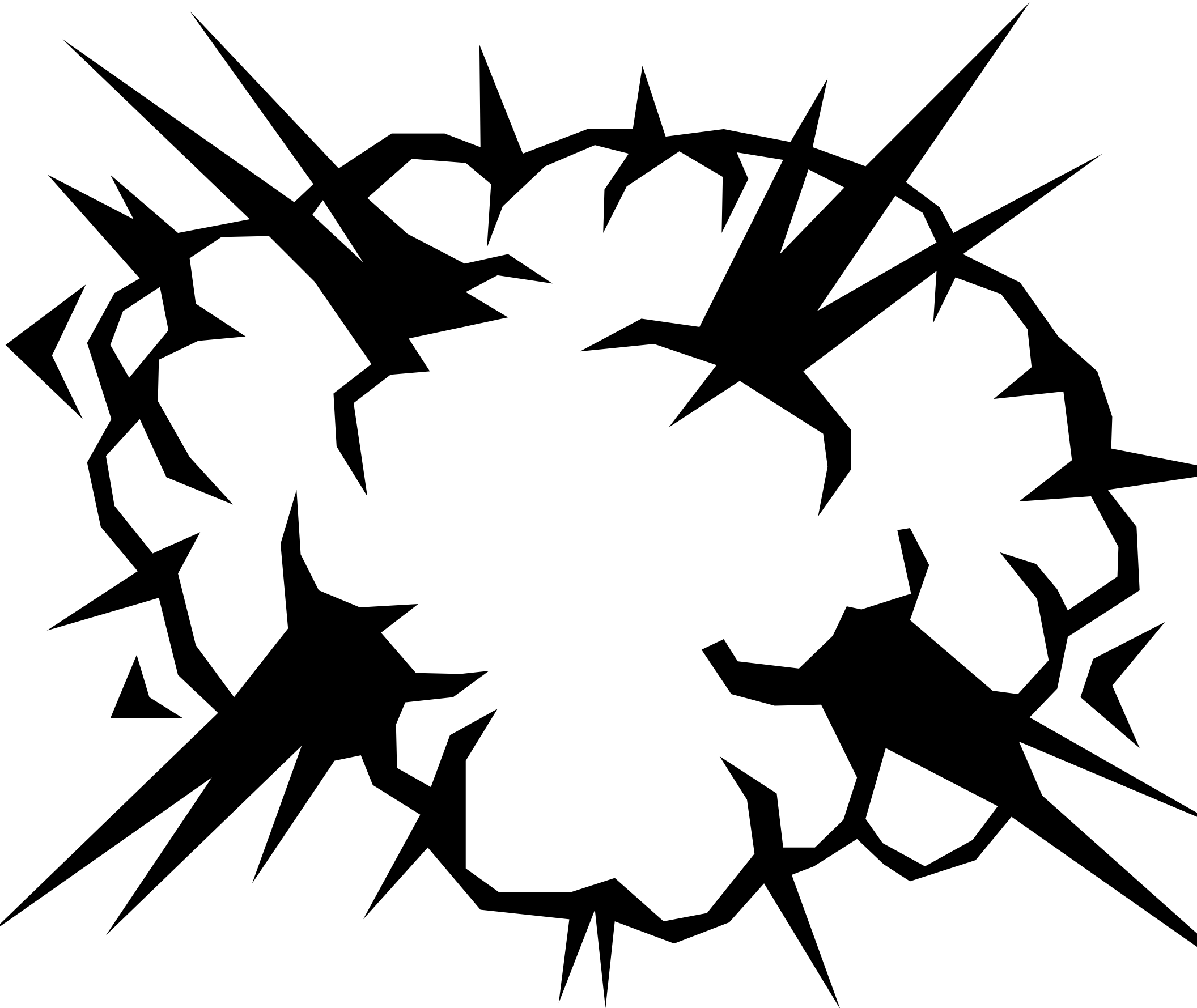


hardboiled

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN NEWS MAGAZINE



Ethnic Studies Under **BLAST**
R1A and R2B **CUTS**
Lisa Ling **BASHED**

6.1
OCTOBER 2002

contents 6.1

4

A Model of Silence

The South Asian community's patriarchal tradition and struggle for assimilation contribute to sexual violence in youth

5

Represent!

Asian Pacific Americans,
GET OUT THE VOTE!

6

Biracial Asians Break From Family Tradition

Their parents may have crossed color lines for love, but many biracial Asians would rather date their own kind.

7

You Call This Justice?

Cambodian Americans
Deported by the US

8

Ethnic Studies Under BLAST

Are criticisms of academic legitimacy themselves lacking independent credibility?

10

Twin Tragedies

UC Berkeley students commemorate victims of ignorance

12

Lisa Ling:

Far from an Asian American
point of *View*

13

Click2FindYourMate

Love at first click?

14

Trick or Treat?

Racist merchandise just in
time for Halloween.

The new semester has started and I find myself bombarded by a barrage of ideological propaganda from both the right and the left. Every editor's note out there seems to be concerned with the changes in the fabric of America after September 11th. As I walked onto Sproul, one year after the attacks on the WTC, nothing seemed to be out of the ordinary. All the student groups were tabling as usual and students were laughing and giggling as if nothing had changed in their lives. Maybe nothing *has* changed. The Patriot and many other students on campus criticized allies of the left for "politicizing" the memorial. The Daily Cal ran responses from the student body at large and one particularly caught my attention. The student wrote, "The other 30,000 students on campus don't give a damn about politics," in response to statements made by student leaders over the ribbon controversy.

That statement, besides being highly condemning, revealed a lot about both the lessons learned and not learned from September 11th and the state of Asian American activism on campus. A majority of students on campus are still confused about why America was targeted and they still don't care to learn. Instead, they choose to accept simple-minded explanations and rally behind meaningless slogans. Asian Pacific Islander Americans form the largest group on campus yet our voices are not heard. Our voices of political awareness and activism are virtually non-existent. Student groups on campus are afraid to take a stance on issues of paramount importance to the APIA community, furthering the image that Asian Americans are apathetic. We live and study in a highly politicized atmosphere and Asian Americans who choose to be ignorant about what's happening around the world and on campus are hindering the advancement of Asian Americans in the United States. The majority of Asian Americans are in some sort of organization on campus, hoping to make positive changes to the community. Maybe if they applied the same type of energy to tackle larger issues of empowerment, equity, and identity in the API community, there will be even more positive changes at a higher level of policy making.

It's been one year already. I reflect and remember the South Asians targeted in the aftermath of September 11th. They were unfairly and unjustly swept up in the fervor of national patriotism and ignorant racist vengeance. Why did most APIA student groups choose to ignore the hate crimes? Perhaps most are still disassociated, whether intentionally or unintentionally, from the South Asian community which they still don't integrate fully into their "target" base. During the Abercrombie & Fitch protest last year, there was lackluster support from the APIA community at large from Cal. Some student groups with large APIA memberships chose not to take a stance. On the other hand, new groups such as AHIMSA – The Alliance for Humanitarianism In Modern South Asia sought to fill a void in the South Asian community; a political progressive voice.

The worst thing you can do is not do anything and remain ignorant about the world around you and the important issues afflicting this campus. Whether or not you agree with **hardboiled** and its stance is your problem. At lease we TAKE a stance.

Roger Wong
hb tech editor
www.hardboiled.org

join us MEETINGS

Wednesday, 6:00 PM
106 Dwinelle

www.hardboiled.org

hardboiled@uclink.berkeley.edu
201 Heller Lounge
Martin Luther King Jr. Student Union
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

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

peter tadao gee
lisa w. macabasco
marites mendoza
dharushana muthulingam
STORY EDITORS

christine vilar
LAYOUT EDITOR

roger wong
TECH EDITOR
gloria kim
TECH INTERN

josh chang
MANAGING EDITOR

charlotte lin
COMMUNITY LIAISON

lael abaya
miguel de leon
annabel r. chang
connie chung
stephen chung
catherine chen
hellen jo
shioun kim
kimberly lau
anne phabmixay
jack song
carmen van kerckhove

CONTRIBUTING
STAFF

hardboiled 6.1

R2A and R2B cuts



With the influx of more Asian and Asian American students, shouldn't the university expand rather than shrink the Asian American Studies curriculum?

by **stephen chung**

Cal students this semester are finding that some classes within the Ethnic Studies department are being cut. These cuts are a result of across-the-board cuts throughout the university budget. One of the classes that has been cut is the popular Asian American Studies Reading and Comprehension series (R&C), better known as R2A and R2B. Many students, mainly Asian students, take this series in order to satisfy the R&C requirements and because they identify with the Asian American themes introduced during the courses. These writing courses are so popular among students that every semester, there are twice the amount of students who wish to enroll than there are

they help students develop critical thinking skills. She says that one of the main goals of the courses is to "develop the students ability to critically evaluate and analyze situations" and to also help "students to identify and understand the problems of society and formulate ways to solve them." By reading the works of Asian American writers and writers of other ethnicities, students are able to "discover enduring themes and fundamental ideas that will provide direction for both learning and living." Students read the works of Asian American writers and can also identify with the characters in the books.

Asian American Studies R2A and R2B are also important because students

also believes that the courses "see a point of view from outside the box, something this university lacks."

The courses are also beneficial to Asian students in particular because there is a lot of stability within the courses. Leong trains the instructors on how to meet the true needs of these students. With training, instructors can learn when, which, and how to correct errors by students. "We work on second language problems as opposed to other grad students who look mainly at grammar. We work on problems such as frequency and try to teach students critical thinking skills and how to logically structure arguments." With an untrained instructor, an English course can alienate students

other areas.

If the R2A and R2B courses are so essential to the development of immigrant students' college education, why is it then that the department has cut a section from the curriculum? With the influx of more Asian and Asian American students, shouldn't the university expand rather than shrink the Asian American Studies curriculum? "The University has not kept up with changing demographics," says Leong, "they should fund more of the classes that students need." One can look to the number of people on the waitlists to realize that many more students want to take the courses than are allowed. Another person who agrees with the idea of the

"The University has not kept up with changing demographics; they should fund more of the classes that students need."

spaces and the waitlists are filled to the limit. In order to meet the high demands for the Asian American Studies R2A and R2B series, seven to eight sections are also offered during the summer.

