1998, Mr. He has repeatedly engaged in a pattern of conduct marked by deceitfulness and dishonesty, without remorse, repentance, or conscience, and has shown a propensity to justify all means, including perjury, for what Mr. He deems to be justifiable ends... Mrs. He is an impetuous person not subject to being intimidated or deterred in achieving whatever she sets as her goal. The evidence shows that she is calculating, almost theatrical, in her actions. The evidence further shows that she is dishonest and manipulative, and has a history of acting in an unstable manner when it

serves her own self-interest." The permissibility of blatant character attacks cast a considerable doubt on the legitimacy of the court ruling.

All along, the Bakers have been accusing the Hes of negligence and abandonment, but they couldn't have been farther from the truth. Mrs. He was in tears when she told the press "Why would we visit our daughter every week if we wanted to give her away?" Jack He had similar feelings for his daughter. "If we do not have reunification, I'm afraid our daughter will grow up thinking we abandoned her. I think that is worse than anything else."

"Mrs. He was in tears when she told the press 'Why would we visit our daughter every week if we wanted to give her away?'"

The Hes sent their daughter jade jewelry and other belongings as a sign of affection, but the Bakers only saw the gifts as cheap tokens. The Bakers' attorney Larry Parrish even said "What is this worth? A dollar fifty? It looks like it came out of a gumball machine." The Hes' way of showing their love for their daughter had been cast aside as something negligible. The Bakers and their lawyers, who could only understand love in dollar amounts, wholly ignored the nuances of Chinese culture.

The end result has been absolutely heart wrenching. The Bakers have gotten their way even though the actions of the Hes really prove how much they would do to get their daughter back.

During the trial, the handful of Chinese Americans in the area gathered at the Shelby County Courthouse to display their solidarity. Yellow ribbons and buttons brought supporters together in sympathy for the Hes. The Organization of Chinese Americans even issued a statement against the ruling, citing racial bias, cultural insensitivity and lack of impartiality. Chinese newspapers have been vigilant during the entire trial, spreading news of the case and its latest developments. A member from the Chinese Embassy in Washington even watched the courtroom proceedings as the case developed.

Aside from the family and the supporters, two heroes emerged from the ensuing conflict of these heated courtroom battles. Pro-bono attorneys David Siegel and Richard Gordon worked on the Hes' case for years without charge. Only rare and unusual circumstances compel trial attorneys to represent their clients without a fee, but the taking up the case of Anna Mae He was a matter of justice in the American legal system. At this moment, they are working with the Hes to file an appeal.

It's just so wrong for it to end this way. It's the antithesis of the American dream. The Hes came to this country with genuine hopes and visions but lost everything they could possibly imagine and even more. Mr. He lost his degree, his scholarship, and his job. The Hes still face enormous legal debts because they must pay fees upwards of \$19,000 for court transcripts and other documents. The family lost their right to stay in the US, but now, they will lose their daughter too. Indeed, the dream has been crushed.



LOST COUNTRYMAN

A REVIEW OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

by shu-sha angie guan

“However, before the Berkeley graduate student (yup, she’s one of us) could fully reconcile her multiple identities, she becomes a missing person.”

June 17, 1980. In Iran, fifty-two Americans are being held hostage. In America, Reagan and Carter vie for executive power. In Japan, a woman lies dead at the residence of a telecommunications tycoon. From this start point, Don Lee begins *Country of Origin*, his raunchy, new “whodunit.”

Years earlier, Michael Crichton (*Jurassic Park* and *Congo*) painted a similar picture at the onset of his crime thriller, *Rising Sun*. The novel’s cautionary message was to ‘buy American,’ for the evil Japanese were planning to take-over America through our very own commercial markets—and possibly eat the hearts of the populace. Well, the novel may not have mentioned organ-gorging, but *Rising Sun* does stand as one of the unfortunate products of American xenophobia in the 1980’s. It became Crichton’s first bestseller.

The parallels are not hard to see. Don Lee’s *Country of Origin* is also a crime thriller with a host of Japanese characters set in the eighties, a period when industrial downturns in the United States were simultaneously being threatened by great economic growth in Japan. While Americans were lining up to bash Japanese-made cars in the streets of cities like Detroit, Japanese citizens were lining up in an orderly manner for “their simulations, their imitations.” It is true that the ugliness of racism is especially sharp during times of hardship and tragedy, but discrimination and violence are never constructive courses of action. One cannot help but remember the unjustified harassment many of South Asian and Middle Eastern descent took after 9/11. I, for one, will not be hollering “encore” for more red-coded-Security-Advisory-System-induced hate crimes.

But to be prejudiced is not a phenomenon limited to Americans. As Koreans in Japan can attest to, the island nation is not free of discrimination. And, just as most Americans had preconceived notions of the Japanese, so too did those in Japan have of *gaijins*, white people. It seems that no person or country, the book reminds us, is without flaw.

Despite similarities, however, major differences set *Rising Sun* and *Country of Origin* apart. Instead of being about the Japanese in America, *CO* is about Americans in Japan. It posits that corruption and deprivation are not centralized in one country or group of people, as suggested by *Rising Sun*, but widespread across the world today. It is a story of race, gender, identity, and love in a time of superficiality and lost innocence. And, much like Lee’s earlier novel, *Yellow*, *CO* is a collage of lives.

Lisa Countryman is a confused Amerasian who leaves for Japan, the country where she was born, soon after the death of her adoptive parents. Feeling detached and unloved, she believed, hoped, on some level, that her country of origin would turn out to be that elusive “somewhere I belong” (as Linkin Park so lyrically put it). But it didn’t seem to matter where Countryman was geographically if, in the end, she was uncomfortable in her

own skin...or, rather, in the color of that skin. However, before the Berkeley graduate student (yup, she’s one of us) could fully reconcile her multiple identities, she becomes a missing person.

Two men are assigned her case. Tom Hurley is a mixed race Korean & Caucasian embassy-officer rich in looks but poor on self-awareness. Kenzo Ota is a slightly-neurotic, Japanese cop whose health seems as bad as his investigative abilities. At first, neither seems particularly eager to solve the case. But Countryman’s disappearance gains validity and relevance as developments in both men’s love lives (Hurley in the affair of a married woman and Ota in hot pursuit of his landlady) cause questions of self to surface. Both try to reexamine themselves, their lives, their past, and that of Countryman’s. The deeper the pair delve into the case, the more intricate the connections become. In the end, it all unravels, exposing not a worldwide conspiracy, but the sins and insecurities of many.

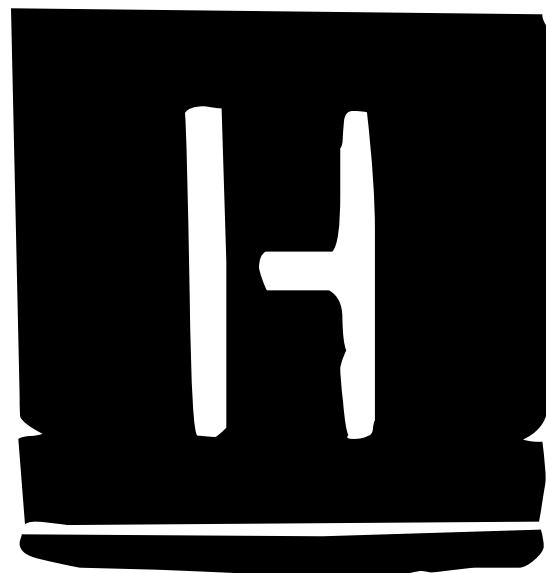
At points in the novel, you may want to raise your arms in exasperation at Countryman, feel the inclination to force a book about hypochondria on Ota, or lecture Hurley on ethics, but despite their many issues, we grow to love Lee’s characters. Almost as in soap-opera format, the novel engagingly moves from between the narratives of the three, giving us glimpses into their stories that momentarily satisfy but always leave us wanting more. Though the novel is light at times and conveys mostly a sense of hope, there is an underlying *mono no aware*, or “essential sadness,” that carries through to the end.

