

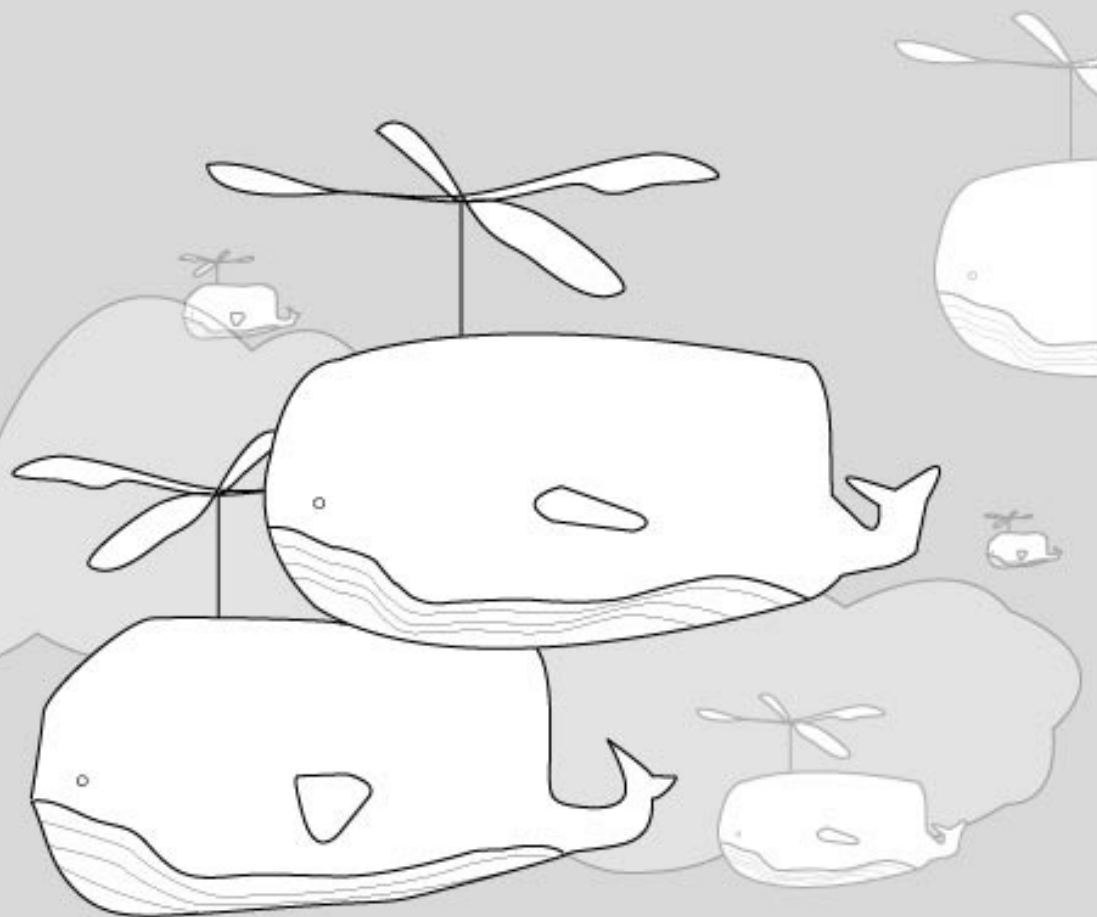
hardboiled

the asian american newsmagazine

10.3

in this issue

- today's technology, tomorrow's toxics
- are asians greek?
- cultivating the asian american farm
- sex trafficking



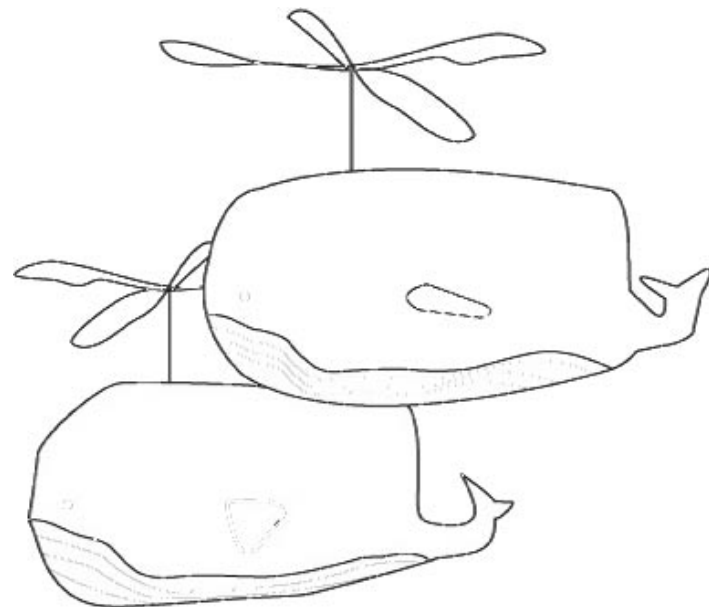
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■ editor's note

The November 24th column by Kenneth Eng in AsianWeek titled "Proof That Whites Inherently Hate Us" gives a list of alleged evidence that "White people hate us and will always hate us". Unfortunately Kenny, it isn't that the White people hate the Asians, it's that the Asians don't give a damn about themselves.

Yes, I am angry too. Where was the media frenzy and public outcry of the Michael Richards magnitude when countless racist comments were made by public figures about Asian Americans? Where were the loud lawyers and protests in the 2004 election when Asians Americans were turned away from the polls and denied translated materials? But perhaps the most important question is: where are all the other angry *Asian Americans*?

If there is anything that comes close to absolute truth in the United States, it is that nothing is free. Equality, justice and dignity are not just dolled out: they have to be fought for. When you are not fighting, you are losing. No one will, or can do it, but us.

And Asians Americans seem to be on the perpetual cusp of almost winning. A recent UCLA article named Asian Americans as the new "sleeping giants" in California politics because of their rapidly growing number of eligible voters. Actually, researchers have been making the same observation for over ten years. And still, the giants sleep on. As scholar Wendy K. Tam wrote poignantly in 1995, "The numbers are there. Apathy is now their last and greatest barrier".

A great big sincere thank you to everyone at **hardboiled** for another unforgettable semester, all of you are truly amazing. Have yourselves a wonderful holiday season full of twinkling lights, warm-fuzzy feelings, love and kindness.

hb story editor
lina peng

reader's response

Hi, I am a high school sophomore in the Bay Area and man, I love your groups' work.

I found your website from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. It was talking about: *safcomic.com* (editor's note: SAF stand for Single Asian Female). Then I looked at the website and found your site. You guys definitely used a lot of effort to make Asian/Pacific Islander issues known. I praise you guys!

It is a pity that here in my school, it's hard for Asian American teens to know about these issues. Before I found your site, I knew some of these issues beforehand (especially the Model Minority ideology). I praise some schools like Lowell High that have Asian American Studies as a class and an A-G requirement class. It seems like there's a problem getting the information across about these issues.

You guys do a great job trying to get people knowing about issues that are happening in our community.

Keep up the good work!
Francis Chen

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searching for sex



Within the hormone raging confines of a college campus, the air is alive with the smell of sex wherever you turn. Little surprise that the Asian American collegiate population, often statistically dubbed as the least sex savvy, must combat the the demeaning label. This is particularly true of Asian American males, who feel the need to constantly wage war against the diminishing claims of “asexuality” and, in everyday jargon, “no game.” Usually, the battle plan involves lying profusely about the number of sexual partners (“twenty” or so is really two), sticking their tongue down anyone or anything that has a pulse, and befriending alcohol in hopes that it will compromise judgment long enough to get some pants unzipped. It both is painful and pathetic. What is really going on down there? Why are we all so madly searching for sex?

Asian Americans have sex later, are more likely to be virgins, have the fewest number of lifetime partners, and feel guiltier about having sex compared to every other possible ethnicity. One 2005 study of Asian American college students show that about half of the sample (48.5%) have had sexual intercourse in their lifetime and a quarter (25.3%) in the previous 30 days: “significantly” low compared to other populations. Also significant, Asian Americans are less likely to have unwanted pregnancies or contract HIV and STDs. Can all this signal a victory for the popular Asian parent version of the sex talk: have no talk at all?

It makes sense that if Asian Americans have a relatively lower rate of sexuality, than they would have relatively lower rates of pregnancy and obtaining STDs as well. It can be hardly called a victory for a virgin to be HIV free. What is interesting though is what occurs after Asian Americans lose their virginity. National studies find that once Asian American youth engage in sexual intercourse, they rival other ethnic groups in unprotected sex, risky HIV behavior, number of partners, and drug and alcohol use. In a study among Asian American students in several Southern California colleges, only 11% reported consistent condom use. Asian Americans have also seen the largest increase in the number of HIV cases during the last five years, with a 38% increase between 1998 and 2002.

Additional evidence suggests that a lack of sexual education may lead to severe consequences. According a national study by AIDS Education and Prevention in 2004 Asian Americans adults showed the highest rate of late HIV intervention. There appears to be a pervasive tendency for Asian American girls and women to be more reluctant to seek care for

their sexual and reproductive health, which can be not only emotionally crippling but potentially life threatening. Cases of sexual abuse and rape are also severely underreported.

