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STAFF

MANAGING EDITORS

katherine wang
patricia williams

STORY/COPY EDITORS

patricia williams
priscilla ng

LAYOUT EDITORS

evy peng
valerie tsai

INTERNS

cynthia huang
tracey fung

STAFF

brian zhang
annie huang
sylara marie cruz
tiffany ma
sherry zhang
kevin ma
kitty lui
michelle ma
mark s. lee

GUEST WRITER

sabrina fong

steven yi

nanticha lutt

anam siddiqui

COVER ART

valerie tsai

ABOUT THIS COVER

this issue, we honor the lives that have been lost this year. this issue is dedicated to george shum, a former hardboiled staffer who recently passed away from natural causes, and to deah, yusor, and razan, who lost their lives to violence and hatred. as a publication ourselves, we are appalled at the lack of media coverage surrounding this hate crime. it's not "just a parking dispute," it's a hate crime fueled by islamophobia. it's not "allegedly" when the killer and motive is clear. we stand in solidarity with the muslim community and urge everyone to speak up against the islamophobia in our society and to support muslim americans during this difficult time.

editors' note

I never truly knew what it felt like to lose someone until very recently. This January, a former **hardboiled** member and a close friend of mine passed away of natural causes. He was only twenty, and I remember thinking over and over again that he was much too young, that there was still so much that he wanted to do. His death was so sudden, so incredibly unexpected. It was something that has been (and continues to be) difficult to come to terms with. As someone articulated for me, it was jarring.

Deah, Yusor, and Razan, too, were just our age. Although I never knew them, I can only imagine the grief their family, friends, and community are experiencing. I can also only imagine what Muslim Americans must feel all over the country – how *jarring* it must be not only to grieve the deaths of three lovely people, but also to feel absolutely unsafe in their own country. It makes me incredibly angry to know that we still live in a society where three young people were murdered for their beliefs – or worse, in a society where major news media didn't think it mattered. This issue, we dedicated our spread to the Chapel Hill shooting. It is the first 3-page spread we have ever published, but it only seems fitting given the lack of media coverage that we dedicate as much as we can to this incredibly tragic event.

I had to learn about it on Tumblr, not as the headline of any major news outlet, because it was barely reported those first few days and buried under other headlines. As I recently spoke to our staff, framing is important, and the way mainstream media is framing this issue is telling. It has been especially disillusioning for me – to see the news paint this as a parking dispute and not for what it is, a hate crime fueled by the pervasive Islamophobia in our nation and worldwide.

I first became involved in journalism in high school, and I still remember how I felt after we watched *All the President's Men* in class. It reinforced my belief in journalism as the fourth branch of government, as a forum to speak up and challenge the status quo. I believed in the power of words and the responsibility of journalists to hold their government and their society accountable. It is the reason why I identify so strongly as a journalist and why I joined **hardboiled**. So, seeing journalists fail communities of color again and again – I have no real words to express how angry it makes me. It's enough that tragedies like these occur. It's often too much to know that people choose to ignore them, especially the people who were tasked in shining the light on injustices.

It reminds me why ethnic press is important and why I do what I do. Amid all of this, it gives me hope to see so many people call the media out about their silence and to speak up, just as they have for other violent acts against communities of color that have been brushed aside or misrepresented. That is so important, and I have so much respect for all of you.

best,
kat
managing co-editor

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112 Hearst Gym, MC 4520, University of California Berkeley, CA 94720

hardboiledmagazine@gmail.com

BIG HERO BULLSHIT

by patricia williams

Let me start off by saying this: I'm mixed korean white, I didn't grow up in the Bay Area, but I'm largely based here now, and contrary to what you're about to read, I actually love Big Hero 6. A lot. Genuinely. Really. I do. With that said, let us proceed with this shit-talking movie review.

Big Hero 6 begins by setting the scene in "San Fransokyo", whose name alone makes me a little sick. The whole city exists only as an East Asian mish mash which doesn't reflect Tokyo or any other major East Asian city. In fact, it ends up looking more like San Francisco's Chinatown than anything else, and Chinatown already inhabits a highly exaggerated, tourist-mongering representation of "Chinese architecture" in the first place. The background given to the alternate universe of San Fransokyo presents a history in which the Japanese communities in San Francisco rebuild most of the city after the earthquake. However, if this was the case, why doesn't San Fransokyo actually model itself after traditional Japanese style buildings? The city just plays into the tired trope of picking apart East Asian countries andreassembling them together into a culturally incoherent Frankenstein's monster of interchangeable Asian cultures.

Speaking of interchangeable Asians, the original cast of main heroes are nothing like the ones presented in the movie; not a single original comic book character of Big Hero 6 was unchanged. Fred, Honey Lemon, and Wasabi all changed from originally being Japanese characters to becoming either white or non-Asian people of color. Although some folks may think that Honey Lemon and Wasabi becoming a (white) Latina and a black man respectively may provide for some much needed representation, the erasure of Asian characters completely negates this; representation does not come from erasure, and that'll be a common theme throughout the character analyses of Big Hero 6. Fred's whitewashing becomes particularly painful upon learning that his original character was indigenous Japanese, an ethnic group that already sees persecution in Japan as it is.

Although Gogo Tamago was originally Japanese in the comic, her behind-the-scenes ethnicity (that is, it was only mentioned in supplemental resources connected to the movie and never mentioned in the movie itself) became Korean. As a Korean person, this meaningless switch particularly insults me. For folks who don't know, the history of the relationship between Korea and Japan teems with violence involving Japan's history of imperialism throughout Asia and the Japanese colonization of Korea in the early 1900s. The mindless, inconsiderate switch between being ethnically Japanese and Korean grabs hold of histories of Korean cultural genocide and fucking spits in its face. Gogo's superhero outfit also looks decidedly sexualized with her tight fitting bodysuit and especially in comparison to Honey Lemon's loosely flowing dress. Considering the sexual violence towards Korean women and the hypersexualization of all API women, these choices in her design seem less coincidental and much more intentional (and much more infuriating).

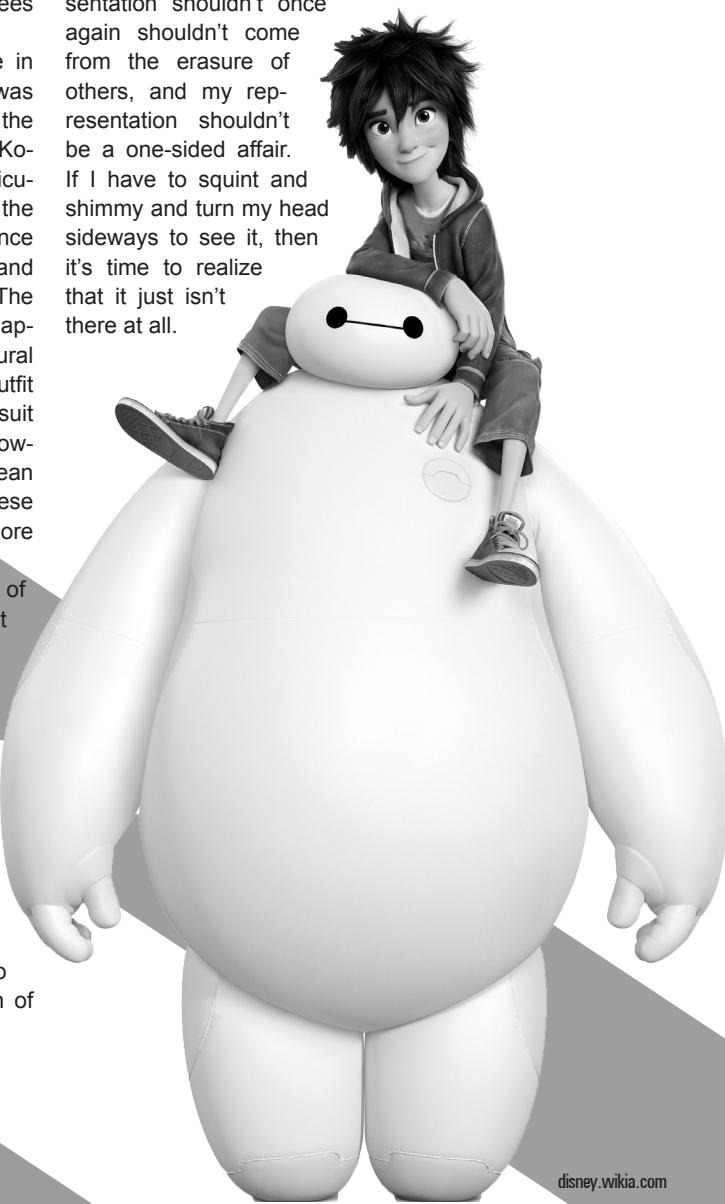
Don't think that Hiro and Tadashi got a pass out of this shit show either. Oh no, god forbid someone got out of this with their original character intact. The choice to make Tadashi and Hiro mixed Japanese-white remains (to me) the most irritating, unexplained, and unnecessary change in the character lineup. In the words of another viewer, "Where is the Asian mom?????" What is the significance of including whitey-model-from-Frozen Aunt Cass? The implication here is that white audiences are rendered completely incapable of feeling emotion or sympathy or empathy for an Asian character, and therefore this character must be mixed white and have no monoracial nonwhite family alive to speak of. Although some folks want to herald Big Hero 6 as some big step towards representation of inclusion of