The roles of the R2A and R2B courses are essential within the university as a whole. These courses satisfy the R&C portion of the curriculum that is mandatory for most undergraduate students. Asian American students are particularly attracted to these courses because they can identify with the content of the material taught in class. Anna Leong teaches the R2A and R2B courses and believes that these courses are important because they help students find voice; a "keen sense of self by developing insight and sensitivity to his or her own experiences, ideas and feelings," and a way to express these ideas.

Another reason why Leong believes the R2A and R2B courses are important is

of color are already "marginalized and isolated in freshman English courses." "The R2A and R2B classes are personal courses that help students establish skills and a relationship to the University," says Leong. These freshman English courses are where "students can learn critical thinking skills and how to logically structure arguments." She is a strong believer that "freshman English is pivotal in helping students find their voice, and express their opinions and needs with confidence." Leong explains that "these classes are a safe place to develop these skills because we look at things from the same point of view and a lot of times the views of minorities aren't considered valid." Jean Ishibashi has also taught these courses and believes that R2A and R2B "do not censor or assimilate, but respects a way that does not censor or marginalize exposure to our history and ancestors, in an academic context." She

and reinforce feelings of inferiority. She believes that the R2A and R2B courses provide support to students who are from immigrant backgrounds and who may not have proficiency in English. "They are basically service courses to help undergrads" develop skills necessary to succeed in a competitive environment.

Leong believes that departments should not be penalized for offering service courses. Departments must allocate funds from their own budget to provide for these courses. "The University should have a separate fund to provide this service to students. All departments who offer these sorts of classes should be given a separate fund so that they will not be penalized." With the anticipated rise in student enrollment referred to as Tidal Wave II, a separate fund for service courses across the campus will not overburden departments financially, but allow them to allocate more money into

expansion of courses offered is Professor Ling-Chi Wang. As the former Chairman of the Ethnic Studies department and one of the seven Asian American Studies faculty members, he has played a key role in the Asian American Studies field. "If anything, I think we should be expanding rather than shrinking" the Asian American Studies curriculum, says Professor Wang. Asian American students have special needs on this campus. "If there is one need that Asian American students identify with besides with the problem of trying to address their own identity, it is with their communication." This, Professor Wang, Leong, and Ishibashi argue, is the reason why the R2A and R2B series should not be cut, but expanded in order to meet the increasingly high demand for those courses.

A recent survey of South Asian American youths regarding gender and sexuality revealed **disturbing disparities** in the needs of the group regarding **sexuality** and the **support** they received from their **community** by dharushana muthulingam

The study was carried out by UC Berkeley undergraduate Leena Samat as part of an honors thesis regarding sexuality in the South Asian youth community and was conducted as an anonymous nation-wide Internet survey of roughly 300 youths between ages 18-25, in college or recently graduated, with at least one parent of South Asian origin. The vast majority of respondents have lived in the US for 16 or more years.

By far the most unsettling results that emerged were that although 80% of female and 67% of male respondents felt dating violence affected the South Asian community, only 4.5% felt this community provided a “good network for sexual concern.”

A large part of this silence, suggests the study, is due to the “model minority” complex, an attempt on the part of the community to better assimilate itself and separate itself from other people of color. However, Samat criticizes this attempted screen against racism as “detrimental” to the South Asian community’s ability to acknowledge and respond to sexual violence.

The study focused on six categories: Lifestyle/Background, Exposure to Various Media, Body Image, Views on Gender Roles and Sexual Propriety, Sexual Experiences, and Experience with Sexual Violence. The study also focused on heterosexuality, though roughly 10% of respondents identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, innersex, queer, or unsure/undecided.

up and down female figures, as cameras commonly do.” For women, these forms of media reinforce the primacy of beauty as worth as well as “the notion that women in fact enjoy being looked at in this manner and will reciprocate the man’s sexual advances if he is persistent enough.”

A large number of women expressed dissatisfaction with their body, which appeared to be in line with “Euro-centric media imagery” and pressures of assimilation. Over half of females, and about 40% of males, have dieted and 15% of females have attempted some form of skin lightening. About 10% of female respondents reported either actual or inclinations toward eating disorders.

Interestingly, males tended generally to have more conservative views on gender and sexuality than women, although women tended to be harsher critics of the propriety of other women, perhaps illustrating the extent to which women have internalized both their own sexual oppression.

Both sexes seemed extensively assimilated into mainstream sexual practices. Roughly half of both males and females began dating before college, and about three quarters have engaged in sexual activity (“having engaged in anal, digital/ manual, oral, or penile-vaginal sex”), although females reported slightly higher percentages for both.

Experience of rape, incest, or sexual assault was reported by 13.3% of all respondents, almost a quarter of

There was also a significant correlation between women with poor body image and experience with sexual violence, though it was unclear whether the poor body image was the cause or result of such an experience, as eating disorders may be a form of coping, a way in which to gain control in the face of racism, sexism, homophobia, pressures of assimilation, and/or abuse.

All the results appear to implicate the “model minority” complex, in its pervasive silence, as highly detrimental to the South Asian community. The survey reveals a generation of youth in full practice of mainstream sexual practices and yet no network of support in which to address issues inherent to this. Results also conclude that traditional views of gender of both South Asian and mainstream culture actually complement each other, as both perpetuate patriarchal attitudes and harmful gender roles.

The study calls for a grassroots movement “to undermine the present paradigm of sexual relations.” Specifically, it calls upon the South Asian community to support progressive organizations that raise awareness and activism, as well as provide social services and support networks. It must develop “culturally sensitive mental health services, peer counseling, and mentoring.”

It also criticizes campus South Asian organizations for focusing on socialization rather than taking up the gaps that the South Asian family has proved inadequate in

A Model of Silence

The South Asian Communities’ Patriarchal Tradition and Struggle for Assimilation Contribute to Sexual Violence in Youth



Respondents, although appearing to have “mostly homogenous associations” (40% of females and 44% of males having “mostly South Asian friends”), largely reveal an overall assimilation into a so-called “liberal,” mainstream lifestyle. Almost three quarters consume alcohol (58% do so more than once a month), one quarter consume marijuana, and 41.3% attend 3 or more parties a month.

There was a notable difference between males and females as to the sources of media from which they received exposure to portrayals of sexuality. 83.5% of males watched pornography and a little over half of females read women’s magazines frequently. However from both sexes, about 40% watched Bollywood films and 44% watched over 10 hours of television weekly.

Significantly, all these forms of media play into perpetuating gender roles of the aggressive, over-sexed, insensitive male and the passive, vampy-yet-virtuous, emotional female. For men, Bollywood, pornography, and mainstream entertainment all imply “it is perfectly acceptable for them to visually pan

whom identified as queer or unsure of sexual orientation. About 21% of women reported experiencing “sexual violence,” but when questions more specifically delineated various forms of assault, numbers show 40.5% of women experiencing such. That is, experiencing sexual activity “despite the subject’s verbally or physically protesting, or being incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs.”

Of reported experiences from female rape victims, 70.8% were committed by other South Asians, and 83.3% were committed by someone known to the victim.

addressing, especially when college appears to be a time when youths are at highest risks for experiencing sexual violence within dating relationships. The study calls upon these organizations to educate its members regarding alcohol, drugs, and sexuality, as well as establish and maintain an open dialogue regarding such issues.

Online Results: <http://geocities.com/genderstudy/index.html>

the Racial Privacy Initiative



A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing by lael abaya

Reading the opening line of the Racial Privacy Initiative (RPI), a California ballot initiative slated for a vote in March 2004, it sounds like a description of social utopia – “The state shall not classify any individual by race, ethnicity, color or national origin in the operation of public education, public contracting or public employment.”

In essence, this initiative would ban all California state agencies from collecting information by race, ethnicity, color, or national origin in the operation of public education, public contracting or public employment. The language of the Initiative does allow for some exceptions.

I recall an instance last spring of an older African American man standing outside my local Wal-Mart who was collecting signatures so that RPI could qualify for the November ballot. He announced loudly, “End Racism! Sign this petition!”

Thus, it is not surprising to find that initial opinion polls find that Californians support this initiative. A Field Institute Poll released in May of 2002 found that RPI had polled relatively well among a wide array of groups - Republicans, Democrats, women, even Latinos and Blacks had indicated that they would support the passage of RPI.

However if people truly understood Connerly's latest proposition, then intelligent, socially-conscious citizens

would not blithely support this initiative. This is not a matter of racial “privacy,” preferences, unneeded classification, or government-endorsed racism as the proponents say. This initiative eliminates valuable segments of racial and ethnic data that is crucial in this state.

The data that Connerly proposes to eliminate is more widely used than commonly discussed: including the illustration of racial disparities; for instance, that black and Latino high school dropout rates are significantly higher than white and Asian students. However, this data is also used in countless other ways, for example as the basis of public health campaigns. When a communicable disease breaks out in a community, state-collected data helps public health workers know what cultural issues they might face, what language to write their educational material, and where to place them in order to halt the spread of the disease. Both cases employ invaluable information that helps inform public policy decisions in the state.

The proponents of this initiative argue that the initiative's exemptions will safeguard legitimate uses of race. However, from the language of the initiative, scores of crucial information would still be eliminated. For instance in public health, the exemptions “medical research subjects,” and “patients” does not include healthy people not part of

specific medical studies. It does not include information that the state collects when every baby is born, or when every person dies. It should be noted that California's Health and Human Services Agency is not exempt. Therefore, epidemiology, the analysis of disease prevention, would be decimated. This threatens to be a universal public health problem, not just in communities of color. For example, white males are linked to high prostate cancer rates and white females are more prone to breast cancer.

Proponents also claim that California's government does not need to collect data on race because the US Census already serves that function. However, the US Census cannot address the plethora of issues Californians face. Not only does the US Census have to deal with the data collection of the entire country, but it cannot guarantee that it will even ask the right questions that are relevant in solving California's problems. Since the US census occurs every 10 years, Californians would also have to wait 10 long years to address any sort of problems- - making any attempts at a solution feeble.