The cultural norm surrounding conservative sexual behavior still has its positive effects. But given that there is a fifty-fifty chance that their collegiate son or daughter may be sexually active, perhaps Asian American parents should rethink the silent sex talk. And it is not just the over-blamed Mom, Dad, Grandma and Grandpa who suffer from lack of openness when it comes talking about sex: we all do. The younger generation of Asian Americans is caught between not wanting to be deemed dishonorable on one end and not wanting to feel undesirable on the other (because everyone else is doing it!). The result is often morally messy and emotionally unsatisfying. And so the search continues silently.

What does this tell us, the living, breathing young adults of these sex studies? Sleeping with the guy who claimed multiple sexual partners is not a smart idea. If you are a guy trying to get laid, appearing “over-sexed” is not attractive, unless your sweetie is attracted to STDs. It might be more worthwhile and effective to try to get in their hearts before their pants; you might even save some money on alcohol. In our presumed innocence and eagerness to prove our sexuality, we forget at our own peril that the risk of HIV and STDs may be more real than many of us would like to believe. If being less sexually active means being less at risk for STDs, then those statistics are something to be proud of. If having sex later means waiting until you find someone you love, then, well, there is nothing sexier than that. Everyone else can go screw themselves.

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Asians in Politics: Secretary Norman Mineta

by albert chen and kory hui

A young Japanese American joined the United States Army in 1953. Despite being one of the 120,000 some Japanese Americans forced into internment camps during World War II, Norman Y. Mineta served for the United States as an intelligence officer in Korea and Japan.

Following his stint in Asia, Mineta returned to the states and began his political career in nearby San Jose. Here, he began as a councilman and went on to be the first Asian American to be mayor of a major US country. After his term as mayor, Mineta served in the House of Representatives from 1975 to 1995. From there, President Bill Clinton appointed Mineta Secretary of Commerce in 2000, making Mineta the first Asian American to serve on a presidential cabinet.

After the Clinton Administration, President George W. Bush appointed Mineta as Secretary of Transportation in 2001. Mineta thereby became the lone Democratic member of Bush’s Cabinet as well as the first person to maintain a Cabinet position under first a Democratic, then a Republican president, in successive administrations.

Following 9/11, Secretary Mineta served as a vital component to ensuring safety in the airline industry. Besides air transportation, he also sought to deliver greater levels of safety in automotive and rail transportation. Following the Hurricane Katrina, Mineta was once again vital in the restoration of the area.

“Norm worked hard to help eliminate red tape and liberalize the commercial aviation market,” President Bush said in a statement. “After Hurricane Katrina, Norm and his team were able to rapidly repair and reopen the region’s major highways, airports, seaports and pipelines.” He also caused some much needed changes in fuel economy standards that currently save fuel, lives and jobs.

Despite his efforts, on June 22, 2006, Secretary Mineta stepped down from his position in the Department of Transportation and joined the international public relations firm Hill & Knowlton as vice chairman. Secretary Mineta was the 14th Secretary in the Department of Transportation and the longest serving member in the Department’s history.

“It is time for me to move on to other challenges,” Mineta said in a letter to President Bush. Nonetheless, as Transportation Secretary, Mineta stood up to Republicans who criticized him for his tough stance against racial profiling. In fact, he issued a directive to airlines telling them it was illegal to discriminate passengers on the basis of their race, ethnicity or religion. He said, “A very basic foundation to all of our work is to make sure that racial profiling is not part of it.”

Indeed, Mineta always believed in his ideals and took them to the top of the administration. He argued, “Surrendering to actions of hate and discrimination makes us no different than the despicable terrorists who rained such hatred on our people.”

sex trafficking

by annie chung

What exactly is sex trafficking? The Trafficking Victim's Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 classifies human trafficking in the United States as follows: "Sex trafficking is 1) in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18, or 2) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery." Due to the high influx of immigrants sold into sex slavery, it can be perceived as an international human rights problem finally hitting the mainstream American media. It is hard to receive accurate, up to date numbers, but the underground atmosphere of sex trafficking is enormous, estimated at about \$8 billion dollars of human exploitation. One of the few statistics we can use is from the *San Francisco Chronicle*, where they reported around 600,000 to 800,000 women and girls being sex trafficked internationally, with San Francisco being a major business port. According to a recent article by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the two other major countries of sex trafficking are also modernized, industrial nations: Japan and Australia.

When thinking about sex trafficking, images of male pimps might come into play. Yet in Asia, it is women traffickers who trick most women into the cruel business. If anyone has immigrant parents or grandparents, the importance of living out the "American Dream" is what drove most of them to leave their families and careers behind in search of new fortunes in the heralded "land of opportunity." This same idea is what the traffickers use to lure these women into the business; by creating descriptions of America as a place where they can be "models or hostesses".

Sex trafficking has not become an \$8 billion international business by chance. Traffickers usually have connections with organized crime, but first-hand accounts of such transactions are rare because of the clandestine nature of traffickers. Only now, through narratives by escapees such as Yumi interviewed by Meredith May in the *Chronicle's* shocking four part series on the Korean sex slave industry are we able to get a little glimpse at the horrors of what can be seen as modern day slavery.

For most sex-trafficked women, who are given a fake passport and business escorts telling them how to act and what to say, it is not too hard to get into the United States through Canada and Mexico. In Canada, certain Native American Reservations have restrictions on border patrolling at night, which leaves open borders for illegal immigration. If the girls are coming from Mexico, usually they drive or walk through to what is known as "El Norte," (literally, "the north") in order to find work. Once arriving into the United States, major cities like New York, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles become first targets.

With so many obstacles blocking the way into America, the shiftiness of the business is all too evident. But once stepping into the system, what can these women do? Many of the girls are brought into sexual slavery because they were financially desperate, raised in poverty-stricken families and communities. Although they may have faced poverty, from the few narratives of escapees available, it seems as if naivete was a major cause of their belief in a "quick and easy" way of making money in America.

In our urban culture today, with the help of media and popular culture, sexual promiscuity is common in younger generations. Many of us could name more than a dozen songs where the idea of a "stripper, hoe, prostitute, bars, pimps" are mentioned. In such a culture, how could we possibly understand and sensitize ourselves to the personal narratives of sexual slavery? Although San Francisco has a long history of sexual promiscuity, even to the most informed reader, the



story of South Korean sex slave Yumi, featured in the *SF Chronicle* series by Meredith May and her team, still shocked readers.

Yumi, coming from the town of Busan, a port-city in Korea, with a family struggling to pay her \$6,000 college tuition, and was just like any other college girl wanting to fit in, discovering the joys of new-found freedom. With a newly attained credit card and friends to treat, clothes to buy, and a look to keep up, she accumulated a debt of \$40,000 in no time. As May goes on to narrate, Yumi, with hopes of paying off her debt quickly and with assurance that "no touching would be involved," swallowed her fears and set off to America with someone, whom she would later recall as her sex trafficker, to Mexico City, then to LA. After little profit, Yumi's boss sent her to San Francisco, where customers were numerous. For three

SF Chronicle photo by Deanne Fitzmaurice

years she worked in every type of prostitution listed: brothels, apartment appointments, bars, spas, and massage places. Truly the ending to Yumi's sex trafficking story is nothing short of a miracle. While she was working at a massage parlor in San Francisco called Sun Spa, she met a man who would eventually become her boyfriend. Secretly, he would take her out to dates and even offered to help her pay her debt to leave the business. Luckily, by that time Yumi had already paid off most of her \$40,000 in debt. As soon as she worked her debt off, she left the business, and with the help of her boyfriend continues to try and restore the life that was so quickly taken away. Upon leaving, May's article writes of how Yumi's boss gave her \$1,000, signifying the hardships in a former sex slave's ability to survive in her environment, thus enticing her back to the business.

Thankfully, this story had somewhat of a happy ending, which most sex slaves could only dream about. Sex trafficking as mentioned earlier is an international trade, and even the most isolated of countries such as North Korea partake in their share. According to researched information from LiNK (Liberty in North Korea), there are three ways in which North Korean women are put into sex trafficking; they can be 1) kidnapped and sold as brides, 2) sold as brides in what amounts to \$50-\$1,250 in U.S. dollars, or 3) voluntarily submitting themselves into the trade. In all types of sex trafficking, the key to many of the personal stories is deception. Just as women from South Korea and other parts of Asia are brought into the trade with offers of being hostesses or at worst, drink servers at bars, North Korean women are deceived with offers of food, water, and shelter. Many women who go into marriage express gratitude for just being alive rather than starving back home. LiNK shared a quote from a former sex slave saying, "It is better to find a man, any man, than to starve to death in North Korea." For other sex-slaved women, the United States is a very likely place for trafficking, but for North Korean women, a very common sex-trafficking hub is China. According to personal accounts retrieved by LiNK, many of these women are forced into arranged marriages to Chinese farmers, who are considered "undesirable" by other women for reasons such as "age, poverty, disability or previous marital history."

There are cases on either extremes, from inhumane cruelty to more merciful luck. Two accounts from LiNK (Liberty in North Korea) references illustrate the myriad of sex slavery situations. In one situation, a woman stumbled upon a more gracious host:

"I was sold to a Chinese man, around 50, who processed potato noodles. He has been a widower for the last 12 years, and his young son was 13. Since I got a temporary place to stay, I took care of the house, made clothes and did some knitting. Because he was a nice man, he used to tell me not to work hard."