mixed race people, I think that's bullshit; REPRESENTATION DOES NOT EXIST AT THE COST OF ANOTHER PERSON OF COLOR'S ERASURE. Their being mixed didn't even hold any relevance to their story or their identities; it was just there unexplained, uninvited, and certainly unwanted.

Let's take a step back and actually examine the plot of the movie. Spoiler alert: one character dies in the movie, and it sure as hell isn't one of the whites. Big Hero 6 presents the stories of two opposing revenge arcs: Hiro's and Callaghan's. In both arcs, the main character loses someone close to them. For Hiro, it's his older brother Tadashi, and Callaghan loses his daughter, Abigail. Hiro, as the hero of the story, goes about his stereotypical arc of fall to darkness followed by a return to forgiveness and acceptance. Callaghan goes through an arc of enacting violence upon those he feels wronged him in order to make them pay for his daughter's death. There's just one thing wrong here, however. At the end of the movie, (white) Callaghan's (white) daughter ends up alive. Tadashi, however, is apparently gone forever. What does this teach us as the audience? The correlation is clear; a white man's violence will reward him whatever he wants, but a young boy of color's acceptance and peace gains him nothing. There is no coincidence in Abigail, the white woman, living instead of Tadashi, the Asian man.

There's always so much more I could touch upon when it comes to the ways that Big Hero 6 pisses me off (don't you dare think I missed the rising sun motifs all over the concept art). However, it's more important that I reinstate my intentions on this article; as a mixed race East Asian person, this movie WAS important to me. Honestly! I projected my own narrative onto the blank slate presented by Tadashi and Hiro. But that's just the thing. I had to supplement the entirety of this story in order for me to feel represented and frankly, I shouldn't have to. My representation shouldn't once again shouldn't come from the erasure of others, and my representation shouldn't be a one-sided affair.

If I have to squint and shimmy and turn my head sideways to see it, then it's time to realize that it just isn't there at all.



disney.wikia.com

MAMA ARE WE THERE YET?



by tracey fung

Even months before premiering on primetime, ABC's Fresh Off the Boat had garnered enough immediate attention to overwhelm social media, receiving coverage from many prominent bloggers in the API community.

Finally, on February 4th, the Multicultural Student Development offices, Chican@ Latino Student Development (CLSD), and Asian Pacific American Stu-

dent Development (APASD), in collaboration with Fox Audience Strategy, hosted a campus screening of Fresh Off the Boat's pilot episode, as well as ABC's Cristela and Empire, and facilitated critical discussions on each series. **hardboiled** was invited to speak with several students after the screening to hear what they had to say about seeing a bit of themselves represented in the mainstream.

Hien
FOURTH YEAR
UNDERGRAD

To be really honest with you, I was really surprised. I came in with a pessimistic view of [the show] and I thought it would be very stereotypical in the sense that it could perpetuate really bad Asian American stereotypes. And in some sense, it does. But what I really enjoyed about it was that there was a big resistance against white culture and [shows] what supremacy and white culture looks like, and I think that it's a unique show within that respect. I haven't read the book yet, but I know of Eddie Huang and through his interviews I know that he's a very progressive person, so I like how it's very true to his personality and beliefs – well not too true I guess because he has critiqued [the show] himself.

So, I'm not very fond of the fact that it focuses only on East Asians, but I did like that fact that it covered the racial stereotypes [of APIs] as it's definitely something I felt was very applicable and something I could relate to. I also through the stereotypical dynamics between the Asian kid and Black kid was very interesting and goes much deeper than the show will ever be able to discuss, but I think the relationship between them is very interesting and is very consistent with my own personal experiences and with the papers I've read on the dynamics between East Asian and Southeast Asian communities and black communities.

Sylara
THIRD YEAR
UNDERGRAD

There is this point in the show – the most shining part of the show – when the only Asian kid interacts with the only Black kid in that entire school – and the way that Eddie wears Nas t-shirts and Wu-Tang t-shirts – he gets that kind of cool from blackness in order to kind of rise up in ranks and "get a seat at the table," but the table he's talking about is literally the White table. He does not want to sit at the Black table, not that there is a Black table as there's only one Black student. In the way that he tries to look up to Shaq, look up to Nas, look up to Wu-Tang, in trying to be Black, he's actually being more White. Because you know these White suburban kids from back then, they were all appropriating hip-hop culture, or consuming hip-hop culture. So I think that this was a really rich moment, in terms of "do I sell out or do I build alliances?" And it made me so sad at the end when he basically ditched the Black kid for the White kids. And so there's a point made about bullying, like that's bullying, but I honestly think it's so much more complicated than that because the Black kid called him [Eddie] a "chink" but he also did ditch the Black kid for the White kids, and the Black kid was so jaded to begin with.

John
THIRD YEAR
GRADUATE STUDENT

The pilot episode of Fresh Off the Boat proved to be many things, but perhaps above all, it proved to be imperfect. The ill-portrayed interracial exchange between the sole Black body and sole Asian body in a nearly all-white space left a bad taste in the mouth of most critical viewers, and I suspect that future scenes may prove to be potentially problematic as well.

Yet despite the feelings of ambivalence it left in of many of its viewers,

Fresh Off the Boat does give a fresh look and subversive re-telling of an often overlooked immigrant experience. Many, myself included, have been able to relate strongly to Eddie Huang's negative experiences growing up Asian in a white-dominated space. For me, who, like Eddie, also grew up in Florida in the 1990s in a majority-white neighborhood, it's been a nod and a confirmation that my own experiences, though neatly rewritten, have not been erased.



MAKING SENSE OF CHAPEL HILL

remembering deah, yusor, and razan

interview by katherine wang

On Thursday, February 12, Cal Muslim Student Association (CAL MSA) organized a vigil on the steps of Sproul to honor the lives of Deah Barakat, Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Yusor Mohammad. Deah, Razan, and Yusor were murdered on February 10 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina by their neighbor Craig Stephen Hicks. Deah studied at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry and Razan at North Carolina State University (NCSU), while Yusor had recently graduated from NCSU and planned on attending the dentistry school in the fall. Deah and Yusor married in December and had just begun their newlywed life.