For anyone who has felt the numbing ache of loneliness, wasted many study-hours pondering about who they were in this confusing world, or wanted a taste of what Japan could have been like in the 1980’s, this book should be on your ‘to read’ list. And if that isn’t reason enough, many will be happy to hear that the surprisingly varied establishments in Japan that cater to those with more “mature” tastes are very well documented in the book. Sex club, anyone? Apparently, Countryman may have been involved in the seedy industry (no pun intended). The investigation leads Ota into several such establishments with horrible, but mostly hilarious, results.

In the end, however, *Country of Origin* is more than just the sum of its sexier moments. It is the sincere story of three lonely individuals, whose lives are inextricably linked and changed by the death of one. Every character floats isolated but seems to possess an instinctual need to connect with something—whether it be a significant other or roots. Perhaps, as the novel states, “we are orphans, all of us.” But it is not our country of origin that defines who we are. It is the people we love, the roles we cast ourselves in, and the homes we choose. And for many of us, this country of red, white [black, yellow, brown], and blue; of Angel and Ellis Islands; of McDonald’s and Disneyland, “this is our home.”

MEASURE

by patty saji



Our nation's population is increasingly diverse, yet minorities are barely visible in American politics. The majority of politicians are old, rich, white men funded by campaign donors who are also old, rich white men, or old rich white corporations – hardly the ideal representative democracy. This November, if Berkeley passes Measure H, the city may lead the nation in another phase of the civil rights movement by working to increase the diversity of candidates entering the political realm. Measure H is a comprehensive electoral reform that would slowly institute a system of full public financing for elections for the city of Berkeley. This reform will increase diversity in the political system by making the system more open to those who can not, at present, afford it, and by making politicians more responsive to their constituents instead of the elite who fund their campaigns.

Among developed democracies, America is the only nation that does not have some sort of public financing system for politicians. As a result, in order to run for office, politicians must spend their time raising money to run a campaign, rather than talking to their supporters and adversaries, or investigating problems in their area of influence. U.S. Senators spend an average of 1/2 to 1/3 of their hours throughout their six-year term fundraising money for re-election. The reality of the current political system is sad and simple – the candidate who spends more, wins. Candidates have to be independently wealthy, or fundraise exorbitant amounts of money to remain competitive. Incumbents often outspend their challengers by a margin of four, or five to one, because they already have a fundraising advantage based in ties to special interest made while in office. With little turnover and the very high financial cost of election, the current campaign system blocks the number of minority candidates who can enter into politics.

Most funds come from special interests that give money expecting something in return. The kickbacks and corruption that result is devastating. For example, despite the rhetoric, education is consistently de-prioritized and under funded by politicians. Students are a transient and poor group and cannot allocate money away from the ramen and tuition fund to donate anything significant to candidates. Banks, on the other hand, are among the top donors to both political parties and individual politicians, one huge part of the reason banks get the high interest rates on student loans that profit them. Due to the extensive nature of fundraising, politicians are beholden to many special interests, and represent their needs before the needs of the people who voted them into office.

How can the current system of rampant money in politics be derailed? The picture is not too bleak. Student groups, such as Democracy Matters, and citizens across the nation are organizing to get money out of politics, and people –all kinds of people, back in. Maine and Arizona have already instituted full public financing of elections at the state level. The results: a three-fold increase in minority candidates, a 25% increase in women candidates, and more contested elections. If Measure H passes, the same shift of power, and increased activism is likely to happen in Berkeley.

Though corruption is less of an issue in the city of Berkeley, it still costs candidates ridiculous amounts of money to run for

office. In the last mayoral race, the two candidates spent almost half-a-million dollars combined. The high price of candidacy at the local level locks out individuals without access to wealth, with no regard to the merit of their ideas, experience, or community support. City positions are an entry way into state and national politics; blocking out a diversity of candidates on the city level, severely limits chances for a diverse group of candidates in higher politics. By leveling the financial playing field, Measure H would enable an increase of diversity in both ideas and faces, because it enables the city to draw from a larger pool of politically active and experienced people, rather than a pool limited only to the wealthy.

Fair and clean election candidates can receive public money to run their campaign so they do not have to spend all their time fundraising. Instead, the candidate can utilize that time to talk to the community he or she will represent once elected, ensuring a closer connection between politicians and their constituents. Though possible to do so, there is no incentive to opt out of public financing, also known as clean money. The clean money candidate will receive a grant to match the funds used by the opposing candidate, who is running on private money. This matching system allows candidates to run and be elected based on the merit of their ideas, not the capacity of one candidate to plaster his face around the city more than the other.

Though public financing opens the doors for ordinary people play a bigger role in politics, it is not a license for just anybody to run. To qualify for funding, candidates must show a wide base of community support through a set large number of five-dollar contributions from voters within the candidate's district. This eligibility requirement, among others, restricts the number of people who can actually run for office based on the limited number of donations that are possible, and the receptiveness of the public.

Measure H has been carefully crafted to ensure that there will be no cuts in services associated with public financing of elections. First, it does not go into effect immediately, rather it is phased in at the discretion of the City Council, as funds become available. Second, should two-thirds of the council at any time declare a fiscal emergency, it can be temporarily suspended. Third, even when fully funded it will cost \$5 per Berkeley resident per year – that's less than half a movie ticket per year, or the amount of change in every sofa, to have a more productive and responsive government. Previous reforms to regulate campaign contributions through public disclosure, and donation limits have not worked. Full public financing approaches electoral reform in a completely different way, and has already been proven successful at the state level.

Politicians and ordinary people are both slaves to the fund race. Passing Measure H in Berkeley will be a step forward for the civil rights movement, as well as a step towards reforming the electoral system on a national level. Berkeley was the first city in the nation to have curbside recycling, as well as the first to voluntarily desegregate schools. Hopefully, this November 2nd, Berkeley will once again make history and set a new trend for the nation.

“The reality of the current political system is sad and simple – the candidate who spends more, wins. Candidates have to be independently wealthy, or fundraise exorbitant amounts of money to remain competitive.”



TAE GUK GI:

The Korean Blockbuster that made a successful landing on Hollywood

by sean park

Commercial movies are those that aim to please the audience rather than send a message. As a Korean, proud of his culture and his country's accomplishments, here are some pieces of the commercial reviews for the commercial movie I'm about to examine:

"Exciting, Entertaining, and Moving ... Bursting with emotion and heart"- Korean Times
"Compelling. Tae Guk Gi bridges cultures and generations."- VIBE

Maybe you've heard the sugar and spice about the Korean movie that successfully landed on the cutthroat and competitive hub of all commercial movies known to us as Hollywood. Now it's time to see beyond the surface, the catchy scenes, poignant soundtrack, and heroically fabricated characters. The "real" nuts and bolts are ready to be unveiled! Before anything, here are precautions for reading my review: Remember, I'm not here to advertise a movie but to critique it.

When reviewing a film, a screenplay is certainly not the only factor to consider but it deserves special attention because it is the one and only blueprint of a movie. It's the first piece of material that sets the stage for a motion picture that saddens, terrifies shocks, exults, and, ultimately, inspires the audience. Although physically it's only a stack of papers with black and white text, those pages are the very essence of a film that transforms into a sequence of images that we call the most popular form of art in our time.

Tae Guk Gi's screenplay was not just flawed; it was decayed. As I've stressed many times in the previous paragraph, it is the foundation of the movie. What a screenplay does is creates the characters and the scene, which are intimately interdependent. The screenplay had incredibly clichéd and unrealistic characters, and this resulted in poor acting. An illiterate elder brother, only driven by the motivation to disarm his ailing younger brother from the military, develops valor and skill in combat that make him almost superhuman. Of course, you can argue against my cynicism that he was motivated by his love for his younger brother, but that way the film dishonors the memory of the Korean war for being used to portray merely brotherly love. In other words, there are many better ways of portraying brotherly love than the Korean War.

