

hardboiled

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN NEWSMAGAZINE

8.2

Hmong Search For a Homeland
Service Workers Struggle at CAL
Injustices Against Muslim Chaplain Yee
The OC's Bleaching Effect
Queer People of Color

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hardboiled 8.2

eight point two.

"They're only 34%"
"Who are they?"
"We are..."
"the least likely..."
To Vote

The most significant detail about Berkeley's recent APIA "Rock the Vote" movement was the spankin new letter added to our beloved acronym. Where did that come from?! Born on democratic soil and the land of fifty stars (not five) gives me the right to vote *and* an extra "A" tacked on to my category of choice. Yeahhh 4.0!

Oh if politics were that easy. The fight against apathy is still going strong, both on our campus and the national front. This time, it's led by Mark Allen, director of a movie trailer calling itself a PSA and featuring all the familiar APIA young actors aged 18-35. Airing on MTV, the network of choice for all young Asians, the ad gives us the usual pathetic numbers and dares us: "you can change that. Choose or lose."

But what attracts Asians most to this ad in particular (because Justin Timberlake wouldn't have the same effect), are the computer graphic backdrops, kung-fu fighting, and anime-esque crying females that glorify Asian cinema in the United States. Of course this would trigger any red-blooded Asian male to pause Naruto and haul ass to the nearest APIA registration table because Kelly Hu said so. Egad, what were they thinking?

Aside from being portrayed as a sultry and kick butt Asian American female on TV, the most alluring aspects of Rock the Vote are the trends. Stats can lie, but unfortunately this campus does not. As a substantial number of Asian Americans at the university which blazed the phrase "free speech" we are a sad, pathetic lot when it comes to the world beyond our bubble. The very least time-consuming route of activism we could possibly do is fill out a form and push buttons on a computer. But, you ask, why bother?

At the presidential level, California is pretty much decided, unless Orange County enforces a ban on abortions and consequently overpopulates. My backup plan is simply to cancel out my dad's vote with my own. But electoral votes aside, there are officials at the state and local level and propositions that shovel our money around. It's a few more buttons, time thumbing through literature and, gasp, maybe reading the newspaper before you stand in line at the polls. But you are one of thousands on this campus and nationwide who collectively have a huge voice. If the collective Asian American population voted against the recall, Gov. Schwarzenegger wouldn't be leaving messages on my machine. You are a citizen, and you drive, walk, eat, and study in this city. You pay energy bills, tuition, medical insurance, and taxes. (Or maybe your parents, but four years goes by fast). Are you willing to let other people decide how to spend your money, fix your city, and manage your school? Sure, "they already do", but this isn't about just you. It's about all of you.

But if you still need an academic reason to get out there and be heard, boning up on current events really floors those grad school interviewers and you can always ask for extra credit for an "I Voted" sticker.

tina pattaratornkosohn
hb story editor

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ANSWERING THE DEMAND FOR ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

by donna ho

Only rarely do we see Asian American history taught in the elementary to high school curriculum. U.S. History barely glosses over the experience of Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans, not to mention those of Filipinos, South Asians, and Southeast Asians. Growing up in San Francisco and being surrounded by such a large community of Asian Americans, it was obvious what the history books lacked. If you were lucky, you would see a paragraph. If not, then maybe a few sentences. We are left with a skewed perspective of the history of the United States and a curriculum that the school boards deem important. In an increasingly diverse country, this can become problematic. It is imperative to understand the histories of not only the various ethnic groups that have contributed to the development of the United States, but also to recognize the diversity in the API communities.

In recent years, the API community has had the second largest population growth, producing a trend of increasing interest and demand for Asian American Studies across the nation. However, the fight for recognition in the academic world has not been an easy one. The Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), a multiracial coalition formed in the 60s, involved students and activists who took an active role in the fight for diversity in education and demanded an Ethnic Studies department in the university. As a result, San Francisco State and UC Berkeley became the first to have the Ethnic Studies programs, which now house Asian American Studies, Chicano Studies, Ethnic Studies, and Native American Studies. The students fundamentally reshaped higher education through these strikes and soon many other schools followed their example. However, over the period of three decades, the administration was on the verge of cutting programs, funding, and resources. Therefore, a new twLF was formed in 1999 and in the spirit of the original twLF, they organized another strike due to the budget cuts in the Ethnic Studies department, demanding for a multicultural center, eight new spaces for ethnic studies faculty, a mural space to celebrate Ethnic Studies, and much needed funding for the department.

It has been five years since the 1999 strikes, and the multicultural center has yet to be opened. The proposed location, Heller Lounge in the MLK building on campus, will replace the temporary multicultural center at the Cesar Chavez Student Center. The funding of the multicultural center has still not been negotiated beyond the \$126,000 for renovation, but the cost to keep the center running, will definitely be more. The demand for a diverse education and the struggles of the twLF, which led to the formation of the Asian American Studies programs are an ongoing battle. Currently the funding for the Ethnic Studies department is not enough for the programs to continue for very long. However, as of now, Asian American Studies still has a lot to offer its students. The curriculum has remained steady and strong with the devoted passion of professors and lecturers.

One of the courses that is usually offered at least once a year is Asian American Studies 20A, *the* gateway to all the upper division Asian American Studies classes here at Cal. The History of Asians in the United States is an introductory course that is a *must*. This class will lead you on a historical tour of the comparative experiences of Asian Americans, from immigration, to labor and settlement patterns. Analysis is also through the Asian American perspective and will also touch upon topics such as the WWII experiences, the different waves of immigration, media portrayal of Asian Americans, the model minority myth, stereotypes, and other concerns that Asian Americans faced from 1848 to the present.

The Asian American Studies R2A and R2B series can help fulfill Reading and Composition requirements. Asian American Studies R2A introduces close textual analysis of literary, political, social, and psychological perception represented in Asian American literature and requires students to write in an academic standpoint. Asian American Studies R2B, on the other hand, is a comparison and analysis of different literary works of African American, Asian American, Chicano, and Native American writers.

Upper division courses offer a more in depth focus into the Asian American experience, from a specific history, to gender, film, literature, technology and even sports. With a closer look at the different ethnic groups in the API community, students are able to distinguish and learn about the heterogeneity among the API community. Listed below are descriptions of upper division courses that are offered this spring. Various other upper division courses are also offered during the Fall, so students have a wide array of classes they can take.

(181) Chinese American Literature

This course analyzes literary representations of contemporary and/or historical experiences of Chinese Americans; genre, formal, and stylistic features; definition of cultural identity and development of literary tradition. Primarily English-language works, some translations from Chinese.

(183) Korean American Literature

Critical readings of major Korean American literary work, including autobiography and personal memoir, autobiographical fiction, poetry, short stories and novel, with attention to conditions surrounding the production and consumption of these writings.

(150) Gender and Generation in Asian American Families

This course examines the influence of cultural legacy, ethnic background, immigration history, community structure, class and economic status, and racism on gender and generational relations in the Asian American family.



Prof. Elaine Kim

(125) Contemporary Issues of Southeast Asian Refugees in US

This course will introduce students to the socio-cultural, economic, educational, and political issues facing Southeast Asian refugees in the U.S. While the course focus is on the Asian American experience, references will be made to the pre-migration experiences and histories of the Southeast Asian refugee groups. The processes and problems in the formulation of refugee programs and services in the U.S. also will be addressed in their implications for refugee resettlement and adaptation experience. Emphasis will be placed on comparative analyses of the Southeast Asian refugee communities.

(127) South Asian American Historical and Contemporary Issues

This course examines immigration and social history of South Asian Americans from the early 20th century to present, discussing the development of South Asian American communities within the social, political and economic contexts of South Asia and the U.S.

(165) Research Methodologies in Asian American Communities

This course offers different approaches to research in the Asian American community, with emphasis on the San Francisco Bay Area. Problems of research design, measurement, and data collection, processing, and analysis will be considered.



Prof. Michael Omi

(171) Asian Americans in Film and Video

This course introduces students to films and videos by and about Asian Americans; presents an overview of the development of the Asian American media arts field in relation to current cultural theories and American film history and theory.

(190) Seminars on Advanced Topics in Asian American Studies

Lec 1: Chinese Americans in Science and Technology. Limit 30.

Lec 2: Exploring Sport in the Asian Am. Experience. Limit 30.

Lec 3: Mapping Diaspora: Southeast Asia in National, International and Transnational Contexts.

(121) Chinese American History

This course covers Chinese American history from 1848 to present, discussing influence of traditional values, Eastern and Western; patterns of immigration and settlement; labor history; the influence of public policy, foreign and domestic, on the Chinese individual and community.

(123) Korean American History

This course covers the history of Koreans in America from 1876 to the present, discussing comparative immigration and settlement patterns; labor and socio-economic life; political activities; community organization; and issues related to the contemporary population influx.



Prof. Ronald Takaki

Finding a Homeland

by amanda hwang



The identity of two Southeast Asian groups also known as “hilltribe people” has become blurred during their history of continual displacement. The Hmong and Miens are two groups that have constantly endured persecution and exclusion by their Asian neighbors. Their stories are ones of constant flights from China to Southeast Asia and later to the United States as war refugees. The Hmong and the Mien came to America under similar circumstances. Although both groups have been in the United States for more than twenty years they have begun to address common problems of poverty and illiteracy.

The Hmong and Mien have been peoples without a homeland. Often in their history, both groups were like the ancient Israelites who fled to Egypt. They were strangers, wanderers, and outsiders to many people they encountered. Since they lack a land to call their own, the origins of the Hmong and Ew Mien remain a mystery. However, their settlement in China several hundred years ago is certain. These indigenous minority groups found themselves among intense conflicts with the Chinese. Both groups refused to sacrifice their way of life, which led to violent reprisals. In a desperate move to keep their cultural identities, the Hmong and Mien migrated to Indochina. Although both groups are scattered through Southeast Asia, a majority of Hmong and Mien settled in Laos. The Hmong and Mien became inhabitants of the highlands and formed remote villages where they continued their farming traditions.

