

Asian American POLICY REVIEW

Graduate School of
Public Policy
University of California
at Berkeley

John F. Kennedy
School of Government
Harvard University

Featuring:

Gen Fujioka and Jo Ann C. Gong

Deeana L. Jang

Vitus Leung and Don Mar

Juanita T. Lott

Albert Y. Muratsuchi

Irene Natividad

Bill Tamayo

Chang-Lin Tien

L. Ling-chi Wang

VOLUME II

SPRING 1991

TEN DOLLARS

The *Asian American Policy Review* is published by an editorial board of graduate students at the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

All rights reserved, © 1991 Asian American Policy Review. Except as otherwise specified, no article or portion herein is to be reproduced or adapted to other works without the express consent of the author or the *Review's* editors.

Donations. Donations provided in support of the *Asian American Policy Review* are tax-deductible as a non-profit gift under the John F. Kennedy School of Government's IRS 501(c)(3) status. Grants and other contributory assistance should specify intent for use by the Asian American Policy Review in order to facilitate accounting.

Subscriptions. Inquiries concerning subscriptions should be sent to Subscriptions, care of the address below. Institutional rate (includes all subscriptions paid through institutional funds), \$30; individual rate, \$10. Please add \$2 per copy for postage. Indicate Volume I(1990) or Volume II (1991). Telephone inquiries are welcome.

Advertising Inquiries. Write to the *Asian American Policy Review*, John F. Kennedy School of Government, 79 JFK Street, Belfer L-4, Cambridge, MA 02138 or call (617) 495-1311.

Postmaster. Send changes of address to the *Asian American Policy Review*, John F. Kennedy School of Government, 79 JFK Street, Belfer L-4, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Printing. The *Asian American Policy Review* is printed by C.W. Beane, Inc. of Cambridge, MA.

Asian American
POLICY REVIEW

VOLUME II
SPRING 1991

JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY

Dean Eugene Smolensky
Graduate School of Public Policy
University of California at Berkeley

Student Government
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Policy Students of Color
Graduate School of Public Policy
University of California at Berkeley

Department of Economics
University of California at Berkeley

Paul Kim
Basle, Switzerland

Paula Mishima
Sacramento, CA

Dale Shimasaki
Sacramento, CA

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

March Fong Eu
State of California

Congressman Robert T. Matsui
United States Congress

Congressman Norman Mineta
United States Congress

Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien
University of California, Berkeley

S. B. Woo
University of Delaware

ACADEMIC ADVISORY BOARD

Professor Lee C. Lee
Cornell University

Professor Robert Lee
Brown University

Professor Don T. Nakanishi
University of California at Los Angeles

Professor Ronald Takaki
University of California at Berkeley

EDITORIAL BOARD

Graduate School of Public Policy
University of California at Berkeley

KarYen Chu
Tammy Eng
Grant Habata
Roland Hwang
Chan U Lee
Curtis Sano
Reina Tanguilig

Our thanks to:

Kathy Choi
Paul Kim
Taeku Lee
Jai Sookprasert
Kenneth Train
Lisa Webb
Chinese for Affirmative Action
Journal of Hispanic Policy

John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Leonard Adler
Sanjay Chatterjee
Anne Ching
Linda Chung
Sabrina Gee
Robert Huang
Susie Kagehiro
Madge Kho
Stephen Kim
Edwin Lau
Wai-Shan Leung
Mona Miyasato
Shao Chee Sim
Dong Suh
Leverett Wing

CONTRIBUTORS

Vitus Leung is civil rights program director at Chinese For Affirmative Action (CAA), a non-profit membership-supported civil rights organization based in San Francisco. He received a B.A. in economics from the University of California at Berkeley and a M.A. in Public Policy at the University of Chicago, and will pursue a Ph.D. in Ethnic Studies at Berkeley this Fall.

Don Mar is Assistant Professor of Economics at San Francisco State University. He received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of California at Berkeley.

Albert Y. Muratsuchi is currently a legislative aide to California State Senator Milton Marks of San Francisco. He received a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley in economics. Muratsuchi conducted his study in Spring of 1990 as a fellow for the Coro Foundation, a non-profit, non-partisan political leadership training institute.

Deeana Jang is a Staff Attorney at the Domestic Relations Unit, San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation. She is also a board member of the Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services and the Asian Women's Shelter.

L. Ling-Chi Wang is Coordinator of Asian American Studies and Chairperson of the Ethnic Studies Department at the University of California at Berkeley. His research interests are Asian American history and civil rights. He is also the chairperson of the University of California systemwide Asian Languages Task Force.

Juanita T. Lott is president of Tamayo Lott Associates, a public policy consulting firm in Silver Spring, Maryland. She chaired the Census Advisory Committee on Asian and Pacific Islander Populations for the 1990 Census. Lott also advises the House Subcommittee on Census and Population.

Bill Tamayo is a Managing Attorney of the Asian Law Caucus, Inc. at San Francisco. He received a B.A. from San Francisco State University and J.D. from the University of California at Davis. He is also a member of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

Gen Fujioka is Housing Project Director with the Asian Law Caucus, Inc. in San Francisco, California. He attended the University of California at Santa Cruz and has a J.D. from the New College Of Law of California.

Jo Ann C. Gong is an intern for the Asian Law Caucus. She has a B.A. from the University of California at Santa Cruz and will be entering Stanford University Law School in the fall.

Asian American
POLICY REVIEW

Volume II—Spring 1991

INTRODUCTION	1
FEATURE ARTICLES	
<i>Vitus Leung and Don Mar</i> 1990 Census Outreach to Asian and Pacific Americans in the San Francisco Metropolitan Area	3
<i>Albert Y. Muratsuchi</i> Voter Registration in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: An Agenda for the 1990s	17
<i>Deanna L. Jang</i> Asian Immigrant Battered Women and United States Immigration Policy	33
COMMENTARIES	
<i>L. Ling-chi Wang</i> The Politics of Ethnic Identity and Empowerment: The Asian American Community Since the 1960s	43
<i>Juanita T. Lott</i> Policy Implications of Population Changes in the Asian American Community	57
<i>Bill Tamayo</i> Broadening The "Asian Interests" In United States Immigration Policy	65
<i>Gen Fujioka and Jo Ann C. Gong</i> The Challenges of Asian American Suburbanization	81
PUBLIC ADDRESS	
<i>Irene Natividad</i> Political and Cultural Diversity: America's Hope and America's Challenge.....	91
INTERVIEWS	
An Interview with Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien.....	99

SPRING 1991

v

Political powerlessness is the central problem facing Asian Americans today, or so writes Professor L. Ling-chi Wang in his article "The Politics of Ethnic Identity and Empowerment: the Asian American Community Since the 1960s," in this volume of the *Asian American Policy Review*. Indeed, Asian Americans have remained divided along political, class, and ethnic lines, generally unable to influence both regional and national politics, as well as policy. The result of this absence has been occasionally ineffective, misguided, and, at worst, discriminatory policies toward Asian Americans.

With the release of 1990 Census results this year, much attention has been paid to the fact that Asian Americans have become the fastest growing ethnic group in the country--growing from 3.5 to 7.3 million over the last 10 years. Yet, this surge in the Asian American population, due primarily to East and Southeast Asian immigration in the 1970s and 1980s, has further fragmented the Asian community. Different national origins, languages, political experiences, and economic status have frustrated attempts to unify Asian Americans as potential political force.

Given this rapid growth and increasing heterogeneity, the central challenge facing Asian Americans today is creating an agenda which acknowledges the diversity of Asian Americans yet addresses specific concerns of individual communities. In this volume of the *Asian American Policy Review*, we present articles and commentaries which explore this challenge through discussion and analysis of current policies affecting representation of, and public services to, Asian Americans.

Vitus Leung and Don Mar present findings from their study--commissioned by the Census Bureau--on the effectiveness of the 1990 Census outreach to Asian and Pacific Islanders. The study describes behavioral and attitudinal differences between Asian and Pacific Islander groups, underscored by widespread fears of the Census' confidentiality and a poor understanding of its primary purposes. Leung and Mar conclude that outreach efforts, while more effective for some groups than others, were overall extremely limited, and recommend strategies to improve communication with the Asian Pacific population.

Albert Muratsuchi's case study of Asian Pacific Americans in Oakland, California identifies Asian Pacific registration patterns and identifies political party size and affiliation of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese electorates. He investigates why Asian Pacifics have not translated their numbers into political strength by analyzing reasons for low Asian registration rates. Muratsuchi compares his findings to previous studies of San Francisco and Los Angeles, and he recommends ways to improve voter registration drives to increase Asian Pacific electoral participation.

Deeana Jang addresses how immigration policy in the last decade has exacerbated the problem of domestic violence against immigrant women. She asserts that the Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986 and the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments of 1986 have established situations where an immigrant or undocumented wife is left wholly dependent upon her battering husband to stay in this country to obtain legal residence. To remedy this problem, Jang suggests several legislative amendments to protect immigrant women from abuse by their partners.

L. Ling-chi Wang chronicles the political history of Asians in the United States. He argues that Asian Americans' lack of political power and influence is characterized by

a history of "dual domination," a system of simultaneous domestic racial injustice and extraterritorial repressive rule. Analyzing the transformation of the Asian community in the last twenty years, Wang prescribes a broad political agenda for the Asian American community based in civil rights and transcending class, culture, and linguistic barriers.

Juanita T. Lott discusses the policy implications of the growing heterogeneity of the Asian American population. Despite the emergence of Asians as a visible ethnic group, Lott argues that policy research has failed to develop a coherent framework to interpret the complexity of this population. Lott further contends that research on ethnic populations can no longer be confined to binary white/non-white terms. She concludes by suggesting ways to improve research on Asian American policy and urging the Asian American community to seize the opportunity opened by the 1990 Census to initiate creative policies.

Bill Tamayo argues that the Asian community's interests in immigration policy have been too narrowly defined to the issue of family reunification, ignoring the consequences of policies such as a national identification program and employer sanctions. Tamayo also cautions against presuming that immigration legislation affects all Asians equally. To effectively critique and advance multi-faceted immigration reform, Tamayo urges the Asian American community to adopt a broader, pro-civil rights framework.

Gen Fujioka and Jo Ann C. Gong address the effects of suburbanization upon Asian American community needs. In the past, urban areas have served as the focus of cultural, linguistic, and social resources for many Asian American communities. The authors argue that as Asians become more dispersed, specialized services--such as culturally and linguistically appropriate elder services--can no longer be concentrated in a single, urban location. The challenge of the coming years is to link spatially dispersed urban and suburban areas to maintain Asian American communities and all of their cultural and social resources.

In her keynote address for Harvard University's AWARE week, **Irene Natividad** speaks plainly of the misconceptions of Asian Americans as the "model minority." She describes how this characterization of Asians has affected public policy, excluding Asians from government programs such as bilingual education, business set-asides, and affirmative action. Natividad attributes the absence of a significant Asian political response to the inability of Asians to participate in the most elementary form of political involvement--voting. Finally, in a brief interview with University of California at Berkeley Chancellor **Chang-Lin Tien**, Tien expresses his feelings about being the first Asian American to lead a major university and the challenge facing the Asian American community to nurture more political leaders.

Gaining greater Asian American representation and influence over electoral politics and public policy indeed will depend upon the ability of Asian Americans to develop effective political leaders, capable of forging a common agenda which balances the diverse and divergent interests of different Asian communities. It is our belief that through discussion and analysis of political, social, and economic issues affecting Asian Americans, more equitable and effective policies can be created, and more enlightened exchange can define this agenda. If political powerlessness is the central problem facing Asian Americans today, we hope that the understanding and communication fostered by the *Asian American Policy Review* will promote a stonger, more unified voice which resonates in political as well as policy arenas.

1990 Census Outreach to Asian and Pacific Americans in the San Francisco Metropolitan Area

by

Vitus Leung
Chinese for Affirmative Action

Don Mar
San Francisco State University

This study attempts to gauge the effectiveness of outreach to Asian and Pacific Americans in the recently completed 1990 Census. Focus group interviews with representatives of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pilipino, Samoan, and Vietnamese communities in the San Francisco Bay Area were used to assess outreach effectiveness, knowledge and attitudes about the census, and participant experiences with the 1990 enumeration. The study results, while mixed across the diverse ethnic groups, show census outreach and participants' understanding of its primary purposes to be extremely limited. Policy recommendations to remedy the shortfalls are suggested.

Introduction

Asian and Pacific Americans (APAs) are the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. Over two-thirds of the APA population reside in the states of California, Hawaii, New York, Texas, Illinois, and Washington. Despite common experiences of racial discrimination and bigotry, APAs have very different cultural, social, educa-

tional, and linguistic characteristics.

In the most recent decennial census, APAs were critical of the Bureau of the Census ("the Bureau") for not only lumping APAs into the "Other" category but also for its ineffective and/or inadequate outreach to the APA community. The Bureau has no dedicated line item specifically for APA outreach, although there is funding for outreach efforts to ethnic groups

This study was funded by the Bureau of the Census. However, the material in this article represents the views of the authors and in no way represents policy or opinions of the Bureau.

in general. This study attempts to gauge the effectiveness of APA outreach in the recently completed 1990 Census. The effectiveness of APA outreach by the Bureau is critical in assessing the degree of participation by APA groups in the census and in reflecting the potential for undercounts in APA groups.

In a good faith effort to better understand the APA population, the Bu-

The Bureau has no dedicated line item specifically for APA outreach...

reau sought the assistance of Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA), a non-profit membership-supported civil rights organization, to evaluate the Bureau's outreach to six APA communities in the San Francisco metropolitan area: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Pilipino, Samoan, and Vietnamese. The outreach study primarily consisted of focus group interviews for each of the six ethnic groups. The study examined topics such as channels of communication, expo-

sure and reactions to outreach and/or news stories about the census, knowledge and attitudes about the census, and their experiences with the 1990 enumeration. Data were collected during the months of August, September, and October of 1990. (Additional methodological details are presented in the appendix.)

Participants' Characteristics

A brief discussion of the characteristics of the participants is helpful in order to better understand the representative nature of the focus groups and to allow evaluation of the applicability of the data for specific APA communities in other parts of the country. The majority of the participants were born outside of the United States with the exception of the Japanese participants. This result is expected given the immigration trends of these ethnic groups. The household sizes of the participants varied considerably. The median household size of the Chinese and Korean participants appears to be lower than what would be expected for these groups. The smaller household size is likely due to the age of the

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents of 1990 Census Outreach Study by Ethnic Group.

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	<u>Pilipino</u>	<u>Korean</u>	<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Samoan</u>	<u>Vietnamese</u>
Percent Foreign-born	80%	77%	100%	10%	83%	100%
Median household size	3	4	2	3	7	4
Median educational level category	high school graduate	high school graduate	high school graduate	some college	high school graduate	some high school
% with household income < \$25,000	57%	46%	73%	30%	78%	83%
Median age category	40-50	30-40	over 50	30-40	30-40	30-40
Percent women	38%	31%	36%	44%	44%	43%

participants. The Chinese and Korean participants are somewhat older than the norms of the two populations. The majority of the Chinese, Korean, Samoan, and Vietnamese participants had household incomes below \$25,000. For the Chinese and Korean groups, this is again a likely result of the age of the participants. In the case of the Samoan and Vietnamese, their incomes are representative of the populations. More men participated in the focus groups. This is not surprising for several reasons. One, more men are likely to respond due to lesser cultural restrictions on speaking with strangers. Two, the use of ethnic phone directories as the primary recruitment source has more men listed. Three, women who have married non-ethnic spouses would be excluded. The higher outmarriage rate of APA women could conceivably cause a lower number of women listed in the ethnic phone directories.

Group Results: 1990 Census Outreach

The focus groups were conducted using a structured instrument consisting of a close-ended section and an open-ended section. The close-ended section contained questions on *how* participants heard about the 1990 Census. The open-ended section consisted primarily of *what* they recalled hearing about the 1990 Census, *what* they thought was the general purpose of the 1990 Census, and *what* problems they may have encountered with the questionnaire itself. The interview also asked about who may have been undercounted in the 1990 Census. The results are presented below by individual ethnic group in the chronological order that the groups were held followed by an evaluation of group differences. (A statistical summary of focus group findings is presented in Table 2.)

Chinese

Means of hearing about the census. Almost all of the Chinese participants heard something about the census from television, newspapers, and contacts with acquaintances. Handbills and posters also appeared to be somewhat effective in reaching this population. On the other hand, few recalled hearing about the census from community groups, magazines, and radio. The census outreach program through schools was not particularly effective as only about a quarter of the participants with children recalled hearing about the census from their children.

Census recall. For the 1990 Census, many participants recalled problems with the low city response rate and also remembered solicitations that urged citizens to respond. Sample statements included: "It said that on TV not enough people responded" and "An organization urged people to respond... It was announced on Channel 26 (a local Chinese station)." Most of them recalled these stories only after having sent in their own census forms.

Some recalled hearing stories about the consequences of not responding to the census. For example, one respondent said that "I heard that one would be penalized if you didn't turn it in." Others recalled stories about the confidentiality of the census. One participant had reservations about door-to-door census taking. "People are uncertain about the consequences of responding or not responding, when and if they come door-to-door. It may frighten some residents. They [interviewer] would appear as if they were government officials (being sent) to investigate." Finally, one participant cited stories about not having a separate classification for Asian Americans. "Asians should not be added to Whites. It seems improper and unrealistic."

Table 2. Chinese, Pilipino, Korean, Japanese, Samoan and Vietnamese Awareness of the Census - Affirmative Responses to Census Outreach Questions.

<u>QUESTION</u>	<u>Chinese.</u>	<u>Pilipino.</u>	<u>Korean</u>	<u>Japanese.</u>	<u>Samoan</u>	<u>Vietnamese</u>
"Hear about census from community group?"	31%	0%	64%	27%	17%	14%
"Read something about the census in a magazine?"	25%	38%	54%	19%	22%	29%
"See something about the census on television?"	94%	77%	100%	81%	89%	71%
"Read something about the census in the paper?"	88%	69%	100%	88%	94%	29%
"Hear something about the census on the radio?"	12%	62%	45%	50%	56%	14%
"See or hear something about the census on a handbill?"	69%	54%	82%	56%	83%	0%
"See or hear something about the census from friends, neighbors, or coworkers?"	94%	92%	64%	62%	83%	71%
"Hear anything about the census from school aged children?" (Asked only of respondents who had school aged children.)	25%	0%	n.a.	0%	60%	n.a

Primary purpose of the census. When participants were asked about the primary purpose of the census, there was no general consensus given for the purpose of the census other than counting the size of the population. Moreover, few were cognizant of its political ramifications for determining representation in government. A handful knew that allocating resources to state and local governments, community organizations, and social service providers could be affected.

Some said that the primary purpose was merely a measurement. "I think they just want to know how many people are in the United States." Others stated that the purpose was to determine the ethnic composition of the nation for allocation

Many [participants] cited individuals who did not bother to fill out the census form.

purposes. "A nation needs to know how many people in different occupations, how many people in different ethnic groups so as to know how to serve them"; "Government needs to know the percentage of certain sectors so that they know how to serve people."

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. The survey also asked about the difficulty of the census forms itself, including questions that were unclear, and further asked if they knew of individuals who had not completed the census form. Overall, most of them felt the census form was not difficult at all. Exceptions included complaints about the length of the long form, confusion over the household enumeration section of the census, and the perceived lack of a Chinese version of the questionnaire.

Many cited individuals who did not bother to fill out the census form. These

individuals included newly-arrived immigrants who spoke mostly Chinese and did not fully understand the purpose of census taking and residents who lived in buildings with only one address (i.e., multi-dwelling units and multi-families living in the same address). As one participant observed, "I know people living in basements, about three families. They didn't receive any forms." Another participant who did not respond admitted that he "found the form too long and didn't bother to respond."

Pilipino

Means of hearing about the census. Almost all Pilipino participants heard something about the census from conversations with friends, neighbors, or co-workers. A majority of the participants recalled hearing about the census from television, reading about it in newspapers, and hearing about the census on the radio. Over half recalled seeing handbills and posters about the census. Formal census outreach programs via schools and community groups, and outreach through magazines, were relatively ineffective.

Census recall. The participants gave different responses as to when they recalled hearing about the census. Many first recalled hearing about the census when they were in school. Several of them recalled hearing about the use of the census in a political context. "I heard it in the 1980's in Salinas during redrawing of the district lines because of the large Hispanic population"; "I remember an article in a political journal about the congressional representation of California and California backlash by other states." Many also recalled advertisements about sending in the census form for the 1990 Census. One participant also recalled discussing in class the possibility of

reclassifying Pilipinos as a separate group from other APA groups.

Primary purpose of the census. The participants were also asked about the primary purpose of the census. The response most commonly cited was to count the U.S. population. Some were even aware of the fact that the census was necessary for determining congressional representation. Others cited that the primary purpose of the census was to allocate funds for governmental programs.

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. Almost all participants found the census questionnaire to be very simple and clear. Comments included: "It was easier than I thought" and "The questions were very straightforward. I did not zip through it, but did not find it difficult." No one found any parts of the questionnaire confusing.

Many cited individuals who did not respond to the census. Three types of individuals were cited. The first type was generally indifferent to or did not understand the importance of the census. "Some of my recent relatives from the Philippines cannot comprehend the concept of a census so they forget about it and blow it off." The second type was those individuals who were afraid to respond because they had illegally entered into this country. "Yes, those people that come over here 'TNT' (Tago ng Tago-literally, Hide and Hide)"; "A lot of people don't answer it because they are 'TNT'." The third and last type was those individuals who believed the census was only available in English and Spanish and therefore did not bother to fill out the census form.

Korean

Means of hearing about the census. Overall, census outreach to Korean participants

appears to be more effective than outreach to other APA groups. All of the Korean participants heard something about the census on television and in the newspaper. Outreach was also especially effective through community groups. Furthermore, most recalled seeing something about the census on a handbill, hearing something about the census on the radio, or from friends, neighbors, and co-workers, and reading something about the census in a magazine. Census outreach through schools could not be determined because most participants did not have school aged children residing with them. This positive

Overall, census outreach to Korean participants appears to be more effective than outreach to other APA groups.

outreach record may be due to the older age of the Korean participants, many of whom belonged to a Korean seniors association that had received census outreach materials.

Census recall. Many participants heard from friends about the importance of getting counted in the 1990 Census. Sample responses included: "A friend told me that every Korean must participate. No one must be left out"; "People are saying that every count counts." Further, they recalled comments associated with the 1990 Census about the importance of being counted in political terms. "The more people we have, the more power our community will have"; "California will have additional assemblymen depending on the census count."

Primary purpose of the census. The Korean groups generally agreed that the primary purpose of the census was to accurately

count the population in the United States, particularly by different population groups. Responses included: "To see how many people from different countries live in the United States. If I were President, I would like to know." They also understood that census information would assist the government in allocating funds. Finally, one participant felt that the primary purpose of the census was for planning. "Besides counting people, the primary purpose is to study urban problems, like how many schools to build, freeways, etc.."

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. All of them found the questionnaire to be very simple and clear. One participant completed a Korean questionnaire. Another participant did not know of its availability in Korean and therefore had to ask someone to translate it. "My daughter-in-law translated the questions written in English so I didn't have any trouble."

The participants did not recall any errors that they may have made in filling out the census form. Furthermore, with the exception of one individual, they did not know of any non-respondents. Most of them told the moderator that it was important to fill out the census and that they encouraged others to do so.

Japanese

Means of hearing about the census. The Japanese participants recalled hearing about the census primarily through regular media channels: television and newspapers. On the other hand, few participants recalled hearing about the census from community groups, magazines, handbills, and radio. Despite the fact that most of the participants had ties with the Japanese community, only one in four recalled hearing about the census via community groups. None of

the participants with children recalled hearing about the census from their children.

Census recall. Like the Chinese and Pilipinos, the participants recalled problems as-

The Japanese participants were the most sophisticated in their understanding of the purpose of the census.

sociated with the 1990 census enumeration, primarily the slow response rate. Some recalled the effort to identify and accurately count the homeless in the city. Others recalled stories concerning the low ethnic response rates that urged people to respond. Finally, some remembered that the deadline for sending in the census form was very close to tax deadlines. There was some discussion that the proximity of the two deadlines had caused the census to be neglected.

Primary purpose of the census. The Japanese participants were the most sophisticated in their understanding of the purposes of the census. When asked about the primary purpose of the census, many participants correctly identified it as having to do with congressional representation and funding to local social service providers. Sample responses included: "I think it's a political thing. So much depends on how many people you have"; "What it says in the Constitution...to get the proportionate representation"; and, "The number of funds they will get and how it's going to be used."

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. Overall, most of them felt the census form was simple to complete. Exceptions in-

cluded several questions concerning the content of the questionnaire form itself. For example, some complained about the "square footage" and "number of rooms" questions in the long form. Others were confused about the "race" and "income" questions. The race question particularly troubled some because of the high rate of inter-racial marriages. "My roommate is half Japanese. If you are mixed, then you have to pick out something that you could identify with."; "On the question of race. It was not clear whether it was race or ethnicity. And, because of mixed marriages in the family, I was wondering whether the kids who are 'Hapa' [part Japanese] could fill out multiple boxes." With respect to the household income question, one participant said, "Because of the way it was written, my roommate and I combined our incomes, but I am not sure [what] that is telling anybody because it is two separate incomes and not shared income."

Only one participant openly admitted that he knew of a married couple who did not bother to respond to the census. Overall, participants were hesitant to give responses to this question.

Samoan

Means of hearing about the census. Almost all of the Samoan participants heard something about the census from the newspaper, television, or conversations with acquaintances. Despite these figures, many could not recall specifically what they heard. Very few, on the other hand, recalled hearing about the census from community groups and magazines. Many of the participants with school-aged children did recall hearing something about the census from their children.

Census recall. For most Samoan partici-

pants, the 1990 Census was their very first-ever experience with the census. In most cases, the first contact occurred when they received the census form in the mail or were approached by door-to-door enumerators. Some recalled seeing advertisements on television and printed materials asking people to fill out the short and long forms. Only one participant noted any previous mention of the census in school.

Primary purpose of the census. The participants were also asked about the primary purpose of the census. Counting the size of the population in the United States was the most often cited response. Some felt the primary purpose of the census was related to taxes and funding. "Determine the federal funding appropriate to each area based on population"; "Economic reasons, for planning." One thought it was for counting the total number of unemployed in the United States. Finally, some participants said that the census was used to determine the ethnic percentages.

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. Many of the Samoan participants had problems with some of the questions in the census form. The most often cited problem was the "Naturalized/US Citizenship" question. "American Samoans are US nationals but there is no box for nationals." Some had further difficulties with the English version of the census form. They simply could not read or understand the questions.

Many cited individuals who did not respond to the census. Most participants attributed non-response to individuals who had no interest in the census or who did not expect any direct personal benefit or both. One participant said, "(my) two aunts don't speak English. If mail has no direct relevance to them, they throw it in the trash."

Vietnamese

Means of hearing about the census. Overall, the Vietnamese population had the least exposure to the census and heard less via the general media than other ethnic groups. The Vietnamese participants recalled hearing something about the census primarily from television programs and conversations with acquaintances. Other methods of hearing about the census did not elicit a high recall rate. Only a small number of the participants recalled hearing about the census from community groups and magazines. None recalled seeing any census information on a handbill.

Census recall. Census recall by the Vietnamese participants was also generally lower than the rest of the population. Like the Samoan participants, the 1990 Census was also the first experience for many. Most of them knew that the census was used for counting the U.S. population but could not elaborate past this point. "I first heard about the census on television news. I didn't know what the census meant"; "My daughter told me about the census...to count people." For one participant, the first time she heard about the census was when she received the form in the mail.

