

ISSUE 12.5

hardboiled

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN NEWSMAGAZINE!

APRIL 2009



IN THIS ISSUE... TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT / FIGHTING
ENGLISH AS THE SUPERIOR LANGUAGE / BEIJING, THE
MODERN GHOST TOWN... AND MORE!

12.5 hardboiled

APR 2009

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hb meetings

WEDNESDAYS 6:00 - 7:30pm

204 Wheeler

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ABOUT THIS COVER

"Fusion Food"

Asian fusion cuisine provides a satisfying means for individuals to reconsolidate the diversity of the API identity. Oftentimes, this diversity is filtered by external influences, which bombard individuals with discrete images of the "Asian American". However, through food, individuals can pick and accentuate particular flavors to create a unique account of the self that relates on a cultural and personal level. See more on page 5.

editor's notes

Journalism was just something that my high school counselor placed me into because she thought it would be good for me. At first, it was just a class. Eventually, it started to define who I was. Despite the role it played in my life before coming to Berkeley, I dropped the activity when I got here because I didn't plan to pursue it as a career. Although this plan still holds true, it was a mistake to not include it in my future because abandoning it also caused me to abandon a large part of myself. This prevented me from fully enjoying my freshman year of college.

This originally small decision came to play a large role in my experiences and actions at Berkeley. When I learned of my mistakes, I took action and made some changes to my life. Now, I'm here editing this newsmagazine.

The twist to this story is that upon graduation, I will likely drop journalism from my life once again. So why am I here, in **hardboiled**, spending so much of my time on something that is going to end? Well... I actually don't know. I'll just keep this piece of me alive for now and I'll worry about the rest later. So right now, I look like a crazy junior trying to become some kind of a health professional who is wasting her time doing something random. Fine, I am crazy but **hardboiled** just makes me a little less crazy.

While I'm off spending time doing something purely for my own happiness and sanity, I am left with less time to dedicate to other things like studying, researching, shadowing, interning and participating in pre-health organizations – all of which would progressively strengthen my resume. Before you start calling the nut house, I ask you: despite how much these future-driven activities will help and how much they will pay off in the end, are you spending time doing something solely for you? Is anything you're doing purely as hobby rather than a job?

I'm not saying that I don't enjoy researching, interning or being involved with a pre-health organization because I do love it. But I also like **hardboiled** and it has been the opportunity for me to get away from the biohazard reagents stored around the corner of my secluded lab bench in the dungeons of Hildebrand to work with a team of happy perky people (although, their enthusiasm gets kinda creepy at times). Sometime in the midst of this semester, I fell in love with **hardboiled**... and I want others to find their place too (wink wink hint hint nudge nudge).

So, you lab rats, you Matlab-aholics, you future doctors: are you still dancing that routine you used to dance, tuning that violin you used to play or perfecting that sport that used to make you sweat? If not, maybe you should reconsider it... or else you'll go through this end-of-junior-year-depression thing everyone is going through because they realized that they're not fully satisfied with their lives and it's almost too late to fix it.

Sometime last year, my roommate told me that I appeared happier than the year before. Sometime this semester, my roommate told me that I'm more open-minded than the year before. I told her that I realized that college is more than just good grades, succeeding and getting our futures in order but it's also an opportunity to find yourself. College is an once-in-a-lifetime experience so experience everything Berkeley has to offer... it's only four years and though you're "too busy" to be involved with these hobbies, these hobbies won't be available to you once you're gone.

Think about it. Do you really want to look back at college and envision a list of unfinished tasks or do you want to look back know you've left your mark?

Julie Tse, Layout Editor

Liked what you read? Feel like joining our staff? Want to send us angry letters? Then contact us!

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The Dartmouth Debacle

hardboiled breaks down the controversy behind the racist email directed toward the Ivy League's first Asian American president

by katherine bai

To most, Jim Yong Kim, who holds a dual M.D./Ph.D and was named one of TIME's 100 most influential, is a luminary. To Dartmouth student Tommy Brothers, he is just another "chinaman."

On March 2nd, Dr. Kim was appointed as Dartmouth College's next president, making him the first Asian American president of an Ivy League institution. His reception, however, was far from welcoming. Here, **hardboiled** brings you a look at the situation at hand.

The Offensive Email

1 The day after Kim's appointment, the school's Generic Good Morning Message email listserv sent out a "satirical" response to Dr. Kim's appointment, with witty gems like, "Dartmouth is America, not Panda Garden Rice Village Restaurant." The writer, Tommy Brothers, uses all the typical racist jokes: the Asians-have-funny-names bit, a lame accent imitation, another-american-job-taken-by-an-asian! quip, and oh-so-clever references to Chinese restaurants and action flicks. And of course, Brothers felt it acceptable to refer to Korean American Dr. Kim as a Chinaman, a racial slur that reaffirms decades of racial injustice and struggle. My question is, how did this email get approved by the editors to be sent?

The Apology Email

2 Let's examine the classic "I didn't intend to offend anyone!" excuse. Brothers writes, "I hope you can all understand that my intent was never one of malice against the Asian community, but an extremely crass attempt at hyperbolic satire." How can anyone make these comments without knowing that it's blatantly racist and offensive? The sheer ease at which Brothers makes these remarks reveals the depth of his ignorance. He then offers to speak to anyone that he has offended, but only "after finals." Such compassion! Such remorse!

Dr. Kim's Passive Response

3 Now, as the Ivy League's first Asian American president, there are a lot of barriers to be broken, especially at a school that is only about 14% Asian American. Dr. Kim's response to the debacle should be a sign of the changes to come. Then, he throws this in our angry faces: "But I also don't want this lapse in judgment to limit his prospects for the future. Dartmouth students are very talented, but we all make mistakes - especially when we are young." Seriously? Believing that our lives should be like ones from *Gossip Girl* is a mistake we make when we're young. Sending a bigoted message to over 1,000 subscribers is just plain stupid. Racism is a deep-rooted problem, and in order to affect any real change, real consequences and proactive actions need to be taken.

Now I get that Dr. Kim's interests are now aligned closely with those of the college, and all this bad publicity is detrimental to the college's reputation, but he needs to understand that his influence is a powerful thing. By addressing the problem of racism,

Kim could be making progressive strides toward greater diversity and understanding at Dartmouth. However, he only touches the subject by telling other Asian Americans: "I understand your pain, and my sincere hope is that this incident will lead to better understanding and greater compassion for the experience of our entire community."

Dartmouth's Past

4 In retrospect, this controversy isn't a huge surprise; the college has had other instances of published racism in the past.

Just last year, the campus newspaper published a comic that attacked an Asian American student with both racist and sexist jokes. With the same clever depiction of Asians, with you know, our prominent rice hats and slanted eyes, two fourth year Dartmouth students attacked a female Asian American student named Bonnie Lam. The editor-in-chief has since apologized for the comic's obvious racist, sexist, and just plain ignorant undertones. No one was really punished, aside from the discontinuance of the comic, and everything was pushed under the rug to be forgotten. It's quite shocking how quickly another racist oversight can take place. Clearly, this method of forgive-and-forget isn't working.

The Future

5 After the email was first sent out, the Dartmouth Review called it a "hilariously over-blown situation" and one that "scores somewhere between the Rape of Nanking and Japanese internment on the Richter Scale of injustice." What. The. Hell. It's ignorant comments like these that make it clear that it's not just one student's bigotry that is tainting this historic moment, but the culture of racism that exists at the college. Since when is it acceptable to alleviate racism with more racism? We can only hope that Dr. Kim steps up to the challenge of really bringing change to campus, instead of sitting back and allowing racism to fester.