The Korean War was a heartrending war not because it's simply the greatest war in Korean history but really because it was a civil war where the two divided countries that shared the same ethnicity, language, and culture were forced to fight each other. In most wars, survival is the most important factor but the Korean War was more than that because it was psychologically significant because the victory of a brother implied a loss for the other.

I agree that the movie had some symbolic significance of the Korean War. As you can see from the slogan of the movie: "Brotherhood of War" the Korean War was the war between brothers. But, unfortunately, acclaimed to be the Asian Steven Spielberg, Director Kang Je Kyu's message is best depicted from the slogan rather than the movie itself. Clearly, the screenplay tries to draw an analogy of the battle between the two brothers to the larger war, but the movie was almost amusing when Jin-

Tae, the older brother and commanding officer of the South Korean army, turns into a North Korean soldier after the death of his brother, Jin-Sok. He was clearly depressed but betraying his country turned out to be too much of a "Hollywood" ending.

Speaking of acting, director Kang specifically mentioned in an interview for a Korean magazine that he employed the two top actors of Korea, Jang Dong Gun and Won Bin, to "show the world that Korea's got good looking actors." Although it remains a question whether or not he was serious, it is quite unfortunate that the good looks of the actors had some negative side effects to the film. I wished Jin-Tae was enacted by someone who looked less urbane and more illiterate (more like the personality of his character) so the role would be more fitting. Also, it was almost painful to witness the awkward brotherly relationship, and the almost sneer-provoking romantic relationship enacted by Jang and Lee Eun Ju.

Because of these hackneyed characters, they automatically create the tacky lines and scenes of the movie. The entire Korean War is declared from Won's line: "There's a war!" The reviewer was almost ready to throw up by the time one of the generals repeated the famous but well-worn line from J. F. Kennedy: "Ask not what the country can do for you- ask what you can do for your country." I personally consider realism and candidness as the best quality of screenplays. That was exactly what the screenplay of this blockbuster movie was lacking. Realism doesn't come from portraying real life with hi-tech cinematography. Instead, it comes from how candidly these characters and scenes are human.

From these fundamental errors in the screenplay, we see the movie merely to satisfy our taste that makes us exclaim, "Cool!" and "Spectacular!" Yes! This is what I mean by a commercial movie. Some people evaluate the Matrix series with laudatory remarks purely based on eye-popping visual effects rather than the plot, storyline, and character development. Without well-justified reasons, they are "cool" and "spectacular." But without a doubt, the ironically beautiful cinematography and the tear-provoking music contribute well enough to the commercial success of the movie.

You might argue, "So what? I loved it!" In response to that, I do not mean to say these movies are not enjoyable for all audiences. Many people watch movies to relax and have fun, so clearly these kind of commercial movies serve that purpose. Also, without these movies, the genuinely artistic movies won't stand out and receive the acclaims and the awards.

All the movie left for the reviewer was the familiar message that wars are evil and they eradicate human senses. Next issue, I'll be discussing the so-called "Golden Age of Korean Movies," punctuated by Chanwook Park's "Old Boy", Kim Ki Duk's "Samaritan Girl" and "3-Iron"; how it's shocking the international film community through its success at both the Asian movie market and the three internationally renowned film festivals (Berlin, Cannes, and Venice).

www.taegukgi2004.com

LOST IN TRANSMITTANCE



by julie fischer

Recently, I've discovered that I am nothing, a nonentity - a cipher even, if I feel that a gratuitous dose of melodrama is in order. To explain simply, my father is a Jew, and my mother, ethnically, is Korean. When totaled up to produce me in the mid-80's, a negation of blood transpired. Of course, the two met in all corporeal senses, but the twain shall never *mix* because my blood, in all respects, defies the laws of nature - or rather, culture, whatever that arbitrary term encapsulates. Instead of my "case" being passionately one over miscegenation, mine concerns the transmittance of cultures, and for me specifically, the failure thereof. For as this obnoxious half Korean guy had been gladly informing me, a person can only *be* Korean if their father is Korean. Include to this plethora of cultural expertise that well known tidbit that a person can only *be* Jewish if their mother is Jewish. So where does that leave me? Again, I'm a person technically devoid of any culture - and well, as long as we're fooling around with culture, let's just throw in identity for fun, as those dual, integral entities of human life are not entirely disconnected.

But it's easy to romantically trap myself under the guise of this tragic hapa archetype - this state of a liminal existence where I am neither this nor that, but I know for my experience, that's bullshit. Growing up in a cozy, affluent white town provided my superego with inflated treatments of "Oh, you're so beautiful!", "Wow, you're so lucky to be mixed!", or "Gee-golly, you're *exotic*!"; and I soaked these compliments in, naively not realizing the inherent, imperialist language of racism underlying their sugary tones - because hell, when I looked in the mirror, I *did* see a different image. I had suspected hapa actors before in la-la land, but they never "came out" to the public that they were mixed - actors like Jennifer Tilly or Russell Wong passed off as white or Asian characters, so this whole time, I convinced myself, via white people's approving reinforcements, that I was special, that I was heroically alone. In fact, I wasn't Jewish or Korean anymore, I simply transformed to become *hapa*, this enigmatic title where a person's specific cultural background wasn't necessary, but as long as you had a parent with chinky eyes and another with round ones, you were granted automatic membership.

Yet, as gag-inducing as my identity politics were a few years ago, I was smart enough to question authenticity; I told myself that even if I wasn't a "whole" Jew or Korean, at least I was Japanese - I mean, my Korean mother was born there, grew up there, ate... in there. And I lived in Chiba during my precious years, and Japanese was my first language - so by all means, throw me a kimono and call me 'sushi' because I was Japanese!

It's just too bad that a lot of people disagree with me. Example: at a watered-down high school reunion/fourth of July/beer & barbeque shindig, an old classmate of mine easily segued into *such* a neutral topic as my ethnicity (tip: alcohol + racial discourse = bad mix, pun intended). After informing him that I identify as both Korean and Japanese, he *actually* snickered. A round of disbelief (ethnic overload on his part, offense on mine) ensued, and he concluded with this: "Hey, my neighbors are black - does that mean I'm black, too?"

Despite the crude nature of his words, he did instigate new thought in me: who exactly are the Japanese?

So a decent question is now posed. But instead of answering this directly, perhaps it's easier to ask the opposing inquiry: "who exactly are *not* the Japanese?"

How convenient: I've always regularly traveled to Japan to visit my family. Despite the inevitable shopping that I always guiltily accomplish whenever I'm there, the summer before last had

proven to be insightful, historically and family-wise.

Racism and institutionalized oppression was somewhat made cognizant in my education, but I was ignorant as to the degree of struggle my Korean family, and other ethnic minorities, experienced in Japan. My family, of whom many were *born* in Japan, were not even granted Japanese citizenship because of their ethnicity. Companies wouldn't hire them, and entrepreneurship was often the only path towards gaining some financial end. No matter that they spoke Japanese or participated in the "normative" sense of daily Japanese life and routine - their passport mattered, and their South Korean identification heavily counted in deciding whether or not they could be deemed as "truly" Japanese.