The migrant peoples lived in Laos as they did in China. Even though they had little contact with people outside of their isolated villages, they were still despised and labeled as “outsiders.” Their lifestyles remained nearly unchanged for about a century and a half until the 1950s and 1960s. Laos became engulfed in the Vietnam War. The United States saw the strategic value of the hilltribes in Laos and recruited them as anticommunist forces. They were trained and equipped as guerrilla soldiers with modern weapons and equipment. Because they knew the mountainous terrain of Laos well, many Hmong and Mien people fought alongside the U.S. against communist forces in Laos. This fateful relationship ultimately led to tragic losses and further dispossession. The losses from the Vietnam War were staggering. Shortly before the end of the war, about one-third of the Laotian-Hmong population perished. Hmong villages turned into battlefields, forcing them to flee once again. The Hmong were left stranded without immediate aid from the United States and they lived in constant fear of the communist armies. Fearing for their lives, many Hmong families hid in the Laotian jungles for years. More than seventy percent of the Mien population fled across the Mekong River into Thailand. After thirty years of continuous fighting and the overwhelming loss of life, the Hmong and Mien people found themselves in the same situations of three generations earlier: repressed and longing for freedom.

After Laos fell to communism in 1975, the Hmong experienced more losses. The Hmong resistance concentrated around Phu Bia Mountain. The communist forces inflicted heavy damage on the Hmong people through chemical warfare and napalm strikes, forcing them into submission. Soviet gunships fired rockets that trailed red or yellow smoke spraying powder over the Hmong villages. Another 50,000 Hmong people perished from the chemical warfare in the Puh Bia region alone. The napalm and chemicals completely destroyed the crops, and caused massive starvation. Hmong rebels were forced to join other Hmong refugees in Thailand. They risked their

lives as they trekked through the borders into Thailand for asylum.

The Hmong and Mien people hoped for safety in Thailand. Even in Thailand, the indigenous groups were excluded. They were isolated in border camps with atrocious living conditions. Given the minimal level of government assistance, many refugees lived in poverty. They were constantly victimized and preyed on in Thailand.

Prior to the Vietnam War era, Southeast Asians communities could hardly be found in the United States. However, between 1975 and 1989, about nine thousand Southeast Asian refugees resettled in the U.S. The U.S. adopted the Immigration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 which allowed a number of volunteer agencies to assist in resettlement. Refugee families were placed with willing sponsors. Once refugees became settled in the United States, they were eligible to become sponsors themselves.

Ethnic enclaves began forming in accordance to where the clan leaders resided. As a result of family reunification, sponsors, and voluntary agencies, Hmong capitals formed in St. Paul, Minnesota and Fresno, California and Mien capitals established in Sacramento and Oakland, California and Seattle, Washington. Outside of these regions, many are unaware of the Hmong and Mien communities.

The majority of the Hmong and Mien people in the U.S. still have difficulty in climbing up the economic and social ladder. Their situation is also compounded illiteracy. Because many families live below the poverty line, sixty to seventy percent depend on some type of public aid as their primary income. Extended families often live under one roof. Since they were accustomed to an agrarian lifestyle, their adjustment to the American way of life has been very challenging.

Although the war refugees have been in America for about 2 decades, their progress in the U.S. remains slow. Ying Lo, a sophomore from Sacramento, partially credits the sluggish pace to culture. “We have many different waves of immigrants coming in. The parents’ way of thinking holds people back, and a lot of people are caught up in old ways of thinking.” Their expectations for familial relations and dating customs contrast with American culture. They emphasize communal values over individual values. Children are expected to take care of their parents, making educational progress extremely difficult.

Despite the obstacles, Lo boasts about the 30 Hmong students in the entire student body on campus. “UC Berkeley is getting more and more Hmong students each year.” Lo says she rarely felt underrepresented because she grew up in a neighborhood heavily populated by Hmong and Miens. In fact, it wasn’t until she attended UC Berkeley that she felt underrepresented. As a freshman and even now, she finds herself having to explain her ethnicity, because there is little mention of the Hmong community in American history or even in Asian American history.

Ton Saechao, a sophomore from Merced, agrees. “We’re very underrepresented. Only the people that grew up with you know what Mien is.” Saechao vaguely remembers living in the refugee camps. She recollects the harsh living conditions. “Just imagine sleeping on dirt floor, building houses out of bamboo sticks. Just imagine living next to livestock.” Despite the low living standards in the United States, incomes and living conditions are higher than they ever were in Southeast Asia.

To enhance recognition and awareness, Saechao and Lo are actively involved in a campus student organization called Laotian American Student Representatives. LASR is a club for Laotian, Hmong, and Mien students aimed at addressing the needs of their communities. This year’s theme for LASR is “Establishing your Cultural Identity.” Saechao says that the club wants to do various activities like visiting temples and watching documentaries about their histories. However, she is disappointed at the slow progress and aims to gain recognition. “It’s so hard because we don’t have the members. To know that we exist is a big thing.”

PROPOSITION BREAKDOWN

by hugo ta



Proposition 1A Protection of Local Government Revenues

A YES on this proposition means the state could not reduce local sales tax rates or alter the method of allocation, shift property taxes from local governments to schools or community colleges, and decrease VLF (Vehicle License Fee) revenues without providing replacement funding.

A NO on this proposition would not affect the state’s current authority over local government finances.

Proposition 59 Public Records, Open Meetings

A YES on this proposition would give Californians the constitutional right of access to governmental information.

A NO on this proposition would not affect the state’s existing law on accessing information.

Proposition 60 Election Rights of Political Parties

A YES on this proposition would allow the top vote-getter from each party in a state primary election to advance to the general election.

A NO on this proposition would add no new statutes regarding state primary elections.

Proposition 60A Surplus Property

A YES on this proposition would require the state to use any revenue from the sale of surplus property to accelerate the repayment of some existing bonds.

A NO on this proposition would not accelerate repayment of some existing bonds by sale of surplus property.

Proposition 61 Children’s Hospital Projects. Grant Program

A YES on this proposition would allow the state to sell \$750 million in general obligation bonds for the construction, expansion, remodeling, renovation, furnishing, equipping, financing, or refinancing of children’s hospitals.

A NO on this proposition means the state would not sell \$750 million in general obligation bonds proposed for the above purposes.

Proposition 62 Elections. Primaries

A YES on this proposition means that there would only be one primary and that the top two vote-getters from that primary would run against each other regardless of their party affiliation.

A NO on this proposition would allow voters to continue to receive primary election ballots based on political party identification.

Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Expansion, Funding. Tax on Personal Incomes above \$1 Million

A YES on this proposition would enact a surcharge on state personal income taxes for taxpayers with annual taxable incomes of more than \$1 million to finance expansion of county mental health programs.

A NO on this proposition means funding for county mental health programs would continue to depend on the Legislature and Governor.

Proposition 64 Limit on Private Enforcement of Unfair Business Competition Laws

A YES on this proposition would allow no one, except for the Attorney General and local public prosecutors, to bring a lawsuit for unfair competition unless the person has suffered injury and lost money or property.

A NO on this proposition would allow a person to bring a lawsuit under the unfair competition law without having suffered injury and lost money or property.

Proposition 65 Local Government Funds, Revenues. State Mandates

A YES on this proposition would change the state constitution to require voter approval for any reduction in money to local governments from sales taxes, vehicle license fees or property taxes.

A NO on this proposition means the state would continue to make changes in local government finances without voter approval at a state wide election.

Proposition 66 Limitation on the “Three Strikes” Law. Sex Crime. Punishment

A YES on this proposition would amend the current “Three Strikes” law to require that the second and third strike offense to be a serious or violent felony, instead of any felony, in order for the longer sentences under the “Three Strikes” law to apply.

A NO on this proposition means the current “Three Strikes” law would remain in effect.

Proposition 67 Emergency Medical Services. Funding. Telephone surcharge

A YES on this proposition would require the state to impose a 3 percent emergency telephone surcharge on bills for calls made within the state. This revenue would be used to provide additional funds to reimburse physicians and hospitals for uncompensated emergency and trauma care and to fund other specified programs.

A NO on this proposition means the telephone surcharge would be limited to 0.75 percent, and additional funding to reimburse physicians and hospitals for the aforementioned reasons would continue to depend largely upon action by the Legislature and Governor.

Proposition 68 Non-Tribal Commercial Gambling Expansion. Tribal Gaming Compact Amendments. Revenues, Tax Exemptions

A YES on this proposition would authorize slot machines at 16 racetracks and card rooms, unless all Indian tribes with existing tribal-state gambling compacts agree to certain terms within 90 days. Either way, local governments throughout the state would receive new gambling revenues.

A NO on this proposition would not authorize slot machines at the 16 racetracks and card rooms.

Proposition 69 DNA Samples. Collection. Database. Funding

A YES on this proposition would allow the state to expand its DNA collection to contain all convicted felons and some convicted nonfelons. Criminal penalties would increase to fund this expansion.

A NO on this proposition means DNA samples would only be required from persons convicted of serious felony offenses. Criminal penalties would not increase.

Proposition 70 Tribal Gaming Compacts. Exclusive Gaming Rights. Contributions to State

A YES on this proposition means Indian tribes entering any tribal-state gambling compact would make payments to the state based on their gambling income. These compacts would expire in 99 years and place no limits on the types or numbers of casino games.

A NO on this proposition means Indian tribes would continue to be subjected to existing tribal-state gambling compacts, which require various types of payment to the state. Existing compacts would last 26 more years and place some limits on the types or numbers of casino games.

Proposition 71 Stem Cell Research. Funding. Bonds

A YES on this proposition would allow the state to establish a new medical research institute and authorize the issuance of \$3 million in state general obligation bonds to provide funding for stem cell research.