Primary purpose of the census. The participants gave several reasons for what they believed to be the primary purpose of the census. The most often cited response was to count the population in the United States. Others felt the purpose was related to planning. "Counting people and their level of education to better serve them"; "To tell the economy of the state...what people you have." As with the Pilipino respondents, a small number of Vietnamese respondents expressed doubt as to the census' confidentiality, and felt that the purpose was to track illegal immigrants.

Difficulty with census forms and non-response. Most of them found the census questionnaire to be fairly simple and clear. No one recalled committing any errors in filling out the census form. When asked if they knew of a Vietnamese language version of the census, all replied that they did not know it was available in Vietnamese.

The most troubling result of the study is that most of the groups did not appear to have a good understanding of the reasons for the census.

General Discussion

Census outreach effectiveness to the six groups was decidedly mixed. Many of the Samoan and Vietnamese participants first heard about the census when the questionnaire arrived in the mail. Outreach to the other four groups was marginally better. Moreover, with the exception of the Korean participants, most of what other participants recalled hearing about the census was not outreach materials but problems associated with the census, such as undercounts and lack of response. Many did not know about the availability of the questionnaire in ethnic languages.

APA awareness about the 1990 Census came primarily through the television and newspaper media and word of mouth. Few participants recalled hearing about the census through specific census outreach programs like those via community groups. Moreover, the majority of the groups did not recall hearing about the census from their school aged children, with the exception of the Samoan partici-

pants.

The most troubling result of the study is that most of the groups did not appear to have a good understanding of the reasons for the census. This may indicate an "identity problem" with the census among these populations. Most participants knew the primary purpose was to count the population in the United States, but could not elaborate. Some participants also felt that the results of the census were used for funding governmental programs but could not give more exact responses. Only a few knew that a third purpose of the census was related to political representation.

Given the fact that most of the participants were immigrants, the poor understanding of the census' purpose is also problematic in terms of response. Some of the groups, particularly the Filipino and Vietnamese, remained unconvinced of the census' confidentiality. A number of Filipino and Vietnamese believed that among the purposes of the census was to locate illegal immigrants. This belief would certainly lower the response rates of these groups.

On the positive side, almost all the participants felt that the census form was simple to complete and did not commit any errors. In addition, many participants were generally supportive of the census and encouraged others to complete the questionnaire.

This study has offered some general findings about the lack of census outreach to APA communities. However, the results are limited by the qualitative nature of the study and its relatively small sample size. For example, although many participants were able to cite examples of APAs being undercounted, the exact magnitude of the undercount is still unknown. In addition, the use of the telephone directories as the primary recruitment source could lead to self-selection biases in the results. Finally, it

is not known how far the results could be generalized to the entire APA population as the study only focused on APA residents in the San Francisco metropolitan area.

Nonetheless, the results of this study show that census outreach to the APA community was extremely limited. Formal census programs to encourage the APA population to return the forms did not appear to be effective. Even programs designed for the APA population were somewhat doubtful. The most glaring example of this problem is the fact that many participants did not know of the availability of the census forms in their native languages.

The lack of APA census outreach is likely due to a number of reasons. One, given the immigrant nature of most APA communities, these groups have little or no knowledge about the census, are distrustful of the US government, and do not receive information from conventional sources such as mainstream English radio and television. Two, even among the US born APAs, there is confusion over the purpose of the census and the use of census data for political and policy purposes. Finally, the census itself has only recently begun to grapple with the problems of the extremely heterogeneous APA population.

Policy Implications

The results of the Bureau's outreach effectiveness revealed in this study have several implications for public policy. First, census outreach to APA groups has not been particularly effective, especially among the more recent immigrant groups, such as the Vietnamese and Samoans. As previously mentioned, the first time recent immigrants heard anything about the census was when the forms arrived in the mail or when the enumerator showed up at the

door. In addition, many remain unconvinced of the confidentiality of the census data. Both factors may contribute to Census undercounts among these APA groups. Finally, as discussed throughout this paper, even many respondents within these groups remained largely unaware of the primary purposes of the census.

Thus further resources on outreach are necessary before APAs can fully participate in the census and appropriately understand its purpose. To effectively and adequately target the diverse APA population, the following policy strategies may prove helpful:

1. In reaching out to the APA community, a better identity for the census is necessary. An "identity problem" prevailed among the Chinese, Pilipino, Samoan, and Pilipino participants in the study. An improved identity may be accomplished by linking the impact of census results to certain crucial aspects of APAs' lives. For example, data from the media habits and community involvement section—the other component of the Census Outreach Study—indicate that many participants recalled public service announcements on health-related topics. Thus the Bureau might publicize how the census results can be used to fund or assist public health programs. Linking the use of census data to educational programs is another method that should evoke a more positive image of the census.

2. Many participants cited individuals who did not respond to and who were not counted in the 1990 Census. Non-response was particularly problematic among Chinese, Pilipino, Samoan and Vietnamese participants. Recommendations above for improving the census' identity should target the extent to which apathy plays a role in non-response among Pilipinos and Samoans. Among Chinese, better outreach techniques must be used to identify mul-

ti-ple dwelling units and multiple families living in the same address. Outreach materials that emphasize confidentiality should be used among Chinese, Pilipino, and Vietnamese.

3. An educational campaign must be undertaken on a grassroots level to educate APAs, especially recent immigrants, about the primary importance of the census. The campaign should include the involvement of the community, the school, and the church so that maximum outreach efforts can be obtained. To the extent that the media habits of the participants are representative of the "true" population characteristics, the use of both ethnic and non-ethnic media (television, newspaper, and radio) can definitely improve outreach techniques. The use of ethnic media is strongly recommended for reaching recent immigrants of Chinese, Korean, Samoan, and Vietnamese descent.

4. Given the heterogeneity of APA groups, specialized programs may be necessary to address each group's specific problems. For example, the primarily non-English speaking immigrant groups—Koreans, Vietnamese, and, to a lesser extent, Chinese and Pilipinos—may need outreach materials in their native languages and outreach programs with non-English language information. For Pilipinos, these materials should be provided in Tagalog as well as Spanish. Samoan outreach may be enhanced with work through existing community networks such as churches or community service organizations. Finally, among the English language APA groups, development of materials that better delineate census definitions of ethnicity and race is necessary. Such definitional issues are especially relevant to the Japanese, given the mixed ethnicity of this group.

Appendix: Methodology

Telephone Survey. Prior to choosing the focus groups, a list of individuals was randomly selected from telephone directories and other ethnic directories for each of the six ethnic groups. Six indigenous moderators subsequently trained by the project staff were hired to conduct a telephone survey. This telephone survey was used to screen participants for the focus groups. Only members of the targeted ethnic groups were recruited; all participants were over 18 years of age; all respondents had completed the 1990 Census form. Thus the study focused on outreach effectiveness only among participants who had completed the form. Based on the information obtained from the telephone surveys, moderators carefully screened and invited participants to the focus groups. Structured interviews held in focus groups were the major method of data collection.

Focus groups. In order to provide some validity testing and a better controlled environment, two focus groups were held for each of the six ethnic groups. The focus groups were conducted in the languages that the participants felt most comfortable speaking. The Pilipino and Japanese groups were conducted in English. The Chinese and Korean groups were conducted in their respective languages. The Samoan and Vietnamese groups were administered in both English and their respective languages. With the exception of the Samoan groups which were held at the Office of Samoan Affairs in San Francisco, all focus groups were held at CAA. Every focus group participant was given a monetary compensation of \$60 and related expenses for his/her participation.

Sampling techniques and response rates. The Chinese and Vietnamese participants were

randomly selected from the San Francisco's telephone directory. Using ethnic surnames, the interview coordinator identified a list of 120 individuals for each population. The Chinese response rate was fairly high. Forty-eight contacts were made to obtain the 15 final participants (effective rate of 31%). The Vietnamese response rate was much lower with 59 contacts to obtain the 7 final participants (effective rate of 12%).

The Pilipino and Korean participants were randomly selected from ethnic phone directories for each of the respective groups. The ethnic phone directories were used because of the difficulty in identifying Pilipinos and Koreans by surnames. Many Pilipinos have Spanish surnames and some Korean surnames overlap with Chinese ones.

The Pilipino participants came from San Francisco, Berkeley, and the county of San Mateo. On the other hand, all the Korean participants resided in San Francisco. The Pilipino response rate was fairly high with 42 contacts to obtain the 13 final participants (effective rate of 31%). The Korean response rate was much lower with 95 contacts to obtain the 11 final participants (effective rate of 12%).

Of the six ethnic groups, the Japanese population was the most difficult to recruit for this project. The participants were selected using two methods. The first method involved a random sampling of Japanese surnames from the San Francisco's telephone directory. This method, however, produced an extremely low response rate with 51 contacts to obtain only 2 participants (effective rate of 4%). This led to the second method: to recruit participants via Asian American community organizations in San Francisco. This method proved to be more effective and fruitful. In the end, one hundred and four contacts were made to obtain 15 participants. Combining the two methods produced a

total of 17 participants.

The low Japanese rate was due to a number of reasons. First, the Japanese were willing to answer the telephone survey questionnaire, but were unwilling to participate in the group discussion. This may be due to being uncomfortable with expressing themselves in front of strangers in a face-to-face situation. Second, the Japanese in San Francisco have relatively higher household income levels than the other five ethnic groups under consideration. Therefore the opportunity cost of attending the group discussion may have been higher than the \$60 monetary compensation. Finally, Japanese in San Francisco tend not to feel comfortable with strangers asking them questions. Recruiting the participants via community groups may have overcome this distrust.

The Samoan participants were randomly selected from a list of Samoans who had previously registered with the Office of Samoan Affairs in San Francisco. The office had approximately 700 registered individuals. The participants resided in San Francisco and nearby South San Francisco. The recruitment source was fairly robust with 38 contacts to obtain the 18 final participants (effective rate of 47%). A caveat is necessary: the Samoan groups were divided into a women's group and a men's group at the suggestion of the moderator. The strong patriarchal structure of the Samoan culture was believed likely to inhibit the responses of women in a mixed gender group.

Focus group survey. A structured interview instrument was administered in each of the focus groups. The instrument consisted of two sections. The questions in Section A were of the "close-ended" type and were taken directly from the "1990 Outreach Evaluation Survey Questionnaire" which was provided by the Bureau. Participants responded to these questions one at a time

in an orderly fashion, and the responses were recorded and tabulated by the moderator. Section B consisted of general questions in which participants were free to respond in any format or order. These questions were specifically developed to probe more in-depth information about media habits, conceptions, and awareness of the census.

Additional information concerning the methodology and the specific instruments utilized are available on request from Don Mar, Department of Economics, San Francisco State University, 1600 Holloway Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94132.

Voter Registration in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities: An Agenda for the 1990s

by

Albert Y. Muratsuchi

This study documents the need for voter registration drives tailored to the language needs and cultural traits of the ethnically diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities. A case study of the Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese electorates in Oakland, California was conducted in order to identify Asian Pacific registration patterns. 1990 voter registration data was analyzed to estimate the size and political party affiliation breakdown of the four Oakland Asian electorates studied and to estimate the voter registration rates of the Oakland Chinese and Japanese electorates. These patterns are compared with findings from Asian Pacific voter registration studies conducted in Los Angeles County and San Francisco. Finally, strategies and resources for increasing Asian Pacific electoral participation are discussed.

Political observers across the nation are turning their attention to the potential electoral strength of Asians and Pacific Islanders,* the most rapidly growing minority group in the nation.¹ The Census Bureau found that the national Asian Pacific population increased by 128 percent from 1.5 million in 1970 to 3.5 million in 1980, and demographers estimate that the population has doubled again in the past ten years to number around 7 million.²

Yet, Asian Pacific Americans are failing to fully translate their rapidly growing population into electoral clout. In California, according to the Field Institute, Asians accounted for only 3 percent of the total vote in the June 1990 primary election, despite the fact that they comprised about 10 percent of the state's population.³ This underrepresentation at the polls highlights the critical need for voter registration campaigns targeting Asian Pacific commu-

* The 1980 Census categorizes the following ethnic groups together as the "Asian and Pacific Islander" population: Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Hawaiian, Guamanian, and Samoan. This study uses the terms "Asian and Pacific Islander," "Asian Pacific Americans," and "Asians" to refer to this population.

nities. As the first formal step in the voting process, the importance of registration needs to be emphasized. Asian Pacific communities need to register and vote to seek representation in elected and appointed offices, to hold elected government officials accountable to

Asian Pacific Americans are failing to fully translate their rapidly growing population into electoral clout.

community needs, and to redefine and fully participate in local, state, and federal political debates that are often defined and dominated by whites.

This study documents the need for voter registration drives tailored to the language needs and cultural traits of the ethnically diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities. A case study of the Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese electorates in Oakland, California was conducted in order to identify and analyze Asian Pacific registration patterns. Through the process of manually counting Asian Pacific surnames listed on 1990 county voter registration rolls, the size and political party affiliation breakdown of the four studied Oakland Asian electorates are estimated along with the voter registration rates of the Oakland Chinese and Japanese electorates. (Reliable population estimates for the Vietnamese and Koreans could not be obtained.) These registration patterns are compared with findings from Asian voter registration studies conducted in Los Angeles County and San Francisco in 1986 and 1984, respectively. Finally, strategies and resources for increasing Asian Pacific electoral participation are discussed.

Oakland Asian and Pacific Islander Population Figures

The 1980 Census, while outdated by ten years, nonetheless provides a rough demographic sketch of Oakland's Asian Pacific communities today. [Editor's note: 1990 Census data was unavailable at the time of this writing.] Ten years ago, Asian and Pacific Islander populations together comprised 26,341, or 7.8 percent of the 339,337 Oakland residents.

Table 1: 1980 Oakland Asian and Pacific Islander population.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>%</u>
Chinese	15,010	57.0
Filipino	5,395	20.5
Japanese	2,390	9.1
Vietnamese	1,440	5.5
Korean	714	2.7
<u>Other</u>	<u>1,392</u>	<u>5.3</u>
Total	26,341	100.0

Source: 1980 Census

Estimates vary as to the changes in the Oakland Asian Pacific population in the past decade. According to the state Department of Finance, the estimated population of all Oakland residents in 1989 was 356,300. The rapidly growing Asian Pacific population in Oakland is now estimated to account for 10 to 15 percent of the city's population, which would translate into 35,000 to 55,000 residents. The Vietnamese community, in particular, has surpassed the Japanese community in size, becoming the third largest Asian group next to the Chinese and Filipinos.

Perhaps the most current information on the city's changing demographics is provided by the Oakland Unified School District, which reports that the Asian and Pacific Islander enrollment increased by a third from 1985 to 1989. Asian Pacific students accounted for 18.3 percent of

the citywide school enrollment in 1989. The school district's Office of Bilingual Education reports that since 1983, Asian enrollment in Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs grew rapidly, with Vietnamese LEP students increasing by 127 percent, Chinese LEP students by 70 percent, and Filipino LEP students by 31 percent. The LEP figures highlight the fact that most of the new Asian residents of Oakland are recent immigrants.

Social and Economic Characteristics of Oakland's Asian Pacific Communities

Past studies on American voter registration behavior have found correlations between registration rates and the socio-economic characteristics of age, country of birth, education, ethnicity, and income. In general, older, American-born, college-educated whites with above-average incomes are more likely to register and vote than any other group.⁴ One objective of this study is to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of the Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Vietnamese in the Bay Area to see if similar correlations between these characteristics and registration levels can be found among Oakland's Asians. The 1980 Census compiled social and economic data on Asian ethnic groups in the five-county San Francisco Bay Area, which includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties.

The proportion of American citizens within each community determines to a large extent the potential size of an electorate. As Tables 2 and 3 show, the predominantly American-born Japanese community had the highest proportion of American citizens in 1980. On the other hand, the vast majority of the Vietnamese community immigrated to the U.S. after

1975, which was highlighted by their relatively small fraction of American citizens.

Table 2: Percentage of Bay Area population with American citizenship.

Oakland, citywide	91.7
Japanese	77.8
Chinese	63.2
Koreans	40.5
Vietnamese	10.0

Source: 1980 Census.

Table 3: Percentage of Bay Area population that is American-born.

Oakland, citywide	84.3
Japanese	83.5
Chinese	49.6
Korean	29.6
Vietnamese	23.2

Source: 1980 Census.

The degree of American acculturation within an Asian community is another variable which influences electoral participation levels. American-born Asians who describe themselves as speaking English well are generally more likely to be familiar with American political traditions and issues, and, as a result, are more likely to register and vote.⁵ The following table once again shows that the Japanese community, made up of many third and fourth-generation American citizens, had the highest proportion of individuals who believed they spoke English well, while the other groups included proportionately larger immigrant groups who spoke English as a second language.

Table 4: Persons 18 years of age and older who describe themselves as speaking English very well or well.

Japanese	76.3
Oakland, citywide	75.9
Chinese	64.7
Korean	63.1
Vietnamese	46.7

Source: 1980 Census.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, the likelihood to register and vote is higher in populations that are older, more educated, and wealthier. Tables 5, 6, and 7 show that in 1980, the Japanese displayed the highest figures in the age, income, and education categories, with the Vietnamese on the lower end in all three categories.

Table 5: Median age (in years).

Japanese	33.4
Chinese	31.3
Oakland, citywide	31.2
Korean	27.5
Vietnamese	22.3

Table 6: Median annual household income (in dollars)

Japanese	21,393
Chinese	20,954
Korean	19,372
Oakland, citywide	13,780
Vietnamese	9,273

Table 7: Education levels (in academic years)

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
Japanese	14.6	13.1
Korean	14.2	12.7
Oakland, citywide	13.0	13.0
Chinese	13.0	12.6
Vietnamese	12.3	12.0

Source: 1980 Census

Looking only at the 1980 demographic statistics presented in this section, the Oakland Japanese community would be expected to register and vote at a comparable level to the citywide population, and at higher levels than the other groups. While the Japanese exhibited a lower percentage of American citizenship than the corresponding percentage for all Oakland residents, the predominantly American-born and English-speaking Japanese community showed higher median age, education, and income levels than the levels seen in the citywide population, as well as in the other three Asian groups. For similar reasons, the Vietnamese would be expected to show the lowest level of electoral activity, with Chinese and Korean electoral participation falling somewhere in-between. What should be remembered, however, is that each community's prevailing attitudes toward electoral politics may also significantly influence voting patterns. (The effect of these attitudinal factors within Asian communities will be discussed in a later section.)

Methodology

Having presented an overview of key socio-economic characteristics of the Oakland Asian Pacific communities, this report will now focus on an analysis of the city's Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese electorates. The area studied includes 16 out of 104 Oakland census tracts and 61 out of 535 Oakland election precincts. According to the 1980 Census, the study area accounted for 37.8 percent of the Asians and Pacific Islanders, 44.8 percent of the Chinese, 21.5 percent of the Japanese, 61.7 percent of the Vietnamese, and 30.3 percent of the Koreans in Oakland.

This study's method is based on that which University of California at Los

Angeles Professor Don Nakanishi used in his 1986 study of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific electorates, and which Grant Din used in his 1984 study of the San Francisco Chinese and Japanese electorates. After identifying 1980 Census tracts in Oakland with large Asian populations, election precincts within these tracts were targeted for analysis. Listings of registered voters within the targeted precincts were obtained from the Alameda County Registrar of Voters. Using these listings, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese surnames were manually counted in each studied precinct, and the party affiliation of each Asian-surnamed registrant was simultaneously recorded. Then, again using 1980 Census data, this study calculated the ratio of each Asian community's population in the studied tracts relative to its citywide population in order to project the total number of registrants from the studied tracts to the citywide level for each community. Finally, current citywide population figures were estimated for residents over 18 years of age in the Chinese and Japanese communities, and these figures were compared with citywide Asian registration projections to estimate voter registration rates. Reliable population estimates for the Vietnamese and Koreans could not be obtained, so their registration rates were not calculated.

Several methodological limitations need to be acknowledged. First, while the basic assumption of the surname-counting method is that Asian Americans possess surnames which reflect their ethnic identities, this assumption obviously does not apply to Asians who change their surnames to those associated with ethnic groups other than their own, as well as to non-Asians who adopt Asian surnames. Census figures show that in 1980, 20 percent of all Asian Americans in California were married to a partner of a different ethnic or racial group, and that Asian American women were much more

likely to intermarry than Asian American men.⁶ These facts point to the likelihood of an undercount of unknown magnitude for Asian registered voters due to the larger number of Asian women who are likely to have adopted non-Asian surnames than the number of non-Asians who have adopted Asian surnames.

Another limitation is that many surnames are common to several ethnic groups. Filipino Americans, the second largest Asian ethnic group in Oakland, share many common surnames with Latinos. For this reason, Filipinos were excluded from this study's voter registration analysis. Other names such as Lee and Young are shared by Chinese, Koreans, Anglo, and African Americans. Several steps were taken to rectify these problems. First, in some cases first names were identifiable with a particular ethnic group. When first names could not be used to help identify ethnicity, all surnames found in the Chinese, Japanese, Korean or Vietnamese communities were categorized as Asian, regardless of the fact that the surname is also found in non-Asian groups. As Din discusses in his study, names such as Lee and Young are likely to be Asian in high Asian population neighborhoods, and he estimates the margin of error in registrant counts to be less than five percent.⁷ Finally, surnames common to both Chinese and Koreans were categorized according to their relative 1980 population sizes, when the Chinese outnumbered Koreans by a ratio of 21 to 1.

Other limitations include the lack of current demographic information on Asian populations at the municipal level and the unknown extent to which the County's voter registration rolls are outdated. Finally, the method of projecting figures from the studied tracts to the citywide level is based on the assumption that the relative population distribution patterns in Oakland have remained the same

since the 1980 Census. Mi Yeong Lee, an urban planner at the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, believes that with the exception of the Korean community, the relative geographic distributions of the Asian groups have not changed significantly.

Because of these significant methodological limitations, the numerical findings presented in this study should be viewed as indicators of trends and relative magnitudes, and not absolute values. Nonetheless, the surname-counting method is employed by university researchers and political consultants to produce information which has proven to be useful in voter registration drives, political campaigns, and discussions on Asian Pacific electoral participation.

Findings

Estimated size of the Oakland Asian Pacific electorate. Table 8 shows city-wide projections of the studied Asian electorates.

Table 8: Projected number of Oakland registered voters.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Registered voters</u>
Citywide	181,813
Chinese	3,951
Japanese	819
Vietnamese	258
Korean	251

Source: Alameda County Registrar of Voters

The Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Korean registered voters together number 5,279, or about 3 percent of the Oakland electorate. This figure is much lower than the estimated 10 to 15 percent Asian and Pacific Islander population in the city. Of course, this estimate only includes

the four studied groups, which accounted for three out of every four Oakland Asian and Pacific Islander in 1980. Inclusion of the Filipinos, the second largest Asian community in Oakland, would certainly increase the 3 percent figure to some extent.

...unregistered Asians eligible to vote significantly account for Asian underrepresentation at the electoral polls.

It is likely, however, that unregistered Asians eligible to vote significantly account for Asian underrepresentation at the electoral polls. For example, a 1987 Coro Foundation survey found that more than half of all San Francisco Chinese eligible to vote were unregistered.⁸

Party Affiliations. Oakland as a whole is a Democratic Party stronghold, with more than three out of every four registered voters identifying themselves as Democrats. On the other hand, the party affiliations of the four Asian groups vary widely, reflecting to a large extent the unique political values of each group.

Table 9: Political party affiliations of Oakland registered voters, by percentage points .

<u>Group</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>	<u>Decline to state</u>	<u>Other</u>
Citywide	76.0	12.8	9.0	2.2
Chinese	42.3	31.3	24.8	1.6
Japanese	74.1	15.1	10.4	0.4
Korean	52.6	30.8	15.4	1.3
Vietnamese	28.4	40.8	27.2	3.6

Source: Alameda County Registrar of Voter

Japanese Americans identify strongly with the Democrats, and closely reflect the citywide party affiliation break-

down. The Vietnamese identify strongly with the Republicans, due at least in part to strident anti-communist segments within the community which embrace the GOP's more conservative foreign policy positions. There are more Democrats than Republicans within the Chinese and the Korean communities, but both groups exhibit a stronger leaning toward Republican politics relative to the citywide population.

A particularly significant finding is that a quarter of Vietnamese and Chinese decline to affiliate with any party, a figure close to three times the corresponding citywide figure. Studies of the San Francisco and Los Angeles Asian Pacific communities also found large proportions of unaffiliated voters in the Vietnamese, Chinese, and Korean communities. Perhaps the large unaffiliated pool indicates the

Perhaps the large unaffiliated pool indicates the relative lack of knowledge regarding partisan politics, particularly among immigrants. Another possible explanation is that many recent immigrants who come from countries without democratic traditions tend to be skeptical or apathetic toward partisan causes.

relative lack of knowledge regarding partisan politics, particularly among immigrants. Another possible explanation is that many recent immigrants who come from countries without democratic traditions tend to be skeptical or apathetic toward partisan causes.⁹

Voter Registration Rates. The voter reg-

istration rate is defined as the proportion of registered voters among the estimated population over 18 years of age. The registration rates for the Oakland Japanese and Chinese communities, along with the rate for the citywide population, are listed in Table 10. As mentioned earlier, voter registration rates for the Oakland Korean and Vietnamese populations were not calculated due to the lack of demographic information.

Table 10: Estimated Oakland voter registration rates

<u>Group</u>	<u>Registration rate</u>
Citywide	67.4
Japanese	41.8
Chinese	22.6

Source: Alameda County Registrar of Voter

While the rates are based on rough population estimates, they nonetheless provide a sense of the Oakland Japanese and Chinese electoral participation relative to the city as a whole. The low rate of registration among the Chinese can be attributed at least in part to its sizeable immigrant and noncitizen population. What cannot easily be explained is the low registration rate of the Japanese community, despite the fact that the community is generally older and American-born with higher income and educational achievement levels than the citywide population. The low registration rate among the Japanese suggests that cultural factors outweigh variables such as age, income, and education in predicting registration rates.

Previous Findings on Asian Pacific Voter Registration Trends

These findings on the Asian Pacific electorates in Oakland are similar to electoral patterns previously identified in San

Francisco and Los Angeles County. Asian Pacific Americans in both San Francisco and Los Angeles are registering at rates much lower than the general population's rate of over 60 percent, as Table 11 illustrates.

Table 11: Registration rates of Asian Pacific Americans

<u>Los Angeles County</u>	
<u>Ethnic group</u>	<u>Registration rate(%)</u>
Japanese	43.0
Chinese	35.5
Samoans	28.5
Filipinos	27.0
Asian Indians	16.7
Koreans	13.0
Vietnamese	4.1

<u>San Francisco</u>	
<u>Ethnic group</u>	<u>Registration rate (%)</u>
Japanese	36.8
Chinese	30.9

Sources: Nakanishi, 1986, p.21; and Din, 1984, p.75, 85

The 1987 Coro survey found that 30 percent of San Francisco's Chinese community were registered, while 36 percent were non-citizens ineligible to register.¹⁰ Thus, more than half of those eligible to vote in the San Francisco Chinese community were found to be unregistered.

The Los Angeles and San Francisco studies also found that for Asians, registration rates were most closely correlated with ethnicity rather than with any other demographic characteristics. Japanese Americans in both cities registered at lower rates than the general populace, despite their being predominantly American-born, with income and education levels higher than those of all other racial and ethnic groups, including whites.¹¹ Similarly, in 1984, South Pasadena's Asian Pacific communities together had a higher median household income and a higher proportion of col-

lege educated individuals, but their overall registration rate was half of the entire city's rate.¹² These findings clearly indicate that Asians of all socio-economic levels face significant cultural obstacles to increased voter registration.

Previous research also demonstrates that Asian party affiliation patterns vary significantly in different state regions. A 1984 Field Institute survey estimated that of 463,000 Asian American registered voters statewide, 48.6 percent were Democrats, 23.8 percent Republicans and 27.6 percent unaffiliated.¹³ The following tables clearly show, however, that the Asian and Pacific Islander groups in different state regions maintain party affiliations quite different from one another.