The vigil was attended by hundreds of students and community members from across the Bay and included speeches by the MSU president, the Dean of Students, and the director of the Asian Pacific American Student Development (APASD) Center. The vigil also created a space for individuals to speak about the tragic event.

I spoke to **Unis Barakat**, one of the co-organizers of the vigil and head of the Political Action Committee at Cal MSA.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE PLANNING THE VIGIL?

Planning the vigil was not difficult at all. The MSA Political Action Committee has experience in carrying out large events in a short period of time. I want to emphasize that it is our dedicated community members that made such a large event happen. Many members of our MSA community as well as other allies felt very strongly about the tragic events and were present in the planning meeting on a very short notice. Many of us woke up to the tragic news and became full of emotions and energy that we needed to get out and I think the vigil was a good outlet for that.

MANY PEOPLE AT THE VIGIL HOPED THAT IT WOULD BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF SUCH TRAGEDY. WHAT WERE YOUR PERSONAL HOPES FOR THE VIGIL?

The main goal of the vigil was to honor the lives of the victims of course. A big part of the program however was focused on the individual community members as well. We wanted to make sure that people had an outlet to express how they personally felt about the tragic event. These events were psychologically draining to all of our community members, which is why we made sure people got the chance to share some of the bottled up emotions. During the vigil, we split into groups of 4-5 at one point to discuss these emotions. In essence, the goal of that was to bring people together and let them know that they are not alone. We also had an open-mic portion where people had yet another outlet to express how they felt about the events and what we can do as a community to move forward. Afterall, it is these times of crisis when we all look for each others' support.

WHAT ARE ACTION STEPS THE CAL MUSLIM STUDENT ASSOCIATION (CAL MSA) IS TAKING AFTER THE VIGIL?

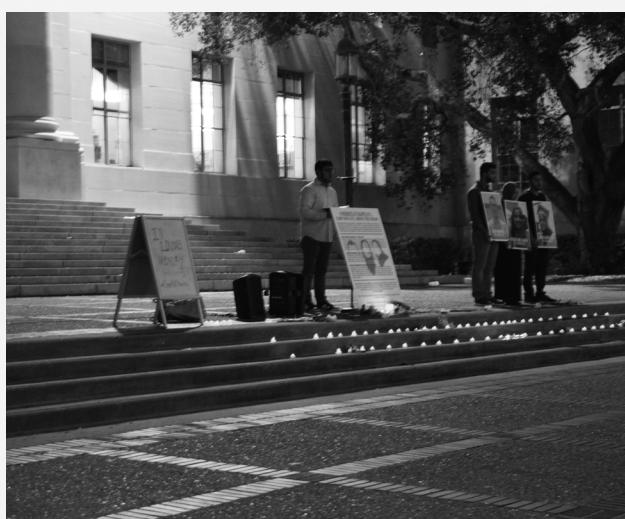
The incident in Chapel Hill was not an isolated one. With the wave of Islamophobia sweeping the nation, it's become the first priority in our MSA to protect our community, to seek out mental health resources, and to institute buddy systems and transportation systems. Long term, we're seeking to educate our campus communities about Islamophobia and hate speech and their very real manifestations towards members of our communities. In a broader sense, we are also trying to get administration to prioritize creating a safer campus climate for Muslim students.

WHAT ARE WAYS ALLIES CAN BEST SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF CAL MSA, AS WELL AS JUST GENERALLY THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY ON CAMPUS AND BEYOND?

At times like this, we need our community's allies to also become vocal about Islamophobia and the threats it poses not just to Muslims, but to the very foundational principles of our society. We need allies to stand in solidarity, by calling out Islamophobic comments, movies, news when they see it. That terrorist joke? Stop that in its tracks. Ask the right questions and engage critically when presented with a news piece that paints any community with broad strokes and statements. We need our allies to push for more an environment where hateful, racist speech and actions are not tolerated in any way or manner. I think it's also important to realize that our struggles are not unique, but a part of larger systems of oppression targeting communities of color, and that our struggles against that is what unites us all.

WHAT, IN YOUR OPINION, NEEDS TO BE DONE AS A SOCIETY TO PREVENT THIS FROM HAPPENING AGAIN?

As a society, it is very important for us to become cognizant of the reality of Islamophobia. This was clearly not an issue about a parking space. It was a hate crime, geared towards three individuals that very clearly appeared Muslim. Everything from the movies produced (American Sniper, for example), the politicians trying to pass "anti-Sharia" law bills, to foreign policy, to the use of the word "terrorist" to refer solely to Muslims in the media, all has an impact on society's biases and racism against Muslims. It all contributes to the larger culture of Islamophobia, and its effects trickle into the minds of all those who are exposed to this. As a society, we need to become aware of the words we use, the programs we create, and hold media to a higher standard when reporting about crimes. We need to acknowledge and actively combat this growing Islamophobic culture.



more coverage on next pages



why won't they call it terrorism? by kitty lui

On February 17, 2015, Rania Khalek of The Electronic Intifada asked why the media does not describe the Chapel Hill massacre as terrorism.

After all, the Chapel Hill killer, who murdered three Muslim students a week earlier, is a self-described "gun-toting" white male atheist. He previously brandished a gun when confronting the victims, who were his neighbors at the time, over noise complaints, and later shot them execution-style in their home. He was also a professed fan of the bigoted and anti-Muslim New Atheist movement, and previously wrote on social media that Christians, Muslims and Jews should "exterminate each other."

If we operate under the media and law enforcement's definition of terrorism, a killer who displays suspect, aggressive and violent tendencies, and is motivated by hateful religious intolerance is often undoubtedly labelled a terrorist, especially if the suspect is not white. Media, elected officials and other institutions love to slap on the "terrorist" label when people of color appear to be the shooters, regardless of whether the facts have actually been established.

If the Chapel Hill massacre were perpetrated by an angry, "gun-toting" Muslim or person of Middle Eastern,

African or South Asian descent, the nation would hear all about it as breaking news that same evening, and the media would rattle on for months about the Chapel Hill "terrorists."

However, the media and law enforcement's double standards for white suspects are made all too apparent in the Chapel Hill shooting's aftermath. The police attempted to frame the murder as resulting from a parking dispute, and the mainstream media, which had initially ignored this story, parroted this line. It's hard to believe that a white man who previously expressed extreme anti-religious hostility did not feel entitled to enter the Muslim victims' home and shoot them over real or perceived slights out of Islamophobia-fueled rage, especially over noise and parking disputes alone. Though the White House has broken its silence on the massacre and launched a hate-crime investigation following international outrage, the mainstream media still refuses to call the killings terrorism two weeks after it happened.

Thankfully, many social media users and civil rights organizations have challenged the "parking dispute" defense claimed by the killer. Alongside the national mourning of the three beloved victims through vigils,

blogs, meetings and protests, community members and activists have shone a spotlight on the rampant violence and discrimination that Muslim communities often face.

At least eight anti-Muslim cases of assault and harassment have been reported in the US less than two weeks following the Chapel Hill massacre. Additionally, a Black Muslim Canadian was murdered the day before the Chapel Hill shooting, and an Al Jazeera op-ed questioned whether his Blackness factored into the continued silence around his killing.