A NO on this proposition means funding for stem cell research would depend on the Legislature, Governor and other private entities.

A couple of weeks ago, guest speaker Peter Tadao Gee, a former hardboiler himself, made me think twice about my knowledge of Asian American history. It was a Wednesday evening in 85 Evans where fellow hardboilers had gathered for our weekly meeting. Peter started the meeting with a game in which each of us picked a date that was important for us. I had simply chosen my birthday; it was the only thing I could think of at the time. However, the rest of the hardboilers chose much more meaningful dates and events such as their first Christmas celebrated in the United States and their first eye opening experiences.

With these dates and others, we made a timeline that chronicled not just our own special dates, but critical events and legislations that have impacted Asian Americans, from the past to the present. What I had assumed to be a simple date game of “what-year-was-the-Chinese-Exclusion-Act” was actually a revelation in understanding the emergence of Asian Americans and their trials and tribulations in the United States. Perhaps, this was my eye opener.

I easily picked up the obvious ones: 1882, Chinese Exclusion Act; 1982, Vincent Chin murder case; 1992 Rodney King verdict and the Los Angeles riots. But then again, I realized that I had only learned about these issues a year ago, and it wasn't through my high school social science courses that these events and legislations had been instilled in my head. It was through my own interest, my own time and effort actively researching a history that affects my life every single day, which had provided what brief history I knew about Asian Americans. But there was still so much that I didn't know, so much that I yearned to know.

As a Berkeley student, I was used to overlooking the fact that Asian American Studies classes were relatively available. It seemed natural that these courses were accessible and on hand—after all, wasn't I going to a school that had a large percentage of students that classified themselves as being of Asian descent? I could even call myself a

FIGHTING A NEVERENDING BATTLE

by pauline sze

little ungrateful and a little unappreciative of the fact that I was given the opportunity to take these classes. I certainly hadn't given a thought to the plight that had occurred for these classes to even exist.

It was only less than half a century ago, from 1968 to 1969, that the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) was formed. Made up of African American, Native American, Asian American and Chicano students from San Francisco State University (SFSU) and UC Berkeley, these student groups of color formed an alliance with one another in an attempt to vocalize their point to the maximum efficiency: an Ethnic Studies department where Asian American, African American, Native American and Chicano Studies must be established. *ColorLines* editor Bob Wing and TWLF participant states that, “Activists of color saw Ethnic Studies as part of an attempt to transform the racist educational system from the ground up.”

According to Professor Harvey Dong, “Strike tactics involved informational picketing, blocking of campus entrances, mass rallies, and teach-ins.” Also common during the year of TWLF included arrests and police brutality against the students actively participating in this demonstration. At one point, even troops from the National Guard stationed themselves on the UC Berkeley campus. After the tear gas stopped and negotiations were made, Berkeley (and SFSU) found their campuses with an Ethnic Studies Department.

My lack of posed a burning had not decided Berkeley, would the opportunity or even major so pivotal to my And the answer is know. And for me, and sad revela-

However, changing. Slowly programs like and the like have the hundreds, reaching various

university campuses across the nation. What does this mean for the API community? It means our voices are being heard, it means more and more students are able to embrace a history that had probably barely been touched upon in their high school education.

Just this past September, two universities have opened up Asian American Studies as a major for its students: Michigan State and University of Virginia. According to The State News on September 2, 2004, Michigan State University's associate professor of anthropology, Andrea Louie, stated that, “The specialization focuses on issues arising from experiences of immigration and living as a minority in the U.S.”

Likewise, after almost a decade of petitioning for an Asian American Studies program, University of Virginia voted unanimously to create such a program. Applause certainly goes out to these schools, but the issue remains—hasn't it been long enough? We need these programs at our schools; they're essential to the understanding of what shapes our thoughts, feelings and ideas.

While some schools have only recently begun to embrace an Ethnic Studies type major, especially in regards to Asian American Studies, other university campuses all over the nation are struggling to keep these programs alive and well funded. We are in what seems like a never-ending struggle to legitimize the importance and necessity of the Ethnic Studies Department, which represents Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies, and Native American Studies. How can something so potent to students be under constant attack?

Just five years ago at Berkeley, in 1999 (only 30 years after the actual formation of Ethnic Studies), the Ethnic Studies Department faced threats of extinction. Barrows Hall was occupied; hunger strikes and protests filled the Berkeley campus as many were arrested for expressing their desire to have an Ethnic Studies department. After twenty-four days of striking and protesting, negotiations were made with former Chancellor Berdahl. According to Adam Ritscher of Youth In Action, “Berdahl backed down and agreed to funding, faculty, and office space for the Ethnic Studies department. The hunger strike was then ended and victory was proclaimed.”

But, whether or not the victory was going to be long-lasting was an entirely different issue. Ethnic Studies continuously faces various perils that may shut it down. This isn't what TWLF students fought for; this isn't why so many have dedicated their time and energy just to see a fundamental department wither away. The University as well as the general public needs to wake up—we won't ever give up on our Ethnic Studies.

It's important to note that African American Studies is actually a separate department from Ethnic Studies. What seemed like a combined effort from the TWLF, somehow, managed to create a separate entity for the sole purpose of African American Studies. It's legitimate. But why are Native American, Chicano, and Asian American Studies lumped together to form one Ethnic Studies department? What constitutes the legitimacy of that? The answer certainly isn't simple or clear but instead, it raises more issues with Ethnic Studies.

However, there is still hope. With the spread of Asian American Studies across university campuses, one can envision that soon, rather than later, more schools will follow this trend, set out by the brave TWLF students in the '60s to create Ethnic Studies (which include Asian American Studies) programs. Otherwise, this generation may need to form its own coalition demanding our rights to learn about our history.

knowledge question: If I to come to UC I still have had to learn about in a history own identity? clearly, I don't that's a scary tion.

times may be but surely, Ethnic Studies expanded by subsequently college and

Service Workers Struggle

just to get by at uc berkeley

by kristina ordanza

The University of California at Berkeley attracts many university employees with its academic prestige, its diverse student body, and its rich history of social movements for progressive and liberal values. Service workers, most of whom are minority and immigrant workers, are drawn to this university with hopes of opportunities to engage in cultural, intellectual, and academic aspects of the UC Berkeley community. They are food service workers, custodians, parking attendants, shuttle drivers, and buildings and grounds maintenance workers, drawn to the prospect of job stability and good benefit packages for their families. But in the past two years, despite increases in the cost of living in the Bay Area, the university has not increased their wages. In fact, over the past decade, many workers have received less than a 2% raise. Instead of feeling included as part of the campus community of students, professors, and administrators, many service workers "feel invisible" on this campus.

On Friday afternoon, October 15th, 2004, more than 200 people rallied on Sproul Plaza in support of low wage service workers at UC Berkeley. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) organized the rally in collaboration with other students, faculty, and community members in support of university service staff. AFSCME represents over 7,000 UC service and clerical workers across fourteen campuses, which includes all nine UC campuses and their five affiliate medical centers. The rally took place in the midst of a standstill in wage negotiations between university management and UC Berkeley service workers. For the past two years, service workers have not received a pay increase, and once again this year the university claims there are insufficient funds for wage increases. With inflation up 6.95% over the past three years, workers have taken a considerable pay cut. Three buses full of UC service workers from the eight other UC campuses and five medical centers came in support of UC Berkeley service workers to demand an end to corporatization and poverty wages at our university.

More than 7,000 UC service workers across California have been working without a contract since June 30, 2004, when the last fiscal

year's contract expired. The UC management has since rejected the UC Berkeley workers' proposals to improve working conditions through a wage increase that meets Berkeley's living wage. The workers demand a fair increase in wages, an increase that *California Budget Project* (CBP) reports have shown are necessary for living in the Bay Area. The City of Berkeley's living wage as of October 2003 is \$10.76/hour. CBP reports that 66% of UC Berkeley food service workers, and 20% of all service workers make less than this per hour.

In 2001, along with a team of student volunteers and academic advisors, three UC Berkeley postdoctoral graduate students directed an extensive study in which they investigated wage, health and safety issues, as well as service/clerical worker relations with university supervisors. The thirty-one page report, titled *Berkeley's Betrayal*, was published earlier this year. Much of the urgency of the rally was inspired from the results of this study, which documents persistent problems concerning unjust stagnant wages, lack of opportunities for promotion, and lack of communication between top university administrators and service workers on the Berkeley campus as found through sixty-three in-depth interviews with UC Berkeley employees.

Through the report, the grad students aim to educate the rest of the Berkeley community of the poor wages and working conditions on campus, mobilize union and student support for the service workers to gain leverage in negotiations with university administrators, and hold the University accountable for improving university employee's wages and working conditions. The report also details issues of inadequate transportation and parking space for workers, and personal stories of families struggling to survive on meager wages. The authors report an inadequate system of checks and balances for workers to evaluate their supervisors and ensure that supervisors are not exploiting workers or abusing authority.

Michael Fonseca, a worker and a union member of the Coalition of University Employees (CUE), expressed how important this rally was for the current negotiations with university management. "What you're seeing here is a lot of militancy, which is good because we need to be strong and persistent in making these demands to the UC administration. Rallies are a strong step, but in the

end, the only way to get what we want will be to strike." He urged the need for unity with all seven unions on campus, and stressed, "this is a worker struggle, and we're all workers here fighting for the same thing." Fonseca clarified that this rally was to give support to AFSCME workers on campus, but he hoped that all the other unions that represent various workers on campus unite.

The most common concerns expressed among the people I interviewed at the rally were the needs for increased wages that at least meet Berkeley's living wage, more respect from their supervisors, and the need for more university support in providing opportunities for their own children's higher education.