Table 12: 1982 Political Party Affiliations of San Francisco Chinese and Japanese, in percentages

<u>Group</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>	<u>Decline to State</u>
S.F., Citywide	63.5	19.5	13.3
Chinese	48.6	21.4	28.3
Japanese	66.4	19.8	13.0

Source: Din, 1984, p. 90

Table 13: 1984 Political Party Affiliations of Los Angeles County Asians Pacific Americans, in percentages

<u>Group</u>	<u>Dem.</u>	<u>Rep.</u>	<u>Decline to State</u>
L.A. County (1990)	55.0	35.0	9.0
Asian Indian	59.1	23.6	17.0
Chinese	41.9	36.4	20.4
Filipino	63.3	22.8	11.6
Japanese	54.9	32.3	12.0
Korean	48.5	29.4	20.1
Samoan	61.0	25.0	11.8
Vietnamese	40.0	35.9	20.5

Source: Nakanishi, 1986 Appendix II

However, several common trends can be identified in Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles County. First, large numbers of Asian voters who decline to state a party preference are found in all three study areas, including about one in five Chinese, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Asian Indians in Los Angeles County, and more than one in four Chinese in San Francisco. These proportions are twice as high as the unaffiliated proportions in the overall San Francisco and Los Angeles populations. The large pools of unaffiliated voters, as mentioned earlier, may be due to the relative lack of awareness of partisan politics in communities with sizeable immigrant populations.

Key Factors in Asian Pacific Registration Rates

The San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Coro Foundation studies discuss some of the major factors which influence Asian Pacific registration rates. Perhaps the most significant factor in the relatively low Asian registration rates is the large proportion of Asians in the U.S. who are foreign citizens. As mentioned earlier, the 1987 Coro survey found, for example, that 36 percent of San Francisco Chinese were foreign citizens ineligible to register to vote. The Field Institute reported in 1987 that the registration rate of all Asian adults in California was 27 percent, compared to the 66 percent rate for all white adults in the state. When comparing the registration rates of adult citizens eligible to vote, however, the gap closes to 45 percent for Asians and 67 percent for Whites.¹⁴ Clearly, Asian foreign citizens who reside in California significantly account for low estimates of registration rates.

Asian communities with a high

proportion of limited-English speakers also can be expected to have low registration rates, particularly in areas without bilingual election materials. To highlight the importance of English fluency, the Coro survey

Perhaps the most significant factor in the relatively low Asian registration rates is the large proportion of Asians in the U.S. who are foreign citizens.

found that Chinese American respondents who chose to answer the survey in English were almost twice as likely to be registered to vote as those who answered in Chinese. More than one in five respondents also cited the lack of information in Chinese as a significant factor in being unregistered.¹⁵

Furthermore, many Asian immigrants are uninformed about American political processes and issues, and, as a result, do not develop an interest in voting. The foreign-born Chinese in San Francisco were found to be 50 percent less likely to be registered as those born in the U.S.. Almost a third of unregistered respondents in the Coro study cited a lack of knowledge regarding how to register as well as lack of interest in voting. Another fifth of respondents cited the fear of being called for jury duty after registering to vote as a deterrent to registering.¹⁶ These responses clearly indicate the need for community education. For example, Asian citizens need to be informed that jury duty assignments are made using several different public listings, so the fear of jury duty should not be a deterrent to registration.

Many Asians also have developed distrust for anything related to the government. The consequence of such distrust is the lack of desire to become involved in political affairs, including elec-

toral participation. Many Asian immigrants developed this distrust in countries of origin governed by authoritarian or corrupt rule. American-born Asians may have developed a distrust or apathy toward electoral politics in reaction to anti-Asian public policies in the U.S., such as the denial of naturalization rights until 1954, and the massive Japanese American incarceration during World War II. The San Francisco and Los Angeles studies discuss the wartime incarceration experience as a possible factor accounting for low Japanese American registration rates.¹⁷

For many Asian Pacific immigrant and refugee groups, issues related to their countries of origin dominate their political agendas and ethnic newspaper pages in the U.S., competing against efforts for greater involvement in domestic political issues. Oftentimes, these homeland political divisions are carried over to the U.S.. For example, the Filipino American community continues to be deeply divided between the former supporters of Ferdinand Marcos and the backers of current Philippines President Corazon Aquino.

While ethnicity has been found to be a better predictor of registration rates than age, income, and education, the Coro survey also found that voters within the San Francisco Chinese community tend to be older men with higher incomes and educational levels. For example, Chinese 60 years of age and older were almost 50 percent more likely to be registered than those 18 to 30 years-old. Those with household incomes \$45,000 and above were more than twice as likely to be registered than those with incomes below \$15,000. Those with undergraduate degrees were almost 50 percent more likely to be registered than those with only primary school education. Finally, Chinese men were almost 50 percent more likely to be registered than women.¹⁸ These trends

show that persons within the various Asian communities with higher socio-economic standing may be more likely to register and vote than those who are younger, less educated, poor, or women.

The Coro survey, in addition, sheds some light on the attitudes of Asians who do register. Among the San Francisco Chinese who are registered, more than half cited the belief that voting is a "duty" and a "privilege" as the most significant factor in their decision to register. The next most frequent response was related to political candidates and issues.¹⁹

Strategies and Resources for Asian Pacific Registration Drives

The low Asian Pacific voter registration rates in Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles clearly indicate the need for registration drives targeting these communities. Voter registration drives have been effective particularly in reaching out to communities with large immigrant populations, which are more likely to be unfamiliar with the American electoral process. The 1987 Coro survey, for example, found that more than half of the San Francisco Chinese electorate had registered at voter registration tables²⁰ as Table 14 indicates. The large proportion of registrants through tabling may also be attributable to the aggressive registration drives of community groups such as the Chinese American Voter Education Committee (CAVEC) of San Francisco.

**Table 14: Method of Registration
(Sample size = 68)**

<u>Location/Method</u>	<u>% of Respondents</u>
Registration table	53%
At City Hall	13%
By mail	12%
At school	6%
At a political event	3%
At work	3%

Source: Coro survey, p. 31

Voter registration drives targeting Latino communities provide valuable lessons for Asian Pacific communities. Latino communities, much like Asian communities, face the challenge of getting large immigrant and non-English speaking populations to register and vote. A study by University of California at Berkeley Professor Bruce E. Cain found that almost three-quarters of all new Los Angeles County Latino registrants in 1982 were registered through registration drives, which led to the conclusion that registration drives are a crucial means of drawing Latinos into the electoral process.²¹ A similar conclusion can also be made for Asian Pacific communities.

Several Asian community organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area conduct voter registration and education activities. Among them, the East Bay chapter of the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) has conducted a series of nonpartisan voter registration activities in the past two years. Registration tables are set up at community events such as the annual Chinatown Streetfest and in front of Chinese supermarkets as election dates approach. OCA coordinates their registration activities with a diverse array of community organizations, such as the Oakland Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, the Wa Sung Service Club, the Chinatown Lions Club, the East Bay Chinese School, the Chinese American Real Estate Association, and the

Chinese American Citizens Alliance. Using over 8,000 bilingual registration forms provided by California Secretary of State March Fong Eu, OCA works with Oakland Chinatown merchants to display bilingual registration posters and registration forms in their shops. Other planned activities include translating absentee ballot registration forms and instruction books and organizing bilingual debates on local political issues.

Many of OCA's efforts are modeled after the activities of the fifteen-year old Chinese American Voter Education Committee. CAVEC conducts voter registration drives at naturalization ceremonies, family association banquets, schools, and community fairs. In 1987 and 1988, CAVEC registered over 15,000 new voters. Like OCA, CAVEC coordinates its registration drives with a wide range of organizations, including the San Francisco Registrar of Voters. The Registrar's office provides the organization with special lots of registration forms and then reports on how many of those come in. This cooperative arrangement with the Registrar's office allows CAVEC to measure the effectiveness of its activities.

The Democratic and Republican parties offer resources for voter registration activities and conduct several community outreach programs. The California Democratic Party operates registration tables at naturalization ceremonies and provides bounties for local Democratic clubs to register voters. For example, clubs conducting registration drives would receive \$1-2 for every Democratic voter registered. One-time grants are also provided to organize registration drives and prepare voter education materials. Other proposed plans designed for Asian immigrant outreach efforts included developing bilingual campaign literature and organizing volunteer speakers to visit citizenship classes and stress the

importance of voting.

The California Republican Party also aggressively courts Asian support. According to Chris Stewart, statewide coordinator of Asian outreach efforts for the Republicans at the time of this study, the Party established six community centers in San Francisco's Asian neighborhoods. Each center provides assistance with voter registration as well as with simple immigration matters. Like the Democrats, the Republicans conduct registration drives at naturalization ceremonies and direct mail operations targeting newly naturalized citizens. They also work with local Republican clubs such as the Chinese American Republican Club of San Francisco to provide bounties reportedly up to \$5 for each registered person.

Public resources for voter registration activities are available through the Alameda County Registrar of Voters which administers all local election activities, including the maintenance of voter registration records. This office coordinates voter outreach efforts with the local chapter of the League of Women Voters, which stocks registration forms at up to 800 public sites throughout Oakland. Sites include schools, city facilities, post offices, and supermarkets. Asian community groups should ensure that their neighborhoods and public sites are also kept well-stocked with registration forms.

On the statewide level, California Secretary of State March Fong Eu administers all elections and voter outreach programs. The Secretary's office works with Asian community organizations and individuals statewide to register Asians. The office provides bilingual registration forms in Chinese and English which can be used in any California county. The Secretary's office also administers two outreach programs targeting Asians and other ethnic groups. The first, entitled "You've Got

the Power," targets high school seniors eligible to vote, as well as the students' parents. The program involves the participation of teachers and student groups along with the statewide Association of Asian Elected School Board Members. The Secretary also distributes posters encouraging registration in Chinese and advertises a toll-free number to call for registration assistance. They are in the process of creating bilingual posters in Tagalog, Korean, Vietnamese, and Thai.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for increasing Asian Pacific registration and voting. *As elections approach, voter registration tables should be prominent at community events, supermarkets, churches, and all other areas with heavy Asian pedestrian traffic.* According to Vince Reyes of the East Bay Filipino American Democratic Caucus, registration activities should focus on getting new citizens with bilingual materials which are not just translations of standard political literature, but materials tailored to specific communities emphasizing a connection between voting and their immediate community concerns.

Registration drives should enlist the support of a wide range of organizations. The importance of voter registration needs to be emphasized by a broad range of Asian Pacific civic organizations, including civil rights groups, social service providers, family associations, business associations, churches, and the ethnic media. OCA's efforts to solicit the financial, volunteer, and in-kind support of business associations, merchants, schools, and social service providers is an example of building broad community support for registration activities. Merchants can be

approached to stock registration forms and display bilingual posters urging people to register. The County Registrar's Office should also be contacted to ensure that locations with high Asian pedestrian traffic have voter registration forms visibly available. Registration drive organizers in California should request Asian language registration forms from the Secretary of State's office.

Prominent and well-respected community figures should emphasize the importance of voting as a duty of citizenship and a privilege of living in a democratic society. Given the traditional distrust of government pervasive in many Asian communities, respected community figures should assume the responsibility of encouraging electoral participation. The 1987 Coro survey found that attitudes of democratic duty and privilege were important motivational factors in getting the San Francisco Chinese to vote. Community education efforts should target citizenship and remedial English classes as well as naturalization ceremonies.

Community education efforts should be organized to inform Asian immigrant communities about the American electoral process and issues. Focus on correcting common misconceptions regarding the electoral process. For example, people should be informed that jury duty assignments are made from a variety of public lists; consequently, fear of jury duty should not deter one from registering to vote. Once again, organizing well-respected community figures to promote registration activities can have a particularly effective impact on immigrants.

Beyond misconceptions, Asian voters should be informed on the issues and candidates of upcoming elections. Articles on local political news and events should be submitted to the Asian ethnic press. Election literature should be tailored to the

language and interests of target Asian communities. Bilingual political debates should also be organized. Finally, candidates can be invited to speak at community events, which would help in highlighting community issues.

Partisan registration drives should be organized with the financial assistance of local and statewide partisan organizations. While some registration drive organizers may prefer a nonpartisan approach, the financial resources of political parties clearly provide opportunities for developing regis-

Both Democratic and Republican organizations should also recognize that while the majority of Asians as a whole lean toward the Democrats, the large and growing pool of unaffiliated and unregistered Asian Pacific Americans can profoundly impact future party affiliation trends...

tration activities and educational materials. Both Democratic and Republican organizations should also recognize that while the majority of Asians as a whole lean toward the Democrats, the large and growing pool of unaffiliated and unregistered Asian Pacific Americans can profoundly impact future party affiliation trends of the fastest growing minority group in the nation.

Conclusion

This case study of Oakland's Asian and Pacific Islander communities focused on voter registration, the critical first step toward increased political participation. As Professor Cain notes, "Registration can be a formidable barrier to electoral participa-

tion. When registration is difficult, participation tends to be low; when it is easy, participation tends to be high."²² The low registration rates found in the Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles County Asian communities clearly indicate that many Asians, particularly the recent immigrants, face significant cultural and linguistic barriers in the registration process. While the electorates surveyed in this report were all in California, the same barriers face Asian Pacific communities across the nation.

This study, together with past studies, shows how various Asian ethnic groups display very different party affiliations and registration rates. The distinct political behavior of each community reflects their unique cultural and historical backgrounds. Therefore, while Asian Pacific political coalitions can be organized around common concerns such as civil rights, immigration and bilingual social services, registration drives clearly must be tailored to the unique political values and language needs of each community.

Observers of Asian electoral participation often cite the high proportion of non-citizens as the reason for low Asian registration rates. What they also need to acknowledge are the significant cultural and practical barriers facing Asians which lead to low registration rates even among Asians eligible to vote. Past studies have found that more than half of all Asians who are eligible to vote are not registered. Aggressive registration drives and community education efforts are needed to target these potential voters. The Coro survey and the Latino registration study both found registration drives to be not only effective but a crucial means of getting immigrant communities involved in the electoral process.

Finally, while Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout the nation are becoming recognized as major sources

of campaign contributions, they remain vastly underrepresented at the polls. Asian Pacific activists should consider how Asian campaign funds can be channelled back into their communities in the form of support for voter registration and education activities. A non-profit organization such as the Latino community's Southwest Voter Registration Project may provide the necessary fundraising vehicle for Asian Pacific registration activities. There are many models, strategies, and resources which deserve closer examination. The author hopes that the information provided in this study will encourage the development of new and on-going community efforts to increase Asian Pacific electoral participation.

Notes

1. See Bruce Stokes, "Learning the Game," *National Journal*, 22 October 1988, 2649-2654; and Judy Tachibana, "California's Asians: Power from a Growing Population," *California Journal*, November 1986, 534-543.
2. See Leon Bouvier and Philip Martin, *Population Change and California's Future* (Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau, 1985).
3. "Asian Population Not Reflected in Voter Turnout," *Hokubei Mainichi*, 14 June 1990, 1.
4. See Lester Milbrath, *Political Participation* (Rand McNally, 1965). Also, see Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, *Participation in America*, (Harper and Row, 1972).
5. Teresa Eckrich, Catherine Lew, and Joel Treisman, *A Pilot Assessment of Voter Registration in San Francisco's Chinese Community*, (Coro Foundation study sponsored by Asian, Inc., San Francisco, 1987), 20-21.
6. "Study Looks at Interracial Marriage Motives," *Hokubei Mainichi*, 7 June 1990, 1.

7. Grant Din, *An Analysis of Asian Pacific American Registration and Voting Patterns in San Francisco* (Master's thesis, Claremont Graduate School of Public Policy, 1984), 71.
8. Eckrich, Lew, and Triesman, *A Pilot Assessment*, 9.
9. See Vu-Duc Vuong, "Southeast Asians in the United States: A Strategy for Accelerated and Balanced Integration," (from the forthcoming book edited by Felix Rivera and John Ehrlich, *Organizing with People of Color: Changing and Emerging Communities*, Allyn & Bacon, 1990).
10. Eckrich, Lew, and Triesman, *A Pilot Assessment*, 9.
11. Din, *An Analysis of Asian Pacific American Registration*, 85.
12. Don Nakanishi, "Asian American Politics: An Agenda for Research," *Amerasia Journal*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1985-86): 17.
13. Field Institute, *California Opinion Index*, 1 January 1988, 7.
14. *Ibid.*, 7.
15. Eckrich, Lew, and Triesman, *A Pilot Assessment*, 21, 31.
16. *Ibid.*, 31.
17. Din, *An Analysis of Asian Pacific American Registration*, 85; and Nakanishi, "Asian American Politics: An Agenda for Research," 13.
18. *Ibid.*, 17.
19. Eckrich, Lew, and Triesman, *A Pilot Assessment*, 30.
20. *Ibid.*, 31.
21. Bruce E. Cain and Ken McCue. "The Efficacy of Registration Drives," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 47, no. 4 (November 1985):12.
22. *Ibid.*, 1

Asian Immigrant Battered Women and United States Immigration Policy

by

Deeana L. Jang*

San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation

Domestic violence is a national problem and particularly acute for Asian and Pacific immigrant women. U.S. immigration policy has exacerbated this problem by placing immigrant women in situations where they are wholly dependent upon their citizen or permanent resident spouses to remain in this country. In addition, the Immigration and Reform Control Act of 1986 makes it more difficult for immigrant women to obtain the employment and financial independence needed to leave an abusive husband. This article examines the impact of U.S. immigration policy upon immigrant victims of domestic violence and recommends national legislative changes to address this problem.

Domestic violence is a nationwide problem affecting all sectors of society. According to Federal Bureau of Investigation statistics, a woman is battered every 15 seconds in this country.¹ In 1982, women were the victims of 81 percent of all violent crimes between spouses (current or ex-husbands).² Domestic violence often escalates, resulting in the victim's death. In 1985, the FBI reported that 30 percent of all female murder victims were killed by their husbands or boyfriends.³

Domestic violence occurs in all communities, and the Asian community is

no exception. Due largely to the fact that society has ignored or even implicitly condoned its existence, domestic violence is an already predominantly underreported crime. The lack of statistics regarding the incidence of domestic violence in the Asian community is reflective of this, as well as factors such as the inaccessibility of services for non-English or limited-English speaking women; the underutilization of social or governmental services by Asians; and the lack of community education in the Asian community regarding domestic violence.⁴

The profiles of Asian and Pacific

* The views expressed are the views of the author and are not necessarily the views of the listed organizations. The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals for their research and ideas: Christie Hogeland, Karen Rosen, William R. Tamayo, Ignatius Bau, Deborah J. Lee, and Rachel Morello-Frosch.

battered women are similar to battered women in general. They commonly hold traditional views of the woman's role as wife and mother and feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and a belief that the abuse may be justified persist. They are often financially and emotionally dependent on the batterer, and have a greater fear of the problems of survival outside the family than violence inside the family. However, because the Asian and Pacific community is predominantly immigrant or refugee, numerous other barriers exist for these battered women.⁵ These barriers include language, culture and immigration status. This article will focus on the impact of U.S. immigration policy on immigrant victims of domestic violence and the policy changes necessary to address this problem.

Asian Women and Immigration

U.S. immigration laws for Asians were not liberalized until 1965, when Congress passed amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act that ended racist national origin quotas and affirmed family reunification as the cornerstone of U.S. immigration policy. For the Asian community this was the first opportunity in decades to reunite with relatives. Of the 270,000 visas currently issued per annum, immigrants from Mexico and five Asian countries receive the highest number of visas. Between 1966 and 1983, one and a half million people immigrated to the U.S. from China, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea and the Philippines. This figure excludes the more than 800,000 refugees from Southeast Asia who have been entering the United States since 1975. Even with this recent influx, the effects of decades of racist exclusion are evident: while persons of Asian ancestry constitute 50 percent of the world's population, they are less than 3

percent of the U.S. population.

The history of U.S. immigration policy towards Asian immigrants reflects the need for cheap labor. Early Asian immigrants were men who came to build railroads, dig mines or work in the fields. Today, women and children make up approximately two-thirds of legal immigrants.⁶ This suggests that for today's economy, immigrant women are needed to support the "hidden" service sectors.⁷ Employees in the service, garment, or light manufacturing industries are disproportionately Asian women. Isolated in this country with no command of the language, no understanding of the culture, and no knowledge of the social and legal systems, these women are subject to discrimination based on sex, race and immigration status. All too often, they are forced to endure substandard working conditions and are vulnerable to exploitation. In addition to the numbers who immigrate for jobs in the service industry, many Asian women immigrate as "professionals." The higher rate of female Filipino immigrants than male Filipino immigrants in recent years is attributable in part to the large number of Filipino nurses encouraged to come to the United States to accommodate the nursing shortage in America.⁸

Many Asian women also immigrate via marriage to a U.S. citizen whom they have met either in their home country or in the United States. Because of the presence of U.S. military bases in Asia, many Asian women have married U.S. servicemen. Since World War II, nearly 250,000 Asian and Pacific Islander women have married servicemen. Although the extent of domestic violence in such marriages is unknown, studies indicate that there is a higher incidence of domestic violence within military families.⁹ Reasons for this may include the stresses -- such as isolation, a military training culture which emphasizes physical force and obedience to authority, and the high

alcoholism rate among servicemen -- imposed by frequent moves.

Cheap labor and marriage, however, do not encompass the reasons why Asian women immigrate to the United States. Some come from developing countries to flee economic or political repression. Others immigrate with their entire family or join a family already in the United States, sometimes after long periods of separation due to war or legal restrictions. Finally, there are also an alarming number of "mail-order" bride companies which play on the stereotypes of Asian women as passive, non-complaining servants and/or exotic sex objects.¹⁰ These sexist and racist stereotypes, reinforced by the media, prevail in Western society and encourage the use of violence against Asian women.¹¹

Immigration Problems for Battered Asian Immigrant Wives

In a battering relationship, the main dynamic is one of power and control. The batterer uses various means of exerting power and control over his or her partner:

Battering is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another. Abusers use physical and sexual violence, threats, emotional insults and economic deprivation as a way to dominate their partners and get their way. ...Battering is behavior that physically harms, arouses fear, prevents a woman from doing what she wishes or forces her to behave in ways she does not want to.¹²

An immigrant woman married to a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident is wholly dependent upon him for coopera-

tion in obtaining her permanent residency status based on that marriage. When an immigrant woman marries a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident, she is eligible to apply for permanent residency through that marriage. To apply, two steps must be followed: 1) the U.S. citizen or permanent resident husband must file an immigrant visa petition for the wife and 2) the wife must file an application for permanent residency. In this process the U.S. citizen or

When the petitioner is also a batterer, it is not uncommon for him to use his control over his wife's immigration status as another means of exerting power and control over her life.

permanent resident is called the "petitioner" and the immigrant, the "beneficiary." When the petitioner is also a batterer, it is not uncommon for him to use his control over his wife's immigration status as another means of exerting power and control over her life. Thus, a batterer who wishes to control his wife has little incentive to help her obtain legal status. Consequently, many battered women who in this situation remain in an undocumented status, trapped in an abusive marriage, even though they may have been married for several years and their children hold U.S. citizenships.

The Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments of 1986 (IMFA) have exacerbated this problem. Designed to prevent what INS asserted were startling numbers of "sham marriages,"¹³ IMFA contained new requirements which created additional hardships for battered immigrant women. Under IMFA, when a U.S. citizen or permanent resident petitions for his or her spouse and the marriage is less than two

years old at the time the petition is filed, the spouse is granted a two-year "conditional" residency.¹⁴ Before the end of that two year period, the couple must reapply to INS to remove the conditional status and obtain permanent residency for the immigrant spouse.¹⁵ If the couple terminates the marriage¹⁶ or fails to file the joint petition with INS during this time, the immigrating spouse's status automatically terminates and he or she becomes subject to immediate deportation.¹⁷

The additional step which requires the petitioning spouse's cooperation two years after the initial application creates a dangerous uncertainty for a battered immigrant woman. During this two year period, she remains unsure of whether her husband will sign the joint petition. Thus she may feel compelled to stay in an abusive marriage that she might otherwise terminate.

However, with the interests of battered women in mind, the IMFA did create two ways a waiver of the joint petition requirement could be obtained. A waiver may be obtained on the basis of "extreme hardship"¹⁸ or upon showing that, although the marriage was entered into in "good faith," the beneficiary spouse had "good cause" to terminate the marriage.¹⁹ "Extreme hardship" is a difficult standard to meet under current immigration law,²⁰ although INS appears to have recognized that domestic violence is a good cause to terminate a marriage.²¹ Unfortunately, INS also construes the statutory language "terminated ... by the alien for good cause" to require that the beneficiary spouse be the moving party in an action to terminate the marriage.²² In cases where the marriage is not yet dissolved, this interpretation results in a race to the courthouse.²³ Thus, in cases where the batterer has initiated the divorce proceedings, the immigrant woman can find herself locked out from this waiver and left only with the slim possibility of having

an "extreme hardship" waiver granted.

In practice, the "good faith/good cause" waiver fails as a real alternative for battered women. Many of these women do not know that they have the right to apply for a waiver. The requirement that the marriage be terminated was a significant obstacle for many immigrant battered women. The lack of affordable family law services, particularly for those with limited-English skills, makes even the most simple dissolution of marriage difficult to obtain (and dissolutions involving domestic violence are rarely simple). In addition, because of the cyclical and escalating nature of domestic violence, many battered women experience fear or conflicting emotions about terminating a marriage and thus, do not consider divorce a viable, immediate solution.

Legislation originally introduced by Congresswoman Louise Slaughter and incorporated into the Immigration Act of 1990 may remedy this problem. It removed the "good cause" and moving party requirements for terminating a marriage and added a third exception to the filing of the joint petition for a battered spouse or child.²⁴ The third waiver is now available if:

...the qualifying marriage was entered into in good faith by the alien spouse and during the marriage the alien spouse or child was battered by or was the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by his or her spouse or citizen or permanent resident parent ...²⁵

In addition, the new law requires the Attorney General "to establish measures to protect the confidentiality of information concerning any abused alien spouse or child, including information regarding the whereabouts of such spouse or child."²⁶ The new

waiver applies to all marriages, whether entered into before, on or after the date of enactment.²⁷

Although this new law should provide relief for many battered immigrant women, it will remain difficult for battered women to document domestic violence or show that the marriage was entered into in good faith. Their lack of awareness of the support services available, their feelings of shame, and their fear of deportation when the abuse is reported will continue to prevent them from accumulating records of abuse, such as police or medical reports, letters from shelters, or orders of protection. Because battered women often leave the family home in crisis following an incident of abuse, they will not have in their possession the required documentation such as family photographs, bills, and other evidence of a good faith marriage. Even bank accounts, leases or rental agreements may not include their names.

Moreover, the new law only solves the problem for the limited number of battered women who are in the conditional residency status. Depending on their country of origin, immigrant battered women married to permanent residents—as opposed to U.S. citizens—are subject to a visa quota and often have to wait as long as ten years for a visa to become available.²⁸ These women therefore may remain in an abusive marriage for even longer periods of time in hope of finally obtaining a “green card.” Finally, a battered woman whose husband refuses to file any kind of immigration petition for her still has no route to citizenship through that marriage.

Other Related Problems for Undocumented Women

The common stereotype of an

undocumented immigrant or “illegal alien” is that of a Mexican male farmworker who illegally crosses the border. Because of the overemphasis on undocumented Mexicans, few studies on the magnitude of undocumented Asians in the United States exist. However, as discussed above, there are a number of undocumented Asian women who, after legal entry as visitors, students, fiancées, or workers, became undocumented after their temporary visas had expired or after their conditional residency had terminated, even though they may be married to U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Therefore, an undocumented immigrant woman who is also the victim of battering suffers even greater hardships than other immigrant women. In constant fear of deportation and, in most cases, the resulting fear that she may lose her children, she will heed her partner’s threat to call the INS if she leaves him or reports him to the police.