RPI also implies that racial data is of little use in a state that is the most diverse in the country. But as a student

continued on page 15

represent!

asian pacific americans, GET OUT THE VOTE

by: jack song

UC Berkeley's Asian Political Association (APA), with sponsorship from Assemblymember Wilma Chan, is currently hosting a campus-wide voter registration targeting Asian American students.

After last March's Abercrombie & Fitch controversy with its racist t-shirt designs, the fervor and political activism from these young Asian American students caught both the media's and the California Asian American Legislative Caucus' attention. The Caucus, which is comprised of Assemblymember George Nakano, Wilma Chan, Judy Chu, and Carol Liu, wants the next generation to be politically involved.

“Being politically involved means participating in things you are passionate about,” said Chan, “and most importantly, it means voicing your opinion.”

The Caucus' concern has led to the collaboration effort of APA and other Asian American interest groups to organize a month-long voter registration drive. The event kicked off “A Political Puzzlement” a panel discussion on Asian American political empowerment. Special panelists include Assemblymember Wilma Chan (D-Oakland) and Cecilia Chang, founder of www.WenHoLee.org.

The goal for this voter registration drive is to register 1,500 students on campus. APA's voter registration drive is the biggest attempt to register an under-represented ethnic group in an educational setting by a student

organization. Volunteers have been conducting voter-education programs in the Political Science, Asian American Studies, and Ethnic Studies department.

According to the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) in 2000, the percentage of young people who vote continues to drop. The “participation-optional” is the attitude most young Americans have about voting. Their lack of political involvement reinforces many politicians' neglect to target the young generation who represent a small portion of the voter population.

“Not registering [to vote] is like having duct-tape on your mouth,” said sophomore Cherry Ordoñez.

The 9-11 incident has catalyzed a series of racial discrimination and crimes against South Asian Americans. Syed Mahmood, who is currently running for California's 13th Congressional District, which covers Alameda and Santa Clara counties, has faced discrimination since the inception of campaign. His campaign posters have been vandalized, and his office has received several harassment calls. The anti-immigrant sentiment is so strong that any ethnic minority can be the target of bigotry and hatred. Through increased registration there can be increased representation of minorities into public office as well as educating America about its racial diversity and race-related issues.

Students who wish to participate may fill out a short voter registration form at the Asian Political Association table on Sproul until October 21st, the last day to register for the November 5th Election.

For more information, please visit APA at: <http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~apa>.

Anyone who follows the lively online discussions among Eurasians (those of mixed Caucasian and Asian descent) will get the distinct impression that many of them are singularly attracted to their own kind. Messages proclaiming the latest local “hapa sighting” and exalting the newest Eurasian starlet can be found in abundance. The two excerpts above, for example, were taken from real postings in the [Relationships Forum](http://disc.server.com/Indices/184660.html) [<http://disc.server.com/Indices/184660.html>] at EurasianNation.com [<http://www.eurasiannation.com>], an online magazine and community for Eurasians.

“I went clubbing on Saturday and the first guy that caught my eye looked like he was [a] Chinese/Caucasian mix . . . I left early, and as I left, I saw him looking straight at me. Pity, I was leaving. Damn . . .”

“I completely understand your ‘hapa barren’ problem! There is NO ONE of any form of mixed raced descent where I live! No wonder why I am [the] bloody freak-show! Hawaii is a good place to move to for some hapa hotties isn’t it?”

As it turns out, these are more than perceptions. EurasianNation’s informal online survey of 166 Eurasian singles shows that although Eurasians are admirably open-minded about interracial dating, a surprisingly large number wish they could meet and date more Eurasians.

Of those surveyed, 45% said that given the choice, they would rather date a Eurasian than an individual of any other ethnic background. Furthermore, 68% said they wished they could meet more Eurasians for romantic purposes. That number soared to 81% among

respondents not in a committed relationship at the time of the survey.

“If I see a Eurasian . . . 9 times out of 10 just by looking at them I’m attracted,” wrote one young Eurasian woman. “And you just really wish that somehow . . . in some circumstance you could get to know this guy . . . maybe it’s just natural . . . but you can’t beat that feeling.”

But many Eurasians are not just engaging in wishful thinking. Almost half (48%) of those surveyed have at one time or another dated a Eurasian. Even among the respondents who live in North America, a whopping 45% answered in the affirmative to the question “In the past, have you ever dated a Eurasian?” This is a remarkably high percentage, considering that there is no natural social community among Eurasian Americans, that they make up only 0.3% of the United States’ population, and that — as one Eurasian male so eloquently put it — “they are as rare as rocking horse manure!”

It would appear, then, that Eurasians are actively seeking each other out. Physical appearance is certainly a motivator (“I tend to be more attracted to hapas than to others,” wrote one Eurasian woman), but most respondents also talked about an “unspoken shared understanding”

that they would not be able to find with any other ethnicity.

“Generally the women I end up dating for more than one date . . . do not ask me what I am on the first date [or] patronize my half Asian ethnicity,” explained one Eurasian man. “Therefore I wish I could meet more Eurasian women. The two girls I dated in the past at least understood.”

Even some of our youngest respondents felt this innate connection. “The majority of people I’ve been with have been Eurasian,” wrote one teenage girl. “My longest relationships have been with Eurasians. I have no reasons for this but I have noticed that Eurasians seem to ‘get’ each other. And I base who I go for on who I connect with well. People of other races I’ve been with never understood what I was talking about when it came to things about identity frustrations.”

Since identity issues are so crucial to Eurasians, it is not surprising that many look for partners who are open-minded and culturally aware. “I’m turned off by guys that are clueless about issues surrounding race and ethnicity and I don’t even consider them as romantic possibilities,” wrote one young gay man.

Many of the survey respondents agree that cultural awareness is far more important than race and ethnicity. “It’s very important to me that a possible boyfriend knows both my backgrounds so he can understand my behavior, feelings and reactions better,” explained one Eurasian woman. “So actually it isn’t that important where this guy comes from as long as he’s open-minded and preferably knows/experienced both of my cultures.”

But while cultural awareness is important to Eurasians, many of those surveyed expressed concern that identity issues would overshadow other aspects of themselves. “I find that being racially mixed seems to provide a good base for long conversations while on dates,” wrote one young man. “As interesting [as] it is as a topic, I sometimes worry that it becomes such a big deal that the person I’m with will start to think too much about my ethnicity rather than focus on my personality and the whole of me.”

This woman put it even more bluntly: “I feel as though guys here [in Japan] are looking at me and want to date me BECAUSE I am mixed rather than that being one of the factors. I then try to make sure that my partner is someone that isn’t just in it for the exotic quality or what-not of me being half-Japanese.”

If there was one single concern that the survey respondents shared, it was the dread of being exoticized. Some wrote about being the object of an Asian fetish: “Even though most people think I look more white than Chinese, some guys I have dated have had the ever-dreaded Asian fetish . . . although they were in denial.” Others found that fetish existed even beyond the realm of white men: “A lot of fetishists from both sides try to kick it to me . . . so I think I’m extremely careful with whom I choose to date.”

Being exoticized has led to heartbreak among some. “It has ended many relationships because on the surface I look exotic and approachable but beyond that guys often don’t care about who I really am,” wrote one young woman. Another woman wrote about “being fetishized by white men because I am half Japanese and my not realizing it and falling for it and dating duds. And because I am not a typical

continued on page 15

Biracial Asians Break From Family Tradition

Their parents may have crossed color lines for love, but many biracial Asians would rather date their own kind. Those are the findings of EurasianNation.com’s first annual dating survey.

by carmen van kerckhove



You Call This Justice?



by annabel r. chang

Cambodian Americans Deported By The U.S.

What's Going Down

Early this summer, six Cambodian Americans arrived in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh, in shackles. These men were the first group of more than 1,400 Cambodians residing in the U.S., who will be forcibly “repatriated” to Cambodia. These 1,400 Cambodians are facing the consequences of the 9-11 anti-immigrant backlash. Currently the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), is citing an esoteric 1996 law as just cause to deport thousands of immigrant Cambodians back to their country of origin.

Politics of Policy

The passage of the 1996 Immigration and Welfare Reform Act allows all non-citizen immigrants, who have been convicted of an aggravated felony, as subject to mandatory deportation. The definition of an “aggravated felony” was expanded under this new legislation to include such non-violent crimes as check fraud, possession of marijuana, and shoplifting. The IMWR Act is retroactive, which makes it possible for the United States to deport resident aliens for crimes committed before 1996, even if the crime would not have qualified as an “aggravated felony” prior to 1996.

Moreover, all of the Cambodians subject to deportation have already served their prison sentences within the United States. After having served their prison terms, scores of these resident “aliens” are now being held in detention centers for an indeterminate period of time. These individuals will remain in the detention centers until the INS judges whether they are deportable or not. Thus, these individuals are essentially being punished twice for the same crime. In American legal terms, this sort of treatment can clearly be construed as “double jeopardy.” So far, all of the individuals that have been deported lacked any legal defense.

In a legal system that is discriminatory towards the poor, uneducated, and people of color, Southeast Asians are disproportionately targeted for crimes by the U.S. justice system. With the enactment of the IMWR Act, the discrimination of our justice system becomes even more glaring.

Presently, 80% of Southeast Asians live in linguistic isolation, making it even more difficult to educate Southeast Asians about their rights as American immigrants. Without the knowledge of the American legal system, Southeast Asians are vulnerable to injustice and discrimination.

Furthermore, the Southeast Asian community has the highest poverty rate of any ethnic group within the United States. Instead of attempting to restore and aid these communities, the United States has chosen to criminalize and expel our fellow Asian/Pacific Islander Americans.

The 9-11 crackdown has involved a growing intolerance for immigrant groups. In March 2002, the United States and Cambodia conducted a series of secret negotiations, in the US finally extracted from Cambodia, a “Memorandum of Understanding.” This Memorandum calls for Cambodia to accept all Cambodian deportees from the United States.