Others are not as lucky:

"He took us to a home saying that we would gradually contact our relatives there. However, later on, we learned that he was a professional bride trader and made 2,000 yuan (US \$250) each in Yanji. They confined us in an apartment and stripped us of our clothes, so that we had to cover our naked bodies with only a blanket. They intended to sell us again after they found a proper buyer."

From third world countries to our very own Bay Area, sex trafficking of Asian women continues, regardless of class and location. Yet many turn heads on the issue or dismiss it as something that has always been around. If only we would even take the time to spread awareness on this type of modern day slavery, I think we would be doing our fellow men and women a humanitarian favor.

There's a Poison Goin' On: THE ENVIROMENTAL AFTERMATH OF THE VIETNAM WAR

by brian lau

"Not since the Romans salted the land after destroying Carthage has a nation taken such pains to visit the war on future generations." - Ngo Van Long, speaking on the US war against Vietnam.

In 1975, thousands of people across the globe watched as US military helicopters airlifted American and Vietnamese personnel out of Saigon. For many, the event symbolized the loss of the war, a retreat for US forces, and the end of American involvement in the region. For those who remained in Vietnam, however, the war would continue on, the remnants of which have affected generations born after the fighting's end.

Among the more lasting effects of the war have been the havoc wreaked by the US's environmental warfare strategies. In Vietnam, the US military faced an unfamiliar terrain covered with fields and forests that provided sanctuary and food for the enemy troops. In the face of the guerilla warriors' home field advantage, American troops did what they could to gain an edge: they burned down the field. And the forests and just about everything that lived in them, with little regard for the natural habitat of Vietnam or its people. Thousands of Vietnamese who resided in the countryside and depended on the land for sustenance were forced away from their ancestral homes into the major cities.

One of the main techniques the US military employed was the use of conventional explosives dropped from B-52s and other bombers. These bombs, some weighing as much as 15,000 pounds, were dropped indiscriminately, onto all types of habitats, and created over twenty million craters in South Vietnam. The craters crippled local farming by uprooting and exposing the subsoil, ruining the ability of the farmers to raise crops. They also made for great breeding spots for mosquitoes; the craters, ranging from five to fifteen feet deep, would fill with water, and, coupled with the hot and humid weather of the region, allowed for the spread of the malaria-carrying insects.

The US also destroyed thousands of acres of

land in its attempts to create landing zones for their helicopters. One of the bombs the military used was the aforementioned 15,000-pound "daisy cutter." Capable of clearing an area the size of a football field, the daisy cutter blew away all vegetation and completely removed all trees in the vicinity. Before the war, Vietnam had been self-sufficient for lumber. However, the massive uprooting and shrapnel that was lodged in the trees made most of the wood incapable of being processed, as the trees became susceptible to infection. Though all this, the land was stripped of its vegetation and overrun with weeds; while the Vietnamese government has made efforts to replant the forests, much of the land today is waste.

But by far the most infamous of the strategies the US military undertook during the Vietnam war was the use of chemical herbicides, of which Agent Orange is the most notorious. Starting in 1961, over a hundred thousand tons of these herbicides were sprayed over Vietnam's forests, through helicopters, boats, and troops with the poisons dispelled from their backpacks. The herbicides destroyed the land, the dead trees totaling an area the size of Connecticut. The poison also hit hard the animal and plant life that the Vietnamese peasants and troops depended on. Despite being denied covering and food, however, the guerilla forces still were able to carry on the war, though at great cost to the local people.

Of the herbicides used, Agent Orange was by far the deadliest. Agent Orange contained dioxin, an organic compound that has been recognized as one of the most toxic pollutants in the world. The effects of the poison range from nausea and vomiting to mental retardation and death. According to some American researchers, up to 4.8 million Vietnamese may have been exposed to the toxins, and in 2000, at least one million were physically disabled because of the exposure.

The poison's effects have not been limited to those alive during the Vietnam War, but have been passed on to new generations of children who are born with birth defects caused by Agent Orange. Many parents may have unknowingly been exposed to herbicides, either directly or indirectly, for example, through

consuming poisoned fish. The children are born mentally retarded and suffer from a variety of physical deformities. Due to the extreme poverty many of the families live in, raising a child with such handicaps is an option few are able to afford. Families cannot live on the wages of one member, but taking care of a disabled child requires the full time and attention of one of the parents. The Vietnamese government gives a \$16-a-month stipend for families, but many children are abandoned or sent to group homes.

To date, the US government has not assumed responsibility for these environmental atrocities. Congress has already passed legislation providing assistance for American veterans suffering from dioxin, though stated that the links between the herbicides and the illnesses were "presumptive." In 1984, American veterans also won a \$180 million settlement against the manufacturers of Agent Orange. However, a similar suit filed by the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin in 2004 was dismissed on the grounds that Agent Orange was not considered a poison under international law at the time of its use, thus shielding the US government and the manufacturers it contracted out from liability. The case is currently being appealed.

Recently, efforts have been made to clean up the aftermath of Agent Orange and other herbicides. The US government has committed \$300,000 to removing the toxic chemicals from the soil of the different hot spots, with the United Nations set to contribute in the near future. The Ford Foundation has also recently that it will be giving \$2.2 million towards restoring the environment and providing healthcare for the victims. However, a joint study between the US and Vietnamese government on the health and environmental effects of Agent Orange was halted when the US pulled out, citing communication failures. The study could have brought affirmed the toxin's link to the victims' health problems, a link that the chemical manufacturers of Agent Orange still deny.

In the end, however, millions of Vietnamese have suffered injuries and indignities that money will be unable to heal. So long as the government that afflicted these hardships on these people remains immune from liability, from acknowledging the atrocities it has enacted, it is not difficult to see how and why these events may occur again, why these lessons may go unlearned. And for the victims, there is undoubtedly little comfort in that.

According to some American researchers, up to 4.8 million Vietnamese may have been exposed to [Agent Orange], and in 2000, at least one million were physically disabled because of the exposure.



Top right: American planes spraying Agent Orange Dioxin on civilian villages and countryside in Vietnam.

Left: Tanks filled with the chemical Agent Orange toxin are being prepared to be loaded on aircrafts.

Photos from www.downtheroad.org



Top: A light plane sprays some of the 19 million gallons of toxic used in Vietnam. Each plane could destroy 350 acres of forest per run. A spray run took less than four minutes, used 1,000 gallons of Agent Orange and was often sprayed by 3 planes flying side by side. That meant one run equaled 1,000 acres of jungle destroyed.

by gene kim

today's technology, tomorrow's toxics:



“© Basel Action Network 2006”

“Not everything in this picture is obsolete.”

Asia's Role as the Dumping Ground for American Hazardous Waste

As the holiday season begins, consumers are being bombarded with advertisements for the newest gadgets and appliances. The new KRZR cell phone is even thinner than its previous RAZR models and features Bluetooth compatibility, web browsing, an internal mp3 player and video capabilities. Other cell phone models on the market allow streaming media from sites like YouTube, online communication through popular services such as Skype, and can even provide driving directions through built in GPS navigation systems. During times like these, it seems hard to believe that only a decade ago most Americans still relied on their landlines and pay phones to keep in touch. In the short period of time that mobile phones have been available, technological advances have completely revolutionized the way that people use their phones.

Of course, none of this is very surprising to us. As college students, we are immersed in technology and electronics everyday. Most of us learned to use computers at a young age, and some of us can type on a keyboard faster than we can write with a pen. Almost all of us carry a cell phone with us on campus, and a majority of us also carry mp3 players, laptops, flash drives, and digital cameras. Some of us may still claim to be “computer illiterate,” but as a whole our generation is very tech savvy. To us, it seems that technology is fulfilling its promise to bring us the convenience and utility of the world of tomorrow.

Unfortunately, the benefits of tomorrow come at a steep cost, and the true price of progress extends far beyond one's credit card bill. The grim reality of the situation is something that most consumers are fully aware of but never actually stop to consider.

We all know that our products are temporary. Sooner or later we head out to buy a higher resolution camera, a more powerful computer, a more compact mp3 player, and a new phone with a dozen additional functions. We replace all of our electronics on a regular basis, sometimes after only a few months of use. Occasionally it happens because the product we had is broken or unusable, but in most cases the device is still fully functional when it becomes obsolete. It may still work as well as the day you bought it, but technology is moving fast, and suddenly that amazing new laptop is no longer good enough.

We all understand the system, and we grow to accept it. Most of us get a new cell phone at least once a year, sometimes only because a free one came with our new contract. According to some estimations, worldwide mobile phone sales in 2005 came out to about 750 million units. When new electronics are affordable and available, there seems to be no valid reason for us to limit our consumption.

That is, unless of course there happened to be a big blind spot to this logic. The problem in this case is the part we so often forget about: what happens to all those “obsolete” products? A couple old monitors pile up in your garage, your old mp3 player is sitting in a drawer, and you kept one of your old cell phones in case you drop your new one too many times. The rest become electronic waste, or e-waste, the fastest growing contributor to our municipal waste stream.