Their lack of awareness of the support services available, their feelings of shame, and their fear of deportation when the abuse is reported will continue to prevent them from accumulating records of abuse...

With the passage of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986, many immigrant women found fewer legal and social resources to draw upon in their continuous struggle to provide for themselves and their families. Although IRCA offered legalization to thousands of undocumented persons, its main provision was the institution of employer sanctions. The employer sanctions provision, opposed by civil rights and immigrant

rights organizations, imposed monetary and criminal penalties on employers who hire undocumented workers. Under IRCA, employees must provide proof of work authorization (that they are lawfully residing in the United States and have permission from INS to work) to any employer who hires them after the date of IRCA's passage. Employees hired prior to this date are "grandfathered" in and do not have to provide any documentation of work authorization to their current employer.

The implementation of employer sanctions has served to further disenfranchise an already powerless community. IRCA codified the disenfranchisement of the undocumented community. It legalized their non-employment, their non-entitlement to public benefits, and their systematic exploitation in the workplace. The General Accounting Office (GAO), in its final report on the impact of employer sanctions, found widespread discrimination against Latinos and Asians.²⁹ "Grandfathered" employees become "trapped" in exploitative working conditions because they cannot work anywhere else. This left women, particularly those working in the least regulated industries such as the garment industry, even more vulnerable to wage discrimination and sexual and racial harassment.

Without work authorization, an undocumented battered woman who has left her batterer will have even more difficulty obtaining employment and gaining financial independence. She is likely to find only the jobs which are offered by unscrupulous employers who subject their workers to low wages and poor working conditions and threaten deportation if the workers resist. In addition, IRCA's provisions further discourage immigrants from seeking public benefits, even when they are entitled to receive them for themselves or their children who are U.S. citizens.³⁰

In addition to the fear of deporta-

tion, undocumented women may find themselves economically trapped in battering relationships because they are precluded from most public benefits and must find employment without work authorization. In light of the meager relief available for battered women under immigration law, advocates for immigrant battered women should be aware of other legal and service options for undocumented women.

Shelters are an important resource for battered women who may not have any other safe place to go. While most shelters do not discriminate against undocumented women, some will not house undocumented women because of funding restrictions. A more common problem, however, is the lack of language accessibility. Many shelters which do not have staff or volunteers who speak Asian languages have turned away Asian battered women. A joint effort between Asian community organizations and agencies and battered women's services is necessary to ensure that this problem is addressed.

While some battered Asian immigrant and refugee women seek help from the Asian community's social services and from domestic violence programs, few turn to the criminal justice system or use the civil legal system for help. They fear that the police or government agency will report them or their spouses to the INS. On a local level, advocates for the rights of immigrants and refugees have addressed this problem by lobbying local government to pass resolutions or ordinances which bar city officials and local law enforcement from turning persons over to the INS, from providing names and addresses to the INS, and from generally assisting in the arrest, deportation, or detention of individuals.³¹ Victims of crime and witnesses should be afforded police protection without fear of deportation.

Summary and Recommendations for National Legislation and Policy

While it is important to work on a local level to ensure that Asian immigrant and refugee women have access to services, immigration policy and its consequences need to be addressed on a national level. Where a battered woman is undocumented or her immigration status totally dependent on her relationship to the batterer, there are limits to what the legal system and local governments can do. Federal policy must be changed. In terms of federal legislation, a variety of amendments are needed to protect immigrant women who suffer abuse by their partners:

1. Although the amendments to IMFA included in the Immigration Act of 1990 addressed the problems of battered women in conditional residency status, situations where the abusive husband will not even file the initial petition to get residency status for the immigrant spouse remain pervasive. Even if he has filed a petition for her, he can withdraw it at any time, thus leaving the battered woman with no work authorization and the threat of deportation. Nothing in any state or federal law imposes a duty upon a spouse to help the immigrant spouse obtain immigration benefits. Therefore, immigration law and policy must be amended to allow battered women who entered into "good faith" marriages³² with U.S. citizens or permanent residents to file petitions for permanent residency independently.

2. Women who are hoping to get their permanent residency through their permanent resident husband are in an even greater bind. Under current immigration law, persons applying for a visa based on marriage to a permanent resident are subject to the per country quota system and must wait for a visa to become available. Most Asian countries are oversubscribed in

this category, thus the wait can be as long as ten years. If during that time the couple terminates the marriage, the woman is no longer eligible for the visa. Also, while she is waiting for a visa to become available, she is essentially undocumented. Therefore, spouses and children of permanent resi-

Where a battered woman is undocumented or her immigration status totally dependent on her relationship to the batterer, there are limits to what the legal system and local governments can do.

dents should be treated like spouses and children of U.S. citizens and be included in the immediate relative category that is not subject to preference quotas.

3. Most battered women face economic barriers to leaving the violent relationship. The Immigration Reform and Control Act created additional problems for undocumented women, who are not eligible for most public benefits. Without work authorization, undocumented unemployed women have an even more difficult time finding means to support themselves and their children. Those who do find work may find themselves subject to low wages, poor working conditions, and exploitation by their employers. The GAO found widespread discrimination against Latinos and Asians in the implementation of the employer sanctions provisions of IRCA. Therefore, the employer sanctions provisions of IRCA should be repealed.

These changes will not come about overnight. The strategy for achieving these recommendations is long-term and requires a coalition of civil rights, immigrant rights, women's rights and domestic violence organizations to influence policymakers in

80% of an estimated 80,000 production line workers are women, the majority of whom are women immigrants from Asian and Latin America. In the nursing home industry, Asian immigrant women comprise 40% of the 10,000 nursing home workers in Northern California. See also Robin Kirk, "The Immigration Reform Act is Hurting Women the Most," *The San Francisco Daily Journal*, 17 November 1988.

8. A survey of 53 Filipinas in the San Francisco Bay Area found that 55 percent of respondents cited economic reasons for coming to the United States. Another 30 percent named family reunification, and 25 percent cited political reasons or a combination of both. See Christie Hogleland and Karen Rosen. *Dreams Lost, Dreams Found: Undocumented Women in the Land of Opportunity*. Spring 1990.

9. See Tracy Lai, "Asian Women: Resisting the Violence," *Working Together to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence*, vol. 5, no. 5 (June 1985) citing The Inspector General's report on Domestic Violence (1979).

10. See "American Men Find Asian Brides Fill the Unliberated Bill," *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 January 1984.

11. See Tony Rivers. "Oriental Girls: The Ultimate Accessory" *GQ*, British Edition, (October 1990) and the recent article by Joan Walsh, "Asian Women, Caucasian Men," 2 December 1990.

12. Schechter, Susan, *Guidelines for Mental Health Practitioners in Domestic Violence Cases*, Washington, D.C.: National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (1987).

13. Immigration Marriage Fraud: Hearing before the Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, 99th Congress, 1st session, 26 July, 1985, S. Hearing 99-325 (Statement of Alan Nelson, Commissioner of INS).

14. INA section 216(a), 8 U.S.C. 1186a.

15. *Id* at section 216(c).

16. *Id* at section 216(b)(1)(A)(ii); *id* at section 216(c)(2).

17. The statute does not define "extreme hardship", but specifies that "In determining extreme hardship, the Attorney General shall consider circumstances occurring only during the period that the alien was admitted for permanent residence on a conditional basis." *Id* at section 216(c)(4)(A); *Id* at section 216(c)(4)(B).

18. INS appears to be using the same standard of proof of "extreme hardship" as applies in another immigration context when someone requests suspension of deportation. According to Bonnie Derwinski, Acting Director of Congressional and Public Affairs, in her letter to Congresswoman Louise Slaughter dated October 19, 1989, "The extreme hardship application requires that the alien establish that such hardship would arise *as a result of the alien's deportation*. In the case of a battered spouse, the hardship has already been suffered while in the United States, and it would not be likely to be aggravated by departure from this country." In the cases of suspension of deportation, the applicant must show that the hardship suffered is different than anyone else who may be deported. Economic problems such as the fact that the immigrant will not be able to find work in his or her home country are not enough. In most cases, hardship is not found unless, at minimum, the immigrant has children who are U.S. citizens.

19. Letter to Congresswoman Louise Slaughter from Bonnie Derwinski, Acting Director, Congressional and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Justice, Immigration and Naturalization Service, dated October 19, 1989.

20. *Id*.

21. Statement of Louise Slaughter on H.R. 4300, 2 October, 1990, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 136, No. 126.

22. Immigration Act of 1990 section 701(a)(2), Congressional Record - House, 26 October, 1990, at H 23234.

23. *Id* at section 701(a)(4).

24. *Id* at section 701(a)(5).

25. *Id* at section 701(b).

26. Although the conditional residency requirements technically apply to these marriages as well, as a practical matter, since the waiting period for an available visa from most Asian countries is well over two years, the conditional residency issue will not arise.

27. The GAO, in its report issued March 29, 1990, found that 19% of employers practice unlawful discrimination as a result of IRCA.

28. The System of Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program links certain federal benefit programs with INS computer records to verify eligibility. The problem with this program is the high probability of errors occurring due to inaccurate or out-of-date information contained in INS records. Thus, many immigrants will be discouraged from applying or will be wrongfully denied benefits.

29. See examples from San Francisco, Oakland, New York.

30. To show "good faith", one need only show that the marriage is not a "sham." A "sham" marriage is one which is entered into *solely* for immigration purposes. See above discussion.

31. See "Americans' Immigrant Spouses Seeking U.S. Status Can be Trapped in Marriage" by Cecile Sorra, *Wall Street Journal*, 28 August, 1989.

The Politics Of Ethnic Identity And Empowerment: The Asian American Community Since the 1960s

by

L. Ling-chi Wang
University of California, Berkeley

Ethnicity has long been an important basis of American politics. Nowhere was this better manifested than in the machine politics found in the big cities of the major industrial states. Based largely on ethnic solidarity, European immigrants in various urban neighborhoods organized voting blocs to gain political power and access to patronage jobs and public services through community-based party machines. Through these same machines, political leaders among each of the immigrant groups emerged.

Black solidarity, on the other hand, was shaped largely by the legacy of slavery and has been determined by white racism as well as black struggles for civil rights and economic benefits. Since the Voting Rights Act of 1965, middle-class African Americans have gained substantial power in black dominated cities and in some of the southern states. In the process, they also managed to make some inroads into selected public sectors of employment.

In many ways, the Asian American

political experience has been quite different from those of white immigrants and African Americans. Unlike white immigrants, Asian immigrants were systematically disenfran-

In spite of rising anti-Asian racism during the 1980s, which should have heightened ethnic solidarity and promoted political action, Asian Americans have remained divided and weak.

chised until after World War II by legislation and judicial decisions which excluded them from citizenship. Like blacks, Asian Americans were denied, *de jure* and *de facto*, political and civil rights until the late 1960s. The civil rights movement inaugurated a new era of ethnic pride, raised political consciousness, and opened new opportunities in education, employment, housing,

social welfare, the mass media, and politics for the first time in Asian American history.

With the massive influx of new immigrants from East and Southeast Asian countries in the 1970s and 1980s, the number of Asian Americans in major cities in general and in California in particular swelled dramatically. Their presence in certain neighborhoods and employment sectors became visible and was resented, but there was no commensurate increase in their political strength along the respective trajectories followed by European immigrants and African Americans. In spite of rising anti-Asian racism during the 1980s, which should have heightened ethnic solidarity and promoted political action, Asian Americans have remained divided and weak. In this article, I shall analyze the central political problem faced by Asian Americans today: the problem of political powerlessness.

The Problem

Since the late 1960s, there has been a perceptible rise in ethnic and political consciousness among certain segments of the Asian American population across the United States in a manner somewhat akin to the pattern of white ethnic politics in the 19th and early 20th centuries and of black and Chicano politics in the post-World War II period. This consciousness manifested itself most notably in the proliferation of voluntary interest groups: from the emergence of the Korean Produce Retailers Association and the Korean American Political Association in the New York metropolitan area during the 1970s to the sustained and passionate struggle for the creation of a separate Vietnamese Catholic parish in San Jose, California in the 1980s; from the relentless push to free Chol Soo Lee by the Korean American community to the successful nationwide campaign for

redress and reparation by Japanese Americans; from the protracted but failed struggle to obtain justice for Vincent Chin by the American Citizens for Justice in Detroit, Michigan to the protest against hidden quotas for Asian American admissions into elite universities by the Asian American Task Force on University Admissions in the San Francisco Bay Area; from the rise of local and regional civil rights organizations such as Chinese for Affirmative Action in San Francisco and the Asian/Pacific American Advocates of California to ambitious national organizations such as the Organization of Chinese Americans, National Asian American Telecommunications Association, and Asian American Journalists Association. In other words, Asian Americans have been organizing and creating collective mechanisms based on ethnic solidarity and have been struggling for their civil and political rights, whether these be fighting against racial injustice, gaining control over community resources, or obtaining equitable public services. These new organizations, patterned largely after black civil and welfare rights organizations, have gained visibility and influence within Asian American communities, and they have done so largely at the expense of the traditional, ghetto-based institutions of the pre-World War II era, causing lasting political cleavages within the Asian American communities.

A further indication of this new ethnic consciousness has been the increasing participation of Asian Americans in electoral politics. For example, Asian American contributions to political candidates of both the Republican and Democratic parties in cities and states with substantial concentrations of Asian Americans have risen sharply during the 1980s. A few Asian Americans have been rewarded with appointments to executive positions and judicial seats. While Asian Americans are

still far from achieving what the Irish Tammanyites achieved in New York, Boston, and Chicago during the late 19th and early 20th centuries or what African Americans have accomplished in major cities since the 1960s, more and more Asian Americans have been seeking minor offices with limited success in local elections in New York, Seattle, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. A few, such as S.B. Woo in Delaware and Michael Woo and Robert Matsui in California, have now set their eyes on higher elective offices, even though their candidacies and platforms may not be in tune with the interests of the communities from which they have raised most of their political funds. Nevertheless, both Asian American political candidates and the Asian American press have come to view the ability to capture seats as the last frontier in the Asian American quest for racial equality. Indeed, it has become fashionable for Asian American community leaders of all political stripes to routinely call on members of the community to increase their participation in the political arena, even if such calls, now largely rhetorical, are devoid of vision and substance.

As visible as these recent manifestations of rising ethnic pride and political consciousness may be, the general lack of power and influence among Asian Americans in local and regional politics is more glaring, even in localities where their population concentration and economic power should have been translated into political power. Worse yet, the community appears to be heading toward greater and greater fragmentation as its population increases as a result of immigration. Different national origins, cultures, languages, and historical experiences, as well as the absence of a shared ideology, political agenda, and national organization, all contribute to Asian American political disunity and weakness.

Unlike earlier immigrant groups

from Germany, Ireland, Italy, Greece, Poland and other European countries, whose descendants usually succeeded in gaining substantial political power by the second generation, Asian Americans have yet to make ethnic politics real and beneficial to

...it has become fashionable for Asian American community leaders of all political stripes to routinely call on members of the community to increase their participation in the political arena...

themselves. They have not yet developed effective national leaders and organizations capable of addressing the dominant society as representatives and advocates of the Asian American community. In spite of their high concentration in certain metropolitan areas on the U.S. mainland and their considerable economic resources and laudable educational achievements, Asian Americans continue to be excluded from mainstream political processes and social institutions. Consequently, they remain politically impotent.

For example, Asian Americans in California now represent nearly ten percent of the state's population, yet there is not one single Asian American in the eighty-seat State Assembly and the forty-seat State Senate. In the city of San Francisco, where Chinese immigrants first planted their roots some six generations ago, the first Asian American did not sit on the eleven-member San Francisco Board of Supervisors until 1988. No Asian Americans occupy decision-making positions in the city's government, even though nearly one-third of San Francisco's population is now Asian and Asian Americans are among the city's biggest political contributors.

In short, Asians have been unable to convert their numbers into political strength: their concentration and achievements, instead of being seen as a strength, are viewed by mainstream politicians as a political liability and perhaps even as a threat. The rise of racial antagonism and, at times, anti-Asian violence, has been documented in reports issued by the U.S. Commission

... Asians, according to Pye, prefer the discovery of personal security through loyalty to, and acceptance of, benevolent authority.

on Civil Rights and the Attorney-General of California in 1986. The same anti-Asian sentiment was manifested in the legislative history of the Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, the English-only campaign, the national debate over protectionist trade bills, the movements to abolish bilingual education and bilingual voting rights, and debates over neighborhood growth or preservation, over culturally different lifestyles in urban areas with a high Asian concentration, and over awards of contracts to union or non-union business firms. To understand this paradox, we must place this problem in historical perspective and explore ways to politically mobilize Asian Americans today.

Structure of Domination and the Emergence of an Indigenous Political Movement

Both public commentators and political scientists have explained that the political powerlessness of Asian Americans is a result of their cultural aversion to, or traditional contempt for, politics and politi-

cal participation. For example, in his massive study on Confucian concepts of power and politics, Lucien W. Pye concludes that, unlike the Western understanding of political power as making decisions, setting agendas, and determining courses of action, Asians—especially East Asians—treat power as status with authority and dignity. Instead of this distinctively Western search for personal identity, autonomy, and the good of political participation, Asians, according to Pye, prefer the discovery of personal security through loyalty to, and acceptance of, benevolent authority. Such culturally defined concepts of power and politics presumably help explain the low level of participation of Asian Americans in American politics.

Without denying the importance of culture as one of the factors that influence political behavior, Asian non-participation in politics can be explained more adequately by the experience of Asians in the United States, as Vincent N. Parrillo suggests in his preliminary study. As Parrillo correctly observes,

The participation of people of Asian ancestry in American politics cannot be examined in quite the same context as that for European Americans. The provision of the Naturalization Act of 1790 — that only white aliens were eligible for citizenship — denied first-generation Asian Americans the right to vote or hold elected positions in government. Discriminatory and restrictive legislation prevented Asian immigrants prior to World War II, particularly the Chinese and Pilipinos, from correcting the grossly imbalanced sex ratios within their ethnic groups. The ina-

bility to do so denied many a stable family environment and delayed the establishment of the ethnic community typified among European immigrants. Further, the job discrimination and labor union hostility against all Asians severely curtailed their efforts to achieve economic security and a piece of the American Dream. Finally, the pervasive racism on the West Coast significantly blocked Asian American upward mobility, acceptance into the mainstream, and participation in the political process.

In short, Asians were economically discriminated against, legally segregated, socially ostracized, and politically disenfranchised before World War II. They were denied both rights and privileges under the U.S. constitution and in treaties signed between the United States and East Asian countries. The forced imprisonment of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans, about 63 percent of them American-born citizens, during World War II without cause and due process, shows precisely what kind of legal "protection" Asian Americans could expect.

Under the circumstances, two major strategies for fighting racial oppression emerged. Both, however, achieved only negligible success. One was to appeal for help or protection from their homeland governments which had to invoke treaty provisions to demand protection of their nationals. The sanctity of treaty obligations proved no match to the power of popular demands from the anti-Asian forces, however. Moreover, the effectiveness of diplomatic channels depended largely on the relative political, economic, and military strength of the homeland government. All

the East Asian governments were too weak to do anything for their overseas nationals. Even Japan, a newly emerged imperialist power that enjoyed military victory over China in 1894-95 and Russia in 1904-05 and successfully pressured the Roosevelt administration to protect Japanese immigrants in California, could not reduce anti-Japanese sentiments and avert the passage of many anti-Japanese laws.

The other strategy was to rely heavily on the American judicial system. Toward this end, all Asian groups, from *Hall v. People* (1854) to *Korematsu v. the U.S.* (1944), waged valiant and costly fights through the judicial system (but with only occasional success) to preserve their rights. Even constitutional mandates had to give way to popular will, right or wrong! Mention should be made of the heroic efforts by small groups of American-born Asians, such as members of Chinese American Citizens Association and Japanese American Citizens League, who tried to seek redress through the electoral process in the prewar period. Unfortunately, their numbers were too minuscule and their efforts were drowned in anti-Asian tidal waves.

Confronted by racial oppression and stripped of any political rights in the American democratic system, Asian immigrants of all classes saw their mistreatment in the United States very early on as a direct outcome of the powerlessness of their homeland governments. Thus they concluded that the first step toward liberation from racial oppression in the United States was to help modernize and strengthen their homelands. For example, different classes among the Chinese in the United States around the turn of the century supported different modernization movements in China led by Kang Youwei and Sun Yat-Sen, and later in the 1930s and 1940s promoted the various factions of the Guomindang (Kuomintang) of Jiang Jieshi (Chang Kai-shek) and the

revolutionary movement led by Mao Zedong. These factions established competing political organizations and founded schools and party newspapers in America's Chinatowns, many of which still survive today. They also left behind a legacy of China-oriented political factionalism in the community that seriously undermined its ability to achieve political unity and to channel its energies and resources toward Chinese American political empowerment. In varying degrees and through diverse means, Japanese, Koreans, and Filipinos also tried to resist racial oppression through nationalistic activities, some of which directly opposed their homeland governments. Issei socialists protested Emperor worship and the rise of Japanese militarism before World War II while the Korean National Association vigorously opposed colonization under Japanese rule.

Overseas nationalism, however, was greeted with suspicion and apprehension by homeland governments which felt threatened and thus tried to keep their overseas nationals under strict surveillance and tight control. The paternalistic and repressive

This combination of domestic racial injustice and extraterritorial rule created a structure of domination unique to Asians in the United States.

policies toward their overseas nationals were expressed through the dispatch of secret agents or emissaries to the Asian immigrant communities in the United States. These clandestine operators installed and institutionalized both overt and covert mechanisms (such as political organizations, schools, newspapers, social, and cultural clubs) that insure extraterritorial control

over the Asian ghettos, often at the expense of the basic rights of Asians in the United States and with the tacit consent of the U.S. government. Economic boycott, political violence, kidnapping, holding relatives hostage were among the tactics deployed. With varying degrees of success, these mechanisms also became permanent institutions in the community, having far-reaching political and legal consequences into the post-World War II period.

Thus, before World War II, each of the Asian immigrant communities endured domination by two oppressive systems: institutionalized racism of the dominant society (the United States) and intrusive and repressive homeland governments. This combination of domestic racial injustice and extraterritorial rule created a structure of domination unique to Asians in the United States. This structure of dual domination was susceptible to fluctuations in the international relations between the United States and each of the East Asian countries involved. Precisely because of this structure of dual domination, we cannot understand the experience of Asians in the United States without a full appreciation of U.S. diplomatic history in East Asia. Invariably, each of the Asian American subgroups found themselves unsuspecting and, frequently, the unwilling victims of changing U.S.-Asian relations. This unique structure of dual domination, moreover, is crucial to our understanding of both the prewar nationalistic activities and postwar domestic political movements for liberation. In essence, it set the stage and dictated the agenda for the post-World War II Asian American struggle for justice and equality.

In the period immediately following the war, many of the harsher racial barriers against Asians were removed one by one largely through the sustained legal and political challenges raised by African Americans. Both the Cold War rhetoric of free-

dom and democracy and the necessity to maintain a strong war economy required some accommodation of racial minorities, especially the easing of job restrictions. The younger, educated Asian Americans and owners of small businesses seized the opportunity, moving out of the ghettos and into traditionally white working-class neighborhoods in cities and sprawling suburbs. These younger Asian Americans also moved into technical, professional, and clerical jobs in research universities, government bureaucracy, and the emerging electronics and aerospace industries. Their exodus from the ghetto and access to new job opportunities was viewed as a major step toward assimilation and acceptance.

The Asian American community, however, continued to come under institutionalized dual domination. The unique civil rights problems of Asian Americans, especially discriminatory immigration laws and employment practices, persisted in the postwar era. The equality and freedom Asian Americans yearned for had yet to be achieved. Moreover, these were not obtainable through the kind of blind acceptance of assimilationist ideology and second-class citizenship that the postwar generation obsessively strived to achieve, but rather through direct legal and political struggles for liberation initiated in the late 1960s.

With the exception of China, the preoccupation with post-war reconstruction among East Asian nations temporarily distracted most Asian governments from active supervision of their overseas communities in the United States, although institutionalized relations and attitudes of the prewar era remained intact in the Japanese, Korean, and Pilipino communities in the first two decades after World War II. The Chinese American community, on the other hand, was an unwilling victim during this period of both American Cold War policies and a divided China. With China's new

place as America's number one enemy, Chinese Americans found themselves prohibited from maintaining contacts with their loved ones in China. In addition, the U.S. government used various law enforcement agencies—such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Internal Revenue Service, and federal grand juries—to indiscriminately intimidate and harass Chinese Americans on the grounds that they might be disloyal or Communist sympathizers.

At the same time, the Taiwan government took advantage of America's anti-Communist hysteria, attempting to place the Chinese American community under its direct control, using its members to lobby for a strong anti-Communist China policy for thirty years until the United States relations with the People's Republic of China were finally normalized in 1979. Throughout this period both domestic and foreign political repression dominated the life of the Chinese American community. The constitutional rights of Chinese Americans were suspended and political dissidents were brutally suppressed.

It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that the first indigenous political movement, known as the Asian American Movement, was finally inaugurated. Led by a small group of Asian American college students and young professionals mostly in California, the movement tried to define a new collective identity for all oppressed Asian Americans in the United States and to formulate a new conception of the Asian American community. This new conception, however, was never clearly defined or articulated by its proponents. Nevertheless, it did manifest itself as a strong protest movement that fought racial discrimination and foreign government intervention in community affairs within the framework of the U.S. Constitution, and that called for ethnic pride and self-determi-

nation within the political and cultural framework of American democracy. It was a struggle to free the community from the structure of dual domination.

Inspired by the black civil rights movement and the anti-war protests, this small segment of the Asian American population perceived the injustice of Asian ghetto existence and job discrimination and the calculated destruction of Vietnam to be the

In short, the new movement wanted nothing short of the building of a new political community free from both racial oppression and foreign government domination...

direct results of deliberate U.S. government policies of racism at home and imperialism abroad. Following their African American peers, they developed a new ethnic and political consciousness and acquired new political tactics to bring about social change. These predominantly middle-class, suburban young Asian Americans challenged the dominant ideology, relentlessly attacked established organizations—such as the Chinese Six Companies and JACL—fought for community services for the poor and disadvantaged, demanded civil and political rights for all Asian Americans, and pressured major universities to establish Asian American Studies programs.

In short, the new movement wanted nothing short of the building of a new political community free from both racial oppression and foreign government domination: a community of *Asian* Americans, not of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino Americans. Unlike the prewar nationalistic movements, it was a coalition built on common experiences and shared interests

in America.

Not surprisingly, the new political vision did not sit well with the holders of the status quo in and out of the community. Within the community, the old guard that closely allied with the U.S.-sponsored military dictatorships in South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines red-baited and harassed the young activists while the middle-class suburban Asian Americans watched the movement with quiet consternation and apprehension. Outside the Asian American community, the specter of angry and militant young Asian Americans protesting racial injustice and Cold War foreign policy was bewildering and unsettling, a far cry from the stereotype of a docile, accommodating, and successful Asian minority.

Undeterred, the activists attacked institutional racism, articulated community issues, founded many community-based civil rights and service organizations, established alternative media, and challenged the tradition-bound leadership within the community. By the early 1970s they began to participate in electoral politics to promote Asian American concerns through local partisan organizations, such as the Chinese American Democratic and Republican Clubs in San Francisco and later, the Japanese American Democratic Club, Nisei Voters League, Korean American Political Association, Filipino American Democratic Club, and most recently, Vietnamese American Democratic Club.