Several senior Cambodian officials said Cambodia was under intense pressure to sign the Memorandum. Since the United States is such an influential world power, Cambodian officials saw that a failure to sign the Memorandum could result in the U.S. blocking efforts of the Cambodian government to obtain much needed World Bank and International Monetary Fund assistance.

life outside of refugee camps and the United States. Almost all of these deportees will not have familial networks in Cambodia, and many of them are unable to speak Khmer. These deportees will once again arrive in a country without money, family, and job skills.

What Can You Do?

Currently Asian American organizations across the United States are mobilizing to stop this attack on our Southeast Asian American communities. The national campaign against Southeast Asian refugee deportation website is (www.searc.org). Take the time to sign the petition online—let your government know that you disagree with its policies! Also, mark your calendars for the National Day of Action, which has been set for November 8th.

One of the most vocal Bay Area groups fighting this Cambodian deportation is: API FORCE (www.apiforce.org). API FORCE is combating this ignorance by mobilizing educational teach-ins, printing informational pamphlets in Khmer, and providing a telephone hotline for those in fear of deportation. API FORCE is also looking into legal avenues for challenging the Cambodian deportations. To get involved in the Bay Area campaign for the National Day of Action, contact API FORCE at: seadep@apiforce.org.

Even on our UC Berkeley campus, student groups are beginning to mobilize around the Cambodian Deportation. The Southeast Asian Student Coalition (SASC) is in the process of organizing Berkeley students to protest these deportations. For more information about how you can get involved on our own campus, email: sasc_info@uclink.berkeley.edu.

Get involved. As sons and daughters of immigrants, or immigrants ourselves, we have to help our brothers and sisters suffering discrimination, criminalization, and deportation. We must remember that the greatest weapon we can wield is education and awareness. It is necessary that we educate our communities of their legal rights within the American judicial system. The deportations are not an event isolated to the Cambodian experience, it is an experience shared by all immigrant communities alike.

“...these individuals are essentially being punished twice for the same crime.”

The Cold War & its Chilling Effects

Cambodian deportees forced to return to Cambodia once fled from the nation as refugees from the Khmer Rouge’s genocidal regime. From the Secret War in Laos to the Vietnam War, the unbearable living conditions that caused the plight of refugees were directly due to United States military intervention. During the 1980-90’s, there were 145,000 Cambodians that sought sanctuary in the United States—many of whom have not yet finished the paperwork to become citizens.

Now, the United States has seemingly forgotten that the plight of Southeast Asian refugees is one that the U.S. is evidently responsible for. Instead of taking responsibility, the U.S. is choosing to throw out its “burdens.”

“To send our community members back implies a rescinding of [US] accountability. . . in Southeast Asia and of the responsibility the US has for Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants,” remarks Loan Dao, a community organizer for API FORCE.

At present, many of these refugees slated for deportation back to Southeast Asia have never known a

"It is the academicians who have been using race in an obscene matter that's now coming to light . . . It is the academicians who gave birth to . . . the proliferation of ethnic studies programs which sometimes amount to segregated curricula."

These words were written in a letter to then President Clinton by UC Regent Ward Connerly in 1997, during the controversy of affirmative action in UC admissions and hiring procedures. A year later he would demand a review of all Ethnic studies programs in the UC system, questioning their "educational value" and seeking to affirm their validity as something more than a "political correctness mind set."

Connerly's criticisms are representative of a more widespread wariness of the academic legitimacy of Ethnic Studies and related programs. These questions and criticisms have followed these departments and pursuits since their inception in the sixties.

Here at Berkeley, Ethnic Studies was established in 1969 as a department within which were four independent programs: African American, Asian American, Chicano, and Native American Studies. The endeavor succeeded, but the traditionally-minded criticized the interdisciplinary approach as undisciplined, and the department had little influence on the status quo of staunch tradition. Some critics went so far as to accuse the endeavor as heralding the deconstruction of Western Civilization.

Yet in the face of this, the departments and their scholarly pursuits thrived, boasting brilliant scholars and enthusiastic support by students and teachers. Many praised a reorientation away from Eurocentric tradition, and giving forum and legitimacy to voices so long denied and overlooked. Study and research of ethnicity and race at the university level could ask the thus far unasked, perhaps disturbing, questions. It could seek to understand the communities of America and our national identity, as well as contribute to the pursuit of multiethnic social justice.

However, recent years have seen an upsurge in accusations and blasts at the academic legitimacy of ethnic studies (as well as gender studies, that has always run a parallel fate over the decades) in the same tone as Connerly.

this, and were overemphasized and received too much attention.

Proponents of Ethnic studies courses and pursuits have felt all of the accusations to be complete misconceptions.

Professor Barbara Christian of UC Berkeley's Afro American Studies has noted that in her twenty plus years of teaching here, her classes have reflected the utmost diversity, including "white students, students from Bangladesh, African American students, Latinos. They take our class because the history and culture and experience of African Americans are central to an understanding of our country and our hemisphere." Ethnic Studies 41 has seen enrollment numbers from 400 to 700 students. At the University of Michigan, half of the 1500 students taking black studies each year are white.

Additionally the research and study of race and race relations have supported and enriched countless other academic fields, as well as areas outside the academia, claim supporters.

Cries of courses being mere politically correct rhetoric are dismissed as entirely unfounded. Many academics regard UC Berkeley's Ethnic Studies and related programs as among the top departments in the nation. Prof. Ronald Takaki, invited as a fellow into the prestigious Society of American Historians as a scholar who has "re-shaped the study of American history," acknowledges there are indeed "politically shrill" types, but they were not at all representative of the many academically serious multiculturalists. He asks any critic to attend his classes or read his books so "they would clearly see then that Ethnic Studies is a serious field of scholarship."

As to the accusations of these pursuits being a source of racial division, "Ethnic Studies did not invent American racial categories or institutional racism," stated Berkeley department grad students in a response to Connerly. It

has always "promoted an understanding of society through an analysis of race that opposes racism, rather than supporting it."

Takaki, who includes in his scholarship and teaching ethnic minorities such as the Irish and Jews, strives to teach "the ways the paths

Ethnic Studies Under Blast

Are Criticisms of Academic Legitimacy themselves Lacking Independent Credibility?

by: dharushana muthulingam

Chief among accusations in the scholarly legitimacy of these studies were not only that of courses being nothing more than "ethnic cheerleading," but of going as far as inciting ethnic and racial hatred, and self-segregation.

"If students who take these courses emerge more frustrated and more race-conscious than they were when they entered the university, that's cause for concern," blasted Connerly in his demand for a review.

Furthermore critics claim these studies only appeal to those students of those respective ethnicities and had no broader appeal. Connerly claimed to have sat in these courses himself, and reported "for the most part, the only students in them are black and brown." Dinesh D'Souza, prolific critic of American higher education, accused multicultural activists as "producing not a truly diverse community, but balkanized, race-conscious, tribal enclaves."

Students who lack interest in ever taking courses in Ethnic Studies often cite similar reasons. A Korean American third year philosophy student felt these classes would be irrelevant to her life as she could recall no "explicit racial strife." She also felt it created divisions: "I want to think of myself as an American and in these classes that's usually equated with whiteness."

An Iranian American political science student echoed sentiments of division. "I came to Berkeley excited about the diversity and looking forward to learning from various cultures, but everyone breaks off into their cliques." These studies, she felt, exacerbated

of different groups have crisscrossed one another in the making of our society, economy, and nation" so as to "bring us together across borders of ethnicity and race."

However, misconceptions or no, Ethnic Studies programs still face struggles. Over recent years, budget cuts added to a freeze on the hiring and replacement of faculty, revealing a pattern of neglect. These culminated to a breaking point in 1998, in which student demonstrations eventually succeeded in eliciting an administrative response. But angry proponents maintained damage had been done, as neglect expressed a sort of hostile environment that saw the loss of faculty and illustrated the University's lack of confidence and support for the programs.

However, there is an entirely other facet to the story, the broad sweeping picture of what some scholars have dubbed "the culture wars."

Many have noted a sort of "media blitz against higher education," as framed by English professor Gregory Jay of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, a media occupied so fervently with belligerent criticisms against multiculturalism,

immigration, educational reform and feminism.

Delving deeper into the matter reveals a shady underbelly, with sources of funding for many of the loudest and noted critics, including Connerly, Bloom, D'Souza, Cheney, and several others, being extensively drawn from conservative think tanks and foundations—

continued on page 14

the Legitimacy of Asian American Studies

Is Asian American Studies doomed to fail, despite its popularity with many students here at Berkeley? by miguel de leon

The Asian American Studies Program seemed to have reached a plateau soon after its inception on campus. Since then, the program struggled to survive, in constant competition with other departments under the umbrella of the Ethnic Studies Department. Out of the top twenty universities in the nation, however, only Berkeley has a major in the field. What is hindering the further advancement of this department? Is it the administration, is it the course content, is it the students? All of these reasons, partly. But looming in the background is the question of legitimacy that envelops the entire Ethnic Studies Department, especially in the branch of Asian American Studies.

Curricular legitimacy is one of the main issues that arises when discussing the future of Asian American Studies. There has been significant movement in the past to pronounce the courses in the major as “academically sound” and not “mere political rhetoric” to ensure that the readings are intellectually stimulating and the writing just as challenging, if not even more so, than those offered by the top English courses in the university. There was no precedent to the program’s creation, therefore making its course offerings suspect: are they part of an acceptable curriculum that defines what Asian American Studies should cover?

According to the Letters & Science handbook, Asian-American Studies “focuses on the Asian American cultural and historical experience in the United States, covering the evolution of social, political, and economic institutions of Asian American communities and their relationship to the larger American society. The Asian American Studies program offers a unified and comprehensive curriculum that seeks to...

prepare students for positions of service and leadership in the Asian American communities, . . . explores the hitherto neglected aspects of Asians in America, . . . [and] broadens the curriculum at Berkeley to include the instruction that reflects the conditions of Asians living in America.” The addition of the American Cultures Requirement in 1989 helped achieve these goals – at least in part because of the wider range of students who began taking courses (although most of the students in the department are Asian American). But the question still remains: is it legitimate?

Does the race of the professors matter in this debate?