Dartmouth president, Jim Yong Kim.

JINDAL

The Republican's Model Minority



How does Jindal's background distort perception of opportunities for Asian Americans?

by montague hung

Katrina. It seems that aside from his policy standpoints, there must be other issues that influence the Republican's decision to promote Jindal.

One alternative reason in the Republican's decision must have been Jindal's self-identification as an Asian American. When Jindal spoke about his background, I could not help but notice him trying to mirror his experience with that of the

President's. The first part of Jindal's response described how his parents could not initially afford the doctor's fee for his birth. The response goes on to say that through hard work, Americans can do anything. In addition to promoting limited government, the Republicans seem to be trying hard to make their party seem inclusive of minority groups by making a person of color their poster child.

Jindal's rising status is used as a political counterpoint to President Obama's journey and brings up the question, how hard is it for minorities to be successful? Jindal's response downplayed the significance of President Obama's journey, to

show that people of color have an equal opportunity to succeed in America. Jindal embodies the model minority myth: that Asian Americans, through hard work, illustrate the attainability of the American dream by everyone. While President Obama's recognition that the effects of segregation are still being felt is an example of his acknowledgement that there lies a need to remedy society's prejudices against people of color, Jindal seems to be oblivious of institutions that make it harder for minorities to achieve their American dream. This only further entrenches the obstacles that Asian Americans face today.

The way that Jindal portrays his beliefs further masks the discrimination that Asian Americans today still face. A recent national survey of Asian Americans conducted by UC Berkeley's Professor Taeku Lee shows that 35% of Asian Americans have been a victim of some form of discrimination (Lee 2008 National Asian American Survey). But even with such a high figure, many people, even other Asian Americans, are not aware that such problems are so pervasive. In Jindal's address, his refusal to recognize discrimination against people of color in housing, the work environment, and justice system further perpetuates the model minority myth and contributes to the ignorance that cripples Asian Americans. The truth is, Jindal is not the typical Asian American success story. There are many people who work hard, just as he advocates, but because they are people of color, they are hindered by social institutions with intractable racial biases from achieving their goals.

It is imperative that people are aware of the prejudices that minorities still face today. There currently does not exist an even playing field, as Jindal suggests. The success of people of color, such as President Obama's, must be celebrated as a special triumph because they encountered more difficulties than others do. Contrary to Jindal's view, Asian Americans are people of color who still face discrimination. By spreading awareness of the difficulties still facing the Asian American community, society can work towards rectifying those inequalities. Only after, can Jindal's claims be true. Until then, his image and statements that all Americans can achieve their dreams if only they worked hard remains a farce.

Date: March 3, 2009 11:06:39 AM EST
To: GOOD-MORNING@LISTSERV.DARTMOUTH.EDU
Subject: Good Morning

This is the Generic Good Morning Message for March 3, 2009.

Yesterday came the announcement that President of the College James Wright will be replaced by Chinaman Kim Jim Yong. And a little bit of me died inside.

It was a complete supplies.

On July 1, yet another hard-working American's job will be taken by an immigrant willing to tent wage, saving half his money and sending the rest home to his village in the form of traveler's checks. Unless "Jim Yong Kim" means "I love Freedom" in Chinese, I don't want anything to do with him. Dartmouth is America, not Panda Garden Rice Village Restaurant.

Y'all get ready for an Asianification under sian-invasion leadership instituted under the guise of diversity. It's a slippery slope we are on. I for one want Democracy and apple pie, not Charlie Chan and the Curse of the Dragon Queen. I know I sure as shit won't ever be eating my Hop dubs bubs with chopsticks. I like to use my own two American hands.

flakr.com

Third World, Second Thoughts

40 years after its occurrence, the TWLF movement still inspires activism

by annie cho

Around this time last year, I didn't know what third world Liberation Front was really about. And honestly, I wasn't interested in knowing the details. Yes, I heard that it was a strike that created Ethnic Studies, but why should that have mattered to me? I had no intention of becoming an Ethnic Studies major.

My initial understanding of twLF was simply factual, another set of factoids to memorize alongside names and dates in a history book. The Afro-American Studies Union, the Mexican-American Student Confederation, and Asian American Political Alliance joined forces to create a Third World Liberation Front in the beginning of 1969. The front began picketing on all major entrances of the UC Berkeley campus, as well as on Bancroft and Telegraph. After months of protests, an Ethnic Studies department was formed and began operating on October of the same year.

I first found it strange that people had to fight for Ethnic Studies in the first place at a place like UC Berkeley. I understood Cal as a diverse place, so why didn't its curriculum and courses reflect that? And why were the twLF strikes so important?

Looking back, I think I had difficulty understanding the importance of twLF because I had taken my knowledge of my culture for granted. I was a first-generation immigrant, so perhaps I thought that something like Ethnic Studies was not necessary. I grew up knowing a lot about my native culture; my parents insisted that my brother and I know the 'old' ways, even though it was inevitable that with time, we would become more American than Korean. But I've come to believe that all students have a right to learn about different ethnic groups and cultures on a campus that claims to be diverse.

Last year, I attended some of the festivities of the 39th anniversary of twLF, and I began to understand. twLF is important because it was a collective effort of underrepresented groups that came together to fight for something that was lacking on the UC Berkeley campus. I went to an inter-generational dinner and heard 'badass' activists from the 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s speak about their experiences, and I was inspired. Even if I didn't fully realize the value of having an Ethnic

Studies department on campus, it was clear to me that if some of these people cared enough to spend multiple nights in prison for a cause and cared enough to share their experiences years after, twLF had a greater importance than I could understand at that point.

This year, I can say with certainty that I have a greater understanding and appreciation for twLF. Though I still have no plans to become an Ethnic Studies major, I attended the 40th anniversary events of this year with piqued interest. The inter-generational talks, events put on by ethnic groups on campus, rallies on Sproul Plaza—they had new meaning this year because I understood what we were celebrating -- the triumphs of those who pushed to have Ethnic Studies at Cal.

As these heroes in the past and twLF become ancient history, it becomes all the more important to remember what the twLF strikers sacrificed in order to fight for what they believed in. That is why the anniversary celebrations persist today, 40 years later, and why they must continue to go on. After all, what's to stop us from taking the right to study our own minority cultures for granted? Who will remember leaders like Richard Aoki, who passed away a few weeks ago?

Now, about a year and a half after stepping onto the UC Berkeley campus as a student, I see people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and I see that there is a correlation to the diverse student body and the courses of study available on campus.

However, the battle for people of color is definitely not over. Currently, the fight for foreign languages continues, as API language programs are threatened as the UC system faces budget cuts. At an event earlier this year called Language Matters, the keynote speaker said in his address that though Berkeley has a reputation for being a progressive campus, it is not because the students themselves are innately activists or that Berkeley accepts progressive students, but rather because students have to fight for what they want. twLF serves as a reminder students can stand up for what they believe in and instigate real change on this campus.



"Activism Right There", one of the twlf festivities, includes an panel and performances by several artists. photo courtesy of activismrightthere.com



Leaders of the twlf strike (from left to right): Richard Aoki, Charlie Brown, and Manuel Delgado. photo courtesy of drepoetic.wordpress.com



Members of the 1969 Third World Liberation Front protest on Sproul. photo courtesy of www.manuelrdeleado.com

TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT?