By the early 1970s, the movement succeeded in gaining some recognition and token support from virtually all major segments of the Asian American population. Asian American professionals in various fields—notably, lawyers, teachers, social workers, and small businessmen—were among the first to organize ethnically-based professional organizations to express Asian American concerns and to combat racism within their professions. The Organization

of Chinese Americans, a predominantly middle-class, suburban-based national organization, was established in 1973 to promote Chinese American welfare. Four years later, the China-born intellectuals and scientists formed the National Association of Chinese Americans to advocate normalization of U.S.-China relations and to promote Chinese American rights. Several other national Asian American professional and political organizations also came into being. Many new immigrants and the elderly poor quickly understood the importance of group solidarity and advocacy in advancing their rights in education, employment training, health care, and housing. They too formed grassroots organizations to advance their agenda. Even some of the old guard in organizations like the Chinese Six Companies and Japanese American Citizens League had to acknowledge the merit of the political agenda of the young. For a while in the early 1970s, it looked as if a political consensus and a united Asian American community was about to emerge to become a formidable force in American ethnic politics, along the trajectories taken by African Americans and European immigrants.

Recent Transformation and Segmentation of the Community

But such was not to be the case. The new movement turned out to be quite limited in its constituency and influence: the majority in the community remained largely apolitical and uninvolved. For example, within the Chinese American community, the entrenched power block—the traditional merchant-dominated family associations in control of the community's social and political institutions, including the press, and economic resources—remained in power. Worse yet, the estab-

lished leadership viewed the young activists, community service agencies, and newly emerging grassroots organizations as a threat to their political hegemony and to community tranquility. In the final analysis, the new movement in fact attracted support only from a small handful of socially conscious young people. And among the latter, there was very little coordination or cooperation, separated as they were by class, residence, profession, culture, national origin, and political affiliation.

In the meantime, important changes in international relations in East Asia and in American politics were rapidly unfolding, subjecting the fragile, budding movement to severe stress and strain, and ultimately relegating it to an even lesser role by the late 1970s. These changes once again reinforced the structure of dual domination during the late 1970s and 1980s. It was not until the late 1980s, when several American-sponsored military dictatorships toppled in East and Southeast Asia, that the Asian American communities were somewhat relieved of the repressive long arms of extra-territorial rule.

The daily unfolding of dramatic events in East and Southeast Asia and the massive influx of immigrants and refugees from these countries dominated public attention. Specifically, the U.S.-China detente in 1972 and the military withdrawal of the United States from Indochina in 1973 represented a major departure from, if not an outright repudiation of, the interventionist Cold War policy that had been in place since the end of World War II. Detente ushered in a period of less direct U.S. military involvement and rapid geopolitical realignment and uncertainty in the 1990s, from South Korea and Japan in Northeast Asia to countries throughout Southeast Asia. On one hand, the dictatorial regimes in South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and South Vietnam—long sponsored and pro-

tected by the U.S. military presence—were now compelled to survive on their own. Among these U.S.-sponsored dictators were Park Chung Hee, Chun Do Hwan, and Roh Tae Woo of South Korea; Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo of Taiwan; and Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines. On the other hand, their long oppressed peoples' demands for democratic reform and national liberation contributed to even greater political instability and uncertainty. In general, the push for democratic reform came mostly from the rising, affluent middle-class while calls for national liberation arose from the dispossessed peasants and exploited working class upon whose backs the burden of the "miracle economies" of the "Four Little Tigers of East Asia" fell.

For Asian American communities, these unsettling political situations in East and Southeast Asia set off two important developments. First, there was a massive capital flight and departure of emigrants seeking more secure futures in the United States. Predominantly well-educated, middle and upper-class emigrants chose to leave their homelands in South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, and Indonesia for the United States. In addition, a million Indochinese refugees sought refuge in the United States, where they established new communities, opened small shops, invested in high risk businesses, and joined the ranks of white and blue collar workers. This wave of immigrants precipitated an unprecedented growth as well as a fragmentation of the Asian American population. And, once again, all Asian Americans became the visible and convenient targets of bigotry and jealousy.

Second, free from life under a military dictatorship, many of these new immigrants grew increasingly vocal and critical of the human rights abuses and political repression in their homelands. The most prominent exiles have been Benigno Aquino,

Kim Dae Jung, Henry Liu, and Xu Xinliang. These immigrants organized protests and lobbied Congress for democracy and human rights at home. In response, U.S.-backed dictators moved quickly to tighten their extraterritorial hold and silence critics in these Asian American communities. They mobilized economic, political, and cultural

...the influx of immigrants in recent decades brought about a sharp increase in foreign government intervention...with an intensity unparalleled in the history of Asians in the United States...

resources to counteract adverse publicity and to exert influence on U.S. decision-makers. Through their clandestine operatives in the United States, like the KMT spies and Marcos and KCIA agents, they sought to control the community press, pay informants, establish intelligence networks, infiltrate community organizations, use economic and political means to suppress dissent, launder money to buy political influence, and dish out sweetheart business deals to loyalists. These repressive regimes also resorted to violent intimidation of leading critics within the Asian American community. The most notable such case was the use of Taiwan's CIA to assassinate Chinese American journalist Henry Liu in his California home on October 15, 1984. In short, the influx of immigrants in recent decades brought about a sharp increase in foreign government intervention in the affairs of Asian American communities in a manner and with an intensity unparalleled in the history of Asians in the United States, causing not only a major setback in the quest for freedom from foreign interference but also a widening of the socioeconomic

and political cleavages within Asian American communities.

While the trans-Pacific migration of people and capital was in progress, the growing economic competition from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore rendered the United States less competitive in the world market. Worse yet, the run-away factories established by U.S. multinational corporations and their subsidiaries in Asia led to a steady loss of jobs in the U.S. domestic labor market and rising anti-Asian sentiment. This combination of a declining competitive edge in global trade and the massive influx of both wealthy Asian immigrants and poverty-stricken refugees during years of chronic high unemployment and inflation aroused not only anti-Asian sentiments and racial violence across the nation but also caused major changes in both the composition and political orientation of Asian American communities. Beneath this "trans-Pacific invasion" of people and capital lay a growing sense of vulnerability and a tilt toward political conservatism.

The new Asian immigrants of the 1970s and 1980s differ from the pre-World War II immigrants in several important respects. Instead of being mostly dispossessed peasants from underdeveloped countries in Asia, the new immigrants are mostly educated professionals and business people from urban centers in developing East Asian nations. The only involuntary immigrants have been the refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, most of whom are poor and dispossessed. Some, like those from Vietnam's ruling class and wealthy ethnic Chinese from Southeast Asia, possessed both means and expertise to reestablish themselves in American cities and suburbs with relative ease while others, poor and unskilled, encountered severe hardship in their new homeland, even with assistance from welfare programs and private charity.

Both rich and poor immigrants from Asia, for different reasons, quickly became highly visible and, not infrequently, a source of resentment and class animosity both within and without the Asian American communities, making the achievement of political unity virtually impossible. Within traditional communities, some newcomers took over or drove out old-time businesses by offering either higher rents or purchasing prices, thereby skyrocketing real estate prices. Tenant/business eviction became common occurrences and class conflict intensified—a phenomenon symbolized by the protracted struggle over the International Hotel in San Francisco's Chinatown and within the garment industry. Others settled in areas away from traditional Asian neighborhoods and set up new small businesses in cities and suburbs like Queens in New York and Monterey Park, Santa Ana, and San Jose in California, offering steep competition to businesses in the old Asian ghettos while arousing racist sentiments. Still others invested heavily in large-scale real estate development and in banking in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Houston, and Dallas, and in high technologies in places like San Jose, California and Boston, Massachusetts.

The overpowering presence of these newcomers, rich and poor alike, substantially altered the appearance of traditional Chinatowns, Japantowns, and Manilatowns and drastically transformed the lifestyles and cultures of the older Asian American communities. In the process, they also changed the American public perception of Asian Americans. The images of wealthy Asians taking over American businesses and buying exclusive homes, poverty-stricken refugees competing for welfare benefits and housing subsidies, and hordes of Asian immigrants invading traditionally white neighborhoods and suburbs have all heightened interracial tensions as well as intrara-

cial conflicts.

These new developments made the struggle for racial equality and economic justice doubly difficult. Images of the "super minority," "model minority," and "successful minority," in particular, made the struggles of the poor and less fortunate Asian Americans and new immigrants a truly uphill battle and undermined the indigenous civil rights movement begun by young Asian Americans in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The new immigrants have had difficulty understanding the Asian American civil rights movement and the concomitant search for personal and political identity. Most new immigrants lack any experience of overt racial and cultural oppression encountered by the pre-World War II Asian immigrants and their American-born descendants. On account of their middle and upper-class backgrounds, many of the new immigrants also entered the United States with strong national and cultural identities, economic resources, and a single-minded determination for economic and educational success in the United States. Another factor that further eroded and undermined the movement toward political empowerment is that some wealthy Asian immigrants very quickly discovered the close connection between money and politics in America and began to buy personal access and favors through sizeable contributions rather than through work in the political trenches.

Empowerment and Agenda in the 1980s and 1990s

From the foregoing analysis, it is very clear that the Asian American community in the 1980s has grown by leaps and bounds as a result of immigration from

several politically unstable Asian nations. The consequences are obvious. The new immigrants have significantly expanded both the size and visibility of Asian communities in major cities and have greatly enriched and added new vitality to Asian community life. In the American body politic, the numerical increase is bound to have a long-term political impact on partisan politics. It is too soon

It is too soon to determine which course of political development the Asian American community will follow...

to determine which course of political development the Asian American community will follow: the European immigrant model or the black model, or neither. For the time being, the presence of the newcomers has generated factionalism along nationality, class, linguistic, and cultural lines, heightened disputes over homeland politics, and distracted, if not set aside, the Asian American civil rights initiatives of the late 1960s. This means that there is now no broad consensus over an Asian American political agenda, strategy, or style, and there are few experienced, viable national figures or organizations to lead the community and address its vital concerns. The legacy of racial oppression, the continuing interference of foreign governments in community affairs, and the demographic changes resulting from a steady infusion of new immigrants unfamiliar with the issues and problems in Asian American communities all make it virtually impossible to unite different segments of the Asian-ancestry population and transform them into a viable political force with vision, policies, and organizations.

This of course is not the only reason for the political weakness of the Asian American community. As long as American political leaders and the general public continue to view the rising competitive edge of East Asian countries as a primary source of many an American economic woe on the one hand, and the public at large continues to view Asian Americans, rich and poor, as undesirable aliens or foreigners, on the other hand, anti-Asian prejudice will persist and the need to perpetuate their political exclusion will continue. In this regard, both the public and private sectors and both the Republican and Democratic parties are equally guilty in not only tolerating, but fomenting such racist sentiments for the sake of political expediency. What's more, both political parties have yet to develop an outreach strategy or machine in the Asian American community as they had done for the white ethnics. Nor have they tried to groom Asian American candidates for public office as they are doing, albeit reluctantly, for African Americans and Latinos. In fact, the few local electoral successes of Asian Americans have come about exclusively with Asian American financial resources and, not infrequently, over the objections of party leaders and machines.

Furthermore, low voter registration contributes to the political powerlessness of Asian Americans. For example, only 15 percent of Asian Americans in San Francisco are registered voters. Moreover, Asian Americans vote in consistently low numbers. Worst of all, their voting record reflects neither solidarity nor party loyalty. Unfortunately, there simply can be no power, given such a miserable record.

Conclusions

The foregoing analysis makes it clear that the political experience of Asian Ameri-

cans has been quite different from those of white ethnics and African Americans. Yet the vision of Asian American activists of the 1960s remains valid today. The need to free Asian Americans from any form of racial oppression in America and from foreign government interference in community affairs is as urgent today as it was more than two decades ago. Asian Americans must not allow themselves to be treated as second-class Americans in a nation founded upon the principles of equality and justice.

The miscarriage of justice in the tragic case of Vincent Chin is a powerful reminder that racism is alive and well in

...we must therefore develop a political agenda capable of transcending class, culture, national origin, and linguistic and partisan lines.

American society and that anti-Asian sentiment is still as deeply embedded in American consciousness now as it was in the nineteenth century. The United States, moreover, cannot allow foreign governments or their agents to spy on and deprive Asian Americans of constitutional liberties, to import factional disputes into Asian American communities, and to turn these communities into the contested terrain of foreign governments. The brutal assassination of journalist Henry Liu is a grim reminder of the terrorization of the Chinese American community under the rule of the Taiwan regime. It also underscores the indifference of the United States government toward the protection of the constitutional rights of Chinese Americans. If Asian Americans are to achieve first-class citizenship, foreign governments should under no circumstances be permitted to buy influ-

ence, control community presses, inhibit free speech, impose economic sanctions, govern community schools, and intimidate law-abiding American citizens. In fact, for the U.S. government to tolerate such interference in the Asian American community with impunity is to relegate Asian Americans to second-class citizenship and to transform Asian American communities into colonies of foreign governments.

Given the current situation, the most effective program for the struggle against the structure of dual domination is none other than informed and sustained participation in the American political process. But it will take time for the new immigrants to become politicized. Only then will Asian Americans become fully empowered. There will always be divisions within the community over a variety of issues, but there cannot and should not be divisions over issues related to racial equality and the non-interference of foreign governments.

As part of our effort to promote full and equal political participation, the Asian American community must develop community-oriented leaders and representatives. It cannot afford nor should it tolerate free-loaders, false prophets, rip-off artists, and prima donnas — Asian or non-Asian—who are unwilling or unable to support our civil rights agenda. The Asian American community should contribute no money to an Asian candidate just to enable that person to be a do-nothing celebrity. The ethnicity of a leader, while important, should not be the sole criterion for selecting a community representative. Performance, not color of skin, is what counts.

To hold our representatives accountable to the community, we must therefore develop a political agenda capable of transcending class, culture, national origin, and linguistic and partisan lines. This agenda remains the vision of Asian American civil

rights promoted in the 1960s. In the 1990s, capturing this vision entails removing artificial admission quotas for Asian Americans in institutions of higher education, opposing discriminatory immigration laws, promoting bilingual education, services, and voting rights, fighting against manifestations of anti-Asian sentiment and foreign government interference, and finally, exposing the racist intent in legislative initiatives like the English-only movement.

This simple, but heavily political agenda cannot be achieved by Asian Americans alone. We must acknowledge our indebtedness to the pioneering struggles waged by Native Americans, African Americans, and Latinos. We must also acknowledge and eliminate our own racist attitudes toward them and unite with them and with sympathetic whites to win civil and political rights for everyone. To build such a coalition, we must help others to understand us and work with us, as we also seek to understand and work with them.

The United States claims to be a multiracial society in which everyone is free and equal. Yet as a nation, we have failed to live up to this fundamental promise. We have instead allowed racism to poison and destroy this vision throughout the history of the U.S.. Ours has been a pluralism without racial equality. However, despite its imperfections, our nation guarantees a legal framework and a democratic political process that will allow us to correct our mistakes and to reaffirm our vision. Our task as Asian Americans, then, is to make use of these tools to help create a truly equal and just society in which we can indeed be proud of our ethnicity and celebrate our diversity.

Policy Implications of Population Changes in the Asian American Community

by

Juanita T. Lott
Tamayo Lott Associates

The rapid population growth and growing diversity of Asian Americans in the past two decades has brought about a new public visibility. This commentary describes these population changes in relation to their policy implications for demographic research and measures of equity. Indeed, these demographic changes challenge conventional standards of research and equity which assume a white majority and a black minority. Thus, given this growth and visibility, the Asian American community is in an opportune position to influence research and equity policies for the 1990s.

Evolution of the Term "Asian American"

Many terms are used to describe peoples whose origins are from Asia and the Pacific region. In earlier times, these included Oriental, Mongoloid and Asiatic. These terms were coined primarily by west-

ern European scholars. In recent decades, however, Asian and Pacific peoples themselves have created and used alternate names including Asian American and Asian-American. They also use the more encompassing term, "Asian and Pacific Americans" and its variations of Pacific/Asian, Asian and Pacific American, Asian and Pacific Islanders (APIs), and Asian and Pacific Islander Americans (APIAs).

About twenty years old, "Asian American" is a relatively new concept.¹ It has been used ambivalently, even reluctantly, by Asian and Pacific Americans because it describes a large and very heterogeneous population. At the same time, the term is now used with growing familiarity among non-Asian and Pacific Americans.

The term "Asian American" was introduced in the 1960s by Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese college students and community-based human service organizations on the West Coast.² Many of these students and human service workers were

second and third generation Americans. They viewed their ethnic communities as primarily composed of working class immigrant grandparents, immigrant and American born parents, and American born children. At that time, newly arriving immigrants were still a minority. These mainly native-born Asian Americans further defined their communities in relation to other racial/ethnic minority communities and to Asians in Asia. Their identification with the latter was sharpened with the 1965 Immigration Act and the prolonged war in Southeast Asia which had the effect of increasing the numbers of immigrants and refugees from Asia. By 1969, formal recognition of "Asian American" was given in the establishment of Asian American Studies programs in institutions of higher education, namely San Francisco State College, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of California at Los Angeles.

In the 1970s, "Asian American" was joined by the term, "Asian and Pacific Americans." This expanded concept was

Today, the questions, "Who is an Asian American?" and more basically, "Who is an American?" are being asked in view of population changes in recent years.

developed as Asian and Pacific American communities, residing primarily in contiguous neighborhoods on the West Coast, formed coalitions to advocate for representation in federal, state, county, and municipal programs. A variety of professional organizations formed Asian/Pacific caucuses, many of which are still active today. A few national Pan Asian organizations emerged, such as the Pa-

cific/Asian Coalition and the Organization of Pan Asian American Women.

Relative to the diversity of Asian and Pacific Americans today, Asian and Pacific Americans in the early 1970s seemed to be a clearly defined group. Heterogeneity described a finite number of ethnic groups. Emphasis was on being American—that is, born and reared in the U.S., and citizens and permanent residents of the U.S.. Today, the questions, "Who is an Asian American?" and more basically, "Who is an American?" are being asked in view of population changes in recent years.

Asian American Population Changes

Demographic data on Asian Americans *per se* did not exist until the 1980 Census. As recently as the 1970 Census,³ data were available only for four Asian groups—Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans and Japanese—and one Pacific group—Hawaiians. Together they totalled about 1.5 million or less than one percent of the U.S. population.⁴ Japanese and Chinese comprised a majority of the Asian American population. Japanese comprised almost two-fifths (38%) and Chinese over one-fourth (28%). In the 1970 Census, the majority of Asian Americans were born in the United States. Ninety percent resided in urban areas. Well over one-half lived in California or Hawaii.

By contrast, the 1980 Census identified twelve Asian American groups and six Pacific groups.⁵ For the first time, a count of the total Asian and Pacific American population was available. Due to the increase of Asian immigrants and refugees throughout the decade, the Asian American population more than doubled from 1.5 to 3.8 million persons. They were still less than two percent of the U.S. population. Ninety-five percent of the Asian American

population was distributed among six groups—Chinese (23.4%), Filipino (22.6%), Japanese (20.7%), Asian Indian (11.2%), Korean (10.3%) and Vietnamese (7.1%). By the 1980 Census, the majority (59%) of Asian Americans were foreign-born.

In 1990, according to the March 1990 Current Population Survey,⁶ Asian and Pacific Americans numbered 7.2 million which represents less than three percent of the U.S. population. Two thirds of all Asian and Pacific Americans lived in five states—California, Hawaii, New York, Illinois and New Jersey. Their regional concentration continued with about three-fifths living in only three states—California, Hawaii and New York. This concentration is noteworthy in view of dispersal policies of the United States in recent years. The most notable are the evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast to other regions during World War II and the post-1975 resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees throughout the United States. In contrast to their historically rural origins in the U. S., Asian Americans today are a highly urban/suburban group. In 1990, only 6 percent of Asian Americans lived outside of metropolitan areas compared to 25 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

The greatest demographic change in two decades for Asian Americans is their increased heterogeneity in an already diverse population. This heterogeneity is evident not only by more obvious features such as ethnicity, language, culture and nativity in the United States, but also by age structure, fertility rates, geographical residence, educational level, labor force participation rates and socio-economic status between and within ethnic groups. Moreover, Asian Americans have higher rates of inter-racial marriage than the general population, even among immigrant generations, such as military brides of U.S. servicemen.

Demographic Research

The policy implications of these population changes for demographic research are dramatic. One implication is that Asian Americans have become a visible and attractive population to study and investigate.⁷ This is in contrast to the recent past when Asian Americans have had to fight an uphill battle to be included in data collection efforts at national and local levels. The data base on Asian and Pacific Americans has gone from scarcity to abundance and from relative inaccessibility to immediate availability. Coupled with the rapid development of electronic technology, the Asian and Pacific American data bases, specifically census data bases, are accessible to a wide audience, not only to academic researchers but to service providers, market researchers, planners and policy analysts. Public policies related to Asian and Pacific Americans will be examined against a wealth of data by a variety of data users.

The second implication is that no encompassing framework exists for interpreting this rich complexity. As it becomes available, the 1990 Census data, combined with vital statistics and other national, state and local data bases, will provide a new opportunity to analyze the increase of ethnic groups, the greater proportion of immigrants over native born, and the substantially increased numbers of Asian and Pacific Americans distributed across six ethnic groups, without any one dominant group. To date, much of the research that poses as Pan Asian research is limited to only a few groups. Research that focuses on several groups remain ethnic-specific in description and analysis, with few generalizable findings to the larger Pan Asian population. Similarly, nascent theories on Asian Americans such as the model minority and middleman theory are not applicable across all groups.

Can meaningful generalizations be made about the total population? One answer is that generalizations of the total population are the only manageable way to address so many groups. The opposite answer is that generalizations are meaningless for so many diverse groups. Ideally, any presentation of generalizations should be accompanied by its limitations. Data for the total group should be accompanied by data for individual groups. Data should continue to be collected and broken down by specific groups. For example, the mean and median years of schooling for the total Asian and Pacific American population should be accompanied by the mean and median for each ethnic group.

Theoretical frameworks to describe the new Asian and Pacific American populations should account for the limits of national comparisons and the appropriateness of comparisons of native and foreign born populations. While Asian and Pacific American populations are commonly categorized by ethnic groups, the time of immigration, reasons for immigration, and differences in types of immigrants are of particular policy relevance to this highly foreign born population. The regional and urban concentration of Asian and Pacific American populations make national comparisons questionable or at least quite narrow.

Measures of Equity

While population changes in the last twenty years have heightened the visibility of Asian and Pacific Americans they also re-affirm the ambiguity of minority group status of Asian and Pacific Americans. In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget issued a policy designating five racial/ethnic categories, including Asian/Pacific Islander, for use in all federal statis-

tical and administrative reporting systems.⁸ These systems included census and civil rights compliance activities. This policy provided the basis for comparisons across five groups and more specifically, comparisons between racial/ethnic minority groups and a white majority group. The categories were used as measures of equity, for example, in assessing beneficiary data and affirmative action plans. The measure of equity was a white majority in comparison to a non-white, usually black, minority.

This policy also bolstered extant but uncoordinated federal agency efforts on behalf of Asian and Pacific Americans. Many of these efforts began in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (DHEW, now the Department of Health and Human Services). At the policy level, the Division of Asian American Affairs in the Office of the Secretary was responsible for cross-cutting programs, research and employment issues (1971-1981). The Asian and Pacific Concerns Staff of the Office of Education (1976-1982) focused on educational programs and policies. In the 1970s, the Social and Rehabilitation Services and the National Institute of Mental Health appropriated several million dollars to a variety of research and demonstration projects at the local and national levels.⁹

Subsequent to an analysis of the 1970 Census data by DHEW,¹⁰ the Census Bureau created an Asian and Pacific American Advisory Committee for the 1980 census. The broad representation of the committee members was manifested in the choice and number of Pan Asian groups itemized in the 1980 Census form.

The Department of Justice, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education (formerly the Office of Education) utilized the Asian and Pacific American category for compliance and enforcement activities. The U.S.

they have lower per capita income and higher rates of poverty compared to non-Hispanic whites.

Equity Implications

Population changes have affected not only the composition of the Asian and Pacific American population but also the concept of minority status. The four racial/ethnic minority groups are growing in numbers and, in selected jurisdictions, constitute a plurality and even a majority. Nationally, one out of four persons in the

... the measure of equity in terms of a white majority and a black minority has become outdated. The needs and characteristics of Americans who are neither black nor white must be taken into account.

United States is non-white or Hispanic. This ratio will increase to one out of three into the twenty-first century.¹¹ Proportionally, Hispanic and Asian and Pacific Americans are the fastest growing groups. They also have the highest rate of inter-racial marriages, more notably among American-born generations. At the same time, they also maintain higher rates of new immigrant populations. There are two equity implications of these population changes. First, research and policy analysis on the American population can no longer be confined to simple white/non-white or white/other comparisons. A white majority may no longer be a standard of measure for all policies. For example, an examination of labor force policies shows differential work-

ing patterns by race, gender and nativity. While white and black males are decreasing their labor force participation rates, white and black females are increasing theirs. Second, the measure of equity in terms of a white majority and a black minority has become outdated. The needs and characteristics of Americans who are neither black nor white must be taken into account. For example, in the West and Southwest, Hispanics and Asian Americans outnumber Blacks as minority groups. In selected areas, Blacks, Hispanics and Asian Americans constitute a plurality.

Conclusion

Just as the Asian and Pacific American community must contend with greater diversity and an increase in immigrants, the American population is being redefined by race, color and nativity. At the group level, Asian and Pacific Americans are making adjustments to who they are. At the national level, they provide a microcosm for population changes redefining the American population.

The decade of the 1990s will be spent making sense of the 1990 Census and other demographic data for both research and equity applications. The Asian American community has the opportunity to initiate new and creative policies based on demographic shifts. The following are specific policy recommendations for the 1990s.

Policy Recommendations for Research

- To ensure that the Asian American community is part of the growing body of data users, Asian American community-based organizations and Asian American Studies programs should advocate for equal

access to public data bases, specifically Census data. Unless Asian Americans become active data users, research on the Asian American population will be restricted to academic, policy, media, corporate and market researchers who treat the population as passive objects of research to be segmented and targeted according to their own agendas.

- Similarly, the Asian American community should advocate for the collection of and access to accurate small area data such as client data for school districts and local service agencies. Small area data, collected at regular intervals, complement national and occasional data, such as decennial data.

- Given the changes in living arrangements in American society, the Asian American community should support research that examines the different definitions of families and households. While the Asian American community historically has consisted of more than the traditional American nuclear family, it also has proportionately high rates of two-parent families. This is noteworthy as such families continue to decline as a proportion of American households. Additionally, the traditional definition of family—as related persons—is being questioned for a variety of policy purposes, such as survivorship benefits.

- The utility of race/ethnicity as a demographic variable will continue to be debated in the 1990s with more attention to ancestry, immigration and nativity. The Asian American community will need to continue to advocate for ethnic-specific and even multi-ethnic, multi-national and multi/racial data, particularly for specific geographical units.

Policy Recommendations for Measures of Equity

- As an example of a diverse community, the Asian American community should advocate for multicultural perspectives on equity issues. Such perspectives would replace the white majority/black minority paradigm which may be inappropriate for other populations. These other populations are primarily the diverse and growing numbers of Asian Americans and Latinos but they may also include new immigrant populations from Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Africa, and the Middle East.

- Finally, the Asian American community should continue to support measures of equity based on need and merit, as well as on an in-depth understanding of the historical and legal status assigned to various racial/ethnic populations.

Notes

1. For an earlier discussion of the development of the Asian American concept, see Juanita Tamayo Lott, *Factors to Consider in a National Concept of Asian Americans* (staff paper, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C., February 1976).

2. See, for example, Paul Wong, "Emergence of the Asian American Movement," *Bridge Magazine*, vol. 2, no. 1, 1972.

3. 1970 Census data are from *A Study of Selected Socio-Economic Characteristics of Ethnic Minorities based on the 1970 Census*, vol. 2: Asian Americans HEW Publication NO. (OS) 75-121, July 1974 and from *Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos in the United States*, Subject Report, PC(2)1G, Bureau of the Census, July 1973.