It sounds like a silent affirmation on the administration’s part that it does. Since the professors themselves are Asian American it is implied that they have a natural bias on affairs concerning the course material, that they cannot be objective about material concerning Asians because they *are* Asians. So is it the same when it comes to white professors teaching European History? The students are also a huge factor; since most of them are primarily Asian American, it seems as if the courses are geared toward only Asian Americans.

What makes a major a “major” in the first place? Is there a progression from being a departmental minor to a departmental major, or do majors just sprout up and declare themselves majors (no pun intended)? A major becomes recognized by the University when the coursework is equal to that of another, through direct student pressure, and through recognition of the program when compared to other schools in the nation. When African American Studies became its own department in the 1970s as a direct result of student pressure and lobbying, there was a sentiment of “selling out” among the other programs then entrenched in the Ethnic Studies department. It seemed unfair for the Asian, Chicano, and Native Americans who felt cheated out of a higher educational access pool. Upon advancement of one division, the University ultimately placed a

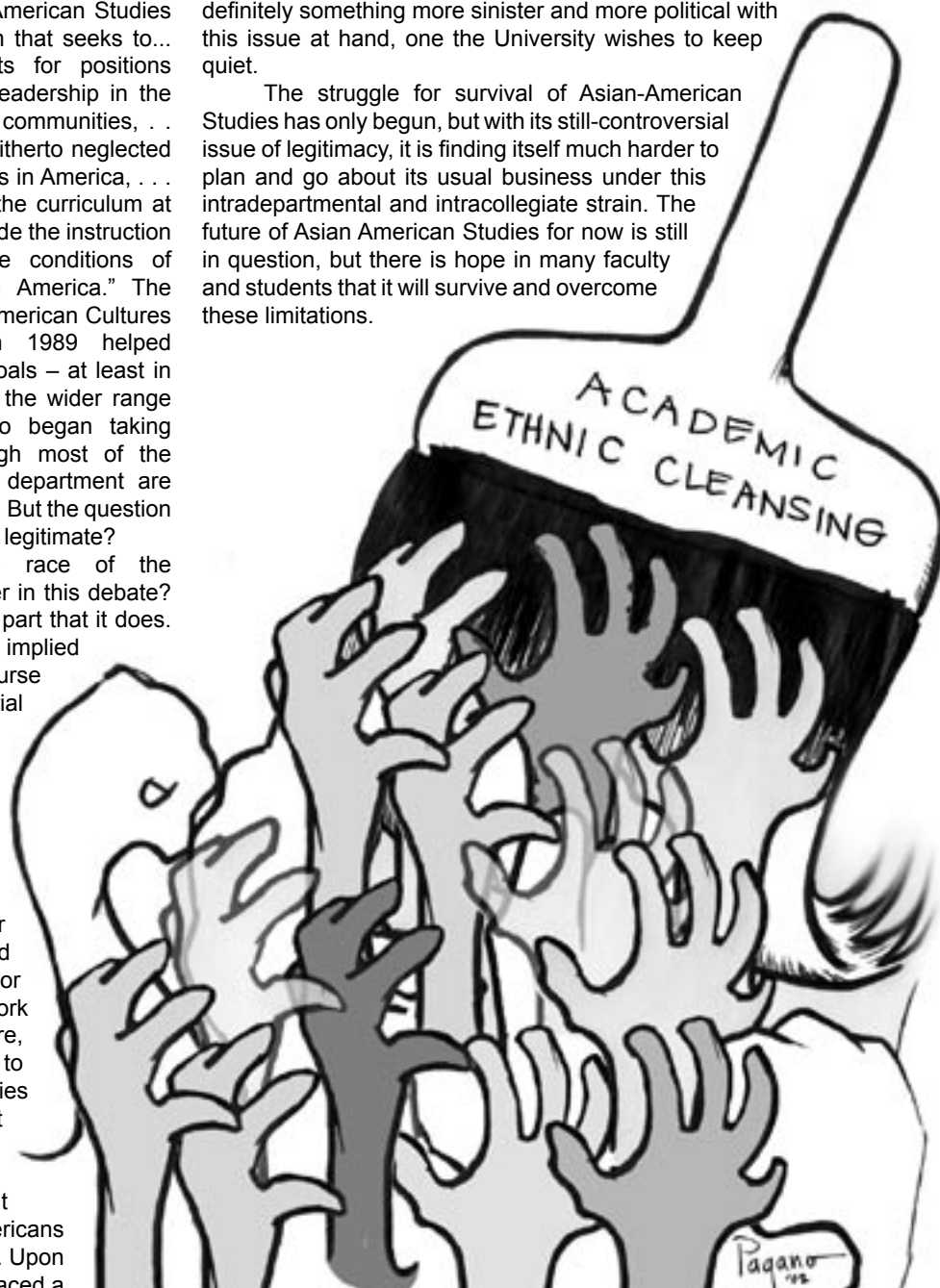
glass ceiling on all the others.

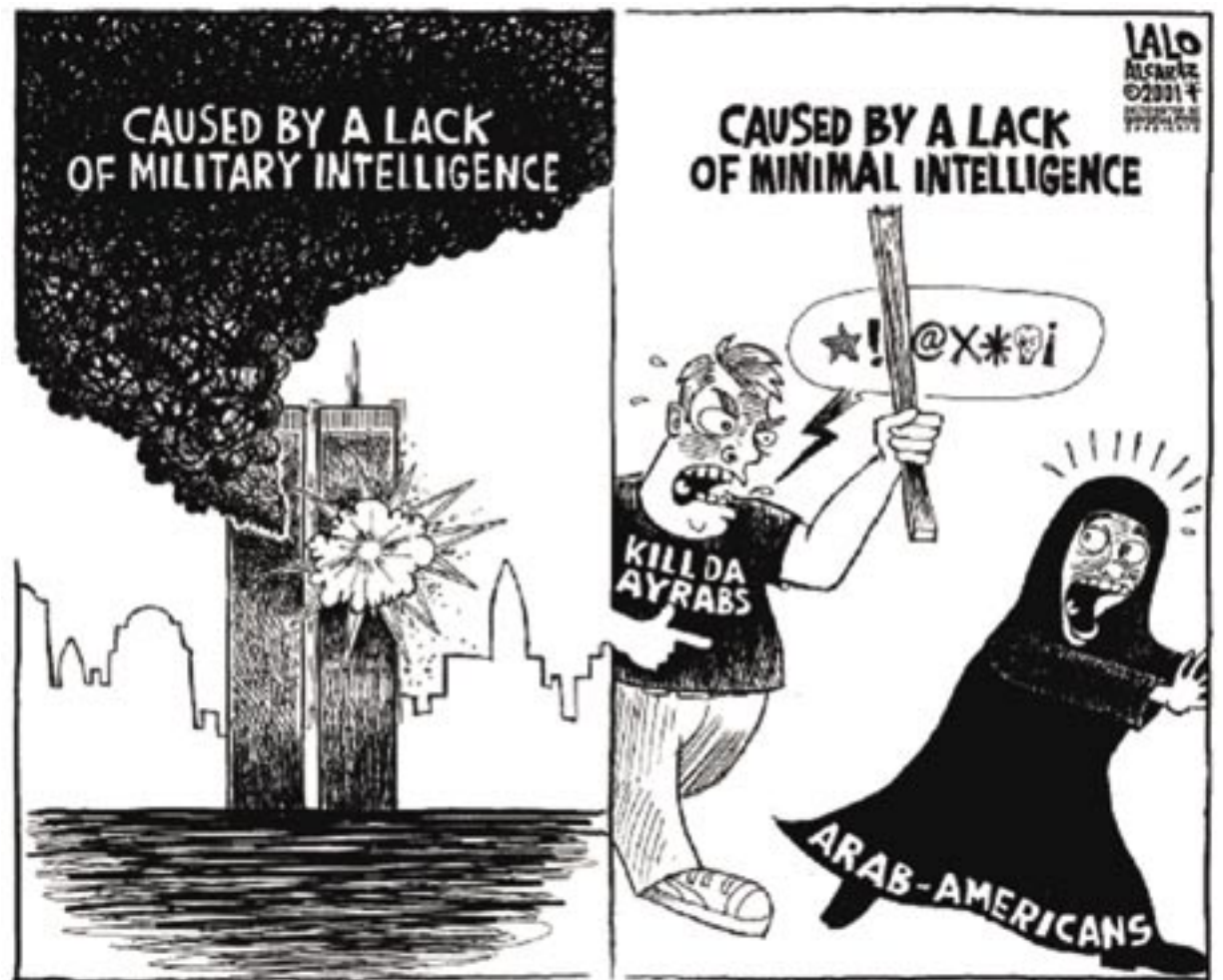
Enormous student pressure on the administration led to the creation of the program in the first place in the late 1960s, but there has been no significant or marked progress since then. The tenure-track faculty has hovered from five to seven, but compared to the booming program in UCLA which began in 1970 (modeled after Berkeley’s program), and has about seventy, it is a meager comparison. And with its growing popularity among undergraduate students seeking alternatives to fulfill their American Cultures Requirement, the Asian American Studies Program is definitely going backwards with one section of its R2A/R2B course getting cut from the schedule and therefore limiting its outreach to the general student body.

Along with the \$30M UC-wide budget cut approved by the state about three weeks ago, and with fears of the program becoming severely underfunded in the near future, is the Asian American Studies Program doomed to obscurity? The response has been a vehement “no.” Professors and students alike see a future for Asian American Studies – to be a department in and of itself, and later hopefully offer more majors under the Asian American Studies Department. But in the immediate present, the program is finding itself fumbling for funds in competition with other programs in the Ethnic Studies Department. There is definitely something more sinister and more political with this issue at hand, one the University wishes to keep quiet.

The struggle for survival of Asian-American Studies has only begun, but with its still-controversial issue of legitimacy, it is finding itself much harder to plan and go about its usual business under this intradepartmental and intracollegiate strain. The future of Asian American Studies for now is still in question, but there is hope in many faculty and students that it will survive and overcome these limitations.

Does the race of the professors matter in this debate? It sounds like a silent affirmation on the administration’s part that it does.





Twin Tragedies

UC Berkeley Students

Commemorate Victims of Ignorance by pierre lee

Hate crimes against South Asian and Middle Eastern Americans have become an epidemic in this country, fueled by irresponsible media coverage and the Bush administration's politically motivated scaremongering.