Three of the five people I talked with were parents who were deeply concerned with their ability to finance higher education for their children. Jaime, a Filipino building maintenance worker with UC Berkeley for the past 11 years, described how difficult it has been for his family because of his low wages. He expressed how AFSCME has provided him with much support and how the rally itself stirs hope for him. Eduardo, a Chicano worker from UC San Diego for the past 10 years as a senior custodian, commented, "We are people with low wages and we just want respect and a decent standard of living. It's hard on everyone's family. They have kids who want to come to the UCs, but it's just too expensive." He continues, "They [university supervisors and administrators] don't answer our questions when we want answers, and eventually they just ignore us. We're trying to make a point here that we're not playing around."

Deborah, an African-American woman with the Patient Care Technicians (PCT) from UC San Francisco, filled me in on the background situation of the negotiations and why the rally was organized. She said that PCT was able to get a raise from their university, but her colleagues and she were compelled to come to Berkeley because university management has repeatedly told workers here that they have no money to provide a raise for service workers. She argues that it has not been an issue of lack of funds, but rather an issue of the university's indifference to the well-being of families of dedicated service workers. Wages for service workers have remained the same over the past two years, while salaries of top university administrators have increased significantly. In June 2003, UC

Senior Vice President Joseph Mullin received a \$70,000 annual raise. Earlier this year, UC Provost Marci Greenwood was granted a \$111,000 raise and our new chancellor, Chancellor Robert Birgeneau received a \$75,000 raise over former Chancellor Robert Berdahl.

After the rally, as hundreds of supporters from other UC campuses walked back to their buses, I talked to two women from UCLA. Marta, a South American woman who has been working at UCLA for over a

decade, explained how she struggled to pay her daughter's way through a UC education. When her daughter enrolled at this campus, Marta had hoped that her daughter would be eligible for partial financial waivers since Marta had at that point already been a university employee for several years. Marta said that as a university employee, her dependents were eligible for financial waivers. To Marta's dismay, the university never provided this financial assistance to pay her daughter's college education. Dina, an Armenian woman whose daughter currently attends another UC, detailed a similar story of her efforts to finance her daughter's higher education. She explained, "They [the university] rose parking fees so now we have to pay more parking, they rose health care, even the complementary/discounted meals we used to get from the cafeteria were cut. Now we have to pay as much as the students for food. They rose everything except for the payroll!"

In *Berkeley's Betrayal*, Gretchen Purser, Amy Schalet, and Ofer Sharone document personal testimonies of workers who have dedicated years to this campus, whose stories greatly mirror the experiences of the individuals I talked to at the rally. Through their extensive interviews with service workers, they raise awareness of the increasingly debilitating wage and working conditions on our campus, but they also remind us that these poor conditions are not exclusive to UC Berkeley nor are they exclusive to the service workers themselves. This concerns all of us in this campus community, especially us students, as we similarly face financial pressures of increasing student fees. We must hold this university administration accountable and demand a safe workplace for workers, respect towards the individuals who dedicate years to this university, and at minimum, a living wage that will sustain a household as well as provide opportunities for workers' children to pursue higher education.

The names of the interviewees in this article have been changed for purposes of confidentiality. For more information on Berkeley's Betrayal, please visit: www.berkeleysbetrayal.org



"....A senior custodian, commented, "We are people with low wages and we just want respect and a decent standard of living. It's hard on everyone's family. They have kids who want to come to the UCs, but it's just too expensive."

history repeats itself:

parallels between the wen ho lee & chaplain yee case

by angie guan

Philosopher George Santayana once said that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Perhaps, then, on September 10, 2003, when Capt. James J. Yee was arrested, America had forgotten the story of Dr. Wen Ho Lee. If this is the unfortunate case, then a retelling seems to be in order.

Wen Ho Lee was born in Taiwan in 1939. He became an American citizen in 1974. Years later, with a doctorate from Texas A & M University, he began work as a nuclear scientist at a laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. He had been working at this site for more than twenty years when he was arrested for suspected espionage in December of 1999. Dr. Lee was slapped with fifty-nine counts of ‘mishandling classified information.’ If found guilty, he faced thirty life sentences. All this was the result of Dr. Lee’s having downloaded CIA information onto diskettes (which were later misplaced) at his internet-accessible, home computer.

Around this time, a similar case involving former CIA director, John Deutch, had been underway. Deutch, a white male, had similarly misplaced and transferred restricted material onto an internet-linked computer. He received the proverbial slap on the wrist, was never arrested, and was later given a presidential pardon. In contrast, Dr. Lee had been chained and sent to solitary confinement for nine months. Even after federal Judge James A. Parker cleared him of all charges, Lee was never given an executive apology. A petition demanding presidential pardon for Lee (which you can happily add your John Hancock to at <http://www.petitiononline.com/wenholee/>) continues to circulate. Why the differences in the two cases?

Federal authorities justified the stringent security measures, saying that they were enforced to ensure that Lee would not be airlifted out of the country in a “Ninja-style commando raid,” writes Eileen Welsome of Denver’s *Westwood* newspaper. Japanese ninjas coming to the aid of a Taiwanese nuclear scientist? Hm...despite the idea’s gross, historical inaccuracy and telling racism, I’m sure Hollywood would still see the movie-magic potential in it. Lee had also been arrested in a period of tension-filled China-U.S. relations. As Helen Zia points out in her article in *Asian Americans on War and Peace*, it was a time when a survey conducted by the Committee of 100 showed that 68% of Americans felt “negative about Chinese Americans and Asian Americans.” The seeds of a second Cold War seemed to be taking root. Perhaps to maintain some sort of tactical edge, the United States had been supplying Taiwan, China’s rogue nation, with missiles. Tentative to begin with, the relationship between the two countries worsened as an American spy plane collided with a Chinese fighter plane in the skies over Hainan, China. These circumstances are not excuses for the mistreatment Dr. Lee. They do, however, offer possible explanations as to why officials were so quick to jump to conclusions and racially profile him. Unfortunately, Dr. Lee is not the first Asian American to be racially profiled, and even more disheartening is the fact that he is not the last.

9/11 dispeled the ideal of an “invincible America.” The fear that bloomed like an atomic mushroom reincarnated itself into an explosion of racially-motivated violence against Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians in the United States. In Arizona, Balbir Singh Sodhi, an Indian gas station owner, is shot. His



gunman then tries to shoot a Lebanese-American at another gas station. In Huntington, New York, a seventy-five-year-old man attempts to run over a Pakistani woman. He then follows her into a shopping mall and, in display of perhaps the worst pick-up line ever, threatens to kill her for “destroying [his] country.” In Manhattan, a Sikh is jumped by three white males yelling “terrorist.” In Texas, a mosque is firebombed and defaced. The same fate befalls another in Washington. These are a few of the hate crimes reported three days after the attacks in the *New York Times* alone. It was in this post-9/11 atmosphere that Captain James J. Yee’s life took its terrible turn.

Capt. Yee was a Muslim chaplain, a clergyman attached to the army, who administered to Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees held at Guantanamo Bay. A Chinese-American born in New Jersey, Capt. Yee graduated from West Point in 1990. The chaplain studied Islam for four years in Syria, before converting in 1991. During this time, he met and married a Syrian woman, Huda. Yee, who also goes by “Yusuf,” was then assigned to Guantanamo Bay in September of 2002. A year after this assignment, despite receiving a Joint Service Achievement Medal months earlier, he was arrested in Jacksonville, Florida under suspicion of being a spy.

Capt. Yee had been carrying classified documents that officials believed he shouldn’t have had. These documents included diagrams of the detention center and a list of the detainee’s interrogators. Possession of these documents incited officials to charge Yee with “sedition, aiding the enemy, spying, espionage, and failure to obey a general order,” says the *Washington Times*. While the army had not arrested Colonel Jack Farr of Guntanamo Bay, who had been similarly charged with mishandling classified information, officers manacled Capt. Yee as they did Dr. Lee years earlier. They also blindfolded him before marching him to the Navy brig where he would spend 76 days of solitary confinement. Yee faced multiple death penalties for those charges connected with espionage alone. Capt. Yee must have been one dangerous man if the most powerful military force in the world deemed all this necessary, right?

That’s what army officials believed but could not prove. The charges were eventually dropped due to a lack of evidence. But Army officials weren’t keen on admitting to wrong-doing. To add insult to injury, on the day of his release from confinement, Yee was additionally charged with adultery and having pornography on his army computer. The ad hominem were aimed at shaking support for Yee. So you see, he was a dangerous man...because he may be unfaithful to his wife and looks at porn. Um...wait a second. What was the question again?

I understand that the United States military is here to protect us (me included, fortunately). And I realize that experienced officers do often rely on gut feelings when searching for suspected criminals who compromise our safety. But we have to remember that, sometimes, our initial feelings about people can be based on automatic or unconscious prejudices. The same guiding instincts that steer us away from danger, can also lead us astray in ignorance and hate. When we see the world through distorted and colored lenses, we lose sight of our nobler goals-goals of freedom, equality, and a safer homeland. In this sense, racial profiling, despite the republican rhetoric of a few (like that of Michelle Malkin who spoke at UC Berkeley recently), is neither a fair nor efficient way of attaining security or the American ideals of liberty and equal opportunity.

America is a land built by immigrants. The image of an ‘American’ should reflect its multi-cultural demographic. But, most of the time, we think of blond hair, blue eyes, and aquiline features instead. Oddly enough (or, perhaps, rightly so), Robert Kennedy and Katie Couric come to my mind. Capt. Yee’s Asian descent gave him a face that conflicted with this image and, therefore, branded him an eternal foreigner. Yee’s faith and practice as a Muslim marked him a suspect-able traitor in the eyes of post-9/11 America. Those who pursued his prosecution didn’t see him as a patriotic, American soldier and clergyman. What they saw was a yellow Muslim working with Islamic terrorists. But, as Yee’s parents, Fong and Joseph, asked, “when is a Muslim defined as a spy or a terrorist?” Perhaps, it is in the same place where Asian an is defined as disloyal.