E-waste has more than just a unique label. It also has to be handled in a special way. Many states have already passed laws that prevent the dumping of certain kinds of

e-waste in landfills. Cathode ray tubes in old monitors and TVs are an environmental hazard because they contain dangerous amounts of lead. Our old cell phones can contain several toxic agents including arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, and brominated flame retardants. Other electronics contain mercury, chromium, and a long list of ecologically threatening and potentially carcinogenic components. The same devices that we carry and use everyday are considered hazardous waste once we discard them.

If this is the case, then the sensible solution seems to be recycling. After all, e-waste is a valuable source of reusable parts and raw materials. Several recycling centers already exist in the United States, but they only handle a limited range of products and pale in comparison to some of the facilities operating in other nations such as Switzerland. Even worse, the truth is that most of these self proclaimed recycling centers do not actually recycle anything.

As the Basel Action Network (BAN) discovered when producing their film *Exporting Harm*, a vast majority of e-waste

Our old cell phones can contain several toxic agents including arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, and brominated flame retardants. Other electronics contain mercury, chromium, and a long list of ecologically threatening and potentially carcinogenic components. The same devices that we carry and use everyday are considered hazardous waste once we discard them.

recyclers in the United States are actually just tech waste “brokers.” When responsible consumers drops off their old electronics, these companies simply take the products, sort them out, then package them to be shipped overseas. Our garbage is then sold for profit to developing areas in Asia such as China, Pakistan, and India.

The BAN documentary focuses on the Guiyu area of southern China, a place that was once known for its rice farming and agriculture. In recent years, the village has been transformed into an e-waste processing operation that involves over 100,000 poor and migrant workers. Men, women, and children work together for little pay as they attempt to process obsolete equipment imported from North America.

The images from Guiyu are unsettling for a number of reasons. First off, the entire operation is very primitive. Women sit in circles and use hammers to break open monitors and remove cathode ray tubes. Others use their fingers to pry the chips off of old circuit boards. There are no buildings or machines. Everything is out in the open or sectioned off by makeshift booths.

It also appears that most of the workers are unaware of just how dangerous their jobs are. Men use paintbrushes to dust the toner out of old printer cartridges, inhaling the black soot that fills the air. Large mountains of wires are set on fire to melt the rubber casings and retrieve precious metals. Clouds of toxic smoke are sent throughout the village as young children play nearby. The health risks presented by the operation are only made worse by the environmental degradation that results.

Acid baths are used to process old circuit boards, and afterwards the used liquids are disposed in the river. Drinking water must be shipped in from neighboring areas because of the extreme pH level of the local supply. The river itself is completely blackened due to pollution from chemicals and the large piles of unusable scrap discarded along the river bank. Plastic cases and other useless fragments are burned to save space, resulting in more poisonous smoke. The parts that cannot be burned simply pile up in ditches or waterways.

The people of Guiyu spend every day of their lives surrounded by hazardous waste that was deemed unfit for our own landfills. While other nations develop comprehensive programs for dealing with their discarded electronics, the United States neglects its responsibility and instead uses Asia as a dumping ground for its toxic trash. As we continue to consume more electronics, this stream is rapidly growing and affecting new areas like Nigeria and Mexico. If left unchecked, our nation's e-waste will continue to pollute the planet and devastate communities around the globe.

According to members of the Students for Sustainable Technology, the U.C. Berkeley division of the Toxic Free U.C. campaign, the real solution lies in manufacturer accountability. As one representative from the group points out, “It's unreasonable to ask every consumer to stop buying electronics. That's not the best way to address the problem. The problem in the United States is that there is no effective way of handling these electronics at their end of life stage.”

“If manufacturers were required to recycle their own products, the industry could be transformed in a positive way.

Once the proper infrastructure is developed, companies would be able to use their own e-waste as sources of new materials. They would also have a greater incentive to design products that contained more reusable parts and were easier to breakdown. Instead of focusing solely on how to sell their creations, they would need to consider all stages of the electronic lifecycle.”

These ideas have already been adopted by the European Union and developed nations such as South Korea and Japan. In order for such changes to take place in the U.S., electronics manufacturers will need a strong push in the right direction. This can come in many forms, including consumer demand or a federal mandate. As informed consumers, it is up to us to make sure our concerns are heard and adequately addressed.

In the end, technology may serve as the solution to the very problem it helped create. Innovations in the electronics industry are focused on producing devices that are compact, fast, eye-catching, and convenient. These same minds could also work to design electronics that are cleaner, less toxic, easier to recycle, and more efficient to upgrade. In order to achieve sustainability, we must be able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Unless drastic measures are taken, future generations will be left with nothing but the toxic consequences of our high tech lifestyle.

Cultivating the Asian American Farm

by adrienna wong

We often think of Asian Americans as an urban or suburban population, an assumption supported by the fact that currently, the vast majority of Asian Americans live in metropolitan areas. This perspective, however, does not acknowledge the degree to which Asian American history is rooted in rural and farming communities, nor does it acknowledge the very real issues of Asian Americans living in rural areas today. For example,

"The problems that today's Asian American family farmers confront are compounded by the fact that many are refugees with limited English and a lack of familiarity with government regulations. Southeast Asian farmers in California have been fined up to \$25,000 for using relatives in the field, which is traditional within Asian family structure, but violates rules related to workman's compensation insurance. They are disadvantaged by the amount of paperwork and bureaucracy necessary to get loans or to become certified as organic farmers."

the US Department of Agriculture expresses concern about the high poverty rate among rural Asian American families. According to a 2000 USDA estimate, 27% of API families earn about one fourth of the poverty level amount for a family of four. In order to grasp the challenges facing rural Asian Americans today, it is necessary to understand the history of agricultural developments in the United States, and how race and ethnicity have interacted – and continue to interact - with the agricultural industry.

Asian Americans have been involved in farming and agriculture since the first Asian immigrants arrived in the United States. American demand for agricultural labor, intensified by periods like the asparagus boom in the early 1900s, brought Filipino, Chinese, and Japanese farmworkers to the United States to work on commercial farms and Hawaiian sugar plantations. Like today's Latino farmworkers, these laborers did hard work for low, unfair wages while always facing the threat of violent racial hostility. To withstand the racist environment around them, they formed communities in areas like Stockton and Locke, California, complete with their own schools and community publications. Asian American workers also organized together to strike and form unions. For example, Japanese sugar beet workers joined with Mexican workers in 1903 in one of the first farmworker strikes in the United States. Decades later, Filipino farmworkers unions took part in the strikes that led to the creation of the United Farm Workers in 1965, with Filipino organizer Philip Vera Cruz as the UFW's vice-president.

Some early Asian immigrants were able to purchase lands and start successful farms, both for subsistence and commercial purposes. As early as the 1860s, Chinese

crops, introducing vegetables and strains of rice that had not been previously cultivated in the United States. Asian American tenant farmers also contributed mightily to Californian agriculture by reclaiming thousands of acres of farmland from the swamps of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The influx of immigrants and refugees from Southeast Asia during the 1960s and 70s led to the establishment of many family-owned

small farms in California and in the Midwest. Today, roughly 1,000 – 2,000 farms in Fresno County alone are owned by Asian American families.

Asian American farmers have faced a variety of challenges. In the early years of Asian American farming, racist laws regulating land and agriculture made it difficult for Asian Americans to access the resources necessary to participate on equal terms in the farming industry. Asian Americans were largely prohibited from buying land by legislation like the 1913 Alien Land Act. These land-owning restrictions were made harsher by legislators during World War II, due to heightened racism directed against Asian Americans. The enhanced restrictions closed the loopholes in the 1913 Act that Asian American farmers had used to resist the law. The courts in the early part of the 20th century also ruled for discrimination against Asian Americans in farming. For example, in 1923 *Webb v. O'Brien* declared sharecropping illegal because it was a way for Japanese Americans to indirectly possess and use land. That same year, *Frick v. Webb* banned Asian immigrants from owning stocks in corporations formed for farming. The Alien Land Act was not declared unconstitutional until 1952. By that time, other major changes were taking place that would seriously threaten the ability of Asian Americans to run small farms sustainably.

The period following World War II was characterized by the growth of industrial agriculture, a mode of farming that continues to dominate today. Industrial agriculture is a form of market-oriented farming carried out by large corporations. In contrast to Asian American small farms, which grow a variety of Asian vegetables and fruits, large industrial farms generally produce one crop on a large scale. These agribusinesses benefit from government subsidies and credit that enable them to buy and use expensive technology like chemical fertilizers, herbicides,

and genetically modified crops. The increased development and use of these high-tech chemically and genetically-modified farming techniques produce high yields and high profits for corporations, but this comes "at the expense of fair labor use, biodiversity, subsistence farming, and soil quality," says Hallie Chen, cofounder of UC Berkeley's Society for Agriculture and Food Ecology (SAFE), "The changes bypass small farmers." In other words, the growth of industrial agriculture made independent small farms with diverse crops and more earth-friendly farming techniques "economically unviable" at a time when Asian Americans were finally allowed the legal recourse to purchase land for farming.