Koreans aside, I pondered of the Ainu, the indigenous folk of northern Japan (Hokkaido), a once sovereign nation, but later colonized by the Meiji government - what of them? And the same with Okinawa - are they, a once completely separate and independent kingdom of the Ryukyus, considered Japanese, too? What about the Burakumin of Japan, the dirt of the social ladder, the paupers who took unwanted jobs to scrape on by? How about Filipino and Chinese women who migrate to Japan in search of a "better life", but instead get trapped in the red-light districts? The Japanese-Brazilian kids who searched for work, but instead received low-menial jobs? And let's not forget the Arab, African, and Indian immigrants who came during the 70's and 80's to find labor and technical employment. What of their descendants, their children, the second and third generations who speak Japanese, flare up a peace sign in photos, and internalize/display all the nuances of that Hello Kitty-tempura culture?

The list is overwhelming, but it raises significant issues that explore the social concepts of "ownership" and ethnic vs. national identity: are the two mutually exclusive? Does phenotype override cultural upbringing? Do I ask rhetorical questions? It wasn't enough that I had all of these confusing variables looming around in my mind, but it caused certain disillusionment - why, you might wonder? Bare with me: if the Japanese won't perceive me as one of their own (and they don't according to my family because I'm half anyway), well then screw them, I'm finding solace in K-town.

Admittedly, I didn't literally go to K-town, but I went to a bunch of online Asian American communities and forums. While the legitimacy of online epistemology is debatable, it shouldn't negate the fact that they can, and do, represent the real opinions of real people. And a whole lotta Korean people (not all though, I must note) online felt that I wasn't "really" Korean. Did I exude this patronizing, anthropologist sentiment in the first place? Should I have let them discourage me, anyway? Responsible me looking retrospectively at this situation coolly thinks "no", but it's tough to shield yourself from "dOn'T tALk aBoUt kIMcHEe, yOu HaVe nO riGhT LoL1!" and aforementioned half Korean dude informing me that "I don't even speak Korean or been to Korea, and I have a white dad". As PC, ethnic -studies comfort were never in their social lexicon, off I went shuffling my non-Korean feet down oblivion.

And then I discover John Lie.

Ok, so it wasn't that intense, nor was I in this condescending position of "discovering" the perfect, mystical wizard who will erase all of my racial woe. I was just mindlessly searching for any professors here at Cal who might have accomplished some studies of ethnic minorities in Japan. And lo and behold, John Lie's book *Multiethnic Japan* nicely spits back at my face. A professor and dean within the International and Area Studies department, I was doubtful that he would have the time and patience to respond

to my emails. Here is what I got when I asked about the cultural rules in Judaism and Korea, of which I lightly touched upon earlier here:

Hi. The 'technical' rule you note for Jews is only one, though influential, interpretation. It's true that according to the Halachic law, a Jew is defined as someone born to a Jewish mother. However, other rules exist. most significantly, most definitions of 'Jewish' identity before the 19th c. were religious. That is, 'Jewish' is someone who adheres to Judaism. This understanding still exists of course.

As for 'Korean', once again, there are competing 'rules' or ideas about what constitutes Korean identity/belonging. Before late 19c, one can argue that peasants (the majority) weren't really Koreans. It's almost certain that they didn't think of themselves as Koreans. Many elite Koreans in turn by the 1940s thought of themselves as Japanese. Because of the rise of hyper-nationalism in the late 20c, many people would have regarded diasporic Koreans (non-Korean speakers, adoptees, and so on), half-Koreans, and others as not 'truly' Korean.

But if you ask what most Koreans in S. Korea will say, then the answer is, I suppose, that you wouldn't be 'really' Korean to them not b/c your father is NOT Korean but more b/c a lot of people believe that to be Korean means to be 'pure' Korean (and I hasten to add that this is a bit of nationalist nonsense). To push a bit, a lot of Koreans feel that diasporic Koreans are NOT 'really' Korean either (only more or less so b/c they may be so by 'blood' criterion but not by cultural, linguistic, or other criterion).

But my point is that this nationalist discourse is something that people should challenge rather than accepting as is. But for those who care, then I'd say that it's possible to take a more expansive view of Koreanness such that the criterion should not be one of purity but rather of any sort of affiliation or affinity.

While his understanding is just one view, and even I myself hesitated at his last statement, his point was clear enough: definitions of ethnicity and identity are flexible and ever-changing. And well...duh. I had to slap my knee: if four years of higher education doesn't pound into your skull that race, as well as ethnicity, is a social construct, and that their structures will always be challenged, you need to quit dozing off during your AC requirement course.

So where does this leave me today? The answer doesn't really matter, my prurient readers. And if I'm going by the campy token that ethnic identity is never fundamentally concrete, I wouldn't be able to expound on it anyway. Negotiating cultures and attempting to define their intrinsic meaning is a shared experience for most Asian Pacific Islander Americans - we were never actually "lost in translation" because the translations were already set up for us; our role in this transnational theatre is to rather (re)interpret them.

CHINESE TOURIST: A THREAT TO HOMELAND SECURITY?



by pauline sze

It started out with a simple trip to view the splendid and luscious scenery of Niagara Falls. Located at the border between the United States and Canada, Niagara Falls is a landmark that attracts thousands of tourists each year. Zhao Yan, a businesswoman from China, was among the bustling crowd of people that had been lucky enough to behold the elegance that is Niagara Falls. But soon, she became a victim—a victim of inspector Robert Rhodes' violent attacks.

According to reports of the incident, on July 21, 2004, Zhao Yan was repeatedly punched and struck on her head, sprayed with pepper spray, thrown against a wall, and kned in the face by Robert Rhodes, an inspector with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security at a U.S. Customs checkpoint near Rainbow Bridge. And this horrible incident beckons the question—Why? Why was Zhao, a seemingly harmless 37-year-old woman attacked so viciously by an officer with the Department of Homeland Security?

For Robert Rhodes, it seems the answer was clear: he was simply doing his job. He had apparently thought that Zhao was with a man who had earlier been caught with marijuana. In a statement, Rhodes pointed out that he grabbed Zhao, while two others ran away when he asked them to come to an inspection station. Rhodes justified his use of pepper spray on Zhao based on the fact that she began swinging her arms at him. This can obviously be seen as a simple reflex instilled in any person: self defense when she is being attacked or restrained by a stranger.

Officials in China have been heated over this incident, demanding a thorough investigation. Zhao claims she is suffering from an ongoing headache, swollen eyes, and severe mental trauma causing her to sleep for only two or three hours per day. Her back pains, associated with the incident, have resulted in her use of a wheelchair. Zhao reportedly stated that the U.S. was the most barbarous

“Zhao Yan was repeatedly punched and struck on her head, sprayed with pepper spray, thrown against a wall, and kned in the face by Robert Rhodes, an inspector with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.”

country she had ever visited and consequently, she is in the process of suing for damages of up to \$5 million.

Although U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge has expressed his regrets for the incident and Inspector Robert Rhodes has been charged with felony assault, it somehow doesn't come close to what Zhao experienced on the fateful summer day in July. This attack has only reinforced the stereotype that the United States is an international bully.

The brutality of this incident is related to the outcome of September 11, especially in regards to the Homeland Security Act, which has affected us all in some way, shape, or form. The Homeland Security Act, in this case, was cited for Rhodes' actions, "protecting our borders." But this can hardly act as a justification for the brutal treatment that Zhao faced. For Rhodes, he was doing his job. For Zhao, her civil liberties were greatly infringed upon. Although the Homeland Security Act includes tougher security especially in regards to international traveling, this doesn't in any way justify the fact that Ridge attacked Zhao without looking at the facts, and basic facts at that.

The concern here is why did something like this happen? The U.S. government regrets the incident—Rhodes calls it a mistake, a mix-up. Why she was targeted, why was Zhao singled out? Whether or not she was racially targeted is unknown, however the question still remains. Could this have happened to APIs as well?

If this is the aftermath of September 11, where a simple Chinese tourist gets brutally assaulted by a U.S. Inspector without any concrete evidence, then I can't begin to imagine what other atrocities similar to this may be bestowed upon other tourists and even US residents in the future. If this is the result of traveling to America, then this may be the end of the travel industry for us.