The loss of life suffered by innocent human beings, the families forever separated, the businesses destroyed, and the terror that took over the human spirit makes September 11th an event that forced us to question what we call our humanity.

Imagery of heroic firefighters, supportive leaders, and patriotic jingoism has been dominating the media during this one-year anniversary, but one image seems to have been forgotten.

Vasudev Patel, a recent immigrant, was shot while working an early morning shift in his Mesquite, Texas gas station. The last words he heard were "God bless America," as his killer fired a .44 caliber bullet into his chest. "Sometimes I wish there was a reset button in life," his son cried, "to fix the problems in life. I could tell people not to go to the towers. And my father would be here" (Washington Post, 9/13/02). The Patel family, however, was

not asked to share their story on national TV. Nor is there a charitable fund to aid his family in their time of grief. Rather, Vasudev's wife, Alka, was forced to return to work, selling convenience items standing behind the same counter where her husband was murdered days earlier.

The attacks on the Twin Towers awoke a new face of ignorance, one that is familiar to many in this country, and has yet been vastly ignored by the general public in this new era of American nationalism. Hate crimes against South Asian and Middle Eastern Americans have become an epidemic in this country, fueled by irresponsible media coverage and the Bush administration's politically motivated scaremongering. This victimization was the topic of a forum co-sponsored by the Alliance for Humanitarianism in Modern South Asia (AHIMSA), the Asian Pacific Council, the Muslim Student Association, and the Sikh Student Association on September 11, 2002.

The event began with a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks as well as the backlash that followed. Ankur Agarwal, a representative from the South Asian American Leaders of Tomorrow (SAALT) then introduced "Raising Our Voices," a documentary

produced by SAACT. "Raising Our Voices" discussed the history of hate crimes against South Asian Americans before and after 9/11. The film brought attention to the fact that hate crimes among South Asians have been on the rise in recent years, making South Asian Americans the most targeted group within the Asian American community.

Afterwards, a thought-provoking panel comprised of UC Berkeley Asian American Studies professor Jane Singh, Dr. Agha Saeed, the founder and National Chairman of the American Muslim Alliance, and Jaideep Singh, the founder of the Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force, spoke on the historical roots of the issues highlighted in the documentary as well as their contemporary political implications.

Singh, whose scholarship focuses largely on the history of the South Asian immigrant experience, noted that South Asians have been under attack by nativist ideologies since their arrival over a century ago. "[The new South Asian immigrants] found that they were in the midst of a virulent anti-Asian campaign," Professor Singh explained. "They soon came under siege by hostile coworkers and nativists who were alarmed by yet another Asian group arriving in the US." Recounting

the physical attacks and other racially motivated crimes committed against South Asians during these early times of immigration, Singh continued to explain how this xenophobia manifests itself within modern times, in groups such as the Dotbusters, an anti-South Asian group based in New Jersey that was prominent in the 1980's. Moreover, Dr. Singh emphasized the curious position of an often celebrated American "diversity," which believes the fact that minority groups have and continue to experience bigotry. This is perhaps best exemplified by the brutal murder of Vincent Chin, a Chinese American who was mistakenly identified as Japanese by his killers during the climax of what was perceived by many as an economic threat from the Japanese automobile industry in the early 1980s.

Dr. Agha Saeed, founder and National Chairman of the American Muslim Alliance, continued on this theme of prejudice, and specifically its institutionalization, as he remarked, "For instance, [the] treatment of Johnny Walker Lindh versus Jose Padilla, both American citizens, both having converted to Islam, but treated totally differently by the US Justice Department, one being a white man, [the] other being a brown man." Saeed stressed the importance of unity in opposing these blatantly undemocratic practices, "There are many forces within the civil society who have come forward and they have created common cause with people of color." Focusing on the civil rights movement, which often goes unacknowledged by other minorities, including South Asian Americans, Saeed continued, "I think the most notable has been the African American community." Through "coalitions between immigrants and indigenous peoples," it is imperative that we pressure our nation's leaders to not merely praise diversity, but to actively uphold its ideals through public policy.

Jaideep Singh examined how the new racially-charged connotations of the word terrorist, a term irresponsibly thrown around by both politicians and the media alike, regenerates sentiments of hate within the general population." The blatant racism behind this characterization [of the Muslim terrorist]. . . can be gleaned from the complete dearth of depictions of the perpetrators of the Oklahoma City bombing, bombers of medical clinics that provide abortion services, murderers of doctors who provide abortions, and members of white militia groups as 'Christian terrorists.'" He emphasized that the prejudice inherent in this inconsistency must be overcome before the United States can truly claim to treat

its citizens equally. Singh went on to discuss the perception of Sikh Americans by the general public, noting that, "The religious background of Sikh Americans provides an additional access of evident difference for Americans, whose racially informed logic prevented the recognition of followers of the Sikh faith as fellow Americans." It is this narrow conception of the "American" that continues to create hostility between minority groups and the majority culture throughout the United States.

The speakers and students attending Twin Tragedies emphasized that the most powerful weapon against hate is a unified voice for tolerance. It is unacceptable for our communities to remain passive in the face of hate violence directed towards any group. Sameer Hassan, AHIMSA Executive Committee member, remarked, "South Asians as a whole have stood by and watched as other ethnic communities, primarily African Americans and Chicanos, have been the primary targets of prejudice. We must end this cycle of apathy. It is only by working together that we can overcome these barriers to equality." Nithan Sannappa, the AHIMSA General Secretary, added, "The South Asian community itself is fractured upon religious, regional and lingual lines. If progress is ever to be made, we must confront our own hypocrisies, with the goal of bridging our differences and creating a unified front."

One of the most memorable moments of the evening was Dr. Saeed's recital of an address by Woodrow Wilson concerning Americans of foreign descent, "I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellow men," Wilson stated. "He has lost the touch and ideal of America, for America was created to unite mankind by those passions which lift and not by the passions which separate and debase." Let September 11th, 2002 mark the resurgence of this ideal, not of a racist nativism or xenophobia, but of a true American patriotism.

More information about this event, including video highlights, is available at <http://ahimsa.berkeley.edu>.

"The new racially-charged connotations of the word terrorist, a term irresponsibly thrown around by both politicians and the media alike, regenerates sentiments of hate within the general population."



Professor Jane Singh traces the history of Anti-Asian sentiment in the United States (left). Jaideep Singh of the Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force implores the audience to be actively critical of the media's portrayal of minorities.



Linkin Park's Mike Shinoda sports Drunkmunky shirts on and off stage.

What's YOUR Style?

Drunkmunky incorporates Kung-Fu philosophies into mainstream fashion

by gloria kim

I remember going to a Linkin Park concert a few years back and admiring Mike Shinoda's red t-shirt. The design on the shirt was very distinct—it had an urban, street, core vibe. I'd eventually notice the whole band regularly wore t-shirts and caps with a similar design philosophy, which included "blocko" Bruce Lee graphics and even monkeys dressed in black belts poised to kick some ass. Only much later I'd find the creator of this hip line of Asian-influenced clothing to be the company Drunkmunky.

Drunkmunky is the mastermind of four Korean American kung-fu movie fans who, overnight, came up with the idea to create an Asian-inspired clothing line. They based their company's philosophy around old school kung-fu philosophies and a desire to create cool clothing that would reflect themselves. The company name popped up during a brainstorming session and its unconventional spelling was an aesthetic choice that would aptly fit the vision for the company.

Drunkmunky (DM) has gained an intense following among teenagers and college students all over the nation. DM's design approach is also garnering an international following in the U.K., Australia, Canada, Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. Part of this following includes artists sponsored by DM, such as Linkin Park, Cypress Hill, Method Man, Xzibit, and

world-class surfer Kainoa McGee. When asked if DM consciously seeks out Asian Americans to sponsor, DM representative Paul Kim responded, "Although we don't consciously just go out and seek bands with Asian Americans specifically, the fact that Mike and Joe (of Linkin Park) were in the band definitely gave us more reasons to support them." Recently, DM has also begun to sponsor Jin, the new Chinese American MC signed to DMX's Ruff Ryders label.

Drunkmunky's rising popularity has additionally inspired an expansion in their product line. Recently, they unveiled their Spring Collection—an offering of shorts, polo shirts, button-up wovens, denims, and jackets in addition to their tees, hats, hoodies, and beanies. This coming February, they plan to unveil a full Fall Collection of thirty pieces and—hopefully—Drunkmunky for women.

Drunkmunky's innovative designs and focus on individualistic freedom appeals to the young urban consumer. But perhaps setting it apart from every other clothing company selling individuality for \$18 a t-shirt, DM also has the express mission to "expose the 'drunkn' nature in the hearts and souls of every individual willing to realize it." And of course, it can't hurt that cool bands like Linkin Park sport their gear.

In addition to having starred in the overly beefy Old Navy commercials and being named one of *Cosmopolitan's* Fun, Fearless Females, *The View's* Lisa Ling now plans to get a piece of the magazine action with the development of an Asian lifestyle magazine for English speakers. If your spider sense is kicking into high gear, it has good reason.

True, Ling has garnered enough of Barbara Walters' respect enough to win a place on the same couch, but this couch is hardly exclusive. Let us not overlook the short-lived Debbie Matenopolous stint—a lapse in sound judgment for sure.

Ling, born in Sacramento, began her career reporting in high school for *Scratch*, a teen magazine show. Her exposure and experience led her to a position as an international correspondent for Channel One News, allowing her to go to the far reaches of the globe. While her peers worried about their prom dresses matching their dates' corsages, Ling went anywhere from Russia's Red Square to uncovering South American cocaine trade to profiling Afghanistan's Taliban. Soon managing her reporting while attending USC became too much, causing her to drop out her junior year. In her pursuit of hard-core news, she has gained credibility as respectable reporter, but this is far from being the ideal Asian representative for the Asian lifestyle.

Her reputable experience points to some great political arenas which are of interest to all, but they do not specifically deal with Asian issues. She may not need to be the exclusively Asian correspondent, but she also does not seem to be investing her time into this aspect at all. Her lack of coverage indicates she does not really participate in the Asian American sphere. Worst of all, she has traded in her real reporting for a seat with a handful of

women chatting and vying for who can win the most applause.