The Role of Asian Fusion Cuisine in Understanding APA Identity

Apparently white people like Asian fusion food. And sushi and tea, at least according to the blog, stuffwhitepeoplelike.com. This blog is mostly for entertainment purposes and is certainly not the most reliable source to find out the predilections of our whiter counterparts. While these Asian-oriented posts may seem to perpetuate the fetish for oriental paraphernalia, it serves as a starting point in breaking some of the stereotypes on Asian American food.

Asian fusion cuisine is an eclectic approach to food that integrates a variety of ingredients from various cuisines and regions into dishes. While the integration of "oriental" salads onto various fast food menus and the popularity of *Iron Chef*, a Japanese cooking competition show, may suggest that fusion food is a recent trend, it actually has its roots to imperialism. For example, Hong Kong cuisine, Vietnamese sandwiches, and Hawaiian cuisine are all heavily influenced by years of European occupancy and serve as a positive marker of the colonial legacy. Today, Asian fusion food serves a similar function to integrate the different influences that American culture have on the Asian American identity. Many of the Asian fusion restaurants are owned by Asian Americans and give them the opportunity to express what it means to be Asian American through their food.

Just as identities are often prescribed to individuals, Asian cuisine suffers from similar treatment. The larger American society has shows Asian cuisine as two extremes. Asian cuisine has been produced by the larger American society. Based on immediate reaction, one would not associate Asian cuisine with fine dining. The prevalence of Asian food stands in mall food courts has put Asian American food in a mundane light with a degraded quality. White take-out boxes with red pagodas and fortune cookies have become American

cultural icons. Television shows like *Seinfeld* or *Gilmore Girls* would not be the same without Chinese food. However, Asian cuisine does exist outside of chop suey, pad thai, and teriyaki chicken bowls. Unfortunately, many taking this stance posit Asian cuisine on the other extreme as being "exotic". This

Being Asian American is not an "either-or" scenario -- there shouldn't be a struggle between the two identities...



The popular LA late night snack Kogi BBQ: a fusion of Korean BBQ and Mexican tacos. Fusion food can be a form of self-expression for many Asian Americans. Photo credited to <http://www.kobibbq.com>

image is also circulated by American chef Anthony Bourdain in his television series, *No Reservations*, where he frequently features eccentric delicacies from Asian countries. While one can appreciate Bourdain's genuine interest in Asian ethnic

That is the question.

by tawny tsang

foods, he does not portray Asian cuisine in an accurate light. Ultimately, Bourdain misinforms his audience by allowing them to believe that his show presents an authentic sampling of Asian cuisine.

Asian fusion cuisine allows Asian Americans to take a stand against how Asian food is typically portrayed. This unique approach to food subtly demonstrates the robustness of the ethnic identity despite assimilation. It also suggests the use of a different analogy to describe American culture. Instead of the "melting pot" or "mixed salad", America is like an ice cream bar. A scoop of vanilla, a little sprinkles, diced fruits, maybe some fudge—we customize the use of available resources to make it our own by considering preferences. For example, chef Roy Choi opened *Kogi*, a popular Korean taco truck in Los Angeles to bring his "ethnic background together with the sensibility and geography of Los Angeles." Similarly, Surapol Mekpongson created the restaurant *Thaitalian*, formerly located in downtown Pasadena, to bring his love of Italian food with Thai cuisine.

So, white people aren't the only ones that like Asian fusion food. Asian people like it too. The next time you are confused about being Asian American, follow the wise words of Anthelme Brillat-Savarin—"you are what you eat" and try eating curry over spaghetti. It may be easier to think on a full stomach. And who knew that resolving identity crises could be so tasty?

Being Asian American is not an "either-or" scenario — there shouldn't be a struggle between the two identities. Instead, as demonstrated by Asian fusion food they should be supportive of each other. This understanding takes a little creativity and a lot of courage to try something new. Just as creating a good dish takes practice and experience, so does the personal reconsolidation of the diversity behind the two cultures. But one can start by thinking outside of the to-go box.



<http://www.childrenofinvention.com>

The 27th San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, an event that spanned ten days, showcased a number of films sharing the lives and stories of the Asian American community. *Children of Invention*, a film directed by Tze Chun, was one such film that played at the festival and brings to light an often unexplored part of the Asian American community.

The pace of the movie is slow, the pauses and silences between characters generous, and the conversations in each scene void of unnecessary details. That's what made the film effectively realistic — how the rhythm of the lives of an immigrant mom and Chinese American children was captured and portrayed.

The film does a great job of addressing an issue that many people, including Asian Americans, are ignorant of — the Asian immigrant experience in America. The immigrant struggle in America includes and impacts the Asian American community, and underneath the model minority gloss is an overlooked struggle worth acknowledging.

The plot revolves around a single working Chinese immigrant mom, Elaine Cheng (Cindy Cheung), and her two kids, Raymond (Michael Chen) and Tina (Crystal Chiu). Elaine tries to make ends meet by looking for any available sales position but eventually gets involved in a pyramid scheme, gets caught and detained in prison for more than two days, and is unable to reach her kids. That leaves Raymond and

Tina, who are presumably in elementary school, to their own devices. They end up going to Boston to withdraw their Chinese New Year money and decide to use that money to support themselves by selling their inventions made of marbles, egg cartons, and forks.

We see the struggle most prominently in the mother, who works hard to make the next paycheck but gets duped by the money-making scheme scam artists that she works for. She is detained in prison along with two other Chinese women. Based on the movie's depiction, it appears that the system is out to get the Asian immigrant. Elaine is taken advantage of more easily because, as an immigrant with little financial stability, she is desperate to support her two kids alone. At the prison, she is further incriminated for her illegal immigrant status because a background check reveals that her visa has expired. Some might argue, the system is excessively thorough in its inspection of the immigrant perpetrator.

By exposing another racial group that falls by the wayside in an attempt to survive in America, the movie broadens the scope of the immigrant pursuit of the American Dream to include the Asian American community. What *Children of Invention* eventually reveals is that the issue of the disadvantaged, struggling parent applies to any community of immigrants. Immigrant parents often times begin at the bottom of the social ladder with hopes of bettering their lives. To achieve this dream requires the sacrifice and a degree of desperation that we see in Elaine. . The struggle that the

Cheng family grapples with is an immigrant one, but this movie also exposes a struggle the general public readily associate with the Asian American community.

Like many immigrant parents, Elaine is sometimes negligent in parenting because of her circumstance in which she is being exploited for labor and struggling to make ends meet. Subtle stereotypes, such as the how quiet and disconnected Raymond and Tina are from the white kids around them, serve not to reinforce the stereotypes but to play up the tension and difficulty that the characters face as immigrants. It points to bigger problems that afflict an immigrant family. The movie reveals the difficulties that immigrant children face without a parent constantly there to pick them up from school, watch over them, and support them financially.

The movie's balance of realism and storytelling can be attributed to Chun's personal experience. A graduate of Columbia University with a degree in film, Chun helped his mother in pyramid schemes, which Chun noted to be the route that many immigrants take to get rich quick. This personal touch helps drive home just how central the immigrant struggle is to the Asian American community. Even today, as more and more Asian Americans are born in the US, films like *Children of Invention* chronicle an important part of Asian American history that is essential in developing an ethnic identity. *Children of Invention* sheds light on the dangers and obstacles facing immigrant Asian American families, and leads the audience to reflect on a critical piece of the Asian American experience.

Beneath the Gloss

A movie that grapples with the often overlooked struggles of the Asian American community

by emily yu



Photos courtesy of Princess Manuel

BAR CODES, DUCT TAPE, AND EDUCATION

GABRIEL NETWORK'S FASHION SHOW SPOTLIGHTS SEX TRAFFICKING

by melani sutedja

Background from dynamiccardsinc.com

Girls shimmied down the catwalk one recent Friday night with tousled hair and high heeled stilettos – only these girls weren't wearing the latest fashions, but duct tape, condoms and trash bags.