4. The historically small numbers of Asians in America is due in large measure to exclusionary immigration, residency and citizenship policies, beginning with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, directed specifically against persons of Asian and Pacific ancestry.

5. *Asian and Pacific Islander Population in the United States: 1980*, Subject Reports, PC80-2-1E, Bureau of the Census, January 1988.

6. See William P. O'Hare and Judy Felt, "Asian Americans: America's Fastest Growing Minority Groups," in *Population Trends*, no. 19, Population Reference Bureau, February 1991.

7. See Juanita Tamayo Lott and Judy C. Felt, "Studying the Pan Asian Community," in *Population Today*, Population Reference Bureau, April 1991.

8. In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget issued Circular A46, "Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting." It described five racial/ethnic categories: black, white, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific and American Indian/Alaskan Native. These categories continue to be used in 1991.

9. These include the Pacific/Asian Coalition and the Asian American Mental Health Research Center.

10. See note 3.

11. For race, see Gregory Spencer, *Projections of the Population of the United States by Age, Sex and Race, 1988 to 2080*, C.P.R., Series P-25, No. 1018, Bureau of the Census, January 1989. For Hispanics, see Gregory Spencer, *Projections of the Population of the Hispanic Population, 1983 to 2080*, C.P.R., Series P-25, No. 1018, Bureau of the Census, November 1986.

Broadening The "Asian Interests" In United States Immigration Policy

by

Bill Tamayo
Asian Law Caucus

Mythologists and politicians have often professed that the United States is a melting pot of cultures, the land of the free, and the bastion of equality. Yet, throughout the history of immigration policy in the United States, Congress has passed or attempted to pass laws which restricted immigration from Asia. In recent years a major vehicle for such an endeavor has been the reduction of visas for persons entering the United States on the basis of a familial relationship to a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident.

Asian American community leaders in the last decade have played an extremely critical role in thwarting attempts to reduce family-based immigration. This paper argues that by focusing on the protection of family-based visas, the interests of the Asian-American community in immigration policy have been too narrowly defined in recent years. This has resulted in a de-emphasis of the broader civil rights and internationalist moorings which should frame any approach

to immigration policy, particularly for minority groups previously excluded by race, ethnicity, and national origin. Furthermore, this paper argues that Asian Americans must examine any immigration proposals within the context of the historical treatment accorded Asians and other racial minorities and within the general struggle for civil rights. Finally this paper asserts that other immigrant rights issues beyond preserving and expanding family reunification provisions require equal attention from the Asian community. Due attention to this broader set of issues, however, will require a consequent alteration of the dominant framework for immigration policy in the United States.

More Than Families

The last days of the 1989-1990 Congress were marked with a flurry of activity and debate on United States immigra-

tion policy. The Immigration Act of 1990,¹ co-sponsored by Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Alan Simpson (R-WY) and then-Congressman Bruce Morrison (D-CN), was presented as a humanitarian and realistic approach to immigration policy for the coming decades—one that preserved family reunification while increasing visas for those with special skills that could keep U.S. industries competitive in the international marketplace. After countless negotiations, the House, led by Congressman Howard Berman (D-CA) extracted positive concessions from the Senate to preserve the family reunification system and to add 55,000 additional visas annually for a three year period for the adjustment of legalized aliens' family members.²

Yet, such legislation failed to achieve consensus among immigrant rights and civil rights advocates. Civil rights advocates were wary of provisions in the draft legislation (and related proposals) that severely curtailed due process rights in deportation hearings, and that created a pilot national identification card system.³

The legislators debated for countless hours with hopes of working out compromises on major sections of the bill. Then, two days before Congress adjourned—when it finally looked like the tenuous coalition of proponents would hold together long enough to pass the bill—the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), led by its most senior member Congressman Edward Roybal (D-CA), dropped a bombshell by announcing on the House floor that it could not support the bill if the national ID program was included and would consequently work for its defeat.⁴ The CHC rightly charged that Latinos and other minorities would be victims of discrimination, and that a national identification system had already been rejected in the Immigration Reform

and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) because of its infringement on civil liberties.⁵ The Caucus specifically challenged the voting rule issued by the Rules Committee to bar the introduction of any amendments upon final vote.

Congressman Robert Matsui (D-CA) joined CHC, arguing that Congress should never support such an anti-civil liberties provision. His position was consistent with his previous criticisms of the employer sanctions provisions of IRCA on the grounds that it was discriminatory and fueled anti-immigrant sentiments. In fact, Matsui co-sponsored the Employer Sanctions Repeal Act of 1990 with Congressman Roybal after the General Accounting Office found that employer sanctions resulted in "widespread discrimination" against Latinos and Asians.⁶ Certainly, his prior leadership in gaining redress and reparations for Japanese Americans allowed Matsui to draw on a wealth of experience in his legislative fights for an end to discrimination.⁷

Nonetheless, Matsui was severely criticized by some of his fellow Democratic Congressman for threatening to break-up a major piece of legislation. More surprisingly, he was attacked for not taking any leadership in addressing what was viewed as the "Asian community's concerns" on immigration, namely, on family reunification. How despicable, some argued, that a Congressman of Asian descent, who failed to lead this legislative effort, should now threaten to break-up and possibly defeat the immigration bill.⁸

Yet, from a civil rights perspective, Congressman Matsui *did the right thing*. Far from being criticized, he should have been commended for neither wavering on his principles nor allowing a genuine interest in family reunification to serve as a substitute for a broader civil rights framework within which to develop and critique

immigration legislation. To the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Roybal, and Matsui's credit, the proposal for the national identification program was eventually rejected by a substantial margin.⁹

Matsui's bold and decisive action that day provides valuable lessons for immigrant rights advocates in the Asian American community. His vision was not restricted. Instead, it captured a broader notion of the principles that immigration policy must encompass in order to be consistent with civil rights and civil libertarian values.

The Perception in Congress: Family Reunification as a Policy

The reaffirmation of family reunification as a key component of U.S. immigration policy through the Immigration Act of 1990 came as a result of constant pressure from immigrant rights advocates, especially those from the Asian, Latino, Jewish, and other religious communities.¹⁰ While the number of visas for family reunification increased marginally as a result, the more important victory came when these advocates withstood an attempt by the Senate to replace family reunification as the cornerstone of modern immigration policy and *institute a new policy advocating the admission of immigrants principally on the basis of their ability to contribute to the improvement and expansion of the U.S. economy.*¹¹

Proponents of this "newer" theory, like Senator Alan Simpson, argued that the U.S. economy could no longer absorb immigrants who lacked specifically needed skills, and whose only "qualification" for admission was being a relative of a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident. As early as 1982, Senator Simpson (a member of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy) publicly stated that

there was no need to admit "distant" relatives (*i.e.* brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens) since citizens can still be close with their siblings whether they live in other countries or not. Simpson contended that such family preference categories inherently catered to "old world" or "Eastern" definitions of family, concepts which he deemed to hold no direct relevance in a modern United States.

Asian immigration advocates made it clear that any equivocation on family reunification could be viewed as racist in light of the long history of exclusionary laws aimed at Asians.¹² In conjunction with Latino, Jewish, and other sympathetic leaders, these advocates successfully pointed to the historical contributions of Asian immigrants to the economic development of this country—

Matsui's bold and decisive action that day provides valuable lessons for immigrant rights advocates in the Asian American community.

whether they entered on family visas or employment visas. Members of Congress gave impassioned testimony that their own family members would have fallen short of the requisite "proper skills" proposed to receive family visas. Yet these immigrants worked hard to provide for their families and communities, and furthered a time-honored tradition of positive production through hard work. In essence, they were the living proof of what "America was all about."

Using this argument, immigration advocates successfully reframed the question from one of "do non-white family immigrants contribute?" to one of "should

we reverse a time-honored U.S. tradition?" Senator Simpson was eventually forced to retreat and acknowledge that Asians had successfully "worked the Hill" and had "come of age" in the world of hardball U.S. politics.¹³ These victories, while limited, were significant in view of the legislative "attack" on Asian immigration, the general conservative opposition to increased immigration, and the growing anti-Asian sentiment in the U.S..

The Limitations of Family Reunification as Policy

While the preservation and expansion of family reunification has been a key premise of immigration advocacy, these cannot by themselves provide a sufficient framework to critique and debate proposed legislation or to develop sounder, more humanitarian immigration policies consistent with civil liberties precepts. As the debates

The "Asian" interest was perceived in Congress and among other immigration advocates as solely one of preserving family reunification...

on the Immigration Act of 1990 revealed, Asian advocates were to a certain extent less vocal than other lobbying groups. At best, they were unclear in their approach to legislation on curbs in due process rights in deportation hearings, on the national ID system, on reductions of the first preference visas by half, and on increases in INS enforcement authority.¹⁴

The lack of a strong and consistent voice from the Asian community on these other equally important issues only con-

firmed the pervasive misperceptions of elected officials and lobbyists. The "Asian interest" was perceived in Congress and among other immigration advocates as *solely one of preserving family reunification, and perhaps, the granting of additional visas to relieve backlogs*. Consequently, Congressman Matsui was publicly berated by members of his own party for opposing a civil liberties issue while failing to take a leading role on legislation which the Asian immigration advocates had supposedly "checked off" on.

Broadening the Framework: Asian Immigration

Broadening the "Asian interest" in line with concepts of civil liberties requires an historical overview of U.S. immigration policy for Asians, an examination of the roots of the "family reunification" policy in the Asian-American community, a critique of the limitations of that approach as reflected in policy debates, and an assessment of recent and future trends in Asian immigration.

Scores of articles and legislation have extensively documented the focus in some of the first major immigration laws on the exclusion of Asians. Besides excluding paupers, prostitutes, beggars, and the disabled, Congress saw it fit to exclude Chinese through the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.¹⁵ This law, however, had very little to do with limiting family reunification *per se*. Instead, it was a response to the threat posed by immigrant Chinese laborers to white workers and to the fierce competition for jobs created by the economic recession of the 1870s.¹⁶ Ingrained notions of racial superiority reflected in the institution of slavery and Jim Crow laws, and notions of a white, native-born male *birthright* to jobs enabled Congress enact such a racially-bi-

ased immigration policy.

Japanese immigration in the late 19th century was similarly prompted by the need for a cheap labor pool to develop Hawaii and the West Coast agricultural industries. Yet, when Japanese workers organized for their rights, they also faced subsequent exclusion and limits on immigration. This sentiment was codified in the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 which began the effort to limit Japanese immigration.¹⁷ The general sentiment against all Asian immigration was eventually legislated into the creation of the "Asiatic Barred Zone" in the Immigration Act of 1917.¹⁸

The importation of Filipinos (then considered nationals of the U.S. because of the Philippines' colonial status) in the 1920s and 1930s to Hawaii and the West Coast raised similar issues. Filipino exclusion through the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 (limiting immigration to 50 per year and rescinding the status of Filipinos as nationals)¹⁹ was in part a reaction to the Depression and the decreased need for cheap labor in California once that need was largely satisfied by white migrant workers from the "Dustbowl." Much like the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, this law was prefaced by race riots, lynchings of Filipinos, firebombings of Filipino club halls, and passage of other racially restrictive laws.²⁰

Ironically, but not coincidentally, it was a war against Japan that finally allowed for the naturalization of Chinese and Filipinos under U.S. laws.²¹ It was similarly during a war against communism, the Korean War, that Japanese were allowed to naturalize (since Japan had by then become allied with the capitalist Western countries).

The 1954 United States Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*²² signaled a turning point in race relations in the United States and gave judicial imprimatur to a growing movement for equality. That movement's efforts during

the late 1950s and early 1960s helped create the climate for Congress to depart from its discriminatory "national origins" system and to finally end, but not remedy, the racist Asian exclusion policies.

However, while many attribute the increase in Asian immigration to the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 which established a preference system based on family reunification, its supporters and sponsors hardly had Asians in mind. When President Lyndon Johnson signed the Act, he had looked to the past, not the future, and stressed the fact that he was addressing the wrong done to those "from southern or eastern Europe," and although he did mention "developing continents," there was no other reference to Asian or Third World immigration.²³ Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) testified that the law would not upset "the ethnic mix of this country...[nor] inundate America with immigrants from...economically deprived nations of Africa and Asia."²⁴

While the Immigration Act of 1965 eventually permitted Asian family immigration in significant numbers, the prior legacy of Asian exclusion and human rights and civil liberties deprivations has failed to provide lessons to guide analysis of current legislative initiatives.²⁵ If any lesson is to be learned, it is that racism, deprivation of civil rights, and anti-labor positions have been interwoven with U.S. immigration law and policy to further the interests of U.S. capital. That fact cannot be dismissed and should serve as a warning that a sharper and more comprehensive analysis of immigration policy is warranted by the Asian American community.

The Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Bill and "Asian Concerns"

In March 1982, Senator Alan

Simpson and Congressman Romano Mazzoli (D-KY) introduced the infamous Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Bill—a piece of legislation that would serve as the cornerstone for immigration debates throughout the decade.²⁶ As introduced, the bill had two major components: 1) a legalization program for undocumented persons, and 2) an employer sanctions provision to penalize employers who knowingly hired undocumented persons combined with a national identification card system. An additional provision modified the family reunification process by eliminating the 5th preference (brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens) and limiting the 2nd preference only to the spouses and unmarried children under 21 of lawful permanent residents.

The Simpson-Mazzoli bill was introduced during the first term of the Reagan Administration, a period when the nation was experiencing a severe recession and when thousands were losing their jobs. In an effort to gather support for the bill, the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) conducted major raids under “Operation Jobs” at job sites across the

In large part, many Chinese-American activists most likely perceived sanctions as a “Latino” issue.

country during the last week of April 1982, resulting in the arrest of over 5,000 persons. After each raid, INS officials promptly announced the number of “illegal aliens” arrested and proclaimed the creation of the same number of jobs for U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents.²⁷ Moreover, the massive layoffs in the auto industry in 1981 and 1982 prompted protests against Japanese imports and exacerbated Japan-

bashing. The murder of Vincent Chin, a 27-year-old Chinese-American, by two white unemployed auto workers *just two months after Operation Jobs*, epitomized the extent of racial hostilities.²⁸ Clearly, Chin’s murder was not an incident isolated from the political onslaught against immigrants and foreign imports.

Yet, the link between the increase in racial violence and the phenomena of import bashing and xenophobia was poor in mobilizing sectors of the Asian community against the Simpson-Mazzoli bill. Political activists, based largely in the Chinese-American community, attacked Simpson-Mazzoli principally for its proposed elimination of the 5th preference. Thus, rather than attack the political, economic, and ideological thrust of the bill, the Asian community responded by creating the Committee to Retain the 5th Preference. To its credit, the Committee was able to rally hundreds (again mostly Chinese) against Simpson-Mazzoli’s curbs on family reunification. It failed, however, to vividly present the impact of the bill’s other provisions—especially the employer sanctions provision—on the rest of the Asian community and other immigrant-based communities.²⁹

Furthermore, what was largely a Chinese community-based argument against Simpson-Mazzoli was touted as the “principal concern” of the Asian community. This sloppy handling of labels unfortunately permitted Congress to narrowly define the supposed “Asian community’s” legislative interests. While there is no disagreement that Asians are affected by family reunification policies, other Asian communities were equally concerned with provisions which impacted undocumented workers and their families.

Thus, while Latino, Haitian, religious, and other civil liberties organizations focused their attention on the discriminatory hardships created by sanctions against

the undocumented sector and used this opposition as the basis for organizing, the Committee critiqued the bill using a narrower framework. In large part, many Chinese-American activists most likely perceived sanctions as a "Latino" issue. This view reflected a naive understanding of the diverse and changing Asian community and, more importantly, the community's range of immigration concerns. In essence, those who focused principally on the 5th preference provision failed to grasp the differential impact of the bill on the various sectors of the Asian community. Moreover, this narrow approach effectively missed the opportunity to use a common critique of U.S. immigration policy to forge substantive links with the Latino community.³⁰

Not surprisingly, the Committee's approach severely limited the mobilization of the Filipino community—the largest Asian group in the United States and the second largest immigrant group after Mexicans since 1982.³¹ For Filipinos, the 5th preference as a basis for immigrating had become a non-viable alternative due to major backlogs. In March 1982, the State Department was issuing visas to Filipino beneficiaries of 5th preference petitions that were filed on or before June 8, 1970.³² In essence, the twelve-year waiting period effectively forced Filipinos on the waiting lists to bypass the system by entering the United States on temporary visas and, eventually, joining the ranks of the undocumented. Moreover, the focus on the 5th preference had little relevance to the thousands of Filipinos (as well as other Asians) illegally in the United States who simply had no relatives with whom they could reunite.

The impact of employer sanctions on this growing undocumented sector of the Asian community, then, was of paramount concern to Filipino-American activists. The massive migration from the Philippines in the early 1980s created a signifi-

cant class of persons who were undocumented (*i.e.* persons without immigration papers) who would be severely affected by the employer sanctions provision. Not surprisingly, during presentations to Filipino community audiences about the Simpson-Mazzoli bill, members of the audience expressed fear that an undocumented friend or relative might be denied a job or fired from one, and ultimately, deported. Hence, rather than joining the efforts of the Committee to Retain the 5th Preference, many in the Filipino community found a more appropriate base of common struggle with the Mexican American and other Latino communities—communities which also acknowledged the existence of a growing undocumented sector.

After the reintroduction of the Simpson-Mazzoli bill in the 1983-84 Congress, the Committee actively protested any proposed elimination or reduction of family preferences and sent delegations to Washington, D.C. to voice its point. Thanks in part to the Committee's efforts, the House version did not accommodate any reduction in family reunification, and the bill failed to pass Congress in that session.³³ Determined to pass a bill addressing illegal immigration, Senator Simpson called upon House Judiciary Committee Chairperson Peter Rodino (D-NJ) the following year to co-sponsor Simpson-Mazzoli's successor bill while dropping his previous ineffective co-sponsor (Mazzoli was then still chairperson of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy). By allying with Rodino, a well-respected veteran known for his liberal positions, and by streamlining his bill to the bare essentials (eliminating any proposed restructuring of family reunification), Simpson faced better odds for the bill's enactment.³⁴

Reflecting in part its limited analysis of the bill, the Committee to Retain the 5th Preference disbanded, ostensibly hav-

ing accomplished its goal of preserving family reunification. Furthermore, many others who opposed Simpson-Mazzoli because of the bill's curbs on family reunification did not become active during the 1985-86 year against the Simpson-Rodino bill. Hence, during the final days of debate on the bill in the fall of 1986, there was a noticeably reduced outcry from the Chinese community and other sectors of the Asian community against what was clearly a repressive and discriminatory law.

Simpson-Rodino was eventually enacted as the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA).³⁵ At its core remained the employer sanctions provision, which has come to wreak havoc on the lives of documented and undocumented Latinos and Asians. In March 1990, the General Accounting Office of Congress reported

Simpson...argued that efforts to bring in Europeans (especially the Irish) and others who had no families to reunite with was critical to having a "fair immigration policy".

that 19 percent of employers were unlawfully discriminating against Asians and Latinos on the basis of national origin and citizenship status as a result of IRCA.³⁶ Moreover, many employers have attempted to deny or have denied protections and benefits to undocumented workers secured under the Fair Labor Standards Act (which guarantees a minimum wage and overtime pay) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (which bars employment discrimination).³⁷ This onslaught on the labor rights of immigrant and citizen workers was accompanied by an increase in border enforcement authorized by IRCA and a subsequent in-

crease in civil rights violations by the INS and the Border Patrol.³⁸

The Immigration Act of 1990

Spurred by his success in 1986, Senator Simpson promptly introduced a bill to the 1987-88 Congress that would have virtually eliminated the 5th preference and curbed the 2nd preference by disallowing lawful permanent residents from petitioning for unmarried sons and daughters over 26 years old. The Asian immigration advocates rightly and properly attacked the premise of the bill—that family reunification was no longer a justifiable basis for immigration policy and that one's skills should be the principal determinant. The community understood the racial implications of this proposed bill quite well. Fortunately, Congress had grown weary from years of battle on immigration policy, and no clear consensus emerged. The upcoming 1988 presidential election also served as a major deterrent to any substantial debate on immigration policy.

The 1989-90 Congress provided a better political climate for Simpson. Calling on Senator Edward Kennedy as a co-sponsor, Simpson repackaged his bill as a proposal to remedy years of excluding Europeans and Africans under the 1965 amendments which created the family preference system.³⁹ Senator Simpson pointed to the family reunification backlog for Asian countries and Mexico and argued that efforts to bring in Europeans (especially the Irish) and others who had no families to reunite with was critical to having a "fair immigration policy." Simpson, who had been viewed as the proponent of exclusion and limits, now presented himself as the voice of inclusion and balance. He also argued that the family preference system did not assure skilled workers entry and alleged

that newer relatives were less skilled and consequently less productive. His arguments inherently favored European immigration over migration from Asia and Latin America.

Asian advocates, however, once again charged that the bill would have a discriminatory impact on natives of Asian countries and would produce even greater backlogs.⁴⁰ They pointed out that the community was still making up for years of exclusionary immigrant policies. Without the enactment of explicitly anti-Asian legislation, they argued, the U.S. would enjoy a broader racial diversity with a substantially larger Asian population. Delegations of Asian advocates in Washington, D.C. attempted to persuade Congress that the current immigration preference system should not be tampered with, but instead should be expanded to shorten the backlogs in the preference system. Asian advocates rejected any narrow definitions of what constituted "family," and urged Congress to adopt positive measures, such as the inclusion of spouses and minors of lawful residents as "immediate relatives" not subject to a quota.

The Kennedy-Simpson bill (S. 358) was eventually integrated with the relatively more liberal Morrison bill (H.R. 4000). Congressman Morrison initially called for the expansion of visas, the addition of 100,000 visas in order to reduce the backlog, immediate relative status for spouses and minor children of lawful residents, protections for Salvadorans, a stronger family fairness program, and other positive amendments.⁴¹ Morrison, however, also laid the groundwork for the inclusion of more repressive measures and curbs on due process by allowing the attachment of so-called "criminal alien" provisions.⁴² These provisions allow an immigration judge to order an alien deported *in absentia* if the alien (or his attorney) received written and oral no-

tice for the hearing.⁴³ In effect, INS could more easily deport many aliens without affording them their "real and full day in court".

Another provision of the bill increases the authority of INS agents to make arrests for felonies not covered by the Immigration and Nationality Act (which grants agents their power). Thus, INS agents, especially in cities and towns along the U.S.-Mexico border towns, could use the suspected commission of felonies as a pretext to arrest someone on a simple civil immigration violation, for example, being in the country illegally or overstaying a visa.

While these repressive provisions were supposed to be removed from the House bill and were not in the Senate bill (S.358), they were eventually placed in the final measure at Simpson's insistence without the benefit of subcommittee or committee hearings. It was precisely these curbs on due process and the expansion of INS' authority that caused various immigrant rights, civil rights, legal, and religious groups to withhold support for the bill in the final days of debate. These groups could not reconcile support for the overall expansion of visas with their opposition to substantial curbs on due process rights and the national identification program.

These efforts and interests of Asian groups, on the other hand, were viewed one-dimensionally as preserving and expanding family reunification and increasing the Hong Kong quota.⁴⁴ This perception found some basis in the community's relative silence on the bill's more repressive provisions. While some Asian groups expressed "concern" over the national identification card and due process limitations, a stricter civil rights orientation no longer framed their approach. Thus lobbyists and members on the Hill assumed that since family reunification was preserved, Asian groups would be pleased and voice no sig-

nificant objections to the bill.⁴⁵

Without questioning the relevance of efforts to preserve a family reunification policy, a critique of the bill's more repressive provisions and the establishment of a civil liberties framework as the starting point for examining immigration policy was equally necessary. Asian organizations should have joined other civil rights organizations more actively in order to strike the bill's repressive provisions. Moreover, they should have made it clear that meeting family reunification concerns, the Hong Kong quota, and the naturalization of Filipino World War II veterans was insufficient. Importantly, Asian organizations needed to draw some lines of demarcation based on a civil rights framework from which to judge other parts of the bill.

New Opportunities: Repealing Employer Sanctions and Other Issues

Several issues that test the civil rights moorings of the Asian community in immigration policy loom on the horizon. The

IRCA has also resulted in the increased sexual harassment of undocumented women on the workforce and the denial of employment protections and benefits to them..

GAO report on employer sanctions has prompted calls for repeal of the Immigration Act of 1990 from various quarters including the Latino community, religious organizations, immigrant-based unions (e.g., the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and the Amalgamated Textile and Clothing Workers Union), the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and other civil rights organizations.⁴⁶ While some Asian organizations supported this repeal movement (e.g., Japanese American Citizens League, Organization of Chinese Americans, and Asian legal organizations), that support has yet to translate into an organized response from the Asian community.⁴⁷

Furthermore, while some may support the repeal of sanctions simply because they are discriminatory, that basis alone will not provide a sufficient framework for examining potential repeal legislation which is tied to increased border and interior enforcement as the "alternative" to employer sanctions.⁴⁸ The Asian community must begin looking at the international migration of labor created by millions fleeing repressive governments and depressed economies. The undocumented sector of the Asian community still grows steadily day-by-day. Many Asians who entered after January 1, 1982 as non-immigrants (thus failing to qualify for legalization) still find themselves undocumented and, consequently, vulnerable and highly exploited.

IRCA has also resulted in the increased sexual harassment of undocumented women on the workforce and the denial of employment protections and benefits to them.⁴⁹ IRCA—combined with the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments of 1986 (IMFA)—also forces immigrant women victims of domestic violence to remain with their abusive husbands in order to maintain or obtain legal resident status.⁵⁰ These issues—beyond preservation of family reunification visas—require the attention of Asian community advocates.

Immigration policy will reemerge as early as 1994 when the Commission on Legal Immigration Reform issues its first report on the Immigration Act of 1990.⁵¹ As the economy worsens, efforts to limit immigration to "productive members" and

remove family reunification as a cornerstone of immigration policy will likely arise again. In addition, this will likely be coupled with further efforts to reduce crime by curbing the due process rights of immigrants and streamlining deportation proceedings. Senator Simpson and liberal Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) have already indicated that they will team-up to propose a national identification card this session in order to improve enforcement of the employer sanctions provisions and curtail discrimination.⁵²

Conclusion

Throughout U.S. history, Asians have been subjected to exclusion and deportation because of racist laws and the changing needs of capital for cheap and easily accessible labor. Experiences with these laws serve as a harbinger of laws to come, and emphasize the need to examine immigration policy from an anti-racist, pro-civil rights framework grounded in a sense of international solidarity with other immigrant communities. While preserving and expanding family reunification has been a critical component of immigration advocacy, pursuing that goal provides an insufficient framework for critiquing and advancing multi-faceted immigration "reform" bills. Congress, in furthering anti-Asian and more generally, anti-immigrant sentiments, has used not only curbs on family reunification, but also curbs on due process and other legal rights to succeed in its mission.

New issues, particularly those affecting the rights of the growing undocumented Asian community mandate a broader framework to analyze them. Furthermore, advocates must be sensitive to and aware of the ethnic diversity within the Asian community—a diversity which represents varied

experiences with U.S. immigration policy. The painful lessons of the legislative battles on the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and the Immigration Act of 1990 illustrate that limitations in our analyses prevented Asian American advocates from fully addressing these major pieces of legislation.

In order to be consistent with our notions of civil rights, a broader analysis must first examine the general civil rights implications and issues raised by any legislation:

- Are there curbs in due process?
- Are there restrictions on the constitutional or statutory rights of immigrants?
- Will the proposals have a racist impact?
- Do the proposals reinforce a growing xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment either by advocating additional enforcement solutions or by denying rights to immigrants?
- Does the legislation ignore the realities of the conditions in immigrants' homelands (especially those countries—the Philippines, Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala—in which economic and military policies are influenced by U.S. foreign policy)?