When watching *The View*, Ling can be seen freely voicing her opinion; unfortunately, it is quite rare that she will address an Asian American related issue. Rather, she talks to celebrities about their current projects, discusses fashion dos and don'ts, and goes on assignments to get to her belly button pierced. Her role on the show is focused on her youth, rather than her ethnicity. Ling will easily talk about Britney Spears, and yet politics are just not of interest anymore. As opposed to Star Jones, an African American woman who makes it clear that she is all too willing to represent her race, Ling hardly claims her Asian heritage.

Ling has the chance to better expose the public and yet she plays into the stereotypes. Currently, she is in the works to write a novel about her grandfather and his concubines, focusing the public's knowledge once again on the polygamous relations of older Chinese traditions. While she has spoken out against the stereotypical roles that Asians fulfill in the media, she still panders to them. Recently *The View* had Jackie Chan as a guest. After some talk about his latest film, the viewers were also treated to a gratuitous martial art move as if he didn't have anything else to offer.

For the past few years Ling has been dating Rick Yune, another high profile Asian American. There has been speculation that she is seeing him to improve her image to only non-Asians. Harked as the new young Asian power couple, they both do little to advance the cause. His movie role as the leader to a gang of violent, racecar obsessed Asians in *The Fast and Furious* does not give a better understanding of

continued on page 15

Far From an Asian American Point of *View*

Lisa Ling

by anne phabmixay



Click2FindYourMate

Love at first click?

by catherine chen

Click2Asia.com was launched in 1999, an Asian American web portal site where people could communicate with each other from around the globe and chat about current issues. Within a year, membership grew to 1 million registered users. Members chatted over various interests ranging from sports to politics. The site acted as an online forum for many members of the Asian American community.

Recently, in a dramatic revamp, the site was re-launched as an Asian dating site in a move to salvage profits. After the dot-com crash, the company found itself losing revenue. A survey was administered to members to determine spending habits. Results showed users spent most on social expenditures, and thus the company concluded that all factors pointed toward a dating site. Wuu believes he has an edge because there are not many Asian dating sites out there. Click2Asia.com re-launched as purely an Asian dating site on October 1st.

His main premise was the criticisms of more mainstream dating sites. Match.com, Yahoo Personals and other sites, he claims, don't accommodate to specific needs of the Asian American community. Racial categories limit the choice of identification to only "Asian" rather than a specific ethnicity.

However, this move has eliminated a significant Asian American niche. Click2Asia.com is serving its 18-35 target demographic by "acting as the vehicle where you can date high quality people and have the option of specifying the ethnicity you would like to date," according to Wuu, adding that it's "serving the community while generating revenue at the same time."

From an Asian American community member's standpoint, I feel that while this is true, it should be taken into account that our voices would not be heard. Individually, everyone has something to bring to the table.

Collectively, it's like being apart of something bigger and more meaningful. Forums are where we can act like ourselves and discover ourselves at the same time. A dating site is not going to amend this fact.

So I asked some of my fellow students whether they would ever go to this site. None of them said yes. Even though online dating is become more widely accepted, there are still many people who would

Basically, this site is geared toward the serious dater or the Asian professional with no social life who can afford this.

not go this site. Especially poor college students. This dating site is free for everyone to create and view profiles. However, only premium members who pay \$20 a month can actually contact other members. Wuu pointed out that AsianAvenue.com is directed toward the "superyoung teens with rice rockets and is not highly desirable for 30 year olds." Basically, this site is geared toward the serious dater or the Asian professional with

no social life who can afford this.

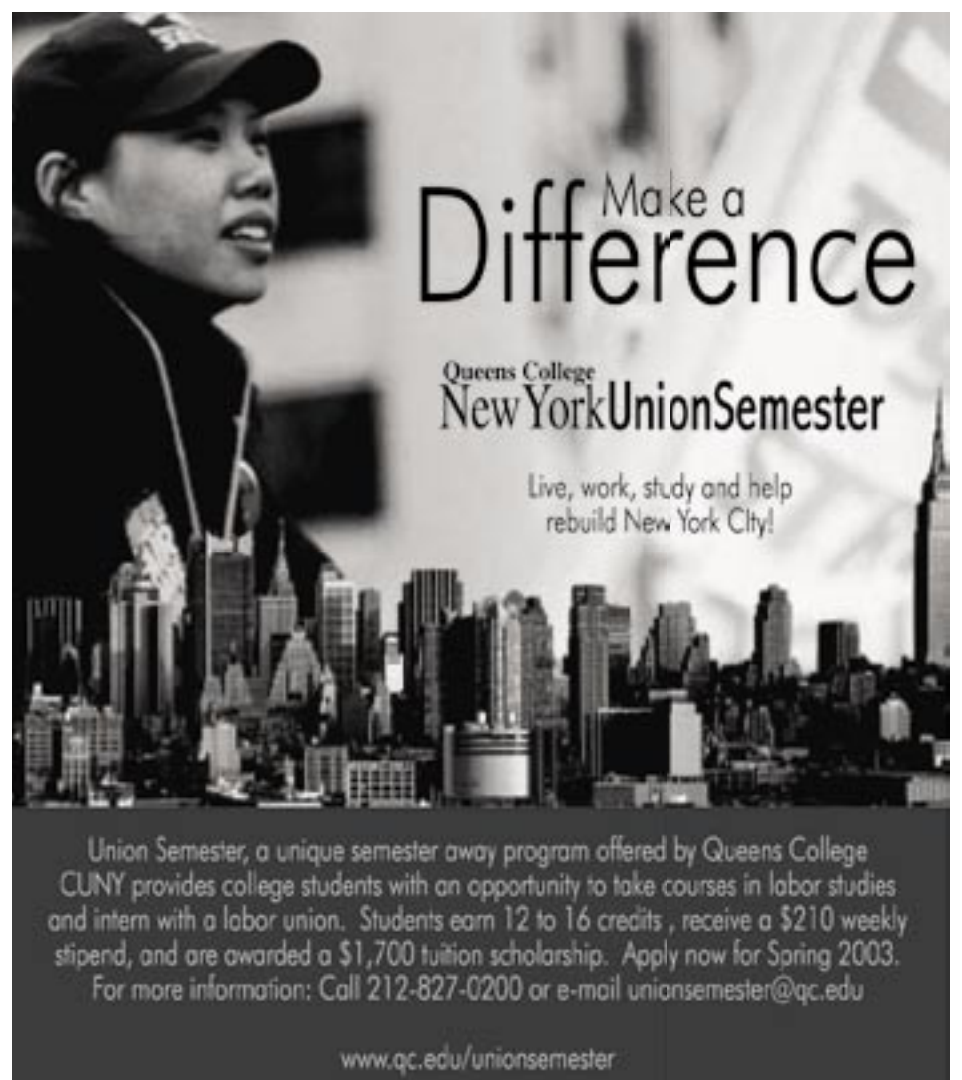
But where do the non-Asians fall into this Asian dating equation? It's not that non-Asians are excluded from this site. There's just not going to be too many of them out there. The problem is that an Asian dating site could promote self-segregation. Wuu refutes that "it's not brainwashing people to only date Asians and it's convenient for providing valuable service." Sure it's convenient, but the whole thing is thrown off because the company's goals have changed. The focus shifts to where the money is. That doesn't leave the entire community with valuable service.

It used to be all about the issues and the amelioration of the community. Now it has become all about the dollar signs. This seems like it's serving the company more than the the community. Wuu said, "Asian professionals easily spend \$40-70 a weekend at karaoke bars or clubs or they could spend \$20 a month at our site, which I think is a steal." While this may be the case, it's only appealing to the single people. The nearly 1 million members are being transferred to the new site and I'm sure not all of them are single and ready to mingle. They will lose out on those members, but is it worth the price?

This site is seemingly harmless, but when you look under the surface problems could arise. For example, men with Asian fetishes could contribute to the objectification of Asian women. We don't know if all the members are legitimate. Wuu felt that people take it more seriously when it is more formalized. Serious daters want to be effective. It wouldn't be too smart to lie about age or height, especially if they're paying for it.

This site could stir up some controversy. Click2Asia.com would be no stranger to that. There was some generated from the picture posted on the website featuring an Asian girl with a mixed guy who looked Caucasian. It looks innocent enough, but there were complaints that it reinforced the stereotype that many Asian girls go for Caucasian guys.

When asked if the CEO himself would use this site, he emphatically replied, "Of course! Why shouldn't I?" Why shouldn't you?



Make a
Difference

Queens College
New York Union Semester

Live, work, study and help
rebuild New York City!

Union Semester, a unique semester away program offered by Queens College
CUNY provides college students with an opportunity to take courses in labor studies
and intern with a labor union. Students earn 12 to 16 credits, receive a \$210 weekly
stipend, and are awarded a \$1,700 tuition scholarship. Apply now for Spring 2003.
For more information: Call 212-827-0200 or e-mail unionsemester@qc.edu

www.qc.edu/unionsemester

SCREAM!

truly frightening halloween costumes • by lisa macabasco

Now that it's October, little kiddies everywhere will be traipsing into the massive fluorescent-lit party warehouses to browse their selections of masks and disguises for America's annual celebration of two of its most long-held ideals – evil and gluttony. And, no, I'm not talking about Thanksgiving. Yet.

Halloween is a time for all the little idiots, I mean, young 'uns to get dressed up in their scariest outfits (Britney Spears!) and run around the neighborhood soliciting candy, or, where I'm from, throwing eggs at houses and spraying shaving cream at kids you don't like. As if these kids aren't doped up enough on things like *Sponge Bob Square Pants* or *Lizzie Maguire* or that little moppet Avril Lavigne, American society has to give them a reason to consume twice their body weight in sugar in the span of one night. And people wonder why diabetes are on the rise among children.