On March 6th, a full house packed the Multicultural Center for the first annual "Trafficked: A Political Fashion Show." Hosted by UC Berkeley's Gabriela Network (GabNet) in collaboration with STOP the Trafficking, the event aimed at spreading awareness of sex trafficking through art activism and politically-conscious designs.

The costumes – ranging from duct taped mail-in-order bridal dresses to bar-coded skirts – directed people's attention toward a topic that many regard as taboo. The designers chose materials associated with the trafficking of women and children in Third World countries to infuse political meaning into their avant-garde creations.

"What we can do is make the normal, abnormal," said Ana Espanola, junior and co-director of GabNET. "The goal is to spread awareness because we recognize that living in this part of the world where we are privileged, gaining an education freely, we can voice our opinion without being threatened to be killed."

In addition to the runway show, the event also featured spoken word pieces and photography. Guest speakers included Professor Joi Barrios and Ruby Verdiano Ching from III-Literacy, a Bay Area's spoken word group.

"The topic is really taboo and not talked about in any culture, even though it is so prevalent inside and outside the US, in cities like Oakland," said Tracy Nguyen, a sophomore and model for the event. "A lot of communities of color are affected by it, and a lot of women in the US and even the Bay Area get sucked into the business."

Nguyen's costume was an oversized dress-shirt with the words "Can't afford this shirt." In her catwalk routine, a well-dressed man symbolically handcuffs himself to her as she makes her way down the runway. When they reach the front, a model dressed as a police officer attempts to stop the two, and the well-dressed man hands him a roll of cash. As Nguyen turns we see that the back of her shirt reads, "But my trafficker can." Meanwhile, the officer puts on his glasses, which read

"Bought."

Espanola said that bribery is not uncommon among police and government officials in many Third World countries, especially in Southeast Asia. "If you think about it, a lot of police and government officials get money out of this," Espanola said. "We find trafficking even through Filipino maids and nurses going abroad to the United States. The Philippines depend on the remittances that nannies make and send back home – their government depends on that money."

GabNET attempts to understand the processes behind globalized trafficking through mass solidarity work towards women's empowerment and leadership roles. All proceeds of the event will go towards the Purple Rose Campaign, a global campaign that GabNET helped set up in 1999 to expose sex trafficking and violence toward mail-in order brides. According to the campaign, over 50,000 women and children are trafficked into the United States annually, and 5,000 Filipina mail order brides are bought by American men annually.

"It's more complicated than just saying 'stop.' There are situations where people get rescued and they don't want to be, because of numerous factors," Espanola said. "Awareness is the biggest key."

In a globalized market where women can be bought on craigslist.com, people can mobilize for the issue in many ways. It can be as simple as submitting a Purple Rose Campaign

pledge card into 515 Eshleman to promise not to contribute to the forces that perpetuate trafficking, or calling if in you see anything suspicious. More active ways to get involved include volunteering or interning with organizations dedicated to stopping the trafficking of women, such as the Gabriela network. Many volunteers work directly with trafficking victims in the women's shelters of San Francisco.

"We can use our intelligence to stop this issue," Espanola said. "It's not about going straight to a country and trying stop it, but using awareness to target it. More of us can go as lawyers, doctors, emerging politicians... to have a bigger impact."

Meanwhile, those in attendance have already taken the first step in becoming proactive: educating oneself on the proximity of this global issue.

"People tonight didn't come out for the fashion show, but for the education," said Nguyen. "It was a full house. People care."



Beijing, the Modern “Ghost Town”

Sacrifice of human rights haunts post-Olympic China

by diane ling

Ironically, the city which was teeming with life and excitement just six months ago can now be described with a single word: empty. Half of inner Beijing's looming skyscrapers stand vacant, despite their imposing presence in the city skyline. Abandoned retail strips stand along streets half-completed. Stationary construction equipment waits for funds not likely to arrive anytime soon.

The desolate Beijing city center now creates the impression of a modern ghost town. Efforts to give the city an ultra-urbanized look have produced a rueful semblance of that effect. Those lifeless skyscrapers aren't the majestic giants they were meant to be – they appear strangely absurd in a city which is home to 17 million people making on average \$6,000 a year.

Something has clearly gone wrong. To find out what has happened, we need to start at the beginning – why China wanted to host the Olympics in the first place. In short, it was because the government wanted to gain international recognition of China as a modern, robust nation equal to any other world power.

To a great extent, this aim was fulfilled. The Beijing Olympics were a magnificent spectacle. And now, China is increasingly being seen as a global force to be reckoned with.

In advance of her trip to China this February, Hillary Clinton called the US-China relationship “the world’s most important of the 21st century.” Clinton discussed with Chinese leaders pressing world issues such as economic policies and global climate change. According to the BBC’s James Reynolds, Clinton’s trip indicates that “the US believes that it cannot solve any of these problems unless China is involved.” China is evidently gaining respect as a world leader. This effect surely arose in part from the amazing hosting of the 2008 Games.

That is not to say China got through the Olympics without any mistakes. The Games came at a great cost to the land and population – in the form of excessive commercialization and numerous human rights infringements. Although these acts were performed amidst a lavish attempt to uplift China’s image, they have actually tarnished that image to a great degree.

In the two years preceding the Games, 500 million square feet of commercial real estate was developed in Beijing. But economically, it was a disaster. Today, an estimated 100 million square feet of that space is empty. Jack Rodman, an expert in distressed real estate, told the L.A. Times that this unprecedented scale of development “just doesn’t make sense.” Sadly, these unused and unneeded scrapers sacrifice practicality for photogenic appeal. They may look beautiful, but what will happen when there is nobody to pay the rent?

The redevelopment of Beijing also came at the cost of the livelihood of many local people. An estimated 1.5 million Chinese residents were forcibly evicted from their homes so that the land could be used for development of highways, subways, and skyscrapers. Often, little or no compensation was offered. There was also the controversial removal of hundreds of thousands of beggars, political dissidents, and other “undesirables” from the streets – all done to present an immaculately clean city for foreign visitors.

The tragic stories of these people cannot be overlooked in analyzing the 2008 Games. They painfully detract from the great image of China that the government had strived to create. The cost in human livelihoods surpasses that of any financial wastage.

It is ironic that this great human sacrifice was performed all in the name of image. If image was the key, China should have refrained from committing such outright

violations of human rights. Because it did not, to this day the country is regarded with suspicion over human rights issues.

As far as China’s leaders are concerned, the Olympics were a success because they amplified China’s presence on the world stage. However, the careless sacrifice of a city’s economic health, environment, and people – all in the name of image and pride – was not impressive at all. And it did not go unnoticed by the world.

I strongly support the Chinese government’s wish to glorify the nation and the Chinese people. It just took the wrong approach.

The uncontrolled rate of construction in Beijing reflected unsound city planning. Perhaps those few extra millions of square feet in office space highlighted Beijing’s recent economic rise to power, but it was unnecessary to go to such wasteful extremes. China definitely could have managed the city’s finances and commercialization more responsibly.

It was even more foolish to engage in overt violations of human rights. Unfortunately, the Olympics saw but a few among a string of China’s human rights offenses. If human rights had been adequately respected during the Olympics, China could have redeemed itself for some of its past infractions. Instead, China has only reinforced its reputation for disregarding human rights. The negative attention consequently drawn by the media does not help China’s world image at all. Even worse, China’s efforts to put on a great Olympics will have been counterproductive if the Games are mainly remembered as a cause of innumerable human rights violations.