JAPAN’S U.N. AMBITIONS

by dan nguyen

On September 21, 2004, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations to voice Japan’s desire and right to be a permanent member of the UN Security Council. This was Japan’s latest desperate attempt to obtain a permanent seat along with other UN members including India, Germany, and Brazil who currently are not on the security council. If Japan wins a bid to become a permanent member of the Security Council, this significant role in the international community would allow them to better protect their own interests. However, there is a long journey ahead for Japan if they want to fulfill their dreams because of dissenting opinions from the international community about their bid.

For those who don’t understand the importance of the Security Council and the significance of being a permanent member, here we go: The Security Council’s aim is to increase security and peace in the world by providing military assistances from members of the UN when necessary. There are currently five permanent members of the UN Security Council, which includes China, France, the Russian Federation, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Along with the five permanent members, there are ten rotating members of the council who each have a term of two years. In order to pass a resolution, nine out of the fifteen members must approve the resolution. What makes the permanent members so powerful is that all five must approve the resolution in order for it to pass. This is one of the many reasons why George W. Bush was not able to get UN approval for a military invasion of Iraq.

In Koizumi’s speech to the UN in September, he was arguing for both Japan’s place in the Security Council as a temporary member and also as a permanent member. He explains how Japan has the resources to aid the UN and how Japan has always used these resources to be actively involved in all of the UN’s endeavors. He utilizes Japan’s role in Afghanistan and Iraq to exemplify these points. Prime Minister Koizumi says in his speech to the UN.

“In Iraq, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions, Japan has joined the international efforts to assist in the Iraqi people’s own struggle towards a democratic and prosperous nation. Japan has been cooperating with the Iraqi people to help them to improve their daily life and rebuild the foundation of their public life. The humanitarian and reconstruction activities of Japan’s Self-Defense Forces and its financial assistance of 5 billion dollars are working in tandem to that end. In order to promote international solidarity, Japan will host the Third Meeting of the Donors’ Committee of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq next month.”

“In Afghanistan, Japan has taken the lead in assisting the national reconstruction efforts from the very beginning. Japan hosted the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan in January 2002. Japan has been actively promoting Afghan efforts for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR).”

Furthermore, he mentions how Japan is providing 21 million dollars of humanitarian aid in Darfur, a region in Sudan where Muslim militants are killing and driving Black Africans out of Suden in order to ethnically cleanse Sudan of non-Muslims. Japan is also providing help to Southeast Asian countries to develop a stable and growing economy.

Koizumi explains that the UN must change in order to become stronger and meet the challenges of a new world. Of course, he specifically refers to the Security Council and that it must expand its permanent and non-permanent membership to countries whom are willing and have sufficient resources to address the challenges it faces. Expanding the Security Council would be a better reflection on the international community.

There are concerns from the other UN members about Japan’s ability to take on the task as a permanent member. One of these concerns is a line in the Japanese, American-Imposed Constitution, a constitution that was created after World War II with the help of the United States. This line might interfere in Japan’s role as permanent member of the Security Council because, in Article 9 of the Constitution, it basically states that Japan may not use any military action against any foreign entity unless there is threat or an attack on their country. This is a problem because permanent members are obliged to provide military assistance to any resolution passed by the Security Council even if the threat is not directed toward your own country; however, Japan’s Constitution does not allow them this liberty, which will interfere with their responsibility as a permanent member. This interference can even be seen today in Japan’s involvement in Iraq, as Japanese troops have barely engaged in any hostile combat in such a volatile area.

Another concern is that if Japan did make onto the Security Council, it might cause tension between Japan and other Asian countries. This tension is derived from two sources. Some Asian countries still have some sort of animosity towards Japan for its occupation before and during World War II. Because Japan needs a majority of the UN members to amend the UN charter they would have difficulty gaining some Asian votes. Another source comes from China as a permanent member on the Security Council; their equity on the UN level might strain the tenuous Sino-Japanese relationship. If Japan or China vetos the other’s bill, it might be viewed as an attack out of person interest. This can potentially cause hostility in the East Asian region.

Though Japan has not gained a permanent seat on the Security Council, the speech presented by Koizumi was affective in getting Japan a seat as rotating member, which was announced in early October. However, this probably will not silence Japan’s plea to become a permanent member, and there will probably be more efforts to change the current state of the Security Council by Japan and other members seeking a permanent seat.



the overwhelming whiteness of television's orange county

by veronica louie

Honestly, how many of you watch soap opera primetime television and enjoy it? For many people it is a guilty pleasure as they tune in every Thursday night to watch a new episode of *The OC*. Don't be ashamed. It is okay to admit that you are one of the millions that have to know if Ryan and Marissa will get back together even though Theresa may be pregnant with Ryan's baby or if Seth will come back from sailing the Pacific Ocean and stay with Summer. You don't have to hide the fact that you are completely and hopelessly obsessed with this type of television. You can quit putting up the visage to your friends that you are one of the few who will not sell out to mainstream television.

For those of you who are not familiar with *The OC*, it is about a guy, who has the bad boy image working for him, from Chino (Ryan). He is invited to live with a rich family in Orange County (The Cohens) because his brother is in jail and his mother abandoned him. He sticks out like a sore thumb, and quickly develops a crush on one of the most popular girls in school who already has a boyfriend. And I'm sure you can tell what the rest of the show is about- DRAMA.

Last year when I lived in the dorms, my whole floor would get together every Wednesday night to watch *The OC* together as a kind of "OC Party." Sounds pathetic, right? But seriously, we would all meet in the common room and watch in silence, and if anyone tried to talk during the show we would all shush them. During the commercials we would recap and give commentary on what just happened; the attention we gave to this show could have qualified it a decal class.

Laguna Beach is another show that focuses on the high school lives of upper class white teens. This show is not as appealing just because it is part reality and rather petty. The basic concept is that two girls are fighting over one guy and one day, in the not too distant future, they are going to realize that they both do not need him.

But until recently I never realized that for some people shows like *The OC* and *Laguna Beach* are really only about rich white people's lives, who have nothing better to do but have parties every week and throw around cash on things that they do not really need. It has become apparent to me that there aren't any people of color on these shows. *The OC* obviously takes place in Orange County, more specifically Newport Beach, and not Laguna Beach, and not everyone there is white. Asians and Latinos make up a good percentage of the population, 14% and 30 % respectively, but none of them are portrayed in the show. They are not even given supporting roles. So where are all of the people of color and why are they underrepresented?

Asian Americans make up 3% of the Newport population and 2% of the Laguna Beach population. These figures may sound small, but it would not hurt to show a face of color every now. Even if people of color were given temporary roles or guest appearances it would add to the diversity of the show. For those of you who are die hard fans, Teresa is a rather inaccurate portrayal of diversity. Her real ethnicity is South Asian/Indian, but in the show she plays a Latina. And, of course, she plays the stereotype of an undereducated pregnant single mother in Chino. Even though she is a South Asian in real life her both her race and ethnicity is masked by the character she plays.

Cities like Buena Park, Irvine, and Westminster have Asian American populations of 14.5%, 18%, and 23%. Westminster is a predominant Asian American community, and houses the largest concentration of Vietnamese Americans in the United States. It is famous for Little Saigon where there are shops, restaurants, and markets catering to Asian shoppers.

One could argue that these are only T.V. shows and it is not really important if they represent people as they truly are. It is all fictional anyway, and if you are not happy with what the show has to offer then don't watch it. But do the people who produce these shows that are highly influential to younger generations have a responsibility to the public to have some kind of credibility? Some people would argue that those who produce television for the general public are accountable for providing quality television. Young kids and teens that are highly impressionable watch and learn from these prime time television shows. And although it may not make as much of a difference for older audiences, the way young people view society is affected. Besides excluding people of color, the shows also tend to facilitate the notion that upper class fun is reserved only for white people.

So why are some people obsessed with shows like *The OC* and *Laguna Beach*? Here is a theory that may not apply to everyone, but it makes sense. People enjoy drama and gossip. It is interesting and fun to talk about as long as the drama is not happening to you. With shows like this, the audience is able to engage in the events of other people's lives from the outside. Ryan may be torn between staying with Marissa in Orange County where he is able to escape from his past, but we do not have to deal with his dilemma. We merely watch from the sidelines and are able to comment on what he should and should not do. But we all know that if the same thing were to happen to us in our own lives, we would be just as lost as Ryan is.

It also helps that the characters on these shows are relatable. Seth is a quirky kind of person who does not really fit in but is still cute in his own way. Ryan is an outsider who has the bad boy image working for him. Everyone can relate to these types of people, and even if they are not those types of people themselves they know a friend who is. Since the individuality of these characters

are so relatable to real people's lives, bringing in roles for people of color would further enhance the quality of the shows. I think it would draw in a bigger audience because people of color would not feel alienated; it would make a good show better. But even though these shows may not be representative of the demographics in their respective towns, does it mean we should stop watching these shows all together? I guess that is up to the individual.

coolest asian ever?

Japan's design hero heads to the US.

by kris capello

Chad Hugo better watch his back, Pharell Williams might have a new favorite Asian. No, he can't make a new beat for Britney Federline, but there might be a couple million dollars for the Pharell coffers if it all works according to plan. Who is this new partner in crime? None other than Nigo, Japanese designer extraordinaire and secretary general of Japanese street fashion.

If the name doesn't ring a bell, you probably aren't from Japan or don't give a damn about fashion (and really, who has time for fashion?). So for the uninitiated, Nigo is the founder and head designer of A Bathing Ape, Japan's number 1 streetwear brand. A Bathing Ape (also known as "BAPE") is ridiculously popular and has catapulted Nigo to a prominent place in the Japanese consciousness. His 30 million dollar house and menagerie of too fast automobiles rivals those of anything you might see on MTV's showcase of celebrity wealth, *Cribs*.