The problems that today's Asian American family farmers confront are compounded by the fact that many are refugees with limited English and a lack of familiarity with government regulations. Southeast Asian farmers in California have been fined up to \$25,000 for using relatives in the field, which is traditional within Asian family structure, but violates rules related to workman's compensation insurance. They are disadvantaged by the amount of paperwork and bureaucracy necessary to get loans or to become certified as organic farmers. Traditional Southeast Asian farming techniques are not applicable to the climate in the United States, but these immigrants have not been given access to cutting-edge organic and sustainable techniques that boutique farms targeting wealthy customers have been able to establish. As a result of these complications, many Southeast Asian farms have resorted to buying the chemical fertilizers and



equipment popularized by the growth of industrial agriculture, purchases which severely eat into their profits. Farming is so difficult and unprofitable that many second-generation Asian Americans who grew up on farms are leaving rural areas and the traditional farming lifestyle of their parents behind.

Despite the disadvantages that Asian American small farmers face, they have been able to find a market to tap into with their produce. Asian American farmers have been able to sell their produce at farmer's markets and ethnic grocery stores. This produce is even hitting the mainstream; according to the Fresno County agricultural commissioner's office, the sale of "oriental vegetables" is increasing, rising from \$10.3 million in sales in 2003 to \$15.7 million in 2004. In total, California's Asian vegetable farms produce between \$75-100 million a year. Most importantly, they sell vegetables traditionally used in Asian cuisine to the Asian American communities in urban/suburban areas like the San Francisco Bay Area. Although Asian American rural and farming communities are often invisible to us, they continue to provide us with the taro, daikon, and bok choy we associate with our heritages and our homes.

Farmers Markets in the Bay Area

Center and Martin Luther King Jr. Way :

> Saturdays 10 AM – 3 PM

Derby Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way

> Tuesdays 2 PM – 6 PM

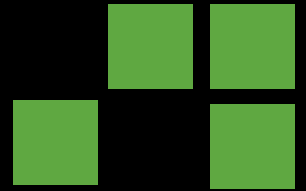
Shattuck Ave and Rose Street

> Thursdays 3 PM – 7 PM

For more information on S.A.F.E.: visit www.agrariana.org

immigrants were starting their own farms to grow crops that would cater to the tastes of Chinese miners. Japanese American farmers organized farming cooperatives to improve growing and marketing of their vegetables and flowers. Asian American farming contributed new farming techniques and

thimmakka



greening ethnic restaurants one establishment at a time

by kevin lee

It is no secret that the Bay Area is home to an extremely assorted collection of fine dining. A casual, ten minute stroll here in Berkeley can lead you to the pungent scents of faraway Ethiopian or Indian cuisine. Ethnic restaurants give patrons a taste of different cultures and lend depth to the uniquely diverse Bay Area landscape.

At the same time, behind the comfortable environment and delicious cuisine provided, restaurants must deal with energy inefficiency and solid wastes, most definitely a lesser-known and not-so-fine side of the restaurant business. For every scrumptious meal produced, restaurants consume great amounts of energy for refrigerating and heating food, while inefficiently disposing of environmentally-harmful substances such as excess cooking oils, greases, and other solid wastes leftover from the cooking and eating processes.

And the problem is not a small one. A 2003 study by the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) concluded that among all commercial industries in the state, food is the most prevalent waste material. Food makes up nearly a fifth of all commercial waste, or over 3.5 millions tons a year. Earlier this year, the CIWMB analyzed the quantity and categories of waste production from a number of industries, including 27 full-service restaurants. The CIWMB concluded that every year, full-service restaurants produce 4,403 pounds of waste for every employee, among the highest industry rates of waste-production. Nearly two-thirds of the waste produced was some manner of food, or about 2,900 pounds per employee.

In 1998, activist and entrepreneur Ritu Primlani set out to change how society views environmentalism. Working with local governments, businesses, and restaurants, Primlani founded Thimmakka, a non-profit group devoted to combating the excessive, environmental inefficiencies of fine dining establishments throughout the Bay Area. "We wanted to outreach to ethnic communities," Primlani stated. "Where do people meet? Besides churches and temples, people meet at restaurants for food. It only makes sense to go there."

Thimmakka is a non-profit organization dedicated to "greening" ethnic restaurants. "Greening" consists of applying environmental measures, implementing new equipment, and raising awareness for restaurant owners and patrons alike. Through greening, Thimmakka hopes to cut down on solid waste and air pollution while increasing energy conservation and recycling usage. While Thimmakka helps all types of businesses out, ethnic restaurants remain as primary environmental targets.

Primlani actually derived the name Thimmakka from a tireless south Indian activist of the same name. Nearly 50 years ago, Thimmakka, along with late husband Chikkanna, began planting banyan trees along a four kilometer stretch. Today,

Thimmakka has "adopted" 400 banyan trees, planting, tending, and nurturing each one, treating them as if they were her own children. The activist Thimmakka embodies the core value that Primlani's non-profit promotes: environmentalism should be accessible to everyone, regardless of class, race, or language barriers.

Thimmakka allows Primlani to combine her twin passions of environmental and social change, and the local community felt her impact immediately. Before Thimmakka, there was a total of one green ethnic restaurant in the Bay Area; after Thimmakka's first year, there were ten. For Primlani, however, statistics are not wholly important; she wants to ensure that society as a whole is gaining environmental awareness, and the positives of greening. "Businesses that are not green are inconvenient to everyone," emphasized Primlani. "They waste energy. They waste water. They pollute the air. They dump pollutants into landfills. We are trying to create an infrastructure that makes sense."

Unsatisfied with Thimmakka's growing influence in the Bay Area, Primlani is determined to spread its message of environmental awareness to restaurants nationwide. Today, Thimmakka continues to expand into other restaurant markets, and people are now coming to Primlani to help green their businesses. Through word-of-mouth, Primlani has been able to establish Thimmakka in both Miami, Florida, and Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada. Establishing guidelines for restaurant environmentalism is difficult because of how every locale approaches environmentalism as a whole. "Each county is unique," observes Primlani, which makes it all the more impressive that Thimmakka has been able to coordinate activities from its Berkeley hub.

With over 100 restaurants in the Bay Area officially green, 15 each in both Miami and Vancouver, and more restaurants applying to become green, Thimmakka continues the struggle for overhauling and revising societal environmentalism. For Primlani, the struggle will not end until people recognize the practicality and benefit of green businesses. "We want to

make systemic changes," Primlani said. "Today, it is unconscionable to walk around with an African slave. That is our goal, to expand environmentalism, to make it part of civic sense."

If you would like to help Thimmakka's cause, or would like an up-dated Green restaurant list, here is how you can get in touch:

e-mail: ger_program@yahoo.com
phone: (510) 655-5566
website: <http://thimmakka.org>

The Thimmakka logo. <http://thimmakka.org>

Are Asians GREEK?

DEAN WORMER: WELL, WELL, WELL. LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY FORGOT THERE'S A RULE AGAINST ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN FRATERNITIES ON PROBATION!

OTTER: WHAT A TOOL.

DEAN WORMER: I DIDN'T GET THAT, SON, WHAT WAS THAT?

OTTER: UH, I SAID, "WHAT A SHAME THAT A FEW BAD APPLES HAVE TO SPOIL A GOOD TIME FOR EVERYONE BY BREAKING THE RULES."

DEAN WORMER: PUT A SOCK IN IT, BOY, OR ELSE YOU'LL BE OUTTA HERE LIKE SHIT THROUGH A GOOSE.

- NATIONAL LAMPOON'S ANIMAL HOUSE

by albert chen and kory hui

The Delta fraternity men in *National Lampoon's Animal House* represent the stereotypes of fraternity men as academic failures, practical jokers and most of all, drunkards. However, the non-Greek community often forgets what fraternities and sororities do for the university's students. Fraternities and sororities pride themselves on bringing the party to those who do not know how to party. Unfortunately, UC Berkeley's department of Student Judicial Affairs often loses sight of what Greek life is really about and targets many of their ill-conceived policies towards Asian Greek houses.

Asian houses value many of the same ideals that "mainstream" houses value. The Greek life mandates that we uphold ideals such as leadership, scholarship, loyalty, self-reliance and honor. People who join Asian houses can testify to the fact that they offer legitimate brotherhoods and sisterhoods. Asian houses thrive upon grassroots work. They get the least traffic and the only reason why they are still around is because of incredibly strong individual commitments and their belief that their lifestyle is something that needs to be valued and passed on forever. Asian houses are usually located on the extremities of campus and during the school year, they are socially involved mostly with their own niche. Asian houses are unlike mainstream houses, who advertise parties with alcohol as their only source of publicity. For example, Zeta Beta Tau, a mainstream fraternity, advertised drinking every Thursday. Their house is so big that they had to sublet rooms out to Irish international students in the summer. These subletters drink frequently and consistently and the house clearly advertises these parties to underage students. Mainstream houses do not represent their organizations on Sproul or campus as much as Asian houses, whose members stand around on campus tabling, flyering and talking to strangers for two weeks every semester, but their houses thrive because they are allowed to email, flyer and telemarket incoming, naive freshman while Asian houses get fined for doing the same.

Asian houses have a long history with the university; ever since the early 1900s at UC Berkeley, there's been an influx of Asian students during admissions. In general, house membership at campus has increased dramatically. However, with the creation of new houses, and with the creation of the Interfraternity and Panhellenic Council, not every house has been included in same Greek community. Membership in any council does not guarantee any benefits or significant advantages besides the requirement to pay Council dues. The fact that some Asian houses have chosen not to join a council allows the university to easily target and punish these houses.