It is especially ironic that these infringements came about through China’s efforts to polish its image, but that now they have created the opposite effect.

The attention garnered by the Olympics

has created a better understanding of modern China: a powerful nation, but not without its imperfections. Its human rights encroachments are currently the biggest slur on its world image.

To change this, China can start by re-thinking its stances on the nation’s current human rights issues. This would be a big step toward repairing its negative human rights track record. Possibilities for change include its policy against Tibet protesters, freedom of expression, detainment and torture of political dissidents, and the harsh death penalty.

As for Beijing’s ghost town, the damage is done, but China can learn from this mistake. The main blame lies in lack of government supervision of the real estate industry. China needs to work on tightening its laws to reduce abuse of the legal system, as well as take an active role in effective city planning. Only then can China be seen as a nation that responsibly handles its own finances and future.

We must realize that as Asian Americans, a positive image of China can be uplifting to Asian Americans. After all, our heritage lies in Asia, and the success of China really empowers the Asian identity. China’s rise ultimately proves that an Asian nation can become a global power on par with the rest of the developed world.

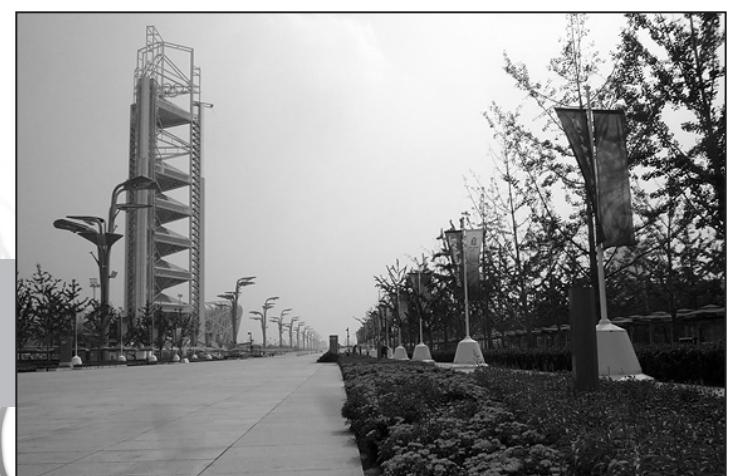
As a Chinese American I will always be proud of China as a nation with an incredibly rich history and culture. However, as an individual with a conscience, I truly regret its leaders’ continual and blatant disregard for human rights. China needs to work diligently and seriously in the coming years to fix the plethora of legal and social problems it faces.

I hope that as a result, China will one day be known not just as a powerful nation, but as a responsible world leader that effectively enforces just laws, values the environment, and most of all, respects basic human rights.



This is Subway Line 8, which serviced the Olympic Green. During the Games, it was usually too full to fit all waiting passengers onto one train.

A view of the Green just one day after the closing ceremony - not a single fan is in sight.



<http://beijing2008.popphoto.com/>



High school senior Lori Phanachone talks to reporters about her decision not to take the English Language Development Assessment.

Fighting ESE

by denise wong

(English as a Superior Language)

High school student is punished for not complying with racist policy

Attesting to the stringency with which Iowa's Storm Lake High School enforces systematic racism, assistant principal Beau Ruleaux responded to a student's protests against a discriminatory policy by calling her "no Rosa Parks."

This is the current plight of Iowa high school senior Lori Phanachone, a Laotian American who was recently suspended for her refusal to take the English Language Development Assessment (ELDA), an English proficiency exam allegedly designed for students whose first language was not English. Consequently, the \$86,000 she has earned in scholarships from Buena Vista University (as well as even greater financial awards from Iowa State University), her membership in the National Honor Society, and her ability to run on the track team and attend prom are now in jeopardy.

Now, the issue of graduating English-proficient students is sensible, especially with the current problems surrounding state-funded education and the need to adequately prepare students for their college careers. However, what makes this story obscenely preposterous is that Phanachone, who was born and educated in the United States, has never been on an English Second Language (ESL) track. In fact, quite the opposite is true: Phanachone is an honor student with a 3.9 grade point average, and was only administered the test because she listed Lao as her first language on a school registration form. As Indiana University professor Dennis Baron astutely observes on his blog, "Even though that is the case, she was able to read those forms in English, and fill them out in English as well – Iowa has no Lao version of the entrance forms, though they are available in Bosnian."

Officials at Storm Lake High School, where Phanachone

attends, have offered several attempts at justifying their ridiculous policies. Superintendent of Schools Paul Tedesco maintained that her refusal was just like any act of "insubordination," and the school system is governed by policy and rules. Others have suggested that the issue here is not of a discriminatory practice, but rather a matter of bureaucracy. Storm Lake administrators have cited that the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires the exam for any student whose first language is not English. The school also receives additional funding for

high achievers on the ELDA, a strong incentive for officials to pressure high-achieving students like Phanachone to take the exam.

The discrimination here is most evident in the fact that eligibility for ELDA exemption is entirely arbitrary:

Phanachone was only made to take the test because she self-listed Lao as her primary language at home. She said that someone had advised her to have initially listed English as her primary home language, indicating that no one really would have investigated whether the clear English-speaker was telling the truth or not. Subtextually, the test targets students who may not identify as native English speakers, even if they obviously grew up speaking the language elsewhere. The test reflects a high degree of xenophobia; it is mainly immigrant communities and families that do not speak English at home.

The issue is also not about "insubordination", it is about being able to challenge rules that are clearly aimed at punishing diversity. According to Baron and contrary to the school's claims, both the Iowa education code and the NCLB Act excuse students who have academically shown English proficiency from the ELDA. One would think that a school district that forcefully mandates English proficiency would be

able to comprehend such legislation.

Ruleaux's inappropriate and disturbing aforementioned statement (which, curiously, he has not clarified or elucidated in any coverage of this story) is hardly shocking considering Iowa's history of xenophobic institutional mandates. Iowa first barred the use of non-English languages in 1918, and in 2002, passed an official English law. This past year, Iowa Representative Steve King sued Iowa's governor for allowing election materials on the state website in non-English languages. While this is requisite through federal law, King argued that it violated Iowa's official English law. Nonetheless, this is not just a problem with Iowa, whose Asian American population is 1.6%. Many other states with greater Asian populations, California included, also administer these tests under similarly ludicrous guidelines and policies.

The rules under which the ELDA is administered isolate students by classifying them as foreign and insinuating their inability to succeed academically on the arbitrary basis of language and self-identification. As such, it is evidently a covert blow to multiculturalism.

Above all, Phanachone should be commended rather than punished; after all, it takes an unbelievable amount of balls to stand up to a key example of institutionalized racism in public schools. This is especially true given her young age and the fact that many of her high school credentials for college are now at stake. It is worrisome that she is the first of many minority students disgusted with the exam to actually outright refuse to take it; and after all, how many in her position would do the same thing? I am ashamed to admit that I wouldn't have. She may have been set as an example by the administration to deter future rabble rousers, but it is an example that students of color should continue to follow until systemic discrimination is recognized and educational institutions stop insulting their students' ability to distinguish a bigoted policy when they see one.

LIVING WITH YOUR CONSCIENCE

Why students should take a stand against Raj and Everest Properties

by afshan qureshi

It is easy to believe that incidents of human trafficking do not happen within the borders of this country. However, people do not realize how close to home "stuff like that" actually happens, and if they do make this realization, most people do not know how to mobilize against it. One such incident did occur in 1999 in the Berkeley community. Lakireddy Bali Reddy, a 1960 Berkeley alum, was accused of exploiting two teenage sisters he had imported from his village in India.