From shirts to shoes to umbrellas to condoms, the BAPE brand has established cool in Japan. From the outside, nothing from the line may be strikingly groundbreaking. The conception and execution of BAPE designs often may seem downright boring, leading many to attribute A Bathing Ape's success primarily to Nigo's marketing strategy. Like United States skater brand Supreme, BAPE, if anything, is exclusive. Everything released is a limited edition, sold in a select few stores around the world, otherwise only available on eBay at extremely inflated prices. By keeping availability low, Nigo avoids oversaturation and keeps availability to the privileged can sport BAPE. Unlike the brands that may be considered "street" or "urban" in the US, like Roca Wear, Phat Farm, Mecca, and Ecko, BAPE relies on mass demand, not mass supply. Basic economic theory keeps the money flowing and continues to elevate Nigo's status, funding his ventures into restaurants, hotels, and salons. With other major brands like Pepsi and Adidas asking to do collaborations, Nigo's over ten year old venture looks to be more than a quickly dying trend.

And we all know that what is cool in Japan inevitably makes its way to the US (Tamagotchis, anyone?) Anytime you see the Beastie Boys, for example, one of them is wearing BAPE shoes. And now that the Pharell half of the Neptunes is on board, Nigo may be increasingly visible stateside.

The two recently hosted a release for Ice Cream, their collaborative shoe line. Manufactured by Reebok and commercially linked to the Billionaire Boys Club, a clothing collection, Ice Creams are normal sneakers, similar to Adidas superstars. The first series of shoes come in three colorways with dollar signs, diamonds, or money rolls screenprinted on them. Most retailers are offering them for a cool \$300.

Like Junya Watanabe's Comme Des Garcons (let the namedropping continue!), Nigo and BAPE have become worldwide forces for the image-obsessed and privileged. What Nigo represents too, though, is a new transnational conception of coolness. Fashion magazines and websites like superfuture.com all speak to this international culture of consumption that worships powerful international brands.

In 2004, Nigo was named an Asian role model in *TimeAsia*'s Hero issue, adding to the designer's accolades. Will his influence extend to the United States? Will legions of fans accept waiting in our long lines to get the chance to purchase a t-shirt with a picture of a monkey on it? Will they go hunting for an unmarked store guarded by an inscrutable doorman? With plans for increased BAPE presence in the US, fashion nerds everywhere wait to see if the Nigo mystique will be able to rile up an American following.



by jeremy chen

Pow! *Drunken Master*. Ha-daa! *Snake In the Eagle's Shadows*. Hai-ya! *Drunken Master 2*! Kapow, kapow! *Police Story*! Kick-to-nuts! *Rumble In the Bronx*. Uh oh... *The Tuxedo*. Ugh gah! *Around the World In 80 Days*... Whether or not the API community likes it, Jackie Chan is our ambassador to the rest of America. His successes are our successes, and his failures are our failures. Just think back to 1998, and the time you had trouble hearing what someone was saying. "Pardon me. I did not quite catch what you just said my good man. The boisterous traffic behind us muffled our intellectually engaging conversation." Which would be responded with the aggravating *Rush Hour* quote, "Can yooo un-der-stand the words that are com-ing out of my mouth?"

Jackie Chan has redeemed himself, sort of. Chan was recently quoted in an interview in a Singapore newspaper, *The Straits Times*, saying:

I've been seeking a breakthrough for many years. I've always wanted to change, to become a real actor, like Robert De Niro. I don't want to be seen as an action hero anymore. I mean, how long can I continue doing that? Of course, I know what everyone expects when they go to watch a Jackie Chan movie. You can't even do one stunt less. But now I just want to try something different.

Ever since *Rumble In the Bronx* was dubbed, shipped, and screened to American audiences in 1995, the Asian martial arts genre has never looked back. America had never seen so many Asian faces in a single film since Bruce Lee karate chopped his way through a thousand inscrutable Asian henchmen in *Enter the Dragon*. Jackie Chan re-opened the doors to American cinema after Lee's death, for actions stars such as Chow Yun Fat, Jet Li, and Sammo Hung. However these are all actors who started their careers in Asia.

It is primarily because of their Asian background that they were accepted to star in leading roles in American films. However it is not solely because of their extraordinary martial arts skills and abilities that they are cast in American films. Rather, it is because they maintain the undying image of Asians as foreign.

America has never been presented with Asians beyond Asian faces playing characters from foreign countries. These martial arts action actors are representative of all Asians in their movies. What I mean by this is that Asian Americans are viewed as Asians from Asia. Asian Americans are not Americans to America because of the images of "Asian-ness" portrayed by these imported actors.

This all leads back to Jackie Chan being the ambassador of the API community, and how he speaks for the community through his films. When he acts, it is with martial arts that he expresses himself, which implies a shallow character who is often confined to a simple premise. Chan's films send a message to Hollywood that Asian and API actors are only capable of success through the martial arts genre.

Asian and API actors have seldomly showcased their skills through any lead characters that have real, raw, and deep emotions, in any recent American films. Why is it that white actors in the 2003 film *Lost In Translation*, have to fly all the way to Japan to tell a story about emotions of loneliness, isolation, self-reflection and self-discovery, when those emotions are equally prevalent amongst non-white, non-English speaking, naturalized immigrants in white American communities? The answer is simple, white people identify with other white people, but to be fair Asian Americans tend to identify with other Asian Americans.

But why then are Asian Americans being identified as Asians from Asia when many Asian Americans do not solely identify with an Asian culture? Again the answer is simple, Asian Americans look just like Asian actors in the films that America watches. Therefore all APIs must all be karate experts.

People identify and relate to what is familiar to them, and for the average American moviegoer, white and black actors are the most represented faces. In fact, people most of the time expect the lead actor to be white. The diversity of roles for white actors is limitless, but the diversity of roles for APIs are limited because anything beyond the martial arts action genre is something

seldomly seen, and is overshadowed by the familiar image of Asian actors as martial artists.

Martial arts actions films are what sell in America, and until an actor with an Asian face is given the chance to take on a Robert De Niro-like role, there will continue to be limited diversity in roles for Asians and APIs in American films. Its like the old saying goes, "If it ain't broken, don't fix it."

It will be very difficult for Chan to break away from his typecast role as a goofy cop who kicks butt, because his films continue to make money. If Chan truly wants to expand his horizons, he will have to accept that there is no chance in hell that he can ever be like Robert de Niro in an American film, which he has recognized by stating:

"It's very hard to find a script which suits me [Jackie Chan] in Hollywood. I've rejected so many projects because I didn't like the scripts. There was this one where I have to play a cop who takes care of seven kids, sort of like The Sound of Music. It's all the same: cop from Hong Kong, cop from China. Jet Li, Chow Yun Fat, and I face the same problem in Hollywood. Our roles are so limited. Even if they gave me a script like Forrest Gump or Saving Private Ryan, I couldn't do that. My English is not good enough."

The martial arts genre continues to make a good amount of money at the box office. There is little incentive for Hollywood to change. On the other hand, Asian and API actors have never been given the opportunity to play lead characters in dramas without having to swing a sword or kill someone to show that they can make successful films in the drama genre. It is a Catch-22 for API actors.

The question then becomes, "How does the community show that it can tackle dramatic roles and still be a successful money-maker?" For starters, we can do it by preventing Jackie Chan from trying to impersonate Robert De Niro, and support him in doing quality drama films in Hong Kong. The API actors should have also have a shot at the dramatic roles in America.

As the ambassador for the Asian and API community to Hollywood, Jackie Chan's words need strength and legitimacy. Towards the end of his interview, the reporter asked Chan:

Your last few Hollywood movies - Around The World In 80 Days, The Medallion, and Shanghai Knights - were not major hits. What went wrong? So are you done with Hollywood?

No, I'm doing Rush Hour III next year. I went to Hollywood because they invited me, not because I wanted to go there. Making movies in the United States gives me a sense of achievement, but there is no sense of superiority. Yes, I get treated like a king over there, but I'm not happy. I get frustrated when I see them doing things the wrong way, but I can't say anything. In Hong Kong, I treat myself like shit, but I'm in full control. Still, we need the Hollywood experience because the American market is so much bigger.

If Chan is going to make statements that he needs to diversify his roles as an actor, there is not much value to his words if he continues to make action films such as the upcoming *Rush Hour* sequel. What he says will resonate within the American film industry, but what he does will keep money from the pockets of Hollywood bigwigs. If he had turned down his lucrative role in *Rush Hour 3* for the reasons he told the *Straits Times*, then the Asian and API acting communities would be making some progress. He is our ambassador whether we like it or not. There is a need for representation beyond the martial arts genre, and representation that reflects the entire Asian Pacific Islander American community and its emerging East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander American actors.

Chan has opened the door for API actors, now let API actors walk through the door, to open a new door for Asian actors in American films. Dramatic roles provide the needed forum where Asian Pacific Islander Americans can show that Asians are Americans. The API community are not all cops from Hong Kong and China or Kung Fu masters out for revenge. There is more to the API community than Shaolin death grips and spinning karate kicks, and it is the API community's burden to express it.

speaking out:

by king i. choi

struggles among queer people of color

In the mass-produced gay culture that we see in our contemporary media, gay men are often defined as middle-class, well-groomed, flamboyant white men. For those of you who have been brainwashed by *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* or *Will and Grace*, this particular definition might ring true. The experiences of people of color in the gay community are often overlooked.

Mass media, such as television, movies, and magazines, have often promoted a predominant white-standardization of the gay community. How often do you see a gay person of color allowed to tell his side of the story, of how it would be like to grow up gay and Asian? Beneath all the glitz and glamour of the media's portrayal of gay culture, there lie hidden stories of gay people of color and their struggles to cope with their dual-identities in a society that already discriminates them for the color of their skin. Until these stories are told, gay people of color will forever be placed beneath the white veil and will continue to be annoyed by not only mass media but also by society at large. Well, with that said, here is my story...