This puts Asian Greek houses in the awkward position of being regulated by outside forces like the university, even though they are not fully recognized. As Jenny Jiang, National Ambassador for UCB Sigma Phi Omega, an Asian-interest sorority said, "I feel disadvantaged when it comes to support for our organization just because we are not a part of the Pan-Hellenic Council. Although we are recognized by the university, we don't receive as much support. The university doesn't give us the kind of legitimacy that it gives to other houses." The Sigmas are required to join a Greek council by next year, pay council dues, but they do not expect the university to introduce incoming first-years to their house.

Sarah Suh, Vice President of Pledge Education for UCB alpha Kappa Delta Phi, an Asian-interest sorority said, "From personal experience, I feel [the university] targets us a lot, they have higher standards for us. If we don't meet them they're a lot stricter. We're scrutinized and at the same time they don't try and establish a better relationship with us... We've been going through a lot with the university; they've been keeping a really close eye on us. It just seems sometimes they are over critical. They always claim that they'll meet us halfway and try to make things 'sound' better. For example, our last advisor was MIA whenever we needed to communicate. She wasn't there to guide us. They don't take a special interest in our house. They just want to regulate us, more than other houses. They said we couldn't even have a carwash with another house. Other houses are having crazy parties and everyone is still... hazing." aKDPH is Panhellenic and part of the Interfraternity Council, but they have never been involved in new recruits' touring process.

Indeed, in the aftermath of the recent alcohol moratorium and the administration's crackdown, many Asian houses lost rights to assemble with each other because that would be a violation of "social probation." Asian sororities were threatened with suspension by the university if they conducted any traditional activities with Asian-interest fraternities.

Last year, UC Berkeley enacted an alcohol moratorium as a result of bad behavior on the part of a few fraternities. Specifically, a hazing incident involving Pi Kappa Phi, a mainstream Interfraternity Council fraternity, and

a fight that broke out on a ferry boat party sponsored by Kappa Alpha Psi, an Interfraternity Council fraternity, led the University to take action. The administration decided to enact an alcohol moratorium to show all Greeks who was boss. But that is exactly where the university failed. They equivocated drinking with bad behavior and decided to regulate by investigating and targeting specific houses.

Reinforcing this false connection, *the Daily Cal* publicized the punishments of fraternities as if cracking down on drinking really counteracted hazing and "other issues." On September 8, 2005, the *Daily Cal* printed a front-page article about Asian fraternity Alpha Xi Omega, which the university acknowledges to be an established fraternity, but not affiliated to a council or a student group. On September 13, 2005, *The Daily Cal* published an editorial called "Crying Over Spilt Beer," with the accusatory lead, "The recent temporary suspension of Alpha Xi Omega demonstrated a few things: traditions die hard, drinking is an integral part of rush and some people don't know how to not get caught." Was the real issue then, about not getting caught? Wasn't it about ending hazing? Or was it about not drinking alcohol? The editorial solidifies the university's policy of sidestepping around the real problem. The editorial continued, "The university knows that if it simply lifts the moratorium, the measure will have been a meaningless PR sacrifice at the media's altar... Bearing that in mind, the slow-and-steady policy that the administration has adopted is the best possible way to deal with a realistically untenable situation."

As even the *Daily Cal* recognizes, the administration's first concern is public relations and the liability of embarrassment for bad behavior on the part of Greek members. The university wants to look pro-active in the public's eye in light of all the news about a few Greek houses' bad behavior. Governor Schwarzenegger already passed the anti-hazing bill, so hazing must not even be an issue. The moratorium then, was enacted purely for the sake of saving face. Consequently, Greek life suffered because of this beauracratic inability to deal with the crux of the problem. It was much easier for the university, with the help of the *Daily Cal*, to attack the legitimacy of a few houses in order to make it look like justice was served.

The Daily Cal staff missed the fact that the administration's policy for this situation consisted of unfair meetings, zero compromise and absolutely no room for many Greek houses to regain their campus legitimacy. Asian Greek houses can best testify to this argument. The Student Judicial Affairs (SJA) panel meeting with Alpha Xi Omega consisted of an administrator literally telling the President of Alpha Xi Omega to "Shut up and sit down." SJA then mandated the house to pay the university thousands of dollars in fines. SJA never again contacted the brothers after the last meeting, not even to collect the money that they supposedly owe for breaking rules. Since Alpha Xi Omega was not even considered a "house" by the university, then Student Judicial Affairs ought to have no jurisdiction over their parties. Threatening the brothers of Alpha Xi Omega with suspension and even expulsion for non-compliance, the university overstepped its boundaries and regulated anyways.

Other Asian-interest fraternities also suffered the wrath of the administration. The Alpha chapter of Pi Alpha Phi, a nation-wide Asian-interest fraternity lost their house and their charter. Members declined to be interviewed for this article for fear of even more backlash from the university. Asian-interest fraternity Lambda Phi Epsilon also faced harsh restrictions.

The Daily Cal editorial argued that "...all Greeks need to follow the rules for a few brief weeks or risk getting caught. And when they do get caught, there's no need to complain. It's not classy either. Alpha Xi Omega's members claimed it wasn't fair to be singled out. It's true that luck got the best of them-but that's no excuse for breaking an agreement that is fair, given the circumstances." However, the moratorium was never an agreement, let alone fair. It was more a mandate that no one except the administration agreed with. In the early twentieth century, millions of citizens disagreed with the United States' prohibition of alcohol. No one accused these dissenters of being "not classy" because eventually legislators realized that the prohibition fostered even more illegal alcohol production and gang activity. The moment that fraternities stop complaining about totalitarian-like investigations and punishments for trivial reasons, is the moment that UC Berkeley forfeits all its historical progress in the free-speech movement and the right of students to assemble.

by krystle ignacio

Memoirs of a J-Town

For Bay Area natives, the thought of San Francisco without Japantown seems loony. It's "J-town" – where you can delight in an abundance of Japanese culture within the confines of approximately eight city blocks, from Sutter to Geary and Fillmore to Laguna. Japanese-influenced restaurants, hotels, movie theaters, lounges, and specialty shops, many with authentic merchandise directly from Japan, make up the charming atmosphere of San Francisco's Japantown. The city is privileged to be home to *Nihonmachi* (aka Japantown), one of only three in the entire U.S. So why sell nearly three-quarters of such a culturally thriving community?

Kinetsu Enterprises Corporation of America, one of two Japanese enterprises that owned a significant chunk of Japantown businesses, formerly owned two major malls, Miyako Mall and Kinetsu Mall, and two hotels, Miyako Hotel and Best Western Miyako Inn. In early February, the company announced their intention to sell all of their businesses in Japantown. There was serious community concern during the initial stages of the dealings that the distinctive identity of Japantown would fade and disappear through this sale. However, legal representatives of Kinetsu Enterprises Co. appeased the public by ensuring that the new owners would protect Japantown's cultural legacy. 3D Investments, based in Los Angeles, bought three of the businesses in late February and readily guaranteed that they would respect the community's wishes to maintain the district's culture. Still, many people remain unconvinced.

It seems as though the most profitable development for that future region would be building market-rate condominiums. For instance, back in 2000, a bowling alley which was also owned by Kinetsu Enterprises Co. was auctioned, despite the community's intensely passionate resistance. Japantown Bowl was eventually sold to the highest bidder for \$7 million. Today, what was once a place for youth and bowling leagues to get together is now just another extremely expensive condominium complex. This, however, is a fate for the rest of Japantown that the community refuses to accept. There has been strong support among community leaders in favor of constituting a Special Use District legislation for the area. This type of legislation would help to protect and preserve the cultural integrity of Japantown. The Special Use District legislation has been passed by the San Francisco Planning Commission and is currently under review by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

In addition, a popular movie theater, American Multi-Cinema, Inc. (AMC) Kabuki Cinema 8, was also for sale due to an anti-trust ruling. AMC and Loews Cineplex Entertainment, two major movie theater chains, merged in January under the government terms that they must put ten of their theaters on the market for independent buyers. As a result, Kabuki Cinema 8 was bought by Sundance Cinemas and is now called "Sundance Kabuki." Representatives of Sundance Cinemas also expressed that they do not intend to alter the "community-based nature of the theater." They anticipate continuing to maintain cultural traditions at the theater such as the San Francisco International Asian-American Film Festival, which is an annual celebration.

Skepticism remains in light of the changes made in the Japantown landscape. Although the Japanese-American population accounts for only 10% of the neighboring region as a whole, Japantown is nonetheless an icon for its culture. If 3D Investments follows through with their promise to keep the cultural integrity of the district, then there would be more reason to rejoice. The new ownership of Japantown could possibly breathe a new, revived life into the community. Modern structures along with age-old culture may be just what Japantown needs. Keeping in mind what happened to Japantown Bowl, let's keep our fingers crossed.



A few facts about SF Japantown...

- San Francisco's Japantown first sprung up with the original inpouring of Japanese immigrants in the mid-1800s.
- After the 1906 earthquake, many more Japanese settlers moved to what is now the Western Addition of San Francisco, also known as the Fillmore District.
- By the end of World War II, the smaller district had grown to have one of the largest concentrations of Japanese outside of Japan.
- Today, nearly 12,000 Japanese-Americans live in San Francisco and approximately 80,000 live in the greater Bay Area.
- One of the area's most distinguished landmarks is the Peace Pagoda, a five-tiered Buddhist type structure. It is a symbol of eternal peace.