Reddy owns most of the properties in the local area surrounding the University of California, Berkeley. This gives students a very limited housing selection that will not add to Reddy's coiffeurs in any way. In fact, Reddy owns over 1,000 apartments under the management names of Raj and Everest properties, which earns him approximately one million dollars a month, making him the largest and wealthiest landlord in Berkeley after the University. According to the website of Women Against Sexual Slavery (WASS), an organization that was created in 2000 to create awareness about the Berkeley sex trafficking incident, by 2000, Reddy's properties were valued at more than \$69 million.

It was discovered that Reddy had imported and sexually abused two teenage sisters, 17-year-old girl Chanti Pratipatti and 18-year-old Lalitha Pratipatti from his village in India. When Lalitha died of carbon monoxide poisoning in one of his apartments, Reddy attempted to dispose of the body instead of calling the police. When Chanti put up a fight, Reddy attempted to silence her and dispose of her as well. Instead of sending these girls to school, he forced them to work as his personal sex slaves and forced them to do menial labor in his restaurants in Berkeley and Santa Clara.

Reddy was sentenced to serve eight years in jail on June 21, 2001 on charges of tax and immigration fraud as well as for charges of transportation of minors for illegal sexual activity.

The WASS website reports, "Judge Armstrong sentenced Reddy to 97 months in federal prison and restitution of \$2 million as well as a three-year period of supervised release." Additionally, Reddy was mandated to register with the state of California as a sex offender under Meagan's List.

Reddy was released from prison on April 2, 2008. He now lives in his mansion in the Berkeley Hills. Because this incident occurred some time ago, students know very little about what actually transpired. Even if they feel morally disinclined to live in a property owned by him, students often outweigh this vice with the convenience of having an apartment in close proximity with campus.

"We only interact with them when

something is needed to be repaired or done for our apartment, the experience is either neutral or negative," said sophomore Timaj Siraj who rents from Raj properties. "I am not comfortable with the leasing company's CEO's personal background, and I will most likely not be living in a property owned by one of these companies in the future because of what happened."

Similarly, freshman Nikita Khetan was searching for housing for next year when her father emailed her articles about the Reddy case that have changed her perspective on Raj and Everest properties.

"From what I've heard, their service isn't too bad but it takes them a while to fix things. The quality of their apartments is shady, but he owns a lot of the properties in Berkeley, so what can you do?"

She additionally adds, "I'm not necessarily going to rule them out, but I'm going to keep all this information in mind. After hearing everything, I'm definitely going to try to really avoid all Raj or Everest properties."

At the same time, there are many students who know about the incident and feel as if they have no other choice but to rent from him. Even more disturbing are the number of students who do not feel as if they are affected from the situation enough to let it inconvenience their housing decisions.

"I'm not very uncomfortable renting with Raj Properties. I can justify it to myself in a number of ways: he's not doing it anymore, he's paid his debt to society, my apartment has nothing to do with his sex trafficking ring, there's nowhere else to live, etc." said sophomore Jaime Lambert. "The truth is, I like this apartment, I wanted it, it was affordable and attainable, and I don't feel too guilty about paying rent to LB Reddy."

While this sentiment is shared by many who are aware of the situation, I do not think it is appropriate to rent from Reddy. This man is praised in his village because of all of the money he donates to local charities, when in real life he is a disgusting criminal who imports young womyn, and subsequently, rapes and exploits them. Is it right for society to allow his cruelty towards womyn of a 'lower caste' to go unpunished and overlooked?

How can violence like this be so blatantly ignored in our society? These womyn's statuses as poor immigrants rendered them further invisible from neighbors and institutions that could have protected them, like the police. Chanti and Lalitha are two individuals in a crowd of millions of nameless, faceless womyn who are being exploited around the world.

Yes, he's served his time and all this happened a while ago but these points are not enough to blanket the fact that a girl is dead, and there are others with psychological injuries because of what Reddy has done to them.

I do not judge those who rent with Raj and Everest Properties, because the issue is a lot more complex than whether students rent from Raj and Everest Properties or not. However, I am still baffled by those students who know about what happened, yet do not care enough to be inconvenienced in their housing situations. After knowing the facts, there should be no excuse in continuing to support someone like Reddy in sustaining his million-dollar living. His crimes are inexcusable and we cannot continue to accept this merely for a comfortable living.

There are students on Sprout everyday advocating for peace in Darfur, relief in Rwanda, they want you to donate money to the Invisible Children Fund, they want you to spend your spring break teaching farmers in Argentina about sustainable living. These are all very noble causes, but politics should start from the home. My argument is not so simplistic to say that people who are renting from Raj and Everest properties are bad people; my argument is that they are making a stupid and unhealthy choice by renting from a man who had no qualms about raping young teenage girls.

The only way now to obtain justice from Reddy is to hurt him financially and this could happen if only more people knew and cared about this situation. Yes, people may feel bad about renting from him, or they may feel bad that something so unfortunate and unbelievable happened right here in our own backyard, but mere sentiment is powerless unless there is an action associated with it. When I was searching for housing last year, I looked at Raj/Everest properties as well. However, when a friend told me about what Reddy had done, I decided I would not support that rapist in any way.

I now rent from K&S Company, and live about two blocks away from campus. I could not live with the thought that my hard-earned money was going to help fuel Reddy's million-dollar lifestyle. Yes, I may be one person, but I have empowered myself using my voice and my actions to advocate for that which I believe in. If other people also feel bad about renting from Raj or Everest properties, then they too should take a stand and stop renting from them. It is never too late to become a political activist.



<http://www.rediff.com>
Reddy sits sullenly in court and awaits a verdict.



<http://www.wassusa.com>
Women stand outside of Reddy's Pasand Lounge in Berkeley and protest his business in light of the discovery of his human trafficking ring.



Searching for Peace

Student's Dialogue Across the Taiwan Strait Innovative Ideas to Break the Strait Deadlock and Build Peace

by laylaa abdul-khabir

It was over three decades ago when Taiwanese folk singer Li Shuangze held up a Coca-Cola bottle at a performance and said, "Everybody [in Taiwan] is drinking Coca-Cola and singing English songs. Where are our own songs?" Li lent new meaning to the term "Cocacolonialism," a word generally used to denote U.S. corporate imperialism in a developing country, and illuminated a key conflict in Taiwanese society at the time: the struggle to define a Taiwanese identity with unique cultural and historic roots. This was the topic that UC Berkeley Professor Andrew Jones spoke about on Day 3 of the Strait Talk Symposium, a week long series of events on Cross-Strait relations between China, Taiwan and the U.S. The Symposium featured speaker panels throughout the week with professors specializing in topics concerning Cross-Strait relations, and hosted 15 student delegates from the three countries who came together to work on building peace, trust and reconciliation across the Strait.