Growing up Chinese and gay in the United States is not an easy thing to do; this dual identity not only means breaking social-cultural norms within the Chinese community, but also struggling with racial discrimination and homophobia within society. I live in a household that constantly reminds me that gay people are mentally ill and socially incorrect. I live within a society that constantly reminds me of how I do not belong because of my skin color. I live within a society that generally rejects homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle. None of these struggles are ever experienced separately; living day in and day out worrying about what my parents would think of me, about how people would judge me in one way or another, and, at the same time, about how I need to keep in line with my Chinese upbringing. However, nothing could have prepared me for what I experienced one fateful day, the day that my world came crashing down on me.

On October 27, 2000, on the front steps of Thurgood Marshall Academic High School, my father was waiting to drive me home just like any other day. However, he had a disgruntled look about him and appeared red in the face as he held on to a crumpled sheet of paper. Earlier that day, while rummaging through my personal belongings, he came across a note I wrote about a fellow classmate; the only problem being—according to my dad—that the classmate I secretly admired was a boy. He handed me that very note and told me to read it out loud for him. As I uttered the last words on the sheet of paper, my dad anxiously asked, “What does this mean?”

My father had always instilled in me the belief I should never sacrifice my own individuality for anybody, for any reason what so ever. “You are your own person; never let anybody tell you otherwise,” those words drilled into me, always there to help me make my best, and—at times—

“Beneath all the glitz and glamour of the media’s portrayal of gay culture, there lie hidden stories of gay people of color and their struggles to cope with their dual-identities in a society that already discriminates them for the color of their skin.”

worst, decisions.

Believing that my father would always support whatever I felt was right, I let the words slip out of my lips as naturally as air would while one breathes, “I’m gay.” Growing more red and upset, my dad grabbed me by the arm and hoped to have a discussion with the friends he knew personally. He refused to believe I was telling the truth. All I thought about as we walked around the school grounds was, “what did I do wrong?” Upon finding the people my dad was searching for, what ended up happening was anything but a discussion. My dad pulled out male friends of mine and began to shout out outrageous comments along the lines of “Hey, you know my son’s gay? He probably wants to have sex with you” and “How can a Chinese son of mine be gay? You probably turned him gay.”

This unexpected turn of events took me by surprise, and after five minutes I decided that I had had enough and walked away from my dad. I was not necessarily mad about his reaction but rather I was confused about his lack of recognition of what I had achieved, of how I garnered the strength and courage to always be myself regardless of the consequences. My dad, seeing me walk away, childishly declared that he would lie down on the floor and sleep until I would return to tell him to the truth. Little did he understand that I had nothing but the truth to tell.

My dad started made snoring sounds, but I continued to take steps away from where he laid. My tenth grade science teacher emerged from his classroom to find my dad lying in front of his door. Mr. Lance shouted, “Are you okay, sir?” Oblivious to what was happening, I turned around and said, “Don’t mind him; he’s my dad and he’s just being stupid.”

How I regret those words. Mr. Lance called me over and I reluctantly strolled back over to my dad. What I saw then continues to haunt me to this very day: my dad was excreting foam and mucus from his mouth as he was grabbing at his chest. What I heard as snores were actually sounds of suffocation; he was having a massive heart attack.

The things that happened next have become quite a blur; the paramedics came, those who remained at school gathered on the second floor, I was pulled into a classroom for consolation as the paramedics worked to save my dad, my mom and aunt arrived, a paramedic came in and told me that my dad might not have a chance to live, and all I could think about was what I had done wrong. Was I the one to blame for his heart attack? Was I at fault for telling him the truth? Should I have waited? Three days later, as multiple tests determined the person whom I knew as my father had ceased to exist within his body; my mom legally passed down to me, as the only child of the family, the duty to decide whether it was best to continue life-support for my dad. Knowing that I had already caused my dad enough suffering, I knew the best thing to do was to end his physical pain, to let him pass on quietly.

However, what I knew was best did not make my decision any easier to make. I eventually made a decision and, today, I live in constant doubt of whether or not I had done the right thing. Fearing that I would also lose my mom, I have yet to tell her the truth of the conversation between my dad

and I. My mom has pretty much set up the rest of my life for me in order to give her happiness: take in a wife at 30 and bear her grandchildren at 35. My heart twists at the thought of how I may not be able to provide her with the things that would make her happy.

During my occasional visits to the cemetery, there is one thing I know is for sure: I can look at his tombstone and proudly believe that I have grown into the man that my dad had always taught me to be, regardless of the consequences. Yet, the cost of my actions will forever remind me of the price that people have to pay in order to achieve and to reaffirm one’s individuality and identity. Not a single day goes by without blame and doubt. Not a single night is slept without the replay of that day’s events in my mind. Even though it was not my intention to do so, I was the one who walked away from him. The guilt lives on but I hope my dad’s words will continue to bring me strength. Through the ups and downs in the days to come, I can only wish that my dad can forgive me and continue to walk by my side to help me make the best choices in life, even though they can end up looking like the worst.

distilled life: ruminations on the byron kim exhibit

by junette sheen

I’m not usually one to poop the party, to bastardize a cliché, but Halloween is just one holiday I have always dreaded. As a first grader, I dressed up as a fish. My costume consisted of two neon green cardboard cutouts stapled together and hung by my suspenders. I was holding a “fishing rod” of chopstick and string, but strangest of all, the fishing line I held was connected to my fish’s mouth. I was fishing myself! My sister tried to save me from the trauma of Halloween, For example, the one year my mother actually *purchased* a costume, my sister embellished the nurse uniform with red construction paper blood as well as a witch’s hat and Dracula cape. I wasn’t quite sure what to say I was, perhaps a witch-nurse? After my loving family members exhausted their imaginations, I begged for a new costume. I joined hundreds and thousands of Korean American girls across the States, forced to dress in a *hanbok*, the Korean traditional costume, year after year.

If you think about it, when people asked me what I was, the only way I could answer was as, “For Halloween, I am Korean. But in reality I am Korean American. Just because I’m wearing this doesn’t mean I’m not American...” You can imagine how the rest of that conversation died, with my feeble explanations. I know many other second generation children of immigrants have faced parallel but equally awkward experiences.

Byron Kim would surely have diarrhea of the paintbrush with these memories of mine. Byron Kim, whose artwork is currently on exhibition at the Berkeley Art Museum, focuses on color. Kim seems to be mesmerized with color and memory. Kim explained some of his thought processes behind his artwork at his lecture on September 16th. One painting was strictly of the colors of the color memory he and his family members had of his first house in Wallingford, Connecticut, and the piece “1961” is a set of three sky-colored paintings that are the exact size of the windows of the house his family lived in when he was born. Kim’s family and life experiences seem to have the biggest effect on his artwork. Yes, he is Korean American, as his blaringly obvious last name announces, but I was impressed with how he discounts yet at the same time concedes to that fact.

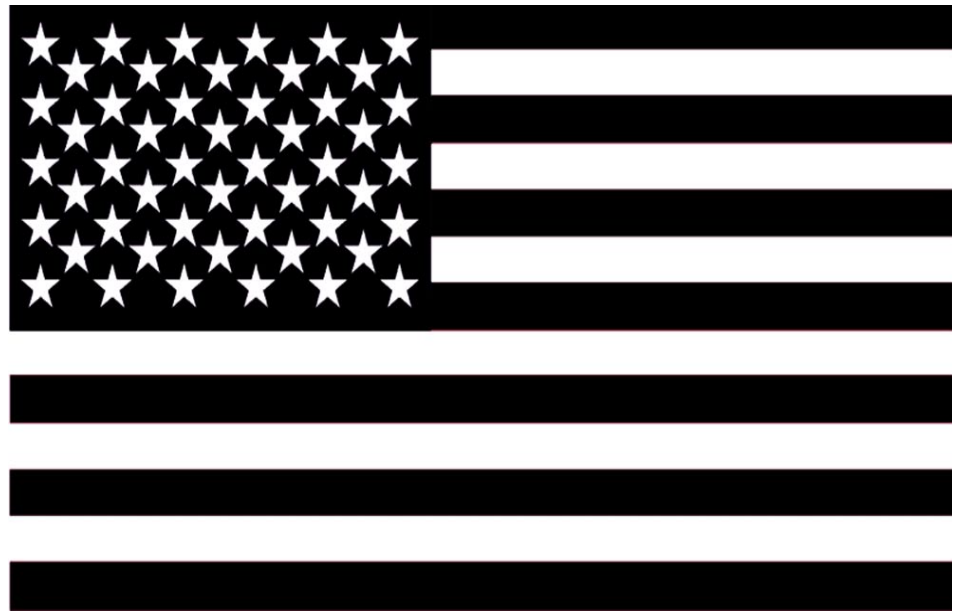
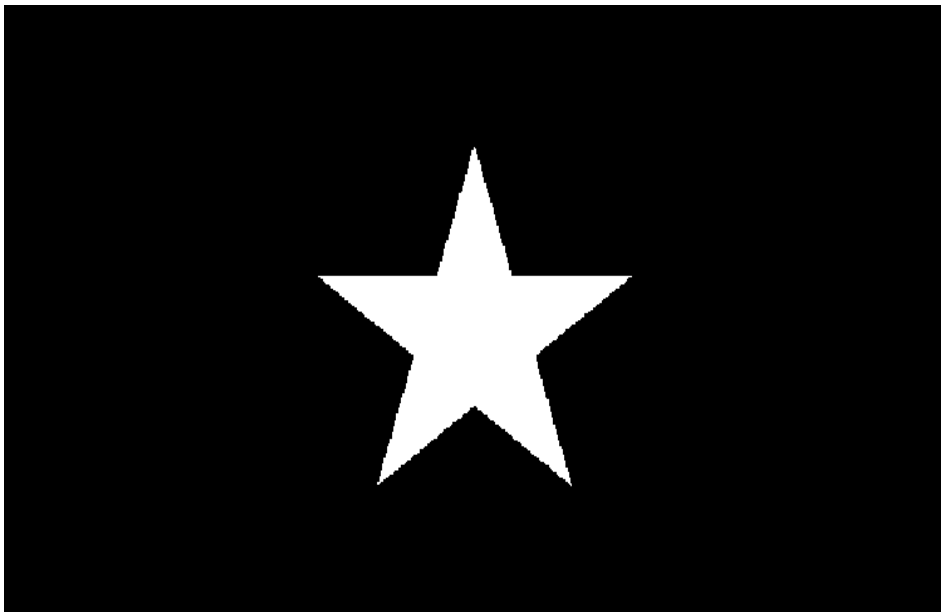
The “Mom” paintings are the results of his imagining the color of his mother’s skin. Doubtless, without his mom’s Asian skin tone, his painting would be nothing like the way it is now, but that is not why Kim painted them. In fact, Kim is as influenced by Martha Stewart, a name he mentioned at least twice in his lecture. The balance that Kim has between being race conscious and being colorblind is seen in his first famous work, “Synecdoche.” Though intimidating to pronounce, Synecdoche tackles its subject matter in a truly impressive manner. Synecdoche is composed of many small squares of different shades of real people’s skin color. Through his art, Kim hints at the issues of community and race.