Images:
http://www.maecke.ch/img/reisen/kalifornien_japantown.jpg
<http://bayimages.net/thumbnails/4k/bay003670.jpg>

Exit Clov's Respond Respond

by joanna kim

Led by twin sisters, Emily and Susan Hsu, Exit Clov is an up and coming indie band that has been receiving a lot of hype. Their band includes guitarist Aaron Leeder, drummer John Thayer, and bassist Brett Niederman.

Exit Clov does not exactly fit the genre of alternative rock. They are more a mix of techno, pop, and alternative: "techpoptive". Despite this unique spin to their music, their music is not always pleasing to the ear. The first track on their CD *Respond Respond* was unnecessarily screechy and mediocre in terms of melody. Though their headache-producing beats and bad musical choices may turn off non-alternative listeners, avid alties will love them.

The musicianship and the album choices made are a mix of harmony and cacophony. They created their "techpoptive" style by combining synth, violin, guitar, bass and drums liberally. Many of the early, screechier tracks gave me a headache, but by the fourth song or so, the melodies became a bit softer and the music

was more palatable. Exit Clov would have been better off producing a whole album of songs with the soft quality of "Violent Berries." Despite the monotonous beat, the violin on the track mixes beautifully with the sweet voices of the singers and the refreshing lyrics. Throughout the album, the guitar solos were well played and the vocals were terrific.

Those two attributes are possibly the only redeeming features of Exit Clov. Their vocal talent was a hidden gem that revealed itself through the course of the CD. Exit Clov's vocals are not the strong, "Christina Aguilera, sing my lungs out" sound. They have a more edgy sound, while still managing to be sweet. The female singers harmonized well (perhaps because they are twins?) and their voices meshed well with the "techpoptive" style.

All in all, Exit Clov is a talented band well worth checking out. Hopefully they will improve with time and someday create a CD that appeals to more than a minor subset of people.

meet the U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL

by annie chung

In a town called Chungju, in the South Korean province of Chungcheong, no one would have imagined that a hometown boy named Ban Ki Moon born in 1944 would sixty-two years later grow up to become the eighth United Nations Secretary General. With current UN Secretary General Kofi Anan stepping down after his two five-year terms, the United Nations has formally announced South Korea's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ki Moon Ban as Anan's successor. It has already been thirty years since the last appointment of an Asian Secretary General, with the last being Burmese U Thant during 1961-1971.

For the average world citizen, the name Ban Ki Moon is unlikely to ring a bell. Who is this man and where did he come from? According to Ban, his dream of becoming a diplomat all started in 1962, when he was the young age of 18 years old when he attended a program sponsored by the American Red Cross, on which he had the chance to meet President John F. Kennedy. With this dream, he pursued a B.A. in International Relations at Seoul University in 1970 and then continued his education at Harvard University receiving his Masters in Policy Planning.

During this time of tension with North Korea's nuclear program, the United Nations seems to have chosen the perfect intermediary to succeed Anan. The United Nations this

time around may not be looking for an aggressive diplomat, but rather an administrator, a role for which Ban has garnered

international regard. Among the five permanent United Nation powers, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Russian Federation, and China, China has had a long history of communication with North Korea. Ban's electoral victory, however, has not proven troublesome to the burgeoning world power, as China has shown support for the Secretary General-elect. As the clichéd saying goes, "actions speak louder than words," and although Ban may have a passive demeanor, his past experience, as both chairman on the Nuclear Treaty Ban Organization in 1999 as well as the South Korean Ambassador in Austria illustrate his deft administrative skills. Ban's previous involvement in international affairs and his own personal

connection to North Korea will hopefully facilitate a proper response to the present North Korean nuclear issue.

Yet many view Ban's appointment as a way for the United Nations choosing the least of three evils. The two other Asian candidates Surakiart Sathirathai of Thailand and Shashi Tharoor of India. Due to recent conflicts in both countries from

military coups and international conflict with Pakistan, many speculate that choosing Ban was a decision nothing

more than just playing it safe. Recent Berkeley graduate Eugene Lee, former research committee executive for Liberty in North Korea, believes that the origins of the new Secretary General may only complicate the situation. "Take it as you will, but North Korea tested their nuclear weapons on the day Ban Ki Moon's victory was announced," Lee noted. "Moon is now in a very difficult position, for on one hand he will have to impartially engage the North, but as a South Korean, realize the danger to his own country. Nuclear weapons, human rights, and the possibility of full scale war are now issues the international community has to face on the Korean Peninsula, and Ban Ki Moon will be the advocate who will vocalize these concerns. The fact that he's a South Korean does not help the situation; it only reminds the world of the political division in Korea."

Ban continues his efforts in preparing for his office, amidst a mix of responses ranging from public enthusiasm to wary skepticism. At the end of October, talks began between China's President Hu Jintao, Ban and China's envoy to North Korea, Tang Jiaxuan. In contrast to his passive, administrative approach, Ban was noted for stressing the need to put pressure on North Korea while approaching the issue in a peaceful way by going back to the six-party talks. Although negotiations with North Korea looms over Ban's tenure as the next Secretary General, China's support may give Ban a diplomatic edge.

Since North Korea has clearly voiced their lack of hesitation in conducting nuclear tests, the United Nations in my opinion might bite their tongue in saying they would rather have an "administrator" than a "diplomat." Ban even states that he will actively pursue enforcing the sanctions on North Korea that the United Nations have already placed. United Nations superpowers might expect Ban to come in quietly, but I expect Ban to begin his tenure as Secretary General with a bang.



Key Appointments in Ban Ki Moon's Career

1975: Staff member of the UN division of the South Korean Home Office
1995: Deputy Minister for Policy Planning and International Organization
1999: South Korean Ambassador to Austria
1996: National Security Advisor to South Korean President
2000: Vice Minister of Foreign Policy advisor to current S. Korean President Roh Moo-hyun.

ASIANS IN BASEBALL

by steve kim



The game of baseball is seen as quintessentially American. After all, baseball was invented in America (whether by Abner Doubleday or Alexander Cartwright), and the game has long been called "America's pastime." However, professional baseball is arguably the most diverse sport when compared to the other major team sports played in America. When someone watches a Major League Baseball game these days, he or she cannot help but see names of players originating from Latin America and Asia.

The 2006 MLB playoffs showcased two starting pitchers from Asia. Hong-Chih Kuo pitched for the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League Division Series against the New York Mets, while Chien-Ming Wang pitched for the New York Yankees against the Detroit Tigers in the American League Division Series. Both hail from Taiwan, where baseball has had a long history. Baseball continues to be one of the most popular sports in East Asia, especially Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan. In this modern age where globalization holds strong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan have separated themselves as major exporters of Asian baseball players. Currently, there are 14 Asian-born baseball players playing in the big leagues, many of them pitchers. The Asian baseball player phenomenon originated with MLB teams importing pitchers.

Growing up in the Los Angeles area as a sports fan in the early and mid 1990s meant witnessing the popularity of Japanese pitcher Hideo Nomo and Korean pitcher Chan Ho Park. Both galvanized interest in baseball to a fever pitch in the Japanese American and Korean American communities in Los Angeles, as well as across the world. This was especially the case with Nomo, who set the first benchmarks of success in Major League Baseball by winning the National League Rookie of the Year award in 1995, playing in the All-Star game, and throwing a no-hitter against the Colorado Rockies in 1996. As time passed, the Asian baseball craze in the MLB only grew with the introduction of Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners.

Ichiro became a media sensation in the United States as both the Japanese national media and the American press was fixated on Ichiro's surprising success in his rookie year. Fans and players were amazed at his unusual batting preparation and stance. They were mesmerized by his speed and his powerful arm from right field. He ended up winning some impressive awards in his rookie year of 2001, earning Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player in the American League, and led all players in voting for the All-Star game. The fervor with Asian players continues today; the Boston Red Sox outbidded the New York Mets and the notoriously high-spending New York Yankees with a \$50 million bid, just for the right to negotiate a contract with Daisuke Matsuzaka. Matsuzaka, the pitching ace for Japan's World Baseball Classic team, has the talent to become Boston's ace next year, but perhaps more telling is who is representing Matsuzaka in contract negotiations: Scott Boras, the "superagent" who's highly paid (and exclusive) clientele include superstars Carlos Beltran and Alex Rodriguez.