Years of deadlock in constructive dialogue have frustrated efforts for a peaceful resolution of the Cross-Strait conflict. Chinese who favor reunification wait for the day that the 'renegade province' of Taiwan returns to the mainland, and they can present a united face as 'One China' to the world. Many Chinese mainlanders reject the idea that the Taiwanese people would not want to rejoin with the motherland and instead want to split ways and construct their own identity. Supporters of Taiwanese independence see Taiwan as a country that has struggled under decades of colonialism, variously under Dutch, Japanese and American forces. The Taiwan they see has a culture, history and flavor that is uniquely Taiwanese, and distinct from that of mainland China. Today, these pro-independence Taiwanese articulate a vision for a strong, independent Taiwan that is fully able to assert itself as an equal nation on the world stage. A growing segment of the Taiwanese population, a large number of them youth, are identifying as purely "Taiwanese," an identity different from

past associations as "Taiwanese and Chinese" or just "Chinese." The search for a voice and form of expression that is uniquely Taiwanese has led to the emergence of folk singers like Li Shuangze, who uphold Taiwanese identity by shunning outside influences, especially American and Chinese pop culture. Strait Talk is one of a few efforts to bring both sides of the Strait together to critically address the problems facing China, Taiwan and the U.S. without infringing on the identity or voice of either side.

The Strait Talk Symposium, a brainchild of a group of undergraduates at Brown University, started in 2005 and takes an innovative approach to the controversial Strait issue by engaging students from the three sides in Interactive Conflict Resolution (ICR) sessions and generating creative ideas to build peace. ICR is a framework for conflict resolution that is based on building trust across conflict lines, and helps participants move beyond disagreeing with different views to understanding the other's perspective and recognizing the basic needs of all sides. Throughout the week of dialogue, the delegates create Peace Project proposals they will implement in their home countries, and an official Consensus Report that has recommendations to their countries in the political, economic, and civil society realms on improving Cross-Strait relations. The report is to be published and circulated among scholars and policy think tanks in the U.S and Asia.

Delegates formed cross-cultural teams to brainstorm their Peace Project proposals, and the finished plans were presented to the public toward the end of the Symposium. The Cross-Strait Young Leadership Plan (CYLP) group based their project on the belief that the root of conflict stems not necessarily from history, but from a lack of communication and isolation. CYLP's proposal is

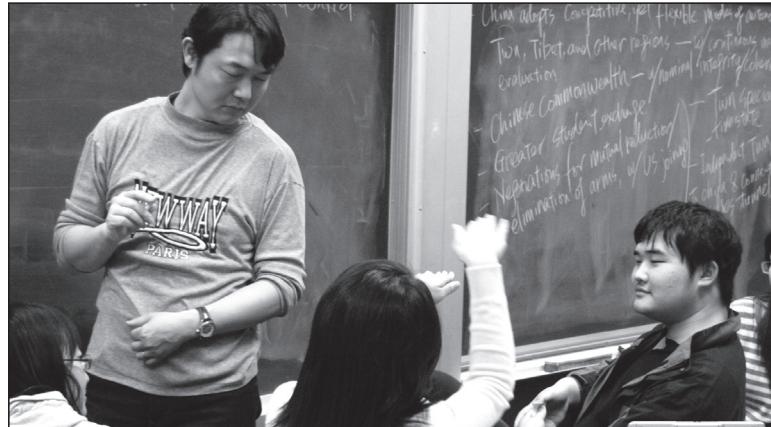
based on increasing communication and contact between students on both sides of the Strait, who will then work together to discuss Strait issues. Their three-step plan begins with the recruitment of students from China and Taiwan to set up a social network for initial contact, then meeting up in an online conference to visually discuss Strait issues (through a medium such as Skype), and finally to a face-to-face direct exchange. CYLP emphasizes that children in Taiwan and mainland China were often brought up in environments of hatred and misunderstanding toward the other side, and communication and cultural exchange are key to breaking these barriers.

A second group, the Women's Peace Ambassadors Blog, believes that women's voices were too often neglected in Strait discussions. The group proposed the creation of the "Strait Talkin' Honeys" blog as a way to empower and inspire women from the three sides to get involved in the peacebuilding process. They hope the blog will become a medium for women to share stories, ideas and solutions to common problems. A third team, the Relieving Forgotten Memories group, emphasizes dispelling bias at the governmental and civil level by bringing a human element into political and confrontational dialogue. Their project involves collecting and recording people's personal stories and histories and sharing them with the public to show the human suffering on both sides of the Strait, and get people to form their own opinions outside of government rhetoric. The last group, Peace Seeds, believes that excessive growth and overdevelopment is an issue that needs to be addressed alongside

the Strait conflict. The team proposed groups of people from China and Taiwan to come together and work side-by-side on a farm to promote sustainable environmental practices while at the same time building bonds of friendship and exchanging ideas on the conflict. Peace Seeds holds that not every problem has a political solution, and that human experiences are crucial to mediating a conflict.

Yang Liu, a delegate from mainland China, witnessed the effect that increased communication and interaction with Taiwanese had on her through the conference. Before coming to the conference, Yang mentions, she held her family's traditional Chinese view on Taiwan, namely that it should re-unite with China because it has the same culture and history. After working with several Taiwanese delegates throughout the week, Liu says, "I realized how Taiwanese feel about themselves. They want to have the right to choose what they want to be." Yang says the most impressive thing coming out of the conference for her was that she saw "How Taiwanese people see themselves, " and that "They want to decide what Taiwan will be in the future." Strait Talk ended with students returning to their home countries with Peace Projects and lasting connections to other students around the world. As delegate Howe Wong from mainland China stated, Strait Talk was set up so that "Future leaders can have peaceful perspectives."

Strait Talk will be at Brown University this November and returns to UC Berkeley next March 2010.



clockwise from top: (1) Delegates present the final consensus document. (2) Delegates take part in a discussion early in the week. (3) Dr. Tatsushi Arai, the dialogue workshop facilitator, records notes about the final consensus document as a delegate explains a point.

photos courtesy of Henry Shepherd

WE ALL ARE PUNJABI

WE HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON, BUT WE CHOOSE TO IGNORE THIS...



Mariam Malik shares her struggle with her Punjabi identity. Photo provided by Mariam Malik

How being Pakistani and Punjabi has forced me to defend my identity

by mariam malik

When I tell people where I am from, I often get confused looks. Sometimes, my answer even seems to make people uncomfortable. I was born in the US but I identify myself with what seems to be a misunderstood region: Punjab.

As a first generation US citizen, whose parents were born and raised in the Punjab province of Pakistan, I find it very enriching to embrace my Punjabi culture. Yet, I am disheartened by the general lack of awareness of the richness and cultural heritage of what was once a unified Punjab.



Left Basant is the most popular Punjabi festival celebrated by Punjabi people of all religions. The day consists of kite flying competitions, colorful clothing and lots of food. Right Bhangra originated as an agricultural dance but has grown in popularity and variety today, making it a strong aspect of Punjabi culture. Photos provided by Mariam Malik.

Punjab is an area in South Asia that lies divided by the Radcliffe Line, the border between Pakistan and India that was created in 1947 after partition. This artificial border not only separates Muslims from Sikhs and Hindus, but has also caused people to forget how unified Punjab once was. It saddens me that politics and religious differences have fostered much disagreement and lack of acknowledgment over the Punjabi

that we feel the need to discount the "other Punjab", as if they never existed. I have to remind myself over and over again that these ignorant responses stem from what seems to create many issues around the world: politics.

After making this realization, I now respond to these comments with confidence. We may be divided by an arbitrary line, but in reality we sing the same songs, read from the same literature, dance the same dance, live the same lifestyle, eat the same food, speak the same language, and even look the same. We share family members and political leaders, we have roots in the same villages, and our parents went to the same schools together. We have so *much* in common, but we choose to ignore this because partition sowed the seeds of animosity. Although this animosity has subsided in the last generation, it's been replaced with a general lack of awareness.

