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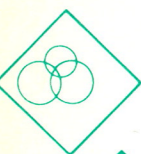
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JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WELFARE

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Number 1

SPECIAL ISSUE ON ASIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

GUEST EDITORS

PILL JAY CHO and BRIJ MOHAN

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Civil Rights and Asian Americans

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Asian American community composed of no less than 20 different ethnic groups is one of the most diverse and complex minority groups in the nation. This article examines the civil rights perspective on Asian Americans through a historical account of major Asian immigrant groups who have experienced and are confronting institutionalized discrimination and violence; and analyzes contemporary civil rights issues affecting Asian Americans in the areas of public and higher education, the work place, and voting rights.

Introduction

The question of civil rights and Asian Americans is best set in the perspective of a history of discrimination that has existed since the mid-nineteenth century, when first the Chinese, then other Asian groups were confronted with xenophobic violence and decades-long exclusion from free immigration into the U.S. More recently, Asians continue to be the victims of bigotry and violence, from the racist killing of Vincent Chin in Detroit, to the KKK harassment of Vietnamese on the Gulf Coast. Contemporary civil rights for Asian Americans also concerns the issues of barriers towards access to public and higher education, discrimination in the workplace, and voting rights.

We will examine the civil rights perspective on Asian Americans first through a historical account of how Asians were made

unwelcome, ill-treated, and kept out of the country by exclusionary immigration laws. Then we will turn to contemporary civil rights issues. The question of access to education will be examined through both: (a) consideration of primary and secondary school issues such as bilingual education and racial/ethnic violence; (b) Asian student access to higher education; and (c) the question of diversity and multiculturalism in higher education. Discrimination in the workplace will be mainly investigated through an analysis of the "glass ceiling", and Asian American voting rights will be examined through a consideration of multilingual balloting and political districting.

History

For almost a century, Asians were exposed to both public and institutional oppression and some even lynched by mob action. But they endured in the face of tremendous odds and demonstrated steadfastness in their loyalty to the United States. A brief account of the major Asian immigrant groups and their experiences is given below highlighting institutionalized discrimination and violence against Asian Americans and contemporary civil rights issues affecting them.

The Chinese

The Chinese were the first to immigrate in thousands to the U.S.A. although they were not the first Asians to enter America. Nearly 300,000 Chinese came to U.S.A. during the 19th Century. Besides, 50,000 went to work on American-owned Hawaiian plantations during the 1840s. Most Chinese, like many Europeans during that period, were sojourners who returned home. The rest who stayed in the country worked to support families left behind. The single Chinese men seldom married since laws barred them from marrying White women and the few Chinese women brought to America were mostly prostitutes. Thus Chinese in America were principally bachelors until post World War II, resulting in the scarcity of those whose descendants can be traced to more than three generations (Karnow and Yoshihara, 1992).

With the onset of the gold rush following the discovery of gold in 1848, prospectors to California from around the world

arrived in great numbers. Twenty thousand of these were the Chinese who came under the auspices of Chinese labor contractors, borrowing to pay their passage in order to seek gold in *Gam Saan* or "Gold Mountain", the Cantonese term for California. As gold extraction came to an end, they moved on to help build the Transcontinental-Central Pacific Railroad in the 1860s, over the Sierra Nevada mountains, which took a toll of more than 1,000 lives but earned them little gratitude (Karnow and Yoshihara, 1992).

Organized attempts to restrict the movement of the Chinese and their occupational pursuits led to the enactment of various laws, chiefly in California. For instance, in 1855, California passed a law requiring \$55 tax on every Chinese immigrant, and in 1858 a law was enacted to forbid Chinese from entering the state (McKenzie, 1928). These laws were ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the U.S. in 1876 [*Chy Lung vs. Freeman*, 92U.S. 275 (1875)]. Also negative stereotypes about the Chinese and their personal habits were spread in the print media. In the midst of economic depression of the 1870s, and as the Chinese strove to enter other areas of employment, national resentment of Chinese immigrants rapidly developed, led by labor and political leaders and newspapers who accused them of pushing wages down, depriving jobs away from the majority White community and for the country's economic plight. The mounting pressure against the Chinese led to the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The legislation suspended the immigration of