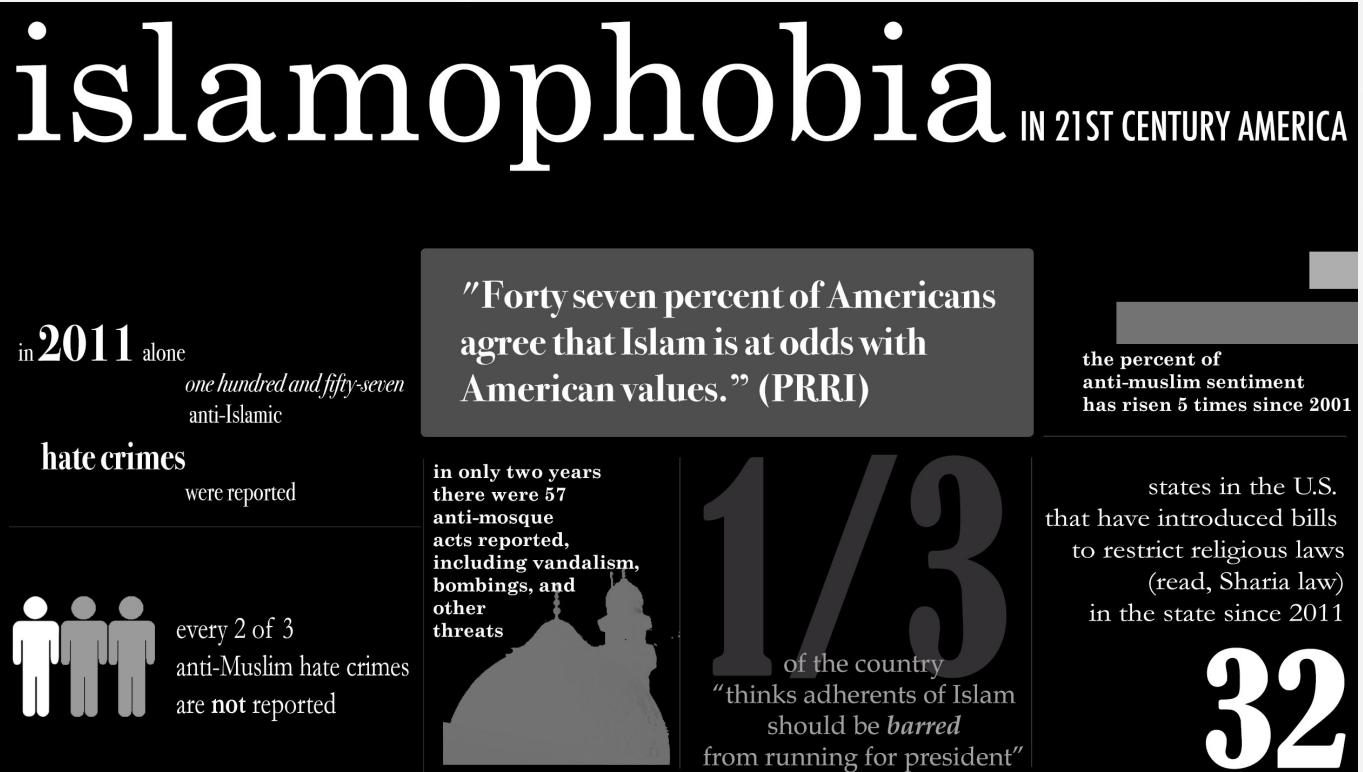
Those who comprise the targets of Islamophobic terrorism are often the ones racialized as the terrorists in our post-9/11 society. This is particularly egregious since white men are overwhelming the perpetrators of mass murders in the US, but are rarely scapegoated as plagued by a culture of violence or terrorism for which many communities of color are scrutinized.

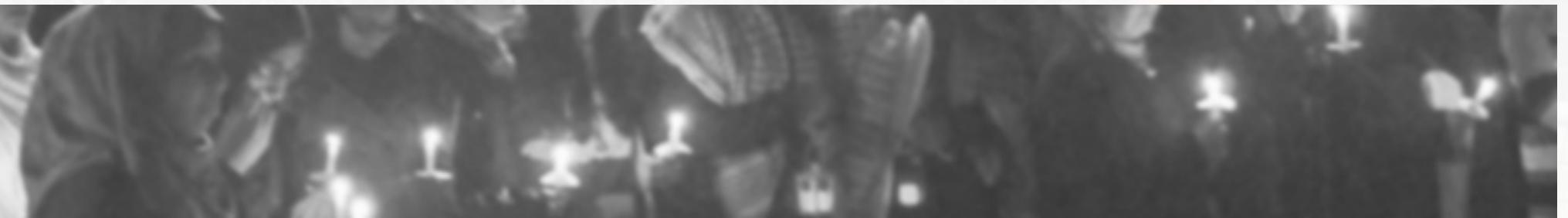
We have lost the three Chapel Hill victims – Yusor Abu-Salha, Razan Abu-Salha and Deah Barakat – and too many others to Islamophobic violence. We cannot begin to adequately confront this violence without recognizing it as part of a widespread trend of anti-Muslim terrorism and challenge the factors that give rise to it.

"IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A WHITE MAN WHO PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED EXTREME AND ANTI-RELIGIOUS HOSTILITY DID NOT FEEL ENTITLED TO ENTER THE MUSLIM VICTIMS' HOME AND SHOOT THEM OVER REAL OR PERCEIVED SLIGHTS OUT OF ISLAMOPHOBIA-INDUCED RAGE, ESPECIALLY IF IT WERE OVER NOISE AND PARKING DISPUTES ALONE."



facts & figures by tracey fung





On February 10, 2015, the global Muslim community was wracked by the news of the murder of three college students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Deah Barakat, 23, was a second-year graduate student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Dentistry. Yusor Abu-Salha, 21, had just graduated in December with a degree in human biology from North Carolina State University. She was preparing to join her husband at Chapel Hill's dentistry program in the fall. Yusor's sister, Razan Abu-Salha, 19, was a sophomore at North Carolina State University, studying architecture and environmental design. On that night, all three of them were found shot in the head, execution-style. A woman who was walking past their apartment heard "5 to 10 gunshots" and "kids screaming," and she immediately called 911. Shortly thereafter, their neighbor, Craig Stephen Hicks, 46, turned himself in to the police.

In the days following the incident, the gruesome details sluggishly diffused into the mass media. The media's coverage (or more accurately, initial lack of) the incident proves problematic in a variety of ways. For example, it took President Obama a harsh admonition from Turkey's president, Tayyip Erdogan, to publicly address the incident. Stunned by President Obama's reticence, Erdogan said "this country [the US] needs to realize that acts of terrorism are not confined to a single religion or ethnicity." After this heavy chastisement, President Obama released a statement three full days after the murders. He stated that the killings were "brutal and outrageous," and attempted to appeal to the grieving Muslim community by quoting Yusor, who had stated in a recent NPR interview that "growing up in America is a blessing."

Despite his sympathetic sentiments, a disturbing irony becomes painfully obvious when we compare President Obama's reaction to the recent Charlie Hebdo massacre with his delayed acknowledgment of the shooting at Chapel Hill. Notably, President Obama soundly condemned the Charlie Hebdo massacre mere hours after it took place. It goes without saying that the Charlie Hebdo massacre was also a horrific, senseless tragedy, but it cannot be disregarded that it did not occur in our own nation. When three young, innocent Americans (albeit Muslims) are murdered in cold blood by a white, male perpetrator

within the sanctity of their own residence, their tragic demise is met with profound indifference, demonstrated by a motley of excuses. President Obama's initial silence speaks volumes about the politics of creed and race that permeate the social fabric of our country. Without a doubt, this silence is a testament to the second-class status that Muslim-Americans have been struggling with in a post-9/11 era, as they are repeatedly held responsible as a whole for the inexcusable, violent actions of a meager fraction of the one billion Muslims in the world today.

Furthermore, the media's fixation and subsequent perpetuation of the controversial "parking dispute" motive served as salt in the wound inflicted by the initial media silence. Remarkably, this motive appears to be derived by Craig Stephen Hicks' early testimony, prior to an official police investigation. Karen Hicks, the accused shooter's wife, echoed this, stating that "this incident had nothing to do with religion...but it was related to a long-standing parking dispute that my husband had with the neighbors." Interestingly, she later announced that she was divorcing Hicks. Hicks' ex-wife and estranged daughter shared opposite sentiments: his ex-wife, Cynthia Hurley, said that he had "no compassion at all," and his estranged daughter, Sarah Hurley, said that she cut off all ties with him "for not only disrespecting the religious beliefs of others but bashing them on social media." Other neighbors agree that he seemed "angry, always angry." These dissonant analyses of Hicks deserve recognition.