I've been fortunate enough to visit my parents' villages in Punjab many times when I return to Pakistan. Therefore, I can personally attest to the beauty and culture of Punjab. It's interesting to me that these villages and cities I visit on the Pakistan side of Punjab are filled only with Muslims because just a few decades ago, before partition, Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus resided together. Religion was an afterthought until the political divide forced it into the consciousness of the Punjabi people. Instead, culture united everyone. In fact, Punjabis were so well integrated that a border drawn anywhere would have been arbitrary.

"I THINK YOU'RE MISTAKEN... PUNJAB IS ONLY IN INDIA!"

identity because the truth is, we Punjabis are all the same.

Frankly, I'm tired of the repetitive "You're Punjabi? I thought you were from Pakistan," or the "So, you're half Indian?", or better yet "I think you're mistaken... Punjab is only in India!"

I hear these reactions so often and with such fervor that even I begin to doubt *my own* identity. Numerous times my dad had to reassure me that I am just as Punjabi as someone from the Punjab province in India. This disconnect sparked my interest in researching why our views have been shaped in such a way

For generations, Punjabis have lived an agricultural lifestyle due to the lush terrain and five major rivers running through the area, making it the most well irrigated area in South Asia. Therefore, spring has been a time of celebration for centuries that has unified the Punjabi people and manifests itself in two popular forms: bhangra and Basant.

Bhangra is a form of dance that has recently gained popularity in the Western world, but truly dates back to generations ago in the heart of Punjab. The dance began as an agricultural ritual done by

"YOU'RE PUNJABI? I THOUGHT YOU WERE FROM PAKISTAN."

farmers to celebrate the coming of spring. Of course, bhangra has evolved into many different styles and uses today, but it remains a piece of culture that all Punjabis can identify with, no matter their religion.

Likewise, the most popular Punjabi celebration is Basant, a festival that originated as marking the arrival of spring, but today is more commercialized and representative of the strong cultural vibe that runs through the province. During Basant, men, women and children all over Punjab dress up in colorful clothing, compete in kite flying and indulge in authentic music and food. This celebration does not specifically hold to just Pakistan or India; instead, it is something that all Punjabis can relate to because Basant was celebrated by everyone's ancestors. Even after the partition divided the area on the basis of religion, this celebration transcended that division and continues to be celebrated by thousands every year. The only difference today is that Basant is celebrated in an exclusive manner within each country rather than as an overarching and unifying holiday.

This list of similarities can easily go on, but it makes one begin to question: with so much in common between the Pakistan and India sides of Punjab, why is there an ideological disconnect and lack of unity amongst Punjabis?

The partition between the two countries did not occur that long ago, nor did it happen peacefully. The initial reaction to the partition, which forced millions of people to change homes and divided families, was to unify on a political basis by country. From my interactions with both Pakistanis and Indians, I can honestly say that in one generation, we have seemed to easily forget how much Punjab had in common because we chose to let go of our rich Punjabi culture.

As tempting as it is to get caught up in politics, we must remember that the differences are artificial and politically based, whereas the underlying similarities date back to centuries ago and can prevail if we chose to let go of any political animosity. Luckily, even though recent events have brought the Pakistan-India tension to the eye of the public, we have come a long ways

in accepting one another. We are entering a new era of more open minded thinking.

I am confident that we will see a revival of a time where people can be comfortable with their own faith and religion while also allowing themselves to partake in the complete richness of their cultural experience.

I am confident, that with awareness, Pakistani Punjabis like myself will no longer have to defend their identity.



[RADIO STATION] hardboiled mix

5 Asian American artists / musicians
to check out for this month!
compiled by davin chang



DEERHOOF

Headquarters: San Francisco, CA
Genre: Indie-Pop, Noise Rock
Latest Release: Offend Maggie
Check them out if you like: Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Dealership
Hear them at: myspace.com/deerhoof



DUSTY RHODES AND THE RIVER BAND

Headquarters: Fullerton, CA
Genre: Folk, Rock, Progressive
Upcoming Release: Palace and Stage
Check them out if you like: The Decemberists, The Band
Hear them at: myspace.com/dustyrhodes



SERIOUSLY

Headquarters: Orange County, CA
Genre: Pop, Rock
Latest Release: Seriously EP
Check them out if you like: Daphne Loves Derby, Goo Goo Dolls
Hear them at: myspace.com/seriouslytheband



ENON

Headquarters: Philadelphia, PA
Genre: Alternative Rock
Latest Release: Grass Geysers... Carbon Clouds
Check them out if you like: Tokyo Police Club, Pidgeon
Hear them at: myspace.com/enonmusic



ASOBI SEKSU

Headquarters: Brooklyn, NY
Genre: Shoegaze, Indie-Pop
Latest Release: Hush
Check them out if you like: My Bloody Valentine, Love Like Fire
Hear them at: myspace.com/asobiseksu

hardboiled says goodbye to RICHARD AOKI

Dear hardboiled,

On March 15, 2009, we lost one of our greatest warriors.

Richard Aoki (1938-2009) dedicated his life to our community as a field marshal in the Black Panther Party, founding member of the Asian American Political Alliance, leader in the twLF, coordinator of the first Asian American Studies Program at UC Berkeley, counselor, teacher, fighter, warrior, inspiration, hero, and true servant of the people. Because of Mr. Aoki and others like him, we have an awareness of APA identity and APA struggle on this campus--an awareness that came from the passion and activism of students. However, as students today we still have an obligation to fight for what is needed, as Mr. Aoki reminds us of when he says:

"Can students alone take over state power? I think so, but it rarely happens. But they can raise a lot of hell. University students are the bellwether of society. They are the future."

And so I ask you this: Have you been raising a lot of hell?

I don't know about you, but I've sure seen a lot of things to raise hell about recently— Rampant budget cuts, without student input, that affect our languages, our cultures, our area studies. Fees that have increased 97% in the last seven years. 97%. That's sure as hell not okay with me. A recall election because of

an alleged hate crime. Come on, hate crimes? How degenerate has this campus become? Not to mention biased and narrow Daily Cal coverage of said recall election. And still, a campus that is actually not that diverse, contrary to what the lamppost banners of smiling faces wish to portray.

Forty years after Mr. Aoki donned his black beret, the fight remains the same. As students and as people of color and allies, we're still fighting for the same thing — self-determination and a meaningful and relevant education. We're fighting to keep the university and the administration in check, because this is our university and sometimes we forget that while change is necessary we must always fight for the change we want.

Mr. Aoki and all of the fighters who came before us have taught us this.

Don't get me wrong — I'm not asking you to raise hell in any violent way. I'm simply asking you to read this and then the rest of **hardboiled**, and then do whatever else you need to do to educate yourself. And then look around, and question what's going on and decide for yourself if you're happy with the state of your campus and your community. And if you're not, then do something about it — join an organization (join **hardboiled!**), attend an event, voice your opinion, even just vote in the ASUC elections! I'm know I'm

going to do all of the above, and more, because I've been looking around, and I'm sure as hell not satisfied with what I see. **It is time to raise some hell.**

It's time to raise hell because we deserve the student services, extracurriculars, clubs, organizations, sports, and resources we want. We deserve to determine what courses we want offered, and what departments we want funded. We deserve the right to know where our money is going, and we sure as hell deserve more than a simple 15 units a semester for our \$25,000 a year. We all deserve the right to shape this university into something that belongs to all of us, where we cannot only learn about economics or biology or political science, but where we can learn to be leaders, constantly examining and exploring our identities and our future. We deserve whatever the hell we want, because it's our money. It's our money, our education, our university. We're the bellwether of society, the future. And together, we can raise a lot of hell. Watch us.

In solidarity,
Annie Kim Noguchi