Op Ed Op Ed Daily Cal & UC Regents in the Wrong:

the state needs to reallocate funds to higher education rather than impose barriers to equal access

by stephen leonard and alberto gonzalez

By voting to raise the minimum GPA requirement for UC eligibility from 2.8 to 3.0, allegedly following the California Master Plan to guarantee eligibility for the top 12.5 percent of high school graduates, the UC Regents strayed from their responsibility to ensure equal access to higher education.

The Daily Cal's editorial board sided with them on September 21 in "Regents Should Vote To Raise Minimum GPA." They support their flawed argument with a combination of scare tactics, incomplete statistical analysis, and plain ignorance.

The Daily Cal writes, "To preserve acceptable levels of funding per student in UC and to avoid stretching campus resources and facilities too far," the Regents should raise the minimum GPA. Are they suggesting that current levels of funding are satisfactory? That campus resources are not already stretched? What UC are they talking about?

The editorial conveniently forgets to mention the budget crisis - which has truly degraded the UC system and has limited enrollment - in an attempt to simultaneously deceive and frighten the reader: it deceives by portraying the current situation as "acceptable" and it frightens by suggesting that the quality of education will decline if the GPA requirement stays the same.

“What is California’s “Master Plan,” really? In the past two decades, the State has opened 23 new prisons but only one new UC campus. Apparently, California’s Master Plan is to incarcerate and disenfranchise certain groups, not to educate its residents.”

The state budget allocation to public education is the most important factor in ensuring a high-quality education at UC. There is a problem at UC but the answer is more money, not fewer students.

The editorial provides an incomplete statistical analysis of CPEC's report, citing a "ballooning 14.4 percent" eligibility pool in recent years, but stopping there. It unfairly neglects the confidence range of the statistic. The eligibility pool estimate is 14.4 percent, but one could say with 95 percent confidence that the actual eligibility pool is between 11 percent and 18 percent. It is possible that the actual eligibility pool is at or below the Master Plan target of 12.5 percent, and that the Regents restricted eligibility for no valid reason. The Daily Cal is completely ignorant of the structural inequities within California's public school system. They write, "Asking all students, regardless of race, to aim higher to attend a UC school is not unreasonable."

This statement is as naive as it is offensive; much like their argument that the high school GPA is weighted from Honors, AP, and IB courses, so breaking 3.0 is, "certainly not too much to ask." Several high schools, such as Centennial High School in Compton, offer only one UC Approved honors course (according to the UC Office of the President). Others, such as Inglewood High, have had to go to court just to increase the availability of AP courses since the high school only offered three AP courses for its over 2,100 students. Sadly, other schools share these descriptions, if not worse ones. Is a "aiming higher" all that is needed at these schools?

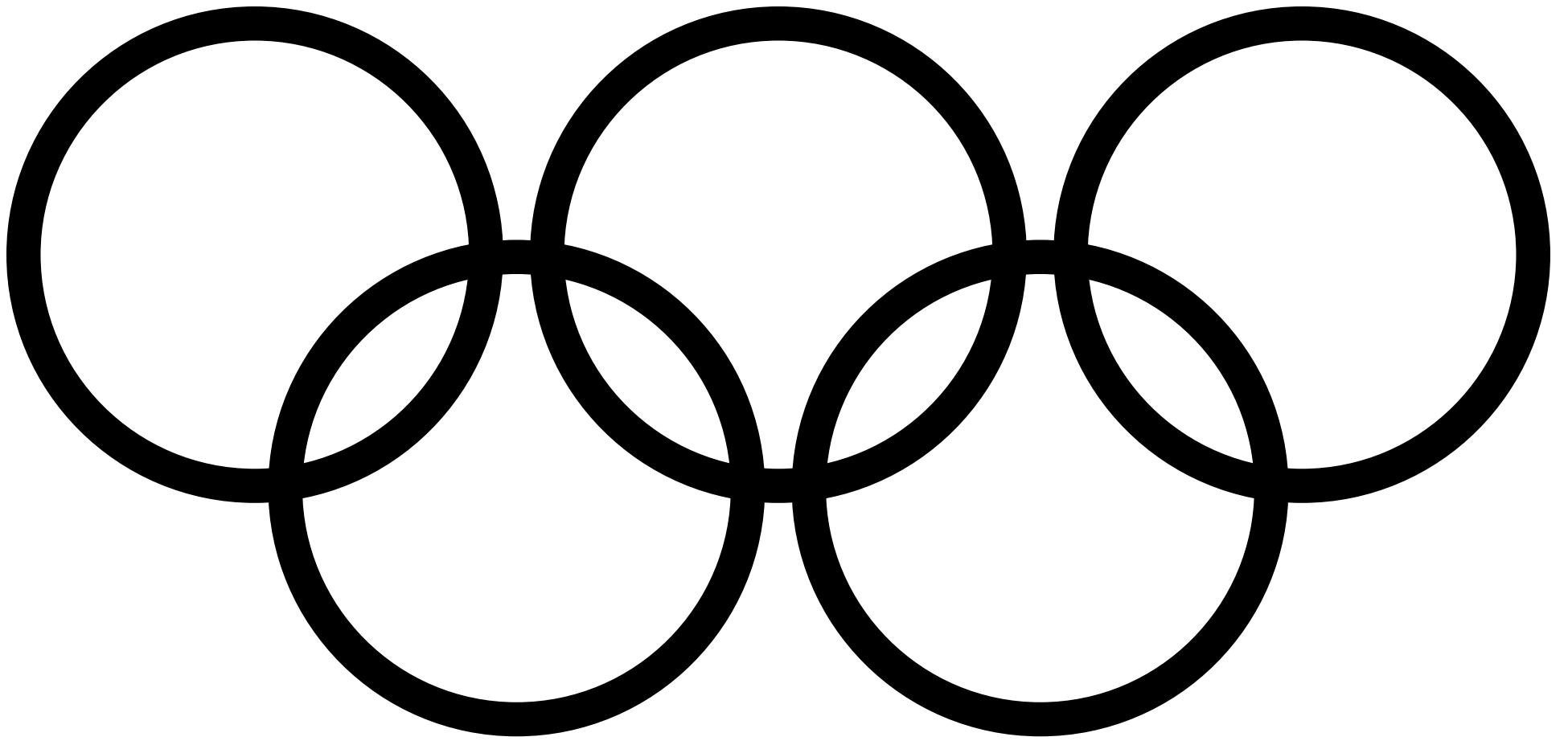
The Daily Cal's irresponsible approach to justifying and approving the GPA hike stems from their inability to take into account the structural and educational inequities that exist in many California public high schools.

What is California's "Master Plan," really? In the past two decades, the State has opened 23 new prisons but only one new UC campus. Apparently, California's Master Plan is to incarcerate and disenfranchise certain groups, not to educate its residents. The state must prioritize its budget, cutting from the Department of Corrections and restoring funds to education. Increased eligibility should be a cause for celebration rather than the justification for tougher admissions requirements.

Concretely, the Regents' vote is another obstacle to higher education. In UC Berkeley's context of an affirmative action ban, tuition increases, last year's severe drops in minority enrollment, and financial cuts to outreach (among others), the vote is one in a series of conservative attacks, and it assumes a symbolic dimension.

The vote sends a message: UC Berkeley is an exclusive institution for the economically privileged, with all the applicable racial implications here in California. As an institution, UC Berkeley has become more and more politically conservative, agitating many students and faculty members.

With "Let There Be Light" as Berkeley's motto, the University, along with all campus organizations - including the Daily Cal - should ensure that all students interested in attending the University of California see the light and follow it without anyone pressuring them to stop. Regents and The Daily Cal, think wisely.