The anomaly of blaming a triple homicide on something as extraordinarily inane as a parking dispute begs further investigation. Firstly, the spot in question was delineated as a visitor's spot, so Hicks had absolutely no authority to police it. Regardless, many of the neighbors, including Deah, Yusor, and Razan, avoided parking in that particular spot in order to avoid conflict and harassment. The Barakat and Abu-Salha families mentioned that Hicks confronted the trio multiple times, complaining about them making "too much noise" and parking in what he considered to be inappropriate areas. Hicks took this self-appointed security guard position so seriously that the local towing company banned him from calling them due to incessant and unfounded complaints. Furthermore, Hick's personal Facebook page unearthed a number of

unsettling posts: he posted pictures of his abundant gun paraphernalia and constantly berated organized religion, referring to himself as an "anti-theist." In light of these details, it's almost foolish to ignore the complexities of the victims' identities and pass off the murders as nothing more than a minor dispute that spiraled cataclysmically out of control. Arsalan Iftikhar, a well-known Muslim human rights lawyer, leaves us with a somber dilemma to ponder over in the following Tweet: "Dear American media: how long will it take you to call the murder of three Muslim college kids at UNC-Chapel Hill an act of 'atheist terrorism?'" It has become increasingly clear that the "t-word" is specifically demarcated for a select group of individuals, thus skewing the original definition in a distinct way. Hicks' profile doesn't comply with this prototype. According to the media, his race and religious affiliation grant him immunity to the "t-word."

Following the social media uproar, the Chapel Hill Police Department have since stated that they are looking into the possibility of the killings being motivated by hate. Yusor's haunting sentiments, relayed by her father, Mohammad Abu-Salha, echo throughout the community: "Honest to God, he hates us for what we are and how we look," she said." Considering the numerous red flags that arose both before and after the killings, this warrants, at the very least, a deeper discussion. Biased media coverage, including Hollywood's consistent perpetuation of racial stereotypes, are having a profound impact on the Muslim-American community, such that they are no longer safe, not even in the comfort and sanctity of their own homes. The systematic "otherization" of Muslims is an institution that urges the masses to question the humanity of Muslims, categorizing them with other groups that tote the term "Muslim" as part of a more insidious political agenda. The flames of Islamophobia have been steadily fanned for the past fourteen years, and the inferno is ablaze once again, as the Muslim-American community attempts to handle the unsettling combination of fear and alienation. Bigotry may have sparked the fire that threatens to consume the Muslim-American community, but the legacies of our three winners - their generosity, community involvement, and shining personalities - burn brighter, immortalizing them.

media bias in a post-9/11 america by anam siddiqui

"THE SYSTEMATIC "OTHERIZATION" OF MUSLIMS IS AN INSTITUTION THAT URGES THE MASSES TO QUESTION THE HUMANITY OF MUSLIMS, CATEGORIZING THEM WITH OTHER GROUPS THAT TOTE THE TERM "MUSLIM" AS PART OF A MORE INSIDIOUS POLITICAL AGENDA. THE FLAMES OF ISLAMOPHOBIA HAVE BEEN STEADILY FANNED FOR THE PAST FOURTEEN YEARS, AND THE INFERNO IS ABLAZE ONCE AGAIN, AS THE MUSLIM-AMERICAN COMMUNITY ATTEMPTS TO HANDLE THE UNSETTLING COMBINATION OF FEAR AND ALIENATION."



THE RAID REVIEW

by isiah regacho

When it comes to martial arts movies, typically people think of movies like "Crouching Tiger" or "Super Cop" and a few names come to mind, such as Jackie Chan, Bruce Lee, Jet Li, and the man who turned into an Internet meme, Chuck Norris. However, it goes to show that when people think of "Asian cinema" in general, it's hard to come up with a popular movie, martial arts or not, that's from Southeast Asia. Even I, as a Filipino-American, can't really come up with any Filipino movies that have attained as much international attention as movies like the movie that this group was named after, "**hardboiled**".

Maybe "The Debut" starring Dante Basco, but one, that's not a martial arts movie, and two, that's a discussion saved for another time. In light of this lack of exposure, let's highlight two Southeast Asian movies, specifically Indonesian, that have received significant international attention, "The Raid" series, directed by Gareth Evans and starring newcomer Iko Uwais.

"The Raid" is about a team of SWAT operators who become trapped in a building they raided by the criminals they were sent to arrest. "The Raid 2: Berandal" is focused on the lead protagonist of the first film, Rama, and his journey into the criminal underworld as an undercover cop. While the first movie's storyline is somewhat simple, the sequel does introduce an almost Shakespearean story about a mob boss's son (played by the talented Arifin Putra) and his attempts to gain more power. Does he succeed? Well, you'll have to watch the movies to find out.

But what makes this martial arts movie different from other martial arts movies? How is Iko Uwais different from your Jackie Chans, Jason Stathams, and so on? To get an idea, the series is known for its masterfully choreographed fight sequences, which look like a combination of Jackie Chan's frantic-but-elegant style and Tony Jaa's raw brutality. These scenes stand out since they are choreographed in a way that makes the heroes seem every bit as vulnerable as the villains.

Sure, Iko and his allies fight their way through hordes of useless henchmen but they also take hits and in the climactic battles of both movies, there is a feeling that Iko might even lose the fight. Of course, he pulls through but the point is that you get a feeling of danger that you don't see in Hollywood nowadays. That's not the case for the Raid movies.

And of course, the brutality. It's become typical of Hollywood nowadays to produce action movies that do just enough to get a PG-13 rating. Even considering the R-rated action movies, it's hard to come up with a Hollywood movie that elicits the type of reactions that "The Raid" was able to produce. Word of warning, these movies are not for the faint of heart. When Iko Uwais fights you, he doesn't just fight you, he'll make sure you don't get up to continue fighting. Examples include a scene where he uses a knife to rip a man's quads, another scene where he slams a man's head repeatedly against a light fixture on a wall, and another where he breaks a man's leg as he goes in for a kick. It's hard not to feel some form of sympathy for the countless foes that are put down by Iko's character.



www.deviantart.com, www.expendablespremiere.com, www.cinemablend.com

With all that said, where did these movies come from? Well, from humble beginnings actually. Gareth Evans was actually making a documentary on the Indonesian martial arts known as "pencak silat" (the martial arts seen in the movies) and he became fascinated by it. Iko Uwais, who was discovered by Evans, was working as a deliveryman for a phone company at the time. The first movie's budget was an estimated \$1.1 million, which is relatively low when compared to Hollywood, whose films are worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Money did become an issue when production was stalled due to budget constraints, forcing Evans to rewrite the script to just have the actors be inside one building. This ended up becoming "The Raid". And despite finishing the movie, there was little hope it would succeed due to its brutality and claustrophobic setting.

Despite the problems behind the scenes and lack of confidence in the final product, in the end, it became a hit for the same reasons. This led to the sequel, which had a larger budget (\$4.5 million, still low but much more than the first) and used the storyline that Evans had wanted in the first movie. Despite the fear that the sequel would not match the first movie, it not only met expectations but exceeded them, immediately leading to talks of a third movie.

In regards to the international attention, the series has attained a loyal fanbase and is now considered a must-see for fans of action movies. It's gotten to the point that there are even talks of remaking it with either the Hemsworth brothers or Frank Grillo in the lead role. Even without remaking it, Hollywood seems to be attempting to mimic the fight style of the movies as seen in the fluid gunplay of "John Wick" and hiring three of the movies' fight choreographers to do the choreography of "Star Wars Episode 7".