Though I attended the lecture, expecting a revolutionary KA artist who would paint renditions of an American flag merged with a Korean flag onto everything, I was pleasantly shocked to discover that Byron Kim is simply an artist, and his work is damn interesting. It interests me because like me, he is searching for a real issue, and he wants to find subject matter that is “large.” Yet, his Korean American-ness affects him in little ways, mostly through his family. Just as *Better Luck Tomorrow* was revolutionary because it wasn’t a good movie about Asians, but a good movie *with* Asian actors, Byron Kim’s work isn’t good because he’s an Asian American artist I should support, but because it’s cool art that has meaning.

Many years later, I still refuse to take part in Halloween festivities, but I have partially found an answer to, “What ARE you?” My answer wouldn’t only be about my racial identity, but about my experiences and just who I am. It is great to be socially conscious, and I believe that it’s a part of Byron Kim’s life, just as it is part of yours (after all you ARE reading **hardboiled**), but it is also comforting to know that race is nothing but a color. It shouldn’t define you and shape your whole life.

And, I definitely am Korean American, and not just on Halloween.

View the Byron Kim exhibit at BAM from now until December 12, 2005



A HISTORY OF NEGLECT AND EXPLOITATION: THE LEGACY OF VIETNAM'S "GOLDEN CHILDREN"

by tuan cao

Amerasians, the children of Vietnamese mothers and U.S. soldiers, have had to deal with the legacy of the Vietnam War on multiple levels. They have faced hardship and discrimination in Vietnam, first for being a living reminder of the American presence in Vietnam and the Vietnam War in general, and second, because of intolerant attitudes toward interracial relationships and having children out of wedlock. Amerasians have also faced adversity upon their arrival in the United States because they were not familiar with the language. This barrier, along with their lack of education, job skills, and stable and supportive family, has made it far more difficult for Amerasians to successfully transition into American life.

Additionally, neither the Vietnamese nor the Vietnamese Americans readily accepted Afro Amerasians because of cultural taboos against darker complexions and African features. Again because of the language barrier, young Afro Amerasians initially found it difficult to relate to and be accepted by their African American classmates.

The mothers of Amerasians do not generally fit the stereotype that is often applied to them. Not all of them were prostitutes or bar servers who had casual encounters that left them pregnant. Many of them were well educated, even by Western standards. They worked in Vietnam as shop owners and teachers, hotel clerks and nurses, bank tellers, seamstresses, and interpreters.

In *The Amerasians From Vietnam: A California Study*, Chung Hoang Chuong and Le Van found that the majority of the mothers of Amerasians did have a regular job and were employed in legitimate work, often alongside Americans. Many came from around the countryside to the more populated areas, in search of opportunities, as war had left their rice fields un-farmable. Several women said that they met their American lover or husband while at work.

The average amount of time an American soldier spent with his Vietnamese lover/wife was two years. As one anonymous Vietnamese woman told the USCCMRS, "Bill and I lived together for two year, it was such a happy time! But then one day, just before I delivered our second child, he went away. He never told me he was going... I went to his office but his secretary told me he was gone and would not come back. I felt so terrible!" Less than 12% of the children had any contact with their American fathers after they had left. The men weren't blamed, however. These circumstances were attributed to the war. For these women, their children were all they had to remember the fathers by.

These Amerasian children in Vietnam grew up in a traditional Asian society that scarcely accepted interracial relationships. Marriage to foreigners was considered taboo, especially for women. If a Vietnamese woman married a foreigner, shame fell not only on her but on her extended family as well. The taboo of having a child outside of marriage was strong as well, regardless of how meaningful the relationship was.

Amerasians and their families were also closely linked to the United States, Communist Vietnam's enemy during the war. When Amerasian children resembled their American fathers, they were treated as enemies of the new regime. Amerasian children were often denied educational and employment opportunities. Many of these children were abandoned by their mothers for these reasons. Some of these children grew up in the streets of Ho Chi Minh City while others lived in rural villages or became settlers of the brutal conditions of Vietnam's New Economic Zones. As many as 15,000 of these Amerasian children grew up without fathers.

It took the United States eight years to acknowledge responsibility for Amerasian children left behind. These broken images of Amerasian children with distinct Western features haunted the American public. An outcry broke in America to help these innocent Amerasian children who were being punished for the tragic legacy of America's involvement in the Vietnam War. In 1980, Senator Stewart McKinney addressed the Amerasian issue in Vietnam and advocated for the rights of Amerasians. He called the issue "a national embarrassment" and called on America's patriotic duty to take responsibility for Amerasians (Asian-Nation).

Despite the opposition from the U.S. State Department due to its political discord with the Vietnamese government, the Amerasian Homecoming Act was passed by Congress in 1987 through the sentiments of the American public opinion. The Act allowed Amerasians fathered by U.S. "military servicemen and born in Vietnam after January 1, 1962 and before January 1, 1976" to immigrate to the United States as non-quota immigrants along with their immediate family members.

Discriminated against in their homeland, Amerasians finally felt a sense of hope when the

US Congress passed the Amerasians Homecoming Act in 1987. However, all was not well. They were treated as political pawns between Vietnam and the US. They were exploited as a means of getting to the US. The legislation ended up hurting them in many ways. However, it did rectify their situations somewhat by allowing them to immigrate to the US. They were also given healthcare, English training, and other government assistance. The law was written so as to allow as many Amerasians as possible to leave Vietnam for the US. 25,000 Amerasians arrived in America with 65,000 of their immediate relatives. Though the law was designed to help Amerasians, it was exploited by Vietnamese to take advantage of the US.

In addition, they were granted refugee benefits such as healthcare, English training, and other government funded assistance. Under the Act, the eligibility requirements for Amerasians to leave Vietnam were made lenient to allow as many Amerasians to leave. In the beginning, if the applicant possessed physical implications of being bi-racial such as blue eyes, or blonde hair, he or she should be granted a Visa quite easily. Twenty-five thousand Amerasians had arrived in America with 65,000 of their immediate relatives.

Immediately after the Act was passed, all ostracized Amerasians known to the Vietnamese as "bui doi" or Children of the Dust were heralded as Vietnam's "golden children." The Vietnamese saw the Amerasian Homecoming Act as an opportunity to take advantage of the Amerasians and use them as passports to come to America. Many Vietnamese who once ridiculed the Amerasians, now adopted them into their families and even tried to arrange marriages, hoping for the opportunity to come to America under the Act. Amerasians, once discriminated against, now became a highly sought after commodity.

Human trafficking and fraud became an apparent issue to the United States, and acceptance rates dropped due to the deception possibly involved. It made it much more difficult for Amerasians to obtain Visas. Now, having American physical attributes were no longer adequate. The applicant needed to provide supporting documents such as photos, letters, a marriage or cohabitation certificate issued by Vietnamese authorities. It was well known that invalid documents existed as required because the Vietnamese mothers of Amerasian children often destroyed them for fear of the Communist government. The Amerasian children were lucky to still possess a photo of their American father. Even with all necessary documents, a visa was not guaranteed. As a result, there are still hundreds of legitimate Amerasians who deserve the right to come to America, but may never see that opportunity.

For the fortunate Amerasians who made it to America, it was difficult for them to transition into American society. Although the experiences and success stories differed for all Amerasians, they all shared common struggles and challenges. Most were not prepared to adapt to American society due to significant setbacks. The Amerasians lacked an education, spoke little or no English, and did not possess necessary job skills. As a result, they could not find jobs or took low-level jobs that paid very little. Thus, many lived at poverty level. Beyond economical issues, they faced other challenges including: loneliness, discrimination, poverty, and nostalgia.

Most thought they would belong and be welcomed in their "fatherland" because they looked more like Americans, however discrimination continued to haunt them in America. Amerasians did not fit in with Americans because they grew up instilled with Vietnamese culture and that was all they knew despite their contradictory features. Their physical appearance may be more widely accepted in America, but once their peers realized they did not speak English well, or that they acted very "Asian", the Amerasians were ridiculed and laughed at.

Afro Amerasians probably experienced the worse of situations. They were teased and shunned because they looked African American but acted completely different in culture and did not speak English. Afro Amerasians were also not accepted by their Vietnamese peers because of the rooted prejudice against Blacks in Vietnamese culture. Once again, Amerasians found themselves as the outcasts of society as they were in Vietnam.

With the suffering that innocent Amerasians have endured, lessons should be learned to prevent anymore children to have to face such horrendous experiences. Nations and fathers should take responsibility for their offspring. Innocent children should not have to suffer for tragic conflicts made between nations. As Amerasians grow older and the Vietnam War grows distant in history, let us never forget the stories and experiences of Amerasians to prevent future tragedies to occur.