At a secondary level of scrutiny, the Asian American community must examine how multi-faceted legislation impacts all sectors of the community. Given the uneven immigration histories of the community's various sectors, no multi-faceted bill can be expected to have one principal "Asian American" issue. Rather, Asian American advocates have a duty to understand each major provision of the bill, to scrutinize it for its specific impact on the diverse Asian communities, and to articulate a position based on our application of the initial level of review listed above.

While there may be uneven and generally different concerns in the various Asian American communities, the legacy of Asian exclusion and the increase in racial

violence against Asian Americans in general serve as painful reminders that we are all in this struggle together. These experiences and phenomena, then, also provide the impetus and the common denominator to work together as an Asian American community. This means drawing in as many sectors of the Asian American population, with a special focus on emerging communities (e.g. South Asians, Vietnamese) and the largest newly immigrating groups (Filipinos, Indians and Koreans). We cannot afford to presume that legislative provisions affect all Asian communities equally, or that one provision excludes concern for all other provisions.

New proposals for immigration reform will continue to be presented throughout this decade. No doubt, the downturns in the economy will fuel another onslaught of anti-immigrant legislation, this time perhaps disguised as a "balanced" increase in numbers for white European countries. More blatant attempts will also surface to impose further restraints on the rights of immigrants in court, at the border, and at the workplace. The Asian American community, however, can be better prepared if it steps back to see the big picture, broadens its framework, and provides a multi-faceted response to these legislative threats.

Notes

1. P.L. 101-649, Nov. 29, 1990, 104 Stat. 4978.
2. "The Immigration Act of 1990 Analyzed" *Interpreter Releases*, vol. 67, no. 45 (1990). Legalized aliens gained legal status through the legalization ("amnesty") program of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Those who were unlawfully in the United States before January 1, 1982 or who had worked a requisite number of days in farmwork were eligible.
3. The deportation-related provisions of H.R. 5284 (Smith-TX) and S. 3055 (Simpson-WY) "Criminal Alien Deportation Amendments of 1990" were eventually incorporated into the Immigration Act of 1990. (See Sec. 501-515 of Act of 1990) *id.* See *Interpreter Releases* vol. 67, no. 41 (October 29, 1980): 1214.
4. *Ibid.*
5. P.L. 99-603, November 6, 1986 (Simpson-Rodino). 8 U.S.C. Sec. 1324a(c) ("No authorization of national identification cards. Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize, directly or indirectly, the issuance or use of national identification cards or the establishment of a national identification card.")
6. U.S. General Accounting Office, *Immigration Reform: Employer Sanctions and the Question of Discrimination*, March 29, 1990 ("GAO report"). Nineteen percent of employers unlawfully discriminated against Asians and Latinos on the basis of national origin and citizenship status as a result of employer sanctions. The Roybal bill was never voted on.
7. Congressman Matsui was one of the leaders in the passage of legislation (P.L. 100-383, 102 Stat. 903, Aug. 10, 1988, 50 U.S.C. Appx Sec. 1989 et seq.) providing redress and reparations for Japanese-Americans and Aleutians incarcerated during World War II under Exec. Order 9066, 7 Fed. Reg. 1407 (1942). "Executive Order 9066...gave to the Secretary of War and the military commanders to whom he delegated authority, the power to exclude any persons from designated areas in order to secure national defense objectives against sabotage and espionage...Most of the evacuees were reduced to abandoning their homes and livelihoods and to being transported by the government to relocation centers' in desolate interior regions of the west." Comm. on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians 97th Cong. 1st

Sess., *Personal Justice Denied* 49 (1982) (report to Congress on domestic internment during World War II).

8. Congressman Matsui has previously spoken against measures to curb Asian immigration. Matsui, however, has never been appointed to sit on the House Subcommittee on Immigration & Refugee Policy nor on the House Judiciary Committees, the bodies which have jurisdiction over immigration legislation.

9. See fn. 4.

10. Family reunification refers to the process in which United States citizens can file visa petitions for spouses, parents, children and siblings. Permanent residents can file petitions for spouses and children. Except for the parents, spouses and minor unmarried children of U.S. citizens, all other relatives are processed under the "preference system." The preference system in effect in 1990 was as follows: first preference: unmarried sons & daughters (over 21) of U.S. citizens; second: spouses and unmarried children of permanent residents; third: professionals; fourth: married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens; fifth: brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens; sixth: skilled and unskilled workers. 270,000 visas annually were allocated to the preference system.

11. See "Give Me Your Professionals, Your Experts, Your Investors", *Center for Immigrant Rights Report*, No. 13, March 1991.

12. For a description of anti-Asian immigration laws, see U. S. Comm. on Civil Rights, *The Tarnished Golden Door: Civil Rights Issues in Immigration*, chs. 1, 2 (1980); see also, U.S. Comm. on Civil Rights, *Recent Activities Against Citizens and Residents of Asian Descent*, Clearing House Publication No. 88 (1986).

13. It should be noted that the Bush Administration did not advocate restrictions on legal immigration *per se* although it stated that it preferred the Senate version over the House versions. Its professed pro-family approach, and its attempts to develop ties to the Latino and

Asian community prevented it from supporting more directly, and at least for the time being, any notions of curbing legal family immigration.

14. Sec. 501, *et seq.* of Immigration Act of 1990; for the citation on the national identification system, see fn. 4; Sec. 111 of Immigration Act of 1990.

15. Ch. 126, 22 Stat. 58 (1882).

16. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Tarnished Golden Door*, citing Carey McWilliams, *Brothers Under the Skin* (rev. 1951): 101-3.

17. The Gentleman's Agreement of 1907, U.S. Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1924*, vol. 2, (1939): 339. "Another provision [of the The National Origins Act of 1924] prohibiting the immigration of aliens ineligible for citizenship, completely closed the door on Japanese immigration, since the Supreme Court had ruled that Japanese were ineligible to become naturalized citizens." U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Tarnished Golden Door*, citing *Ozawa v. United States*, 260 U.S. 178 (1922).

18. Act of Feb. 5, 1917, 39 Stat. 874; see also U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Tarnished Golden Door*.

19. Gordon and Rosenfeld, *Immigration Law and Procedure*, Sec. 4.5d (1976).

20. Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Distant Shore: A History of Asian Americans*, New York: Penguin Books (1989).

21. Ch. 344, 57 Stat. 600 (1943). This act of Congress also allowed provided for 105 Chinese to immigrate annually, and declared Chinese eligible for naturalization. 60 Stat. 1353. That Act also allowed for the naturalization of Asian Indians. The Filipino quota was increased from 50 to 100 that same year. President Proclamation NO. 2696 (1946) U.S. Code Cong. and Ad. News 1732. 118,000 spouses and children of military servicemen were al-

lowed to immigrate to the U.S. under the War Brides Act of 1945, Ch. 591, 59 Stat. 659 (1945). Under the Act, the spouses of Filipinos who served in the US Armed Forces were able to enter the United States eventually constituting the "second wave" of Filipino immigration.

22. 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

23. R. Daniels, *Coming to America*, Harper Collins Publishers (1990): 340-1.

24. Testimony of Senator Edward Kennedy before the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy on S. 500, 89th Cong., 1st session, February 10, 1965.

25. Pub L. NO 89-236, 79 Stat. 911 (1965).

26. Senator Simpson was a member of the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy (1979-1981). Congressman Mazzoli was the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs.

27. Legal and community-based challenges to these raids and have been successful in enjoining some of these practices. *International Molders and Allied Workers v. Nelson*, 643 F. Supp. 844 (N.D. Cal. 1984) (preliminary injunction against INS from conducting warrantless raids), *affirmed*, 799 F.2d 547, (9th Cir. 1986).

28. U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Recent Activities Against Citizens and Residents of Asian Descent*, Clearing House Publication No. 88, (1986).

29. In comparison, other coalitions were formed around the country to address the bill as a whole—its suspect legalization program, employer sanctions, reductions on family reunification, national identification systems, etc. These organizations included the Bay Area Committee Against Simpson Mazzoli (eventually becoming the Committee to Defend Immigrant and Refugee Rights), New York Coalition Against Simpson Mazzoli, etc.

30. The most recent expression within the Chi-

nese community regarding a concern for undocumented persons was displayed in efforts to stop any deportations of Chinese nationals after the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 4, 1989. This concern for the safety of persons returning to countries where their civil rights would be abridged should also serve as the basis to support efforts to stop the deportations of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Haitians, etc.

31. Preliminary 1990 Census figures, U.S. Bureau of the Census. See also, O'Hare, *Asian Americans: America's Fastest Growing Minority Group, Population Trends and Public Policy*, no. 19, Population Reference Bureau (February 1991).

32. U.S. Department of State, *Visa Bulletin*, vol. 5, no. 18 (March 1982).

33. The 1984 Presidential elections and special efforts within the Democratic Party to court the Hispanic vote contributed to the bill's demise. Actions by anti-Simpson-Mazzoli activists at the Democratic Convention in San Francisco in July 1984 prompted the Hispanic Caucus of the Democratic Party to use opposition to Simpson-Mazzoli as the "litmus" test for presidential support. Presidential candidate Rev. Jesse Jackson publicly criticized the Simpson-Mazzoli bill, and in particular, the employer sanctions provision. The bill eventually passed the House by three votes in October 1984. However, a conference committee of the House and Senate felt no need to resolve the differences during the Presidential election year, and thus the bill was never enacted.

34. Rodino had already indicated in 1984 that he did not want any tampering with the legal immigration system and family reunification.

35. P.L. 99-603.

36. GAO report. Other reports similarly found discrimination as a result of employers trying to comply with their understanding of IRCA. A survey of San Francisco businesses found that 40% of employers found it riskier to hire Latinos and 39% of employers found it riskier to hire

Asians. Avidan, *Employment and Hiring Practices under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986: A Survey of San Francisco Businesses*, Public Research Institute, San Francisco State University 1989; Testimony of Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (New York), Asian Law Alliance (San Jose), Asian Law Caucus (San Francisco), Asian Pacific American Legal Center (Los Angeles), Lawyers for the People of Hawaii (Honolulu), and Organization of Chinese Americans (Washington, DC) on Senate Joint Resolution No. 280 (calling for repeal of employer sanctions following GAO report) before the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, April 20, 1990.

37. See *Patel v. Quality Inn South* 846 F.2d 700, (11th Cir. 1988); *Patel v. Sumani Corp.*, 660 F. Supp. 1528 (N.D. Ala. 1987); *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission v. Tortilleria La Mejor*, No.CV-F-87-505 REC (E.D. Cal.).

38. See American Friends Service Committee, *Human Rights at the Mexico-U.S. Border* (1990); see also testimony of Roberto Martinez of AFSC before House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, April 11, 1990, reported in *Interpreter Releases* vol. 67, no. 17 (1990): 504.

39. S.358 (1989-90).

40. See Statement of Eleanor Chelimsky, Assistant Comptroller General, GAO, before Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs, March 3, 1989. ("...although limiting new 5th preference applications to 'never married' brothers and sisters would drastically reduce new applications, the length of the current waiting list and limits on admissions mean that it would be nearly 75 years before petitions filed now would be acted upon.") [emphasis added]

41. *Interpreter Releases* vol. 67, no. 14 (1990).

42. *id.*

43. Immigration Act of 1990 (IA 1990), Sec.

545(a).

44. The only other provision which received substantial comment was the provision allowing for the naturalization of Filipino World War II veterans. This provision had already gained the unequivocal political support of the Administration and Congress and was not necessarily a point of controversy.

45. The Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund and the Asian Law Caucus, while working hard to preserve family reunification and increase visa numbers, ultimately refused to support S. 358 because of its substantial curbs on due process.

46. GAO report, *supra*.

47. See testimony of Asian legal organizations.

48. Munoz, *Unfinished Business: The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986*, National Council of La Raza, December 1990. The Council actively advocates for the repeal of employer sanctions, but reaffirms its position for controlling "illegal" immigration and offers increased border enforcement and labor law enforcement as the alternative to sanctions.

49. Hogeland and Rosen, *Dreams Lost, Dreams Found: Undocumented Women in the Land of Opportunity*, San Francisco: Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services (1991) This study found an increase in Latino, Chinese and Filipino undocumented women.

50. P.L. 99-639. [Editor's note: for a detailed discussion, see Decana Jang's article in this issue of the *AAPR*.]

51. Immigration Act of 1990, *supra*, Sec. 141.

52. *San Francisco Daily Journal*, 25 January, 1991, reprinting *San Diego Tribune* editorial. Frank, long an advocate for civil rights, was the principal author of the anti-discrimination provisions of IRCA in the enforcement of employer sanctions. While these remedies have been ex-

tremely limited at best, they provide no meaningful alternative in the view of most civil rights organizations. Moreover, through a national identify card system, minority groups would be forced to give up their certain liberties in order to protect perceived equal employment opportunities.

The Challenges of Asian American Suburbanization

by

Gen Fujioka
Jo Ann C. Gong
Asian Law Caucus

Whatever its deficiencies, the 1990 Census of Population and Housing has chronicled a decade not only of unprecedented growth in the population of Asian Americans, but also of a qualitative expansion in their geographic distribution. In particular, Asian populations in the San Francisco Bay Area—an area encompassing nine counties and seven thousand square miles—had clustered almost exclusively in identifiable neighborhoods, mostly in urban centers. The Census now shows Asian Americans to reside, work, and do business throughout the urban and suburban region. The dispersal of Asian Americans poses a number of practical and philosophical questions regarding our notions of community. Practically, this dispersal brings new challenges to our abilities to effectively identify and address community needs. Urban communities have been able to concentrate cultural and linguistic resources in addressing localized social service needs. In

contrast, suburban communities have spatially dispersed needs, often spread across city and county lines.

Suburban areas may also lack the spatial density useful in making collective political demands—demands which contributed to the creation of existing community based social service programs. Deprivation in suburbia may be translated into individual isolation rather than a social experience. In such a situation, collective voices for change may be lost or made less effective.

Philosophically, the integration of Asian Americans into suburbia strains notions of community. Questions of *what* constitutes our community, and even determining *where* our communities exist, have become a new challenge to policy analysts and community organizations. As playwright Lane Nishikawa puts the question:

From the fields of Delano
to the dusty roads of Fresno,
From Nihonmachi to Little Tokyo,
Asian America: where did you go?¹

In the past, Asian Americans have created communities despite repressive and conscious forms of racial discrimination.

Questions of what constitutes our community, and even determining where our communities exist has become a new challenge to policy analysts and community organizations.

These have now been abolished, at least in their most legal and public forms.² Suburbanization and dispersal represent a different challenge to creating and maintaining Asian American communities, calling for social and political structures and strategies to meet these new conditions.

History of Asian Segregation in California

Geographic mobility has not always been an option for Asian Americans. In California, the state's Alien Land Law prohibited Asian immigrants from owning any land until the statute was invalidated in 1952.³ Restrictive covenants preventing the purchase of homes by non-whites and racial discrimination in rental housing kept Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans in generally segregated neighborhoods.⁴ Hence the Chinatowns, Japantowns, and Manilatowns of the area, as well as the residential clusters that developed in cities from Watsonville to Berkeley, were in part

a creative and social response to the adverse conditions on the West Coast.

Beginning in the 1950s, many of these historically Asian neighborhoods came under attack by government urban renewal projects. One redevelopment project in San Francisco's Japantown alone permanently displaced a number of small businesses and 4,000 families, mostly Japanese and African American.⁵ Although Asian America's historic community centers were besieged and thousands displaced, it would be an exaggeration to describe the events as an Asian diaspora.

Other developments have also led to the restructuring of Asian American residential patterns. In particular, in the Fifties and Sixties, the civil rights movement won passage of legislation prohibiting explicit forms of housing discrimination.⁶ As a result of fair housing laws, non-economic barriers to Asian American access to housing markets were significantly reduced. With the lifting of these barriers, there has been a pronounced decline in the levels of suburban segregation experienced by Asian American groups since 1960.⁷

A variety of factors motivated Asian Americans to move into these now accessible housing markets. One major factor was the housing market itself. The preference of the market and government toward single family homes in the postwar period⁸ led to low density housing policies. In turn, these policies translated into lower housing prices in certain outlying areas with cheaper land prices.⁹ Another major factor in motivating movement to the suburbs has been the movement of jobs, both skilled and entry level, away from central cities.¹⁰

The combined result of the above factors (and perhaps others)¹¹ has been a decided population shift away from urban centers. For example, while Asian populations grew in all counties in the San Francisco Bay Area, the fastest growth rates were

in Santa Clara County (in the south bay) and Contra Costa County (in the east), neither of which were population centers before. As a result of these growth rates during this past decade, the total number of Asians in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties (known collectively as the "East Bay") for the first time exceeds the total Asian population in San Francisco. Santa Clara County's Asian population is expected to exceed San Francisco's by 1995.¹² In contrast, without international migration, San Francisco would have suffered a net loss in its Asian population. Between 1980 and 1985, San Francisco suffered a net negative domestic migration of 31,000 Asians.¹³

The shift towards the suburbs may also affect the nature of commercial activity in both urban and suburban areas. With more Asian Americans living in the suburbs, particularly those who are more affluent, markets that serve them also move outward. This market shift is apparent in the expanding numbers of Asian restaurants and shops opening in upper-income areas of San Mateo County and Santa Clara County.¹⁴

Concurrently, the commercial decline in San Francisco's Chinatown over the past two years has raised questions about the viability of these historic centers, especially given the growth of new Asian oriented mini-malls and shopping districts in outlying areas.¹⁵

Suburbanized Communities

The suburbanization of communities has had at least two general features. First, as previously described, there has been a shift in population to suburban areas, both in relative and absolute terms. Although current census data was not available as of this writing, it would appear that this population shift has occurred across class and generational lines. For example, University

of California at Los Angeles Professor Don Nakanishi observed that in Southern California "the San Gabriel Valley has clearly become a port of entry for Asian immigrants as inner-city and downtown areas have traditionally been."¹⁶

A second general feature of suburbanization has been increasing economic segregation. In part this has been reflected in the migration of middle and upper-income households from urban centers, leaving an increasingly poor and elderly population in the central cities.¹⁷ The result has been the creation of what University of California at Berkeley Professor Ron Takaki has described as a "bipolar" community, or "one divided between a colonized working class, and an entrepreneurial-professional middle class."¹⁸

In addition, in the suburban context itself, economic segregation is reflected in economic distinctions between suburban cities, largely as a result of variations in housing costs. High rents and home prices are in essence the "cost of admission" into many suburban cities. For example, in Contra Costa County, median rents range from \$459 in one city to over a thousand dollars in another.¹⁹

While media accounts often describe the suburbanization of racial minorities as proof of minority ascendancy,²⁰ suburbanization may also mask abiding forms of inequality. This "underside" of suburbanization has been noted for African Americans following the 1980 Census:

Blacks have arrived much later in significant numbers and often after the communities they are entering have ceased to be 'suburban' in some of the characteristics most closely identified with the suburban ideal. These communities were not new and were not on the pe-

riphery of growth, but they were often older communities with declining housing stock, shrinking schools systems, and weakening fiscal situations.²¹

While complete 1990 Census is not yet available, existing data suggests that at least portions of the Asian American community are experiencing similar adversity in the suburban context.

For example, the City of Richmond (median home price of \$144,300, with over 40% of the residents renting)²² has an 11% Asian population of a total population of 87,425. Earlier this year, but for a last minute lawsuit by parents, the bankrupt Richmond school district was to be the first school system in the state to be closed for

In many ways, the suburbanization of Asian Americans has meant merely the suburbanization of social needs, a geographic expansion of the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate social programs and policies.

lack of funds.²³

Similarly, Asians have experienced "inner city" conditions in suburban tracts. For example, in the heart of Silicon Valley, on San Jose's east side, high rents and housing costs have forced immigrants into dilapidated and overcrowded units little different in condition from the worst urban centers.²⁴

As with African Americans, then, the growth of Asian suburban populations does not necessarily signify their integration into the suburban ideal. In many ways, the suburbanization of Asian Americans has

meant merely the suburbanization of social needs, a geographic expansion of the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate social programs and policies.

Suburban Needs

Existing services and policies, however, have not adjusted to the qualitative changes in the population. As one recent United Way study of services in Alameda County found:

Over the last decade, newly arriving immigrants and refugees have brought significant demographic changes to South and East County. Two-thirds of the county's Hispanic population and one-half of the Asian and Pacific Islander populations now live in the Eden, Tri-City, and Tri-Valley areas. Small agencies that have historically served a predominantly white population, have difficulty keeping pace with the resulting changing needs.

The study went on to note that, for example, there are no mental health services for monolingual Asians located in this sizeable region of the Bay Area.²⁵

The gap in services in suburban regions of the Bay Area is not merely a result of the sudden growth in Asian migration. The physical and political organization of suburban growth also poses barriers to advocating for and addressing the needs of Asian Americans. For example, the Bay Area encompasses nine counties and ninety-eight cities, each with their own governing bodies and programs. Laid over this divided set of authorities are hundreds of separate schools districts. With Asian com-

munities lacking vehicles for advocacy in each community, these localized social services have been especially unresponsive to the elderly and education programs.

The gap in suburban services is perhaps most obvious in the instance of the elderly. Service programs for the elderly are generally recommended to be both proximate to their target populations and culturally sensitive to those served. Absent such features, elderly participation, especially of immigrants, tends to be very low. Where appropriate programs are not accessible, elderly immigrants suffer from intense isolation and elevated mental and physical health risks.²⁶

Culturally and linguistically appropriate elder services have long been a goal of the Asian American community. In the suburban context, however, the barriers for such services are heightened by spatial deconcentration or, in some situations where ethnic elders are concentrated, a lack of existing services.²⁷ Given these conditions, suburban elders may become increasingly isolated or dependent solely on their immediate family.

Many families have adapted to these conditions by allowing elder members to reside in the urban centers where existing community based programs are located.²⁸ But there are limits to available central city housing and resources particularly given the fiscal crisis of the urban centers. Ultimately other approaches must be developed, whether they be changes in service delivery systems or methods to assist existing programs on a regional basis.²⁹

The troubled condition of many bilingual education programs presents another example of the barriers to Asian access to services and programs in the suburbs. While the entrance of minority children into suburban schools may imply better quality education, mere inclusion has not guaranteed equal educational opportu-

nities for minority children. Dispersal and deconcentration for children with special needs, including limited-English speaking students, may in fact be antithetical to quality education programs.³⁰ For example, the city of San Jose implemented a school desegregation plan under court order in 1986 which effectively ignored the needs of language minority children. Under the plan, language minority students were scattered throughout the district, leaving behind strong, well-established bilingual education programs in downtown/urban schools.³¹ San Jose implemented its program without regard to the effects of desegregation on the specific needs of various groups within the community. Because of this, schools were left struggling

to provide enough teachers and materials, [with] some parents tell[ing] of children left to fend for themselves in classrooms because no one [was] trained to help them in their own language as well as teach them English.³²

Thus, in this case, racial balance did not translate into more effective school programs and in fact may have undermined attempts to address these children's needs. In recognizing a serious problem with equating educational opportunity with racial equity, we must shift our efforts toward desegregating school funding and control, not the students. Ultimately, our focus as Asian Americans needs to be on gaining equal *access* to resources and *control* over decision making processes, and not just of integration.

Conclusion

Existing social, educational, and

legal services oriented toward Asian communities are the products of a history of community organization and mobilization. They were not established by legal fiat or academic enlightenment. Thus, in the leading case relating to bilingual education, parents in San Francisco had to wage a protracted community based battle to establish a basic program in their school district for limited English speaking students.³³ Simi-

Ultimately, our focus as Asian Americans needs to be on gaining equal access to resources and control over decision making processes, and not just of integration.

larly, existing culturally and linguistically appropriate senior programs have been located primarily in historic centers.

But political empowerment under our constitutional system is premised upon geographic concentration. The right to representation is based upon where we live.³⁴ As a consequence, a dispersed residential community assures minority status in every congressional district, city council, and school board district. This is not an absolute barrier to political empowerment, but it does call for additional strategies to compensate for the lack of an immediate electoral base.³⁵

While the virtue of spatial integration has been taken largely for granted, the "negative effects" of the dispersal of ethnic communities has similarly been assumed. It has also been a basis of public policy.³⁶ But this polarized view fails to consider the cultural, linguistic, and social resources which spatially concentrated ethnic communities, make possible. Centrally located services, cultural activities, family associa-

tions, churches, businesses, and the like offer individual residents the opportunity to participate in a community life. A sense of shared history and struggle inform and integrate these individuals into a collectivity and a common life. Our task in this coming decade is to link together our spatially dispersed communities, urban and suburban, to make such a life possible. As Maxine Hong Kingston said in *The Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book*, "Community is not built once-and-for-all; people have to imagine, practice, and recreate it."

Notes

1. From the play "I'm on a Mission from Bhudda."

2. But other "free market" forms of racial discrimination are alive and well. See e.g. Ayres, "Fair Driving: Gender and Race Discrimination in Retail Care Negotiations," 104 *Harvard Law Review* 817 (1991).

3. *Fujii v. State of California*, 38 Cal.2d 718 (1952).

4. See Connie Young Yu, "A History of San Francisco Chinatown Housing," *Amerasia Journal*, vol.8, no. 93 (1981): 101; Harry Kitano, "Housing of Japanese-Americans in the San Francisco Bay Area," in Nathan Glazer (ed.) *Studies in Housing* 178 (1960): 183-84; Carlos Bulosan, *American is in the Heart* (1946).

5. Carole Hayashino, Boku Kodama, Wes Senzaki, and Michele Wong, *The Master Plan (of San Francisco and the Bay Area)* 48 (1975); Chester Hartman, *The Transformation of San Francisco* (1984), 24-25. It was the second eviction of Japanese Americans in twenty years. Executive Order 9066 forced the first abandonment of the community in 1942.

6. See, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, 42 U.S.C. §3601-19, 3631 (federal statutes); Civil Rights Act of 1959, Cal. Civil

Code S 51 and California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Cal. Government Code SS 12900-12996, (formerly the Rumford Fair Housing Act of 1958, at Cal. Health & Safety Code SS35700-35745) (California statutes). It should be recalled that the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 came only after the assassination of Dr. King broke a legislative logjam on the question of fair housing.

7. Franklin Lam, "Suburban Residential Segregation of Chinese and Japanese Americans: 1960, 1970, and 1980," *Sociol. Soc. Rep.* 263 (July, 1986): 64. See also, Stephen Kan and William Liu, "Residential Segregation and Concentration of Asian Americans in Chicago, 1980," (paper published by Pacific/Asian American Mental Health Research Center, University of Illinois, 1983).

8. In explaining the general trend toward suburbanization a number of factors should be considered. For a discussion of the corporate and governmental role in supporting suburbanization see, Barry Checkoway, "Large Builders, Federal Housing Programs, and Postwar Suburbanization," *Critical Perspectives on Housing* (Bratt, Hartman & Meyerson eds, 1986), 119-36. For a discussion of ideological factors see, Delores Hayden, *Redefining the American Dream* (1984).

9. Richard LeGates, "Regional Housing Issues in the San Francisco Bay Area," (report to the Bay Vision 2020 Commission, 1990).

10. *Ibid.*, 21-22; John Kasarda, "Urban Change and Minority Opportunities," in *The New Urban Reality* (Peterson, ed., 1985).

11. Some commentators have noted that particular Asian nationalities have demonstrated either a higher capacity or a higher desire for integrating into the general population. For example, one Chicago study found that the Vietnamese had the highest rates of segregative residential patterns and the Filipinos the lowest. Stephen Kan and William Liu, "Residential Segregation and Concentration," 21-23. Another study of Alameda County, across the bay

from San Francisco, similarly found that Southeast Asians demonstrated the highest rates of residential clustering in a few areas while Filipinos were particularly well represented throughout the county. Mi Yeong Lee, "A Profile of Asian Americans: Changing Faces of the Asian Population in the East Bay," 11, 17 (published by East Bay Asian Development Corporation, 1989). See also, Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore* (1989), 432.