This is not a joke. J.J. Abrams actually brought on Iko Uwais (lead protagonist Rama), Yayan Ruhian (Mad Dog), and Cecep Arif Rahman (The Assassin) to handle the lightsaber work. To get an understanding of how that might look, go look up any scene involving "Baseball Bat Guy" or "Hammer Girl" from the second movie. When you do, imagine the scenes with lightsabers.

That pretty much makes up the success story of "The Raid" movies. The first and second movies, despite being very different in terms of setting and story, both pushed the boundaries of what you can do in action movies. They're fun, brutal, and as an added bonus, the story and acting are pretty good. It's astounding that CGI extravaganzas like the "Transformers" series which take hundreds of millions of dollars to make are now boring audiences while movies like "The Raid" series, which had a measly budget that ranged from 1 to 4 million dollars, are exciting audiences worldwide. That's the reason for the international exposure; it's action stripped down to the bare bones.

You feel the punches, every stab, every gunshot, every bone break, and every kick. Everything, from the one-on-one fight scenes to even the car chases in the sequel, is breathtaking because there's a real sense of danger in them. That's why I highly recommend watching these movies.

s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com, www.anime-kun.net/



IS NEET!

by sabrina fong

Anime, a Japanese style type of television and movie animation, creates and destroys Asian Pacific Americans in the United States. Anime is the Japanese equivalent to the cartoons we see on television in America, yet it also applies to a wider age spectrum other than just children. Tired of media that is dominated by white content creators and actors, Asian Americans use anime to bond over something that is collectively and distinctly Asian made. While anime limits

different groups of Asians since it centers specifically on Japanese culture, at least it reflects cultural values different from that of Western, white

civilization. As a form of media that is mainly accessible online, anime allows Asian Pacific Americans to escape to a world of characters with wild hair colors and adventurous stories. Anime leaps further than American media in not conforming to societal standards, where depicting homosexual love or satirizing aspects about their own society or government is common. However, just like American cartoons, it can also influence people negatively with its violence, sexualization of women, and formation of gender roles.

THE ALLURE OF ANIME ESCAPISM CONTRIBUTES (ALTHOUGH NOT EXCLUSIVELY) TO THE NEETS PHENOMENON WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE STAY AT HOME, IMMersed IN TECHNOLOGY.

As much as anime creates us in allowing us to display our Asian pride, it also destroys us through the way people use anime to exoticize, fetishize, and stereotype all Asians. The ignorance of others in sexualizing the Asian body or stereotyping all Asians is damaging to Asian identities in America. It melds us together into a singular Asian object that struggles to get out of the image of being the "model minority" or a mere sex object. It is necessary for people to become more aware of how influential media like anime can be since it does have its own faults. Anime is very deeply rooted in maintaining the gender dynamics of male superiority and female subservience. The exorbitant amount of fanservice (or sexualization of women) with close up shots of women's abnormally, gargantuan sized breasts or colorful underwear is really detrimental in the way it can influence the human mind, especially the younger crowd. It causes the female to be viewed purely as an object for males to toy with. The recent anime "No Game No Life" is the embodiment of all that is wrong with anime. The main male character Sora, forces the princess into servitude, takes pictures of girls bathing naked, and glorifies the NEETs (young people "Not in Education, Employment, or Training") lifestyle.

Perhaps what is most alarming is the rising prevalence of NEETs in Asian and American societies. The allure of anime escapism contributes (although not exclusively) to the NEETs phenomenon where young people stay at home, immersed in technology. This can be seen at Internet cafes and at home where people spend hours, even days on the computer without regards to their health, family, or the real world. This is a genuine concern that needs to be addressed because what will happen to our future society if an increasing percentage of our generation chooses to not engage with the outside world? We need to conscientiously admire and appreciate anime, yet also acknowledge and push against the risks and stigmas anime holds in shaping and defining our Asian American identities.

NO GAME NO LIFE



vag mons sucks

by nanticha lutt and steven yi

the vagina monologues and
how white people manage to ruin everything



I just wanted to say that being the director of the Vagina Monologues has been one of the most profoundly disappointing experiences of my entire life.

I wanted to change the problematic structure of Vagina Monologues at UC Berkeley or at least, I wanted to expand the field of people who would potentially want to participate in the community of the Vagina Monologues. And I did. I helped make our communities full of womxn of color, non-binary folks, trans folks, disabled folks. However, I found my efforts constantly frustrated by the white imperialist hordes of Eve Ensler's lawyers, white tears, white guilt, and white people in general. Vagina Monologues still has white people in it, and the dialogue still centers some really fucked up oppressive bullshit.

Cunt community (aka "the community of Vagina Warriors") was really hard for me to sit through. White people would list off statistics about violence that disproportionately affected womxn of color and Third World womxn like they were preparing for a test, in the same breath that they complained about their own lack of "sexual liberation.". When I tried to facilitate workshops that challenged this way of thinking and speaking, I was promptly derailed by white womxn's feelings of self-consciousness. I discovered that people of color couldn't even call out white folks because then the white folks would suddenly complain about how they feel unsafe in the space, feel "attacked," start crying, or completely ignore a valid request. When folks produced art for the show, the direction of the theme was totally forgotten, in favor of images of genitals. (I never want to look at another sketch of a vulva ever again.) Non-binary folks in our community refused to create an art piece because our art projects were overwhelmingly images of white vaginas. Our stickers were initially pastel-colored hands holding each other, images reflecting our "solidarity." My hands are not fucking green or purple or pink; why is it so dangerous to color in hands that have melanin in them? I felt like I was constantly being talked over, interrupted, and ignored by white feminists who wanted to use the Vagina Monologues as a platform to achieve their own ends.

Eve Ensler's part of the problem. How can you have a production, performed in California, about gendered violence, that doesn't consider the violence that goes on, everyday, all around us? Trans womxn being murdered in SF, sexual assault by police officers, forced labor (and endemic rape) in our prisons. How are the issues that the production focuses on - genital mutilation, war rape, abductions and human trafficking, all primarily in Third World countries - more relevant than the real, lived experiences of the womxn in the production? What is it about brown and black womxn across borders that white feminists are so drawn to?

During every single cunt community, folks would talk about their struggles as undocumented immigrants, domestic violence survivors, suicide survivors, sexual assault survivors - but our experiences and interests as a community were not in line with how Eve Ensler wanted to structure her monologues or the priorities of white feminists. I would say something

**How can you have a production,
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about my identity; a white womxn would try to link me back to "broader structures of oppression." Cis white womxn wandered into this space thinking that it would cater to their imperialist perceptions of feminism and cried foul when anyone told them otherwise.

By no means is this a problem unique to Vagina Monologues - this is the danger in speaking of "womxn's issues," of burying difference under layers of abstraction. To treat "womxn" as a monolithic group with a common set of interests is to ignore the fraught colonial histories in which we are very much embedded, which inveigh on our "activism" and on our "safe spaces." Why is "Pro-Choice" a frontline womxn's issue, whereas the forced sterilization of womxn of color and indigenous womxn isn't? This is the danger in speaking of "sexual liberation" as if it's the same for everyone everywhere. Why (and for whom) do we try to reclaim "slut" when it's used to murder womxn of color? Why do we advocate for the "right" to get naked, under the color of "body positivity," when we contextualize the nudity of white womxn ("Art," "avant-garde," sacred, purity) and the nudity of womxn of color ("trashy," "loose," immoral, labor) in totally different ways? Everywhere folks are asked to compartmentalize their identities and experiences for the sake of the "greater struggle," pushing those who are already marginalized in the conversation further to the periphery. (Yes, #solidarityisforwhitewomxn.) The interests of the group become reconfigured as the interests of its most privileged members.