But, alas, this year, we have more to fear than poisoned candies, hidden razors, kidnappings, or even eight-year-old girls prancing around in schoolgirl's outfits telling Little Bobby to "Hit me baby one more time!" A costume company based in Poway called Disguise has come out with a costume and mask set called "Kung Fool." It consists of a black and white "kimono," and a rubber mask of a distorted Asian face with a swollen black eye, two prominent buckteeth, and a red headband with a Chinese character on it, which says "loser," according to the company's marketing director. The costume makes last spring's Abercrombie and Fitch shirts look downright complimentary. The costumes are sold in stores like Party City, Wal-Mart, Spencer Gifts, Spirit, and several online stores, which means that plenty of little kiddies across the country may be tugging on their parents' arms right this minute saying "Ma! Can I have this costume? Then I can look like a real Chinese! I thought they all just run laundries like my Abercrombie shirt shows, but I guess some of 'em do kung fu too!"

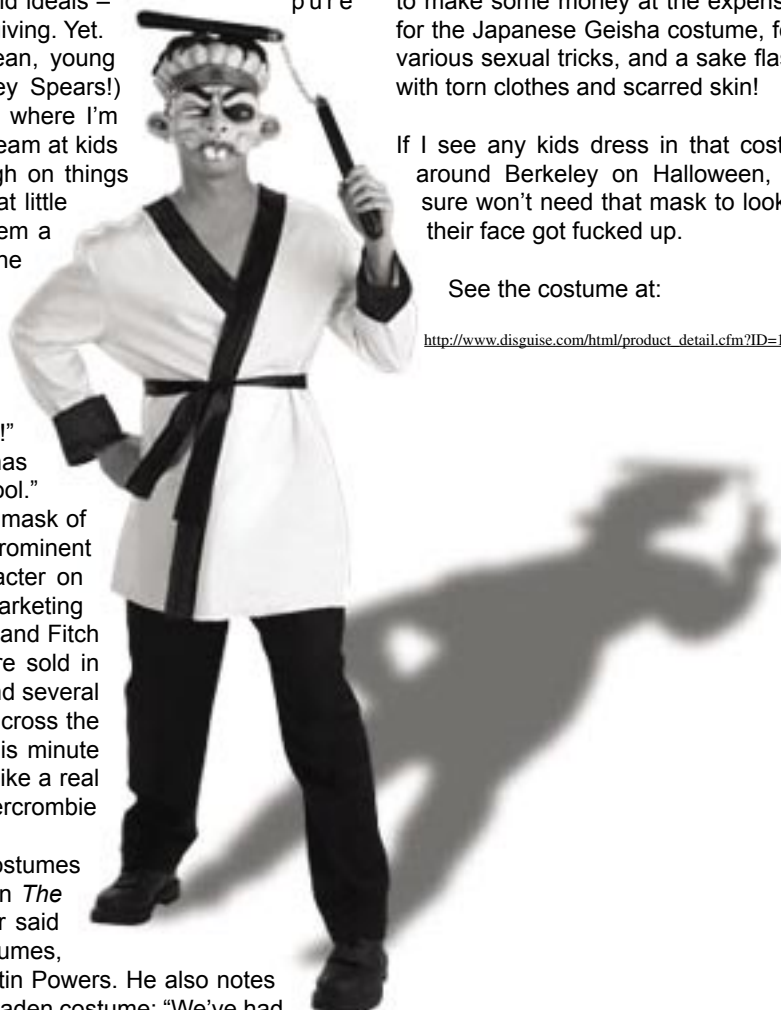
Ironically, the company says that they only make costumes appropriate for children. In an article on the company in *The North County Times*, the company's marketing director said the company produces only tasteful children's costumes, meaning no characters from R-rated movies, even Austin Powers. He also notes that they turned down requests to make an Osama bin Laden costume: "We've had people ask us to make a costume of bin Laden, but we won't do it," he said. "There are some things that are more important than something that may get some sales." How considerate. Don't worry about perpetuating the stereotype that all Chinese know kung

fu and nevermind the centuries-old caricature of the bucktoothed Chinese fool. Although they consider the bin Laden costume to be inappropriate, apparently they're still willing to make some money at the expense of all Chinese in America. And next year, look out for the Japanese Geisha costume, featuring a mask with unhumanly slanted eyes, list of various sexual tricks, and a sake flask, and the Vietnamese Refugee costume, complete with torn clothes and scarred skin!

If I see any kids dress in that costume around Berkeley on Halloween, they sure won't need that mask to look like their face got fucked up.

See the costume at:

http://www.disguise.com/html/product_detail.cfm?ID=1115



Contact Disguise
Disguise
11906 Tech Center Ct.
Poway, CA 92064
tel: 858-391-3600
fax: 858-391-3601

Ethnic Studies Under Blast

continued from page 8

all which maintain very close links to the Republican Party. Jay accuses the criticisms as a "carefully orchestrated attack" with political grounds. The same network funds the likes of the National Association of Scholars, the magazine *New Criterion*, as well as numbers of campus newspapers throughout the nation, including UC Berkeley's "The Patriot."

This undermines the very criticisms these conservatives make of the over "politicization" of higher education and renders them grossly hypocritical. It also illustrates a fundamental rift between the opposing points of view and their methods of argument. Academics may not necessarily be eye to eye with the right's foundation intellectuals as these politically motivated critics are not subject to the same standards of research and scholarly integrity. Their pursuit is the one of power, and of influence, not necessarily truth, and their misrepresentations resurface repeatedly even when numerous disproved.

This is sharply contrasted with criticisms within the academia, which has actually significantly evolved over the decades. Takaki recalls his debates with prestigious historian Nathan Glazar, who was once a critic of ethnic studies, but has since then felt otherwise and written a book entitled "We Are All Multiculturalists Now." Even those maintaining

their criticisms, such as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr, writer of "The Disuniting of America," acknowledge the academic legitimacy of serious multiculturalist scholars and debate on common grounds.

But the loudest speakers are still those that control the fax machines to the media power players. This may have proved a victory, then. The mainstream media blindly and bombastically runs the word of the cultural right with little note of the machinery systematically constructing it.

"The careful and often tedious scholarly process for producing and evaluating ideas has been junked," bemoans Jay, "In its place is a reckless publicity machine that subordinates truth and facts to the political interests of a power elite."

It is then not a question of the legitimacy of the study of race and ethnicity, but the legitimacy of these privately-funded special-interest critics and the misconceptions they perpetuate.

The Racial Privacy Initiative...
continued from page 5

student at the one of the best research institutions in the world, I believe that this data should not be undervalued. Statistical data underlies the very research the University of California is famous for. Chand Viswanathan, chair of the University of California Academic Senate, opposes the initiative. He has publicly announced that this initiative would threaten research at all the campuses. Even UC Berkeley Associate Professor of Linguistics John McWhorter, a self-described admirer of Connerly and an opponent of affirmative action, has come out against the initiative because of the data that could be lost.

People should not be defined by the basis of their skin color. However, RPI is not the way to achieve this belief. What RPI does is eliminate the ability of Californians to admit that there is a problem. How can something be fixed if we don't know its broken? Even Connerly and official proponents concede that discrimination still exists, yet they still want to remove the very statistics that would inform Californians of these realities. If this Initiative passes, problems will not only receive a blind eye but will be compounded for generations. It will rob Californians of critical data that helps us detect, fix and monitor problems as members of a well-informed university and society. This initiative will not solve racial differences, but make them invisible and more difficult to address.

Editors note: Ward Connerly's Racial Privacy Initiative will come to vote in March 2004. Stay tuned for more information!

Lisa Ling: Far From an Asian American Point of View
continued from page 12

Asian Americans.

She has admitted that these roles are stereotypical, but should not be ridiculed because they might somehow lead to more. What exactly? Maybe the public wants another female Asian broadcast journalist. Yeah right, turn on the tv set and just try to find a channel without an Asian correspondent.

While her appearance would not easily confuse her for being anything but Asian, and oftentimes actress, Lucy Liu, she does not live the Asian life—her lifestyle as celebrity is not one common to other Asians. For a magazine devoted to lifestyle, the day-to-day activities revolve not around movie premieres, investigative journalism or retreats to expensive and trendy cleansing spas, but perhaps home décor and indulgent cooking recipes.

Simply put, Ling makes it easy to forget the she is even Asian. If Lifestyle magazine is her endeavor into the Asian community, then she needs to get more in touch with what it means to be Asian. She admits to having grown up in a predominantly white neighborhood and having been embarrassed for being different. It seems now that she is trying to hard to be the same; sadly, that same is still far from being Asian. Working with Ling are Danielle Chang and Todd Leong who do participate in the Asian community. Leong, an independent documentary filmmaker, has made a video of the Asian American heroes from Sept. 11 as well as a PBS special about *The Chinese in America*. Chang has had magazine experience having published *Simplycity*. Let's hope they can help Ling learn a thing or two about being Asian.

Biracial Asians
continued from page 6

Asian girl, Asian guys won't look twice at me."

But many respondents revel in the dating versatility that being Eurasian has given them: "It has allowed me to date a nice variety of girls that I may not have been able to otherwise," wrote one man. A young woman felt that "[being Eurasian] has opened up doors into both Asian and Caucasian social situations for me which allows me to meet people to enter into a relationship with."

Interestingly enough, Eurasians are more likely to have dated a Caucasian person than an individual of any other race. Almost 80% of those surveyed said they had dated a Caucasian in the past. This holds true even among Eurasians who live in Asia.

In spite of this, many Eurasians feel more of a natural affinity with Asians than with Caucasians. "I have found the connection with Asian American women has been the strongest because they also have lived life bridging two cultures," wrote one Eurasian man. Another said, "Even though I may look out of place hanging out with Asians, I feel comfortable with them around me. This pretty much dictates the type of partner I'd be interested in."

One young man seemed to sum up the general sentiment among Eurasians: "I think in the end, the character, compassion and heart of a person transcends all barriers. Race may be important but you are indifferent to it if you find true love."

To view the full results of the dating survey, visit:
http://www.eurasiannation.com/generic108.html

About the Author

Carmen Van Kerckhove is Belgian and Chinese. She is co-founder of EurasianNation.com [http://www.eurasiannation.com], an online magazine and community for people of mixed European and Asian descent. Originally from Hong Kong, she now lives in New York City.