THE OLYMPICS SUCK

Judging Error Taints Olympic Ideals

by jean park

The Olympic Games were founded on the ideology that sports can bring all people of different race, ethnicity, or social class together and peacefully compete for the sake of competing. The Olympic creed states, "The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph, but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered, but to have fought well." This is the only sporting event where audiences can witness talented athletes whom are not yet tainted by the greed of money. Expectations were set higher this summer because the Games returned for the first time to its birthplace in Athens, Greece. The opening ceremony was an inspiring sight. Iraq, despite the turmoil the country is in, walked confidently into the stadium. People were moved when North and South Korea walked hand in hand into the stadium.

"Controversies in many events soon overshadowed the grandeur of the Games."

Controversies in many events soon overshadowed the grandeur of the Games. The controversy that received the most attention revolved around the gold medal for the Men's All-Around Gymnastics competition. The gymnastics judges started South Korea's Yang Tae Young's parallel bar routine at 9.9 instead of 10. This tenth of a point could have been enough to switch Yang from third to first place over American Paul Hamm. In the end, Hamm's overall score was 57.832 and Yang's was 57.774. The South Koreans, however, realized this judging error two days after the competition. They filed an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, the highest authority in sports, to have the International Gymnastics Federation justly award Yang a gold medal. The International Olympic Committee stood firm on its decision to refuse Yang a duplicate gold.

Many questions, however, arose when observing how the competition and the controversy were handled. For example, why did no one suspect Yang's 9.9 starting score when he did the same routine a couple days earlier in the preliminaries? Was there some biased involved because South Korea is not known for a strong gymnastics team? Soon after the Koreans filed the appeal, the three judges who wrongly scored Yang were suspended. No errors should have been made in a

competition of this intensity and importance. The scoring should have been checked for mistakes. The IOC boasts of having technologically advanced judging systems but they obviously failed when it mattered the most.

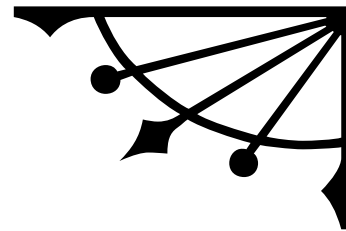
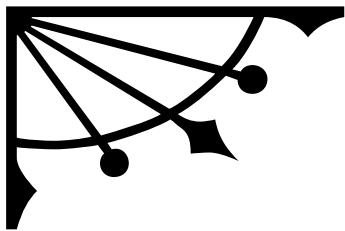
Moreover, if a more economically or politically powerful country were in South Korea's position, would the IOC have a different opinion about giving another gold to the rightful winner? Aren't the Olympics about fairness? Ioan Suci, a Romanian gymnast, said to the press that "the U.S.A. got something more than it deserved." Suci could have said this out of spite but many others questioned the validity of the scores.

Nevertheless, no one can blame Hamm for the controversy. He was an innocent victim just like Yang who was thrust into this scandal. Like any proud Olympian, he refused to give up his medal. Through the controversy, he repeatedly defended his right to the medal by saying, "Deep in my heart I feel like I am the champion." In the end, he did not rightfully deserve the gold medal, but it would still be wrong of the IOC to take his medal away. After his huge fall, Hamm did perform almost perfectly to fight his way back up to medal contention. But either way, his comments and the IOC's passiveness put Hamm in a bad light.

"The IOC handled this situation in the worst way possible."

After refusing to award another gold medal to Yang, the IOC decided to cowardly resolve the situation by putting the responsibility on Hamm's shoulders. They requested that Hamm give his gold to Yang but they respected his decision if he did not.

The IOC handled this situation the in worst way possible. Instead of proactively trying to resolve the controversy, the IOC tried to wash their hands of the blame by saying the judging error was not in their control. It also wrongly shifted the responsibility of resolution onto the athletes. Hamm was put on the spot to give up the gold because the IOC was too stubborn to duplicate and award the true winner a gold medal. Ultimately, this controversy undermined the spirit of the games, crushing the ideal of fairness and international unity.



Not Just Rolling On By: The Plight of the Disabled

by kimberly jinsook crawford

I live a good 35-minute walk away from campus. The only source of transportation that I own is my two God-given legs. Utilizing the student bus pass is definitely a high priority for a lazy fifth year, such as myself. Most mornings are pretty uneventful, but earlier this week, I faced an interesting situation that left me riled with the desire to write.

On one of my rare commutes to my 8 AM class, the shiny "new" 43 bus had to pause to load a handicapped passenger. If you haven't had the fortune of riding the "new" buses the city of Berkeley seems to be utilizing lately, this bus requires the driver to stop the engine, come over to a drawer of controls and hooks, and load the handicapped passenger from the middle of the bus. Normally it doesn't disturb my half attempt to catch a few more "zzz-s" into my morning, but this particular morning I had the misfortune of sitting next to a couple of students, who groaned at the delay. Glancing at their watches several times and obviously irked, they disturbed the train of thought that passed behind my closed eyelids.

"We're so going to be late for the quiz," one moaned to the other. "I know, this is *such* a pain. His wheelchair is motorized. Why the hell do they need to take the bus?" the other grumbled back. I managed to crack an eye open to see what couple of ignoramuses were sitting across from me.

"*Baka desu (idiots)*", I thought, angry at first. But as the bus started up again and we were on our way, anger dissipated into disappointment- shame even. The thought of me attending such a prestigious university with people who really were not as knowledgeable as they acclaimed to be was disheartening.

Disabilities are still frowned upon in today's fast paced society, even in their growing numbers. It's looked upon as a humiliation, a burden, something that the world could be better off without. What people don't seem to realize is that 49.7 million people in the United States (at least those accounted for) live with some type of long lasting condition or disability. A disability is as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities of an individual. These are limitations within a *societal network*. The United States Federal government provides many ways in which disabled persons are supported at the societal level, such as policies surrounding the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. It's the most comprehensive law addressing the rights of disabled people, providing clear standards that need to be met in efforts to eliminate discrimination.

But discrimination still persists— as was exemplified to me on the bus. It

is important to recognize the presence of those with disabilities because they are a specific population who face barriers in their every day world, especially in communities of color. People of color, that have a disabling condition, face difficulties on various fronts: they are rejected in the larger society (for being a person of color and/or being disabled), and they are often rejected from the respective group itself for being disabled. This discrimination at two fronts proves

that there is a significant lack of social education of various groups different from the "norm". Sadly, you'll find there is even a lack of culturally sound resources available for the disabled Asian Americans and API persons in our society. Resources that do exist are written from a Eurocentric perspective, and do not wholly accommodate people of color. A significant and controversial example would be the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) that many professional persons utilize as a tool for diagnosis.

Disabled persons surround us in our daily lives, and not all are confined to a wheelchair. Disabilities that exist at a mental level are not always present in their most drastic forms. You might have heard announcements made in your classes for fellow able bodied students to assist their fellow classmates with disabilities. These are some rare but growing efforts that the University of California, Berkeley has made to decrease the gap between contrasting groups. Programs such as the Disabled Students Program (DSP) are beginning to rise in number on high school and university campuses, further stemming culturally sensitive groups from the movement.

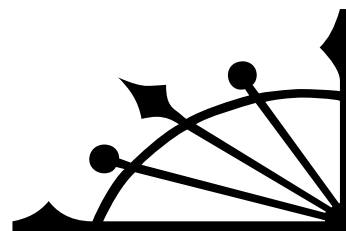
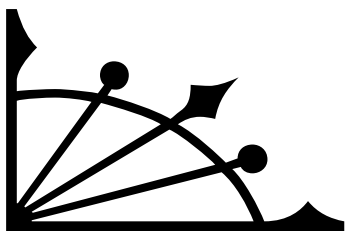
Whether physically or mentally disabled, these persons can be fully functioning members and contributors to society. Examples of famous disabled people are found out through the entertainment and academic world. FDR, Cher, Beethoven, Tom Cruise, Thomas Edison, Einstein are all individuals that have contributed significantly to our culture that exists today. The list does not stop there. Like all other groups that have suffered under the discriminations of

the majority group- African Americans, various groups of Asian Americans and API, etc- disabled persons should receive voice and respect as his/her fellow man. Further research and development should arise to provide them with equal access and equal respect. With this, barriers of discrimination can be taken down, and

further understanding of our fellow man can be gained.