12. Some data now indicates that even Santa Clara County may be a temporary stopping point as growing numbers of Southeast Asians are moving from the county to outlying areas, particularly to the San Joaquin Valley where housing costs are significantly lower. "Flow of Southeast Asians is in Flux," *San Jose Mercury News*, 5 January 1988, 1B-2B.

13. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates by Race and Hispanic Origin for States, Metropolitan Areas, and Selected Counties: 1980-1985*, (1986). Note: the Census data presented refers to the classification of "other races" which is considered to consist almost entirely of Asians.

14. As noted by the manager for two San Mateo County restaurants, which are part of a Hong Kong-based chain, noted, "roughly 60 percent of our customers are from the suburbs." "A Rich Ethnic Mix in the Suburbs," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 May 1991, A15.

15. "San Francisco's Chinatown is Struggling to Save Its Soul," *New York Times*, 17 December 1990, 1; "San Francisco Chinatown Down On its Luck," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 16 July 1990, 1; "Gloomy Times in Chinatown," *Asian Week*, 4 January 1991, 1. While the current depressed conditions in San Francisco's Chinatown may suggest a trend, it is too early to conclude that in absolute terms the community will continue to decline. Other communities are facing similar concerns. See "Japan-town's Quiet Limbo," *San Jose Mercury News*, 18 May 1985, 1E.

16. "Anglo Enclave Becomes an Ethnic Patch-

work," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 March 91. It should also be noted that while there is some clustering of communities, the dispersal of Asians into the suburbs has been fairly generalized. As one Santa Clara county planner observed, Asians "are truly everywhere...There's no major concentration except maybe Southeast Asian refugees in San Jose and possible in Mountain View." "Dramatic Growth of Asian Population," *Asian Week*, 8 March 1991, 1-2.

17. See Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 426.; City and County of San Francisco, 1989 *Community Development Program*, 12. See also, Elana Shavit, *Housing Needs of Southeast Asian Refugees in San Francisco* (1983) (unpublished paper at Asian American Studies Library, University of California at Berkeley); Edwin Lee, "Displacement and Dislocation of Low-Income Asians From Low Cost Housing..." *A Sheltered Crisis: The State of Fair Housing in the Eighties* (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1983), 200.

18. Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore*, 425.

19. 1990 U. S. Census data. Unfortunately, the Census failed to measure rents over \$1,000 and so the median rents over that amount are unknown.

20. See "A Rich Ethnic Mix in the Suburbs," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 May 1991, A1.

21. Gary Orfield, "Minorities and Suburbanization," in Bratt, Hartman, and Meyerson (ed.) *Critical Perspective on Housing*, 224.

22. "San Francisco Led Jump in Housing Costs," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 May 1991, A1.

23. "Bailout for Richmond Schools," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 1 May 1991, A1.

24. "Landlord's Land of Plenty," *San Jose Mercury News*, 26 August 1985, 7B; "Not a Simple Majority," *San Jose Mercury News*, 17 September 1989 1A, 16A. Unfortunately, given the generally deregulated environment of the

suburban context, there are fewer protections for tenants in areas such as San Jose. Having no local experience such as struggles to save the International Hotel, suburban communities in California generally lack any controls on evictions or relocation requirements for private displacements—protections won by tenants in cities such as San Francisco.

25. United Way of the Bay Area (unpublished paper, 1990, copy in file at the Asian Law Caucus). See also "Agencies Cannot Come to the Rescue," *San Jose Mercury News*, 17 October 1989, 16A.

26. Doman Lum, "Asian-Americans and Their Aged," *Aging in Minority Groups* (McNeely & Colen, ed., 1983), 85; Hisashi Hirayama, "Group Services for the Minority Elderly," *Aging in Minority Groups* (McNeely & Colen, ed., 1983), 270; Elizabeth Gozdzak, "Older Refugees in the United States: From Dignity to Despair," (paper published by the Refugee Policy Group, Washington, D.C., 1988).

27. United Way of the Bay Area, unpublished paper, 2-3 (finding a "lack of culturally appropriate day care and support services for monolingual Latino, Asian and Southeast Asian seniors" in the southern Alameda County region).

28. Connie Young Yu, "A History of San Francisco Chinatown Housing."

29. For example, while there may not be a sufficient Chinese elder population in a given suburban community to justify a senior center or housing program targeted toward Chinese elderly, the regional demand may warrant such a project. Whether the existing funding system would recognize such need is yet another question, as discussed previously.

30. See Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved* (1987), 102.

31. "San Jose Students face lack of Bilingual Help," *San Jose Mercury News*, 14 December 1986.

32. *Ibid.*

33. L. Ling-Chi Wang, "Lau v. Nichols: History of a Struggle for Equal and Quality Education," E. Gee (ed.) *Counterpoint* (1976), 240.

34. See Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved*, 98. See also *Thornberg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30, 92 L.Ed.2d 24 (1986).

35. For example, the Coalition of Asian/Pacific Americans (CAPA) based in San Francisco was formed as a PAC to assist candidates supportive of Asian/Pacific issues (e.g. civil and immigrant rights legislation, bilingual education, etc.) and to oppose those that do not. It organized support statewide for Asian American candidates running in key local races.

36. For example, HUD's proposed regulations on the Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy classifies "concentration of racial/ethnic minorities" as a "negative effect" of local government policies. There is no similar characterization of non-minority concentrations. 56 Reg. 4487 (February 4, 1991).

Political and Cultural Diversity: America's Hope and America's Challenge

by

Irene Natividad

Irene Natividad is President of the Phillipine American Foundation. In 1985, and again in 1987, she was elected President of the National Women's Political Caucus—the first Asian American to head a national political organization. She currently runs her own consulting firm in Washington D.C. and has recently been named Director of the 1992 Global Summit of Women. This speech was given on February 19, 1991 at the ARCO Forum, John F. Kennedy School of Government, as the keynote address for Actively Working Against Racism and Ethnocentrism (AWARE) week. This event was sponsored by the Office of Race Relations and Minority Affairs, Harvard University.

The United States is now in the midst of a great wave of immigration. Since 1980, immigrants have made up one third of our nation's population growth. Were it not for the foreign newcomers, California would gain only two congressional seats, not seven. These are but two of the many indices of the growing diversity in the American population — a diversity which will bring about profound changes in American culture. We must prepare ourselves for such changes.

As many of you can see, I'm an Asian American. I would like to open a window into our awareness of cultural diversity by talking about the group of Americans to which I belong, to share with you how others see us, and how we see ourselves. In so doing, I hope to convey to you

the challenge of multicultural sensitivity that will be required of each of us in the next century.

A few years ago, there was a great deal of press attention paid to a Vietnamese girl graduating as valedictorian of her class, who only four years earlier had been one of the boat people. It seemed to me the feat was indeed remarkable, but the attention was out of proportion. I soon realized the fascination with this young woman's story had to do with the fact that for most Americans this young woman was the latest version of the American Dream.

Most Asian Americans, in fact, are viewed as Horatio Alger's stories replicated a thousandfold in miniature. We are known as the people who pull ourselves by our bootstraps. I'm referring, of course, to the

model minority image that has been heaped on us, of late, by every media outfit you can think of—"60 Minutes", *U.S. News & World Report*, *Newsweek*, *Parade Magazine*, and so on. And based on the numbers alone, it would seem as if we Asian Americans, as a group, are doing well. For instance, according to the Population Reference Bureau, the median family income for Asian Americans is \$23,000, as opposed to \$20,800 for white families. Not evident in that figure, however, is that more members of Asian American families work, thereby increasing the overall family income. It's not just the father, it's the mother, it's the uncle, it's the cousin, etcetera. Therefore, it looks like we make a lot of money from one family.

Our academic prowess has become a matter of lore. The high school and college completion rate for Asian Americans is greater than any other population group in this country. We are so overrepresented in the so-called "good schools" that informal quotas have been put into place to limit our admissions. For instance, many of you may have heard that the [former] chancellor at U.C. Berkeley acknowledged that such quotas were indeed in place, apologized for their existence, and announced plans to change that policy direction. Unsurprisingly, the unemployment rate for this highly educated, hard-working group is very low.

Now let me share with you a Gary Trudeau cartoon strip which underscores what I have just said. And this is important because I think Gary manages to catch the pulse of our general American culture. In this strip, we have two female students — one white and one Asian American. Jennifer, the white student, says "National Merit Scholar! How do you do it, Kim?"

And Kim says, "I don't know. I guess I just study."

"No way, I tried that once. You've got some edge," replies Jennifer.

"Edge? Like what, Jennifer?"

"You know. Some genetic edge. Getting good grades is a racial characteristic, isn't it? An Asian thing?"

"You won't tell everyone will you?" asked Kim.

"I knew it!" Jennifer exclaims, "You guys are some sort of super race aren't you?"

"We mean you no harm. We only seek computers for our young."

I laughed and then called Gary and said, "You know it really hits closer to home than I would like because this is indeed what people think we are—these super technicians." This cartoon and the success stories hyped in the press promote the perception that we are highly-educated, hard-working, over-achieving automatons who do not make waves. It is an image which fill me with a great deal of ambivalence. It both angers me and instills pride.

I'd be less than honest if I didn't say how proud I am when I hear that a majority of the finalists at the Westinghouse Science contest are Asian American students—year after year after year. Or, when I read in an academic journal that if America is to regain its premier position in science and engineering, it will be because of Asian Americans majoring and doing research in those very disciplines. I'd be a liar if I did not admit my wonder at how a minority group, which now only makes up 2% of the U.S. population, comprises 30% of the student body at U.C. Berkeley, and other major segments at Harvard and the other Ivies.

I am pleasantly astounded when I discover that the premier cellists and violinists of this country are Asian Americans and that, in general, Asian Americans are reshaping the culture of this country for the better—according to many—by adding a little complexity here, a little simplicity there. It does seem as if we have achieved much as a group, but I am angered because while we're carted out and shown off as models,

we are also treated differently for the way we look. The question, "Where do you come from?", will often refer to another country as opposed to another state, even if we have been here for four generations. Other people may never believe that this, too, is our country. I suspect, as well, that our uniqueness as models has more to do with our small numbers, and that should we mushroom to become a significant population group, there would be fear among many of our doing *too* well.

The model minority stereotype tends to gloss over the fact that we, too, are discriminated against. I am angered because while the *Wall Street Journal* chronicles the corporate world's efforts to tap the Asian American market because supposedly we're so rich, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reports a surge in anti-Asian racism supported by Department of Justice figures. The *Chronicle* attributes this violence against Asian Americans to our increased visibility, to an unstable economy, and a trade imbalance between the U.S. and Japan.

I am angered because the term, "Model Minority," invites resentment, not only from other minority groups, but from white Americans as well. Such stereotypes generate the kind of climate that created the Vincent Chin tragedy in Michigan, where a Chinese man was clubbed to death by unemployed auto workers who thought he was Japanese, or the recent boycotts of Korean-owned grocery stores by African Americans in New York and Washington D.C.. I am angered because this term does not include the entire truth about the Asian American experience. The high personal cost of our so-called success, for instance, or the fact that Harvard and Berkeley statistics do not include the Hmong or the Vietnamese who are having a difficult time adjusting to or simply living in the U.S.. Not all of us become valedictorians. Instead, there are far too many of us with

college degrees who will never reach the higher echelons of management in American institutions because we are perceived as technicians, not as managers, executives, or

Asian Americans have achieved excellence in academia, art, and business, but not in politics and governance. The majority of us are not even involved in the most elementary form of political involvement—voting.

administrators. Moreover, we are, for the most part, underpaid given our high educational attainment.

The stereotypes that I have described for you not only limits how other people see us, but also has great impact on public policy. Because Asian Americans are perceived as able to take care of themselves, they have to fight to be included in government programs designed for minorities, including bilingual education, business set-asides and affirmative action. In fact, in Washington D.C., there was a point where Asian Americans considered filing a suit against the local government because they were not included as a minority group.

Language does make a difference, and the blame is partially ours. Asian Americans have achieved excellence in academia, art, and business, but not in politics and governance. The majority of us are not even involved in the most elementary form of political involvement—voting. So, I run around all over the country exhorting my fellow Asian Americans to make a difference by increasing their presence in the voting booth. I tell them that if we do not vote, then we haven't earned the right to complain about the streets, about crime, about education, about discrimination against our

own people. People in my home country of the Philippines wrap their arms around ballot boxes in order to protect the right to vote, but once they get here they take that right for granted. The result is our political

Asian Americans have yet to see the direct relationship between politics and their daily lives, between the act of voting and the ability to right a wrong.

invisibility, our lack of presence in the policymaking bodies of this country.

As corny as it may sound, I personally believe that with citizenship comes responsibility. This is true for Asian Americans and white Americans. Minorities like us, whether native-born or from other countries, are citizens of the United States of America as well, and therefore, ought to have a say in the way it is run. It sounds very simple and rational, but it is difficult to actually convince people to vote. Asian Americans have yet to see the direct relationship between politics and their daily lives, between the act of voting and the ability to right a wrong.

This problem also exists for Hispanic Americans—the fastest growing minority group in this nation [sic]—for whom I have had the same message since many of them do not vote either. The actual political power of this group has yet to be felt. We have much to learn from our African American brothers and sisters who discovered long ago the power of political action, whether it is lobbying, voting, or holding elected or appointed office in order to have their concerns addressed. Civil rights have not been fully secured, but think of where minorities would be, were it not for the African American leaders of the Sixties who

broke ground and led the fight for equality.

The century of diversity is upon us: it's not around the corner. On the radio the other day, I heard that in the greater Washington metropolitan area, only 29% of the labor force is white male and native-born, the rest are women, minorities, part-time workers, or immigrants. In fact, the surge in immigration will speed up what is called the "browning of America". Would you believe that even in Indiana, a state whose population is 90% white, the population growth this year was purely attributable to the 36,000 immigrants who went there. If it were not for the 36,000 immigrants, the state of Indiana would be witnessing a loss in population. There are many who fear this change, who think "Oh, my god, more people to compete in what is already a very tight labor market, more people for whom we have to provide social services, more people than this country can withstand."

But let me remind those who may have those fears that just as the first wave of immigration at the turn of the century provided America with new talents, skills, and ideas, the current wave of immigration will also bring a new vitality. This new vitality will result in increased economic growth. Already decaying areas of major cities have been revitalized by the arrival of new residents. There are also those who believe that America's preeminent position in science and engineering will be sustained by the talents represented by this wave of newcomers.

America, as we now know it, will never be the same. But until these immigrants are successfully absorbed, their arrival will cause additional strains, especially in major cities which now face diminished resources. New York City, for instance, has 178 identifiable ethnic groups, many of whom cannot speak English and make very big demands on medical and social services. So, in the short run, there will indeed be

some problems. In addition, as they become more a part of the existing minority groups, political tensions are also bound to develop. Juan Williams in the *Washington Post* offered what I consider one of the better analyses of what this new political mosaic. According to Mr. Williams, there are four major shifts, shifts which will define the new terms of political confrontation.

First of all, because of the rapid growth of the Hispanic population, this group will become major political players for the first time. Race relations in the United States will not just be a matter between blacks and whites, but browns as well. By the end of this decade, Hispanics will be the largest minority in this nation. Second, the baby boomers will age and the over 55 population will comprise 25% of this country's population, with the ability to exert a major political influence. What is important is that the social security benefits for these baby boomers who are predominately white will be supported by a smaller group of workers who will be disproportionately Asian, Hispanic and African American.

Third, political power in congressional and presidential elections will shift to the south and the west. Hispanics will be a major segment of the population in Florida, Texas, and California. According to Mr. Williams, since Hispanics are predominantly Catholic, they will keep those states politically and culturally conservative. Lastly, the underclass of poor people in the cities, the majority of them black, will continue to grow. As other minorities, including blacks, move into middle-class neighborhoods, this underclass will become increasingly isolated. Given this scenario, no doubt increased tensions between competing interests will emerge—one minority group versus another, the rich versus the poor, the young versus the old, child care versus Medicare, the Northeast versus the Southwest. Some

of this is already beginning to happen.

On the positive side, a shrinking labor force will mean more opportunity for women and minority workers. The 1990s, in short, will offer the best chance for these groups to gain an economic foothold in this society. More blacks and other minorities will move into the middle class as well. In addition to this potential economic clout, commensurate political clout will emerge as more and more members of these groups become participants in the political arena. Sheer numbers alone will push both major parties to develop strategies to lure these constituencies in order to win.

Take, for instance, the Republican Party's latest effort to attract African American, Latino Americans and Asian Americans. The appointments of minorities to some senior level positions in the Bush Administration reflect that commitment. It is, therefore, a desire of that party which has traditionally been seen as predominantly white, conservative and representing the establishment, to somehow broaden itself for sheer survival. Unfortunately, political strategy has run counter to public policy. The President, as you know, has recently vetoed the Civil Rights Act because he disapproves of quotas. There is a sense

Sheer numbers alone will push both major parties to develop strategies to lure these constituencies in order to win.

among minority communities that perhaps his commitment is not as deep as they thought it was before.

Many of you have heard about the controversial Jesse Helms campaign ad against Harvey Gantt. A pair of white hands crumple a piece of paper, ostensibly a notice

that this person has not gotten a job. The spokesman denounces racial quotas and he links them to the other candidate, Harvey Gantt, who is black. Such Republican Party appeals to people's fears of blacks taking jobs, scholarships, or promotions away from white Americans enabled them to portray the Democratic Party as only caring for a narrower segment of people, the poor and the disadvantaged.

When asked about the issue of affirmative action, Harvey Gantt wisely responded that it is not a question of what

...until such time as we, peoples of color, have representatives in sufficient numbers to articulate our concerns, we must vote as if our lives depended on it. Because frankly, they do.

racial remedy you employ to bring equality into the work place, but whether you want America to be truly competitive in the future. If, indeed, America's future work force will be browns, blacks, and women, then it's incumbent upon our society to provide the best training and the best education for this labor pool to be most productive for our nation. This is a sound argument which I support, but it will not stop Republican Party strategists from using quotas as a tool in the upcoming presidential election.

The Democratic Party, traditionally supported by a multi-racial coalition and generally perceived to be more progressive on issues of concern to women and minorities, is not entirely blameless either. While women and minorities continue to be the most dedicated segments of this party, there is a great sense among these voters that somehow many of the issues that are most important to them are not always fully

addressed. With each presidential election, the same platform fight emerges, where we try to maintain the same statement in every election cycle. The challenge facing the Democratic Party is how to maintain its base of women and minorities, and at the same time appeal to the American middle class.

However these two parties decide to attract or retain the emerging constituencies which will determine America's future, it is still incumbent upon those very constituencies to make their own grab for power. Seats at the decision-making table are not going to be given away. Consequently, it is important for new Hispanic districts to be carved out as in Los Angeles, where Gloria Molina and Art Torres are running for supervisor. In New York's Chinatown, possible new seats will enable an Asian American to be a member of the City Council for the first time in well over a century since Asian Americans first got there.

With these new districts, of course, we have new leaders, and therein lies America's hope. No one race and no one gender has a special corner on good ideas. So, the promise of a diversified decision-making body, whether in the state legislature or in Washington D.C., may be a wealth of new expertise and hopefully new solutions to age-old problems. But until such time as we, peoples of color, have representatives in sufficient numbers to articulate our concerns, we must vote as if our lives depended on it. Because frankly, they do.

For too long, women and minorities have suffered whisker-burns from the lip service both parties have paid to the sharing of power. And it is time that we remind both the Democratic and the Republican Party that it is our votes that has loaned them this power, and that it is not an interest-free loan. The interest on our loan demands fairness and equity in every seg-

ment of our society. But to collect on that loan, we must not only march, we must not only write letters—we must vote. In other words, the responsibility is ours, to gain a political foothold in this country. And it is the responsibility of society as a whole to support our claims for equal representation because that is the premise on which this country was built.

The successful leaders of the future will not only try to manage diversity, but also to celebrate it. That is the painful challenge facing whites, Asians, blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans. The myth of the American melting pot must give way to the American tossed salad with each ingredient retaining its own integrity, while forming a delicious whole. Our hope is embedded in the first paragraph of the Constitution, and it remains our task, even today, to form that more perfect Union. It is difficult even to define that perfect Union, but surely it must be a place where women are the equals of men, where African, Hispanic, Asian and Native Americans are the equals of white Americans.

An Interview with Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien

Chancellor Chang-Lin Tien is presently Chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley, the first Asian American to preside over a major university in the United States. He is also a Martin Berlin Chair Professor and Professor of Mechanical Engineering at UC Berkeley, and serves on numerous professional executive committees and journal editorial boards. Chancellor Tien is a past Chair of the National Academy of Engineering, a past Executive Vice-Chancellor at the University of California at Irvine, and a past Vice-Chancellor of Research at UC Berkeley. Born in Wuhan, China, Chancellor Tien holds a B.S. from National Taiwan University, a master's in mechanical engineering from University of Louisville, and a Ph.D. from Princeton University.

Why did you decide to change professions, from being a professor to an administrator?

This was not a sudden decision but a gradual one. Even now I do research and still have Ph.D. students whom I supervise. I continue to edit three international journals, so it is not a total change. Over the years, I just became more involved: first as a Department Head, then a Vice-Chancellor, then an Executive Vice-Chancellor, and finally as a Chancellor. In the beginning, I was very reluctant to give up my scholarly activities or even to reduce the intensity of my scholarly pursuits. On the other hand, I also found excitement in administration. There are things you like and things you don't like, but on the balance it is very chal-

lenging. Finally, the opportunities just arose. I never applied for the positions I have held. In fact, people persuaded me to take the positions.

Do you think you bring anything unique to the position of Chancellor?

I don't think I bring anything particularly unique except in the case of my Asian-American background. I am the first Asian American chancellor of a major university, however, I am not that different from any other chancellor. I have been associated with UC Berkeley for over 30 years--I know the people, the places. I have been awarded repeatedly for distinguished teaching, research, and campus services, so it is natural for me to come to this position.

When you make decisions, with whom do you confer?

I see a lot of people. Actually, before this meeting I met with someone who is writing a book about how leaders listen. I get a lot of input from different sectors: constituents, students, faculty, and staff. I also have my immediate staff. In fact, right now they

We see more people breaking through barriers and the glass ceiling... Very soon, we will see a tremendous change in the political participation of Asian Americans.

are working with me on an urgent press release. So as we speak, all my vice-chancellors and assistant chancellors are working in the other room.

There are very few Asian American leaders and policymakers. Why do you think this is so?

There is a combination of reasons. Right now we are in the middle of rapid transformation. There are certain kinds of perceptions about Asian Americans--stereotypes as not having good management and human relations skills. Then there is also outright discrimination such as the glass ceiling. There are also legitimate reasons in terms of communication skills, certainly including myself--my first language is Chinese. Some Asian Americans are in a disadvantaged position because of this language barrier. In fact, at lunch, I was talking to someone about strengthening communication skills for people who speak English as a second language. Different cultural backgrounds and different customs also pose problems.

But as we go through these rapid changes, these factors are becoming less and less relevant. We see more people breaking through barriers and the glass ceiling and we see more Asian American role models. Very soon, we will see a tremendous change in the political participation of Asian Americans.

You mention that we are at a turning point for Asian Americans in leadership and you are one of the few on the cutting edge. What challenges have you faced being the first Asian American chancellor, an important role model for the community?

Being Asian American makes me different in many ways compared to the Caucasian male. But on balance, I don't feel disadvantaged or advantaged. I get some benefits because of my Asian American background, not to say that my cultural background helped me deal with people. But as an Asian American--as a minority--I got some intrinsic support from the minority community. To speak quite frankly, Asian Americans are viewed very highly by the majority and I think I benefitted from those perceptions. However, there are also disadvantages to being Asian American because people look at Asian Americans with certain stereotypical notions. Perhaps, when a Caucasian male makes a poor decision, it would not be questioned, but with the same decision by an Asian American, they might think that the person doesn't have good management skills because of a preconceived notion about Asian Americans. So you always carry a negative image with you because that's the real world. We live in that kind of a world. So on balance I would not say I am advantaged or disadvantaged.

What policy issue in the future do you think will be most important to the Asian American community?

Right now, looking at the overall Asian American community, we need more people in political leadership. I think we Asian Americans do extremely well in the sciences, education (especially higher education), technology, business (especially high-tech business), and the service sector. But the one area that lacks representation by Asian Americans is the political arena. If we can push more in that direction, it would change the whole political dynamic in an important way.

Interview by Chan U Lee, June 5, 1991.

Make a Difference. Subscribe.

Yes -- I Support the *Asian American Policy Review*

The *Asian American Policy Review* is published by students of the Graduate School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. The *Review* relies upon the support of individuals who share a concern for the political & social issues which affect the Asian American community. Please make a difference by supporting the *Review*.

Please send me Volume II (Spring 1991) of the *Asian American Policy Review*.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

_____ I have enclosed \$12 (individual) or \$30 (institutional) for a subscription. Please send the *Review* to the above address.

_____ I have enclosed \$12 (individual) or \$30 (institutional) for a subscription. I have already received a copy of the *Review*.

_____ I do not wish to subscribe at this time but add me to the *Review's* mailing list.

IN ADDITION, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE ASIAN AMERICAN POLICY REVIEW.

_____ Supporter (\$25)

_____ Friend (\$50)

_____ Sponsor (\$100)

_____ Benefactor (\$250)

_____ Other \$ _____

Please make checks and money orders payable to:

The Asian American Policy Review
The John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Belfer L4
79 John F. Kennedy Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

All donations provided in support of the *Review* are tax-deductible as a non-profit gift under the John F. Kennedy School of Government's I.R.S. 501(c)(3) status. Please specify intent for use by the *Review*.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Information for Contributors

The Asian American Policy Review is a non-partisan, scholarly source of information on the political, social, and economic developments affecting Asians in the United States. The *Review* publishes work from a variety of disciplines and professional perspectives, including but not limited to political science, economics, sociology, jurisprudence, history, ethnic studies, education, public policy and public administration.

The *Review* welcomes unsolicited contributions and will consider manuscripts that focus on issues of concern to Asian Americans. All editorial correspondence should be addressed to The Editors, *The Asian American Policy Review*, 79 John F. Kennedy Street, Belfer L-4, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Articles should be 20-30 pages (doubled-spaced) of original research and include analysis of policy issues or propose an original political thesis. *Commentaries* should be 5-15 pages in length and address Asian American policies and politics in an engaging and original fashion. *Book reviews*, *letters to the editors*, and *interviews* are also welcome.

To ensure manuscripts are reviewed as quickly as possible, please send (1) three copies of the submission, (2) three copies of an abstract not exceeding 250 words in length, and (3) a short biography. Footnotes and references should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style*, University of Chicago Press. All submissions should be double-spaced.

Feature Articles:

Vitus Leung and Don Mar

1990 Census Outreach to Asian and Pacific Americans in the San Francisco
Metropolitan Area

Albert Y. Muratsuchi

Voter Registration in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities:
An Agenda for the 1990s

Deeana L. Jang

Asian Immigrant Battered Women and United States Immigration Policy

Commentaries:

L. Ling-chi Wang

The Politics of Ethnic Identity and Empowerment: The Asian American
Community Since the 1960s

Juanita T. Lott

Policy Implications of Population Changes in the Asian American Community

Bill Tamayo

Broadening the "Asian Interests" in United States Immigration Policy

Gen Fujioka and Jo Ann C. Gong

The Challenges of Asian American Suburbanization

Public Address:

Irene Natividad

Political and Cultural Diversity: America's Hope and America's Challenge

Interviews:

Chang-Lin Tien

Chancellor, University of California at Berkeley