These theoretical issues bleed into the performance-practice of Vagina Monologues. According to Eve Ensler, happy endings are only for white womxn. Why is it that it's white womxn reclaiming their bodies and loving their vaginas, whereas the bodies of womxn of color are literally being RUINED? Why are the pieces that discuss outright violence against womxn all about trans womxn or womxn of color, and why do they share a platform with the experiences of cis

white womxn experiencing discomfort or "sexual liberation"? Feelings of self-consciousness, a lack of 'sexual liberation' should not be equated to sexual violence and trauma. the discomfort of white womxn should not be equated to the trauma of womxn of color. Spaces like these are used as a tool to make white womxn feel more comfortable instead of actually deconstructing these problems.

This is not only a problem with the pieces, but also the mindset that comes along with casting womxn for these roles. In almost every Vagina Monologue production the womxn who are chosen to perform the "happier" pieces (whites written by white womxn) are almost always white because the production team cannot see people of color holding any other role than the one of the victim.

Vagina Monologues distorts and subordinates the voices of womxn of color and Third World womxn, appropriating them for Activist Gold Stars. It claims to speak on behalf of womxn but ultimately speaks over them. The underlying assumption of Vagina Monologues is that we have this "Feminism" thing figured out, here in the USA (!!), and now it's time to export it all over the world.

Gang rape, trafficking, torture, mutilation. Places where clitorises are excised with pieces of broken glass. These "atrocities" happen "over there", out of sight and out of mind. They don't happen in our country - but thank God Eve Ensler has brought to our attention the plight of those less fortunate than us. (We were blind before, but now we see.)

In 2015, Vagina Monologues is the best it will ever be. Vagina Monologues will no longer be transformative or radical because it's reached the point where it can no longer be improved without totally removing all of the monologues that Eve Ensler wrote. The theme of the 2015 show was supposed to be Solidarity. However, even that was too controversial for our former faculty advisor, who thought the show shouldn't be making too strong of a "political statement." V-Day international, as our parent organization and legal fink, actively discouraged voicing opinions that diverge from Eve Ensler's "original mission." Instead, we settled for the modifier of "cultivating," which, although it borrows from the rhetoric of community activism, is really just a pretense for the fact that the show still prioritizes educating white womxn about the horrors of white imperialism...

I want to close by saying that I do sincerely love my cunt community. Some of the folks that I've engaged with, cried with, and organized with this year have made this show a transformative leadership experience, and I want to thank them for supporting me as a person and as a director. I love you very much.

Obsessed with Race

by mark s. lee

The Census Bureau predicts that in the year 2042, White citizens will account for 49 percent of the U.S. population, making them the racial "minority."

This is absurd.

Stand-up comedian Hari Kondabolu wisely points out this projection means nothing. In fact, the figure is more catered to the interest of White people and how it relates to them. The fragmented demographic of Hispanic, Black, Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Americans that will comprise the 51 percent are not acting as some united front. Quoting Hari, "It only works if you think, 'Well, it's 49 percent white people and 51 percent you people.'"

Kondabolu grew up in Queens, New York with his parents and brother, Ashok, who also ventured into the performing arts as a rapper (he's better known under his stage name, Dapwell). According to his 2014 LA Weekly interview, Hari was subjected to racial persecution during his studies at Bowdoin College in Maine – a stark contrast to the diverse environment of Queens. He would later choose to perform comedy at night while doing social justice work during the day, for the sake of "catharsis." His first creative writing gig was with W. Kamau Bell's political comedy show *Totally Biased*, and he has since performed his stand-up material at late-night talk shows hosted by Jimmy Kimmel, Conan O'Brien, and

Hari's debut studio album, *Waiting for 2042*,

David Letterman. showcases his gift of blending silly pop-culture references with dense, controversial topics of racism, sexism, and human vice. The recording takes place in Oakland, California, and he is worried that the audience's loud cheers in response to his more radical opinions will make listeners in other states think

they are freaks. Hari's album begins with a joke about how chocolate is widely accepted as a brown product, and that there is no motive for white chocolate other than racism. He then seamlessly jumps into "A Feminist Dick Joke," asserting that while women may deal with impaired judgment from hormonal imbalances once a month, men suffer from poor judgment every five minutes. One of my favorite bits centers on *The Advocate*, a queer rights magazine, interviewing Matthew McConaughey. He admits to once consoling a closeted gay friend by telling him, "Whatever raises your skirt, man."

The writing and delivery of the jokes are top-notch. What is more important is that it reaffirms comedy as a potent weapon for dissecting social norms in America. Stand-up is still very much a white realm, so there is a large pool of untapped ideas from underrepresented groups that ambitious comedians can explore.

Not every person of color shares the desire to discuss race, however.

Lindy West of *The Guardian* penned an op-ed about Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal's views on addressing race. Following an outcry on social media about an alleged portrait of Jindal appearing to have a much whiter skin tone than his own, he fired back by accusing liberals of being "obsessed with race." He goes on to undermine the validity of progressive opinions on race, asserting that they are divisive and detrimental to the rightful claim that everyone should just be treated like "Americans." Kondabolu absolutely detests fellow Indian Americans who choose to uphold the notion of colorblindness. On Twitter, he asserts that Jindal "can go to hell," and that conservative political commentator Dinesh D'Souza "looks like my Uncle...Tom." More significantly, the stand-up comedian is known for the following quote: "Telling me that I'm obsessed with talking about racism in America is like telling me I'm obsessed with swimming when I'm drowning."

West goes on to challenge political correctness, labeling it as an option for race-conscious individuals who are hesitant to work towards tangible results. Work would require "...Listening. Learning. Letting other people talk. Changing your behaviour. Holding yourself accountable. Saying you're sorry. Those things are hard, and sometimes embarrassing, but they are part of our job as human beings. This is the work of humanity: to get better." Understanding racism is hard work that should be done, but not everyone does it.

Hari Kondabolu, out of both sheer necessity and desire for social justice, is committed to helping the country understand race, one joke at a time. It is clear that he is well informed about current social issues, and he shares his wisdom without pretension. In his NPR interview with Terry Gross, he describes a bit where he would literally read questions from the U.S. citizenship application- not to appear overeducated, but to emphasize the absurdity and difficulty of these questions that most actual citizens could not answer. The fact that he is upsetting certain people with his jokes (while exciting others) shows that the words are making an impression on people, as well as highlighting the huge disconnect among different racial groups in their interpretation of these controversial topics.

What this means is that anyone who desires a more equal and just society needs to continue the fight to eradicate the longstanding legacy of colonialism and subjugation of non-whites. Discussing these ideas will be difficult and uncomfortable, but that's natural because racism is a fucked up thing. Sugarcoating topics of race and gender oppression underestimates their toxicity and trivializes any discussions attempted to eliminate these stereotypes. It is not just people of color that are drowning, either; every single one of us suffers from this mess.