“Examples of famous disabled people are found out through the entertainment and academic world. FDR, Cher, Beethoven, Tom Cruise, Thomas Edison, Einstein are all individuals that have contributed significantly to our culture that exists today.”



NO LOVE FOR THE ASIANS

The Prevalent Exclusion of the API voice and vote

by julie carl

Current president George W. Bush would like to keep his job. In November the position of ruler of the "free world" is up for grabs again, and as usual, two wealthy white men are vying for the presidency. Incumbent Bush is hoping that his idiot "Everyman" charm will carry him all the way to another four years in the White House. His main opponent is John Kerry, whose biggest claim to fame is his apparent opacity on all the big issues. The time has come to choose the best man, the one who will represent and fulfill your needs and visions.

Now, if you are an Asian Pacific Islander American voter, finding that one candidate who truly speaks to you is going to be harder than it should be. Neither presidential candidate has shown much interest in API community. Bush and Kerry do have sections in their websites dedicated to the API constituency, but the candidates need to move beyond lip service. Merely posing next to people of Asian descent should not be confused with actually understanding the situations and struggles of different APIs.

The 2000 National Census reveals that Asian Pacific Islanders are the second fastest growing population in the United States. However, to both the Democrats and Republicans, the API voting bloc does not seem to be worth their time or money. Whilst the African American and Latino votes are generously and elaborately courted with television ad campaigns and personal visits to the communities, APIs are left out with no one fawning over them, causing many APIs to feel as though they are wearing too thick of an invisibility cloak.

Both parties point to logistical reasons behind this exclusion, as though numbers and figures are the only factors that matter in determining a group's potential to leave a mark on election day. One major reason being that states with large API voting populations are often locations that are not heavily politically contested.

Electoral, California, New York, and Hawaii are all strongholds of the Democratic Party. However, the increasing API populations in states like Washington and Nevada are making the potential influence of the API constituency quite pertinent.

Another key factor that prohibits API voters from being romanced has to do with the diversity that exists within the API population itself. Unlike the African American and Latino populations, the term "Asian Pacific Islander American" reveals not only various cultures but also many different languages. Providing language services for many APIs during the election year would not only be very costly but would also take much manpower. And, seeing how American society runs on the notion of instant gratification, the APIs are simply not quick enough.

Yet amidst the unfortunate apathy from the politicians, there are some APIs within both major political parties who are going out of their way to convince their fellow API brethren to vote for their candidate of choice. One major figure in this sudden move to mobilize APIs from within a major party is none other than the current Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao. A staunch Republican, Chao seems to be pulling for her boss all the way by citing appointments of APIs to higher levels of government under the Bush Administration. Referring to herself as an example of Bush's dedication to diversity, Chao even spoke at the Republican National Convention in New York City.

The Republicans are turning to none other than the action star-turned-governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger to help push APIs to vote Republican. As Matthew Fong, Bush campaign's API delegate-extraordinaire, told *AsianWeek*, the Republican Party along with incumbent Bush are utilizing Schwarzenegger's immigrant story to encourage API voters to think of the Republican Party as being inclusive of an immigrant's American Dream. It certainly will serve in the best interest of the Republican Party to make it known to the general public that they are welcoming of people

of color. After all, wasn't President Bush the one who spearheaded the Patriot Act, which placed harsh restrictions on immigrant rights and took away the civil liberties of anyone who "looked" like a terrorist? Oh, right, but that's for those *other* minorities.

If the Republicans can be accused of overzealously carrying the "multicultural" banner, then the Democrats can be seen as overzealously perfecting their role as a wallflower. Using the Republican/Democrat dichotomy as their main and possibly their only weapon, the entire Democratic campaigning strategy lies in the mere fact that John Kerry is not George W. Bush. Certainly, the specifics of that difference are not fully elaborated upon. Apparently, it is up to the voter to figure that out.

So here we go, Bush says yes to war, and Kerry initially voted for the war but now portrays himself strictly as an anti-war veteran. Bush says all forms of Affirmative Action have got to go, and Kerry adopts a more middle-of-the-road Affirmative Action should stay but be fixed route. Bush says abortion is morally wrong whereas Kerry says that women should have choice over their own bodies. Bush believes that the means justify the end when it comes to combating terrorism, while Kerry voted for a bill that would place harsher penalties on hate crimes against those of Middle Eastern descent after 9/11.

It seems as though Kerry's history and relationship with the API community may run a bit deeper than Bush's because of his wartime experiences. However, this will probably serve to go against Kerry come this November, Kerry's status as an anti-war veteran of the Vietnam War has created a situation where he comes off looking sympathetic to the Communist Vietnamese government, which certainly does not go over too well with the Vietnamese American community. The Vietnamese American community at large prefers the more militantly anti-

communist policies of the Bush Administration, which went as far as to deem them to be evil.

Kerry's attempt to connect with the API voters resulted in a photo opportunity in the Bay Area. Candidate Kerry even attended a town hall meeting in Daly City, where he shook hands with Pilipino veterans who are fighting to gain full veteran benefits from the U.S. government. He later went on to sit down with *AsianWeek*, a prominent API newsmagazine based in the Bay Area, where he took time to note that his niece is an adoptee from China. If this was the only connection that this America, he was sure proud of it.

man has to Asian

Out of the confusion and apathy, the true heroes who have emerged are the many different nonprofit, community-driven API organizations that have spilled much energy and resources into registering API voters for this presidential election. Honoring the notion that a vote expresses the political freedom that the United States often lauds as one of its founding principles, the voter registration drives held by many of the API organizations offered language translation as well as other services to facilitate the voting process. And, for their hard work, Governor Schwarzenegger did what any good leader would do. He made major cuts to their funding.

Don't lose hope, dear API voters. With the rising numbers of API voters along with the rising awareness from the API community about the startling lack of an API political clout, the exclusion that was once designated for us can be combated. Perhaps, the first and very important step would be to go out and vote. Who you vote for may not matter as much as the mere fact that you, of the yellow or brown skin, walked up and actually voted. That's right, this November 2004 election will determine whether or not the API voter gets any respect.

MY TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS IN BERLIN.

by Jonathan Yip

My parents are Chinese from Hong Kong, but they met each other at college in Minnesota. They both came to seek out the United States just as I went to Berlin to seek out Germany. Why Germany of all places? Simply because I had been studying the German language over the past seven years, and journeying there was my chance to be like one of those I-have-been-abroad students. Those students were the ones who had a spanking new appreciation for their homeland and a newfound pity for the rest of the world. Unfortunately, it was too true of a reality for me.

I arrived at this understanding the moment I arrived in Berlin. This was when I realized I was going to be the only Chinese-American staying at a remote dormitory in an East Berlin suburb. Before even boarding my transatlantic flight, I had expected to arrive in a diverse, cosmopolitan capital, where international students wander at liberty amongst the sophisticated German populace. I found nothing of the sort in the area around my dorm. There, many young men with shaven heads stared me down with their angry frowns. It alarmed me even more to find out that one Cameroonian male student from my dorm was assaulted by a group of men one night after I moved out of the dorm. Needless to say, my program coordinator advised me not to travel alone outside of the Berlin city limits. Right at the very beginning of my year in Germany, it became clear to me that non-Germans like me were not welcome. However, I hadn't thoroughly understood the context of this hostility.

The reason for the violence and the hate is not as obvious as we, Americans, would expect. The vast majority of Germans are not anti-Semitic in the manner of Hitler and his Nazi cohorts. But looking at a reunified Germany with its lingering socio-economic problems does paint an ugly picture. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, unemployment in the former East German states has climbed up to about 25%, a condition so bad that people of the West German states are becoming less and less willing to "throw money at [the] problem."

Ironically, cultural and institutional dominance by the more capitalistic West Germans in the reunified nation has helped seal the unhappy fate of the East Germans. German reunification has caused East Germans to collectively lose their political identity, their cultural identity, and social status. The frustration that arises from not being able to find employment expresses itself in the form of good, old-fashioned xenophobia. Some East Germans blame unskilled, foreign workers, presumably Turkish immigrants, to be stealing all of the jobs away, and so they resort to extreme right-radical neo-Nazism, which is still to be found in a (comparatively) liberal city like Berlin.

Inhabitants of the more conservative states in the southern parts of West Germany, including Bavaria and Baden Württemberg, are more concerned about the lack of highly-skilled workers in the country. In the 1990s, there was a push to limit immigration from Mediterranean countries, including Turkey, by members of the more conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU), a political party gaining much support in Bavaria. In the German Federal Republic, anti-immigration laws still continue to be an important and decisive issue in the national arena. CDU politicians, who represent the economic interests of West Germany, appeal to many East Germans because of their anti-immigration stance.

The average German does not consider her or his country to be one of immigrants. Germany's traditional position toward immigration is in accordance with *ius sanguinis*, or 'blood rights,' i.e. having German blood is a prerequisite for German citizenship. This means that the approximately 2 million Turks who do live in all of Germany, have only been considered for German citizenship very recently, although this still comes with certain restrictions.

One such catch is that there is a legal expectation for immigrants, Turkish or otherwise, to become culturally German and be as fluent in the German language as any other German. (Ironically, "guest worker German" – a recognized variety of German developed by workers imported from Mediterranean countries during 1950s – is easier for me to understand than Bavarian!) As late as 1998, a CDU politician stated that foreigners who do not want to integrate themselves into German society should ask themselves if they do not wish to go back home. But for many Turkish "immigrants," home is in Germany for it is where they grew up. And, the modern-day national food of Germany is not the sausage but the döner, a type of Turkish sandwich.

While I was in Berlin, I let it be known that I moved out of my racist dorm and into an apartment in the Kreuzberg district, a district known for its high Turkish population. Upon hearing this, my listener immediately viewed me as someone who was very brave, very ill-advised, very Turkish, and/or very Muslim. This mindset that the Turkish part of Berlin was dangerous and unfriendly is indeed racist, and up to this very day, I still cannot understand this attitude. Berlin has 3.4 million residents, of which

only 200,000 are of Turkish decent. I never felt safer than when I walked down my Turkish-German cobblestone street alongside Turkish-German families on my way to the local Turkish-German grocery store.

Turkish immigrants in Germany do have it bad, especially compared to fortunate some Asian-Americans in the U.S. like myself. Both of my parents voluntarily came to the States with student's visas, and I attained my citizenship right when I was born. Had my parents been from Mexico or other parts of Latin America, I probably wouldn't feel so comfortable here, since California Proposition 187 has been denying schooling and medical care to certain immigrants of color. It would also bother me that twenty-three states have already adopted English as their official language, a language that is difficult to acquire for the socially-stigmatized. My hope is that Americans do not relapse into the nativist mentality: that the average

American is white and English-speaking and that uneducated, low-skilled immigrants are short-term visitors.

Back in Berlin, it saddened me that people didn't consider me eligible to be a German. No matter how much I neared impeccable, accent-less pronunciation, few Germans would cease in viewing me as an underprivileged, young man from Vietnam. I say here "Vietnam" because the 10,000 Vietnamese in Berlin form the city's largest Asian immigrant community. Many Vietnamese have emigrated into Germany when socialist East Germany imported unskilled labor from socialist Vietnam. Person after unsuspecting person asked me whether I was from Vietnam or Thailand, but never China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, or even Japan. The Berliners did not know much about East Asia. They only knew about the foods that they encountered in their local Asian eatery. One professor I had even asked the class, "What if the Chinese had control over all of Germany and not just its restaurants?" The question invited a fair amount of haughty laughter. But, meanwhile, my faith in a diverse and tolerant German culture was eradicated.

It comes as no surprise that I feel at home in California. The people don't stare me off of subway trains, my place is not in the pan-Asian restaurant, and I don't have to carry my passport with me wherever I go. Berliners interpret directness as honesty, and in the process, allow for blatant discrimination. One time, a man on a subway train went up to a biracial man and said to his face that he was disgusting. No one on the train said or did anything. As an Asian-American and a U.S. citizen, I am extremely privileged. Sadly, others are not so fortunate.

Remaking Asian Cinema

by allen do won seol

Asian cinema's influence in the United States has grown substantially in the past few years. Initially, its success depended on martial arts action movies, with Jackie Chan's films leading the way. Today, many imported films consist of Japanese animation and Hong Kong flicks. But in the last decade, a new wave of movies, particularly those from Korea, have arrived in the theaters of America.

Take the recent success of *Oldboy*, a neo-noir thriller movie by Chan-wook Park, and *Tae Guk Gi*, a war film by Kang Je-gyu. Park's film was the first South Korean movie to receive an award at the Cannes Film Festival. Kang's film enjoyed unprecedented success at theaters across the nation. Both show that the current US demand for international films is expanding.

As a result of the films' popularity, US companies have been buying movie licenses in order to produce cheap American knockoffs. Before the movie was shown at Cannes, Universal Pictures had picked up *Oldboy*'s license for a remake with Justin Lin, the director of *Better Luck Tomorrow*. Rights to other smash hit movies, such as *My Sassy Girl* and *My Wife is a Gangster*, have also been sold to American movie companies for remakes. Several companies, like Roy Lee's *Vertigo Entertainment*, have dedicated themselves to the sale of Asian movie rights to US studios, such as.

The prevalence of remakes of successful Asian films raises some serious issues. Why do American studios need to remake them if they were such a smash hit in their home countries? Why can't America accept the movies as they are? *Crouching Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon* and the more recent *Hero*, were not remade for American audiences, but they proved to be incredibly successful movies. *Hero* even captured the number one spot for several weeks at the box office. In Hollywood's eyes, it's a convenient to draw upon the ideas of many foreign films through remakes. Doing so allows them to release films without the hassle of dealing with cultural constructs and allows for increased manipulation of the film. The bottom line is that remakes simply leave many talented Asian writers and directors without any credit.

In America, there seems to be an unwritten rule: Asian cinema should be exotic. Underlying Hollywood's mindset is a Fu-Manchu perspective of Asian filmmaking: We're only good at acting out the stereotypes that are imposed upon us. This is dangerous because it viciously and subconsciously immortalizes barriers for APIA actors.

Does this mean that Asian Cinema can only have an impact on the American market if it features flaring swords and flashy kung fu moves? Granted, there is a language barrier, but like other foreign films, we usually overcome that barrier. It seems almost like a slap to the face when movies are remade to be more "American."

On the other hand, Japanese Animation, or as anime, has enjoyed a great deal of success without much alteration. Its success is so far-reaching that it has even influenced our American culture. The appeal of the giant robots battling it out and coming together to form a bigger, badder robot and the coolness of little 12 year-old ninjas duking it out can appeal to anyone. Although anime is voiced over when it is brought to America, companies rarely change the content. The most that distributors can do is edit or cut out some minor scenes. The reason why American companies like Disney are not picking up remake licenses and redoing the animations themselves is probably because it is difficult for them to recreate the style of anime.

The success of subtitled Asian films and anime proves that such forms do not need to be remade for American audiences. What appears to be the case is Hollywood's eagerness to impose its ethnocentrism and revisionist work on the American audience.