The World Baseball Classic held in March of 2006 highlighted the ascendancy of Asian baseball on the global stage. Major League Baseball attempted to both capture baseball's international audience and create a World Cup soccer type atmosphere where all the best players represented their nations in a tournament. Many baseball pundits predicted that a team like the United States, Cuba, or the all-star packed Dominican Republic would emerge as champions. While Asian nations fielded skilled teams, hardly anyone in the media or in the baseball world picked them to win it all. Surprising most baseball analysts and followers, Japan and Korea advanced to the semifinals, while the United States failed to advance out of group play. Japan eventually

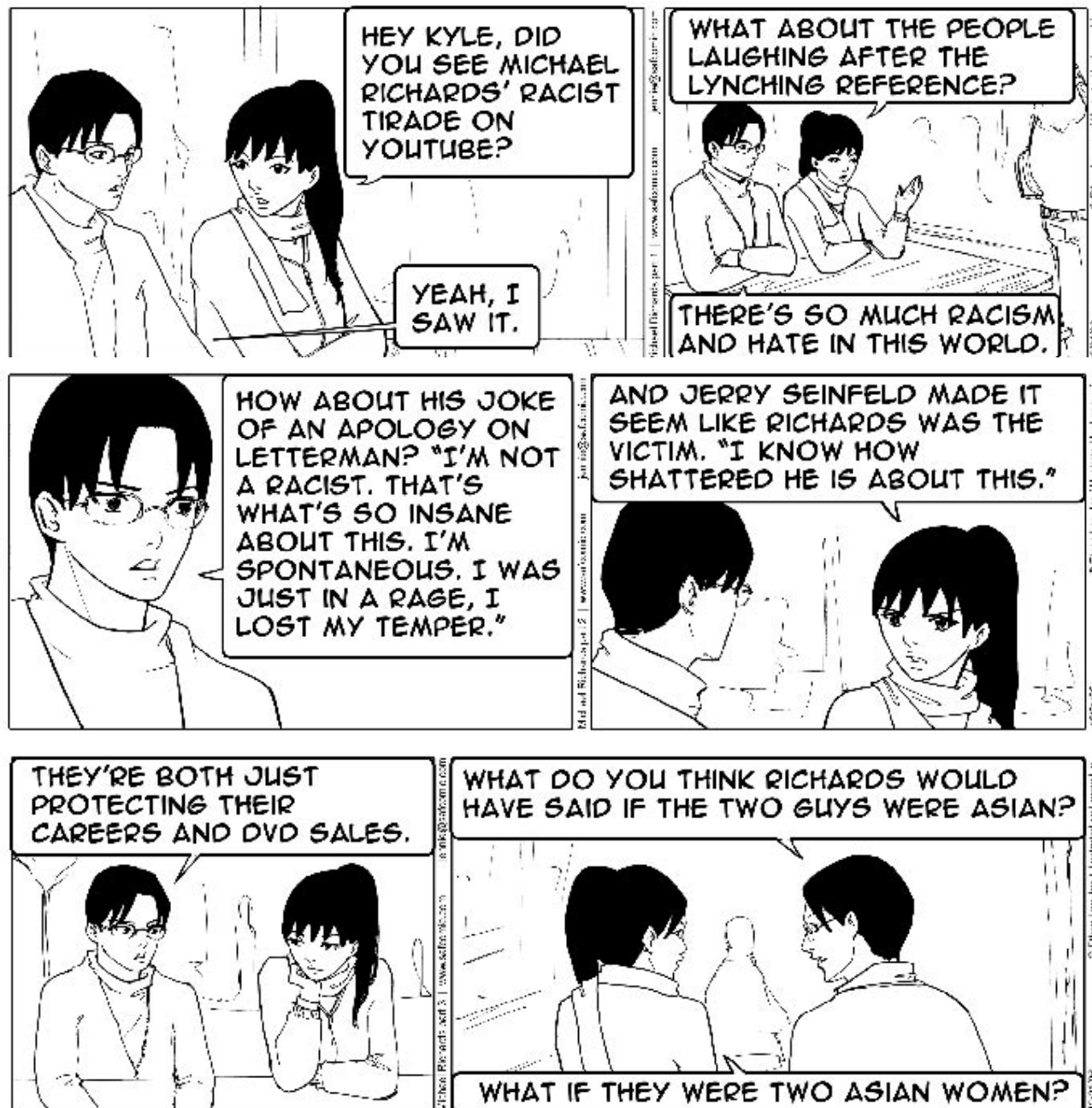
beat a strong Cuban national team, 10 to 6, to capture the inaugural World Baseball Classic. The argument can be made that Japan and South Korea were the most impressive squads of the WBC, showcasing impressive fundamental baseball to overcome the star-studded squads. As the WBC grows in popularity and revenue over the ensuing years, all of the baseball world will watch and see if Japan and Korea will continue to post impressive results.

Asian baseball has made its mark in the MLB. As the Asian American community grows in the United States, there seems to be a significant lack of American-born baseball players playing at the highest level. With the exception of players like Johnny Damon, Danny Graves, Jim Parque, and Dave Roberts who all happen to be half Asian, Asian American baseball seems to be lagging behind East Asian

baseball. However, for many Asian American baseball fans, seeing people who share a common background competing on the biggest stage is undoubtedly a thrill, as both sports fans and Asian Americans. With respect to Yao Ming and the NBA, professional baseball continues to be the cutting edge for Asian Americans in American major sports. Success in baseball provides a social benefit as well; the stereotype of Asian males being physically weaker and less athletic than other males is severely challenged by the rise of players, like Nomo and Suzuki, and international teams from Japan and South Korea. Finally, the recent fervor over Matsuzaka and his contract negotiations with the Red Sox means that the spotlight will continue to shine on Asian baseball. There are still more innings to be played and ground to be broken to see how this current and recent past success of Asian baseball players will translate for Asian America.



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The Waribashi Project: San Francisco...

Chopsticks and the Environment

by lauren morimoto

A trip to San Francisco Japantown is hardly complete without stopping for a bite to eat. From ramen to sushi, Japantown provides a cornucopia of delicious cuisine. But have you ever wondered what happens to your wooden chopsticks after you are done eating your meal?

Donna Ozawa asked the same question early in 2005 and found the used chopsticks, or *waribashi*, to "pose a great problem to our environment through deforestation and destruction of forest habitats." Thus, the inspiration for the Waribashi Project: San Francisco began, where Ozawa sought to "examine the disposable chopstick as an artistic, cultural and environmental subject."

With the aid of the Columbia and LEF Foundations, the Japanese Community and Cultural Center of Northern California, and restaurants in San Francisco's Japantown, 180,000 *waribashi* were collected, cleaned, and air-dried. With these, Ozawa created new sculptures and installations for an Waribashi Project exhibition in June 2005. The project gained publicity at several public events, including the United Nations World Environment Day 2005 and Japantown's Nihonmachi Street Fair in August 2005. Last September and October 2005, Ozawa's showcased her new work through a personal exhibition.

Ozawa stresses the importance of chopsticks in Asian and Asian American cultures. Used from a ceremonial basis to the everyday, chopsticks have existed for over 5,000

years, representing sustenance and history. As Ozawa notes, "For Asian Americans, they represent the strengths of our ancestors and our cultural inheritance." As for *waribashi* in particular, the disposable chopsticks are a symbolic icon of the modern, pan-Asian, consumerist society. In the 1870s, *waribashi* originated as a creative method for using scrap wood materials. Contrast this trend to today, where Japan is the world's largest consumer of rainforest wood, and *waribashi* make up Japan's second leading cause of wood consumption; 130 million pairs are produced per day, and roughly 11 billion pairs per year.

Through the Waribashi Project, Ozawa hoped to encourage awareness of environmental issues and cultural practices. Her proposal to an alternative for *waribashi* is to carry your own non-disposable set that comes with a carrying case. She also recommends re-using *waribashi* as aids in the garden or use with art projects. The East Bay Depot for Creative Use and the Scroungers' Center for Reusable Art Parts (SCRAP) are places geared towards creatively re-using items. Other single-use products such as Popsicle sticks, tongue depressors, coffee stir-sticks, and plastic ice cream spoons also cause environmental damage and can be dropped off at these reuse centers.

Nonetheless, the Waribashi Project discouragingly ended toward the end of 2005. Despite popular appeal for Ozawa's exhibits, no restaurants in Japantown have tried to amend their

recycling habits. The Japantown Center could "save over 25% on their garbage bill" if they implemented suggested recycling methods. Ozawa even notes that the Japantown mall does not have any recycling bins for bottles and cans at all. Overall, Ozawa concluded, "I can't force anyone to change, but you can imagine how frustrating it is after all the work, fundraising, artmaking..."

Ozawa's project applies to our very own campus as well. Nearly 20 years ago, the city of Berkeley banned Styrofoam. In June, Oakland followed in Berkeley's footsteps and banned Styrofoam as well. Berkeley is one of the most environmental-friendly cities in the country, so one cannot help but wonder, what's next? Could the city of Berkeley pick up on Ozawa's statement and ban disposable wooden chopsticks as well? When asked about hypothetical campuswide and citywide bans on chopsticks, UC Berkeley sophomore Nick Brown seemed reluctant to support such a proposition. "People do use them and it'd be wrong to ban it," Brown argues, "Berkeley has too high of an Asian population to ban an important aspect to Asian culture." Kik Inouye, Brown's friend and a fellow UC Berkeley sophomore, disagreed. "Banning disposable chopsticks in restaurants alone would be fine," replied Inouye. "It would be like eating at a Chinese restaurant with plastic chopsticks; it's the same as using metal forks."

The environmental debate over banning *waribashi* in Berkeley could be the next big thing for eager, optimistic eyes, but Donna Ozawa who tried to make it a reality, concludes, "I feel like I have been holding the reality of this project on my own. I think the Japanese American community's inertia on this and so many issues is enough to make this homegirl run screaming."



For further information:
Donna Ozawa www.donnaozawa.com
Japan's waribashi issue http://www.geocities.com/green_in_japan/issues/waribashi.html
SCRAP <http://scrap-sf.org/>
The official Waribashi Project website www.waribashi.org