Perhaps that is why humor is so powerful. In a comedy space, a person can make light of any controversial topic, but it also enables one to communicate their thoughts in the rawest, most brutally honest way imaginable. It transcends many other forms of communication and art. At a time when racial tensions have us drowning and gasping for air, stand-up comedy allows us to walk on water.



www.harikondabolu.com

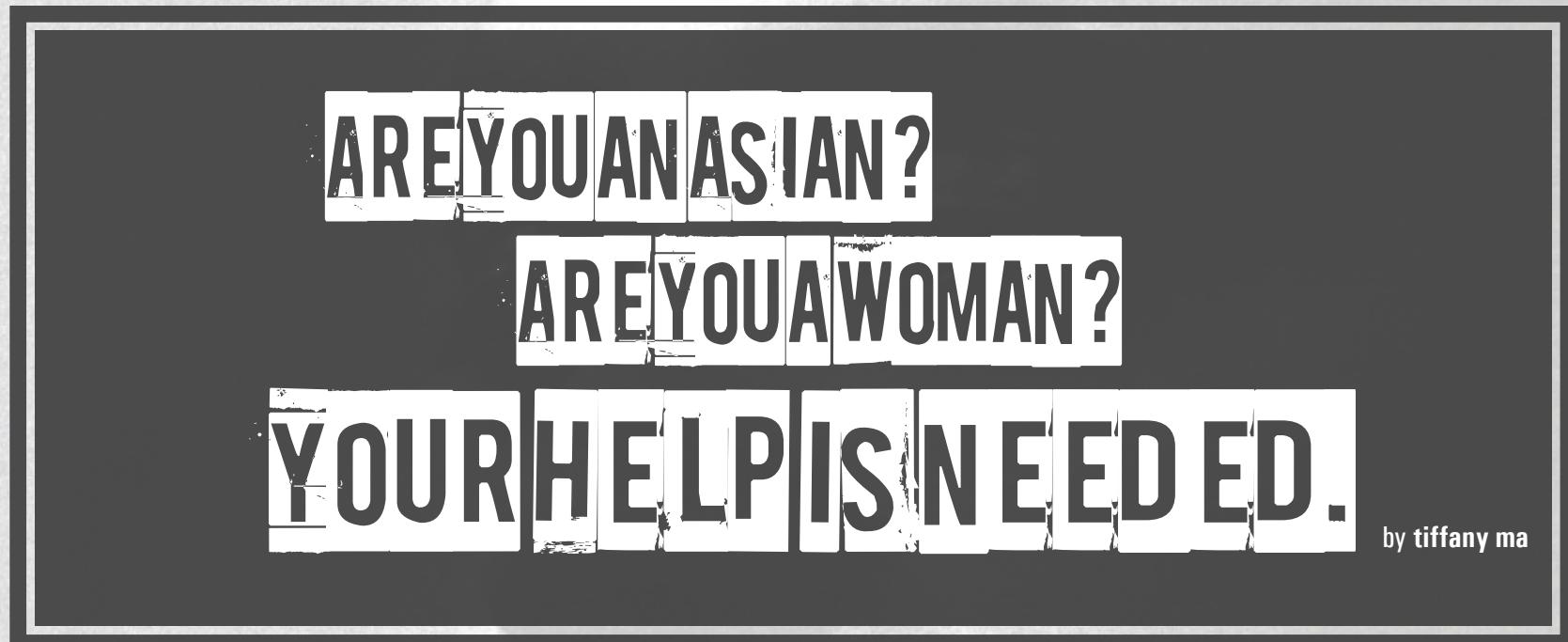
"Now that we know that we're systemically oppressed," I said panting, running to catch up to my friend, "Don't you feel good about having more power in changing the system?"

My friend looked at me, scoffed and laughed. "Hell no! Ignorance is bliss, yeah? I just want to get married, get rich, and have kids."

Rewind to freshmen fall, when my best friend from Hong Kong and I were taking GWS 10 to fulfill the social behavioral breadth requirement. It didn't take long for us to experience the renowned mind-blow that often came as a pack-

age with *Intro to Gender & Women's Studies*. The sudden acknowledgement of power structures that we have internalized for so long was no different to taking off a pair of warped filtered glasses we have looked at the world with, since God knows when.

Thus, imagine how appalled I was when I learnt that even my bright and intellectually curious friend would not bother putting this newfound knowledge to use. I paused to think. Then a horrible realization dawned upon me: does she not realize our unique oppression as *Asian American women*?



The first step to freeing yourself is realizing you're in the Master's house.

As two Asian American women taking GWS 10, I realized that we existed in and spectated from an ambivalent space. We spoke the standardized Western language of English that we were expected to speak, yet there is no reciprocation for us in the world of academia, no legitimate space for addressing the specific oppression of Asian-Pacific women in the U.S. We stayed up late reading MacKinnon, Foucault, and Crenshaw – why white feminism is problematic, how women of color are removing themselves from the shadow cast by white feminism... slowly, my best friend and I faded into the backdrop as the "Other" commentators, conveniently forgetting our own status as oppressed subjects.

If our oppression wasn't explicitly addressed in academia, it means that our oppression isn't as legitimate as the oppression of white and black women, right? Fuck no, you may say, *what kind of stupid question is that?* Yes, this may sound like a rhetorical question. But we must realize that academia as an institution, favors the circulation of certain information over others. Asian-Pacific women seem to only be addressed in the topic of Orientalism. Have we internalized Western standards so well that we allow our only proper acknowledgement in the academic field of GWS to be "Asian-Pacific women being colonized, eroticized, fetishized and exoticized?"

Hell no.

Even if academia has failed us, and for those of you who don't care about Gender & Women's Studies or Political Science or East Asian Area studies, *I urge you to observe oppression as everyday-life phenomena*. We have almost no Asian-American role models in the media, and pitifully have to resort to good old Mulan, for even dear JK Rowling does us injustice with Cho Chang, and we for sure aren't going to settle for the role of the Asian side-kick. Look around, and see that changing our last name to a "white" one, and changing our "Ms" to "Mr" on our CV would suddenly fill our email boxes up with more job and interview opportunities than before. If we look into the political arena, we don't even see Asian issues being actively addressed, much less Asian women's issues. How many Asian-American women are in Congress? If we look at our social sphere, when we romantically engage with a non-Asian person, do we become anxious, at risk of being *exoticized*? Do we have to try harder than others to be unique because everyone else homogenizes Asian-American women, as the ones who are doomed, tied down to their careers, culture and family-life?

Why the hell should you care?

My friend tried to comfort me, "Tiff, of course I know that we're more disadvantaged than certain groups of people. But it's just too troublesome to care. It's just easier to conform to the system. If you give so much time and effort trying to go against the system, you risk wasting all of that when the system doesn't

change for the better."

Why should we care? The same reason for why we are against slavery. The same reason for why we care when children are bullied on the playground. The same reason for why a human being cares about other human beings. And perhaps one of the most important reasons is that here, it is not even a matter of empathy for others; it's you who's being oppressed. Why would you settle for and wallow in worst, when you can go from worst to worse to fair to good? Why, when you are given the power of knowledge to fight against it?

I urge you to realize that the personal is the political. Your political involvement, even if you don't identify as an activist of any kind, is never separate from your personal, private life. The political has a direct effect on the personal, and the best part is, *vice versa*. This is where your input matters.

The second step is identifying the Master's tools – you ain't going nowhere following everyone else.

You also have to realize that being a woman and Asian doesn't happen separately – it happens at the same time, and we have *double* the pressure. We aren't only pressured to fit into the societal norms of being a woman, we have to deal with pressures of being an Asian – to be attractive, feminine but also to excel in academics and career. But an *Asian woman* adds to that and it means we have to be even more submissive, subservient (than the average non-Asian woman) and have more obligations to the family (compared to Asian men).

We have to realize that hegemonic white feminism is a form of the Master's tool – blindly supporting popularized feminism does not help emancipate Asian-American women from their oppression. In the same vein, blindly supporting the eradication of racism is equally futile. Lumping differences of different class, race, ethnicity, gender, age does not help.

The hardest part is finding your own tools to dismantle the Master's house.

Realize that the unique psychological experiences and micro aggressions that you face as an Asian-Pacific woman are *undocumented*, and the phenomena I named above are true but almost cliché. There are so many more experiences than the ones I named above that highlight what it's like to be oppressed as an Asian-American woman – many of them I am unable to put into words. *I urge you to write down instances, however small or big, of when your identity as both an Asian and a woman is held accountable.*

As Fannie Lou Hamer says, "*Nobody's free until everyone is free.*" So, I urge you – do your part and free yourself.

My friend was right - ignorance may bring bliss... but knowledge gives us power.

<http://upload.wikimedia.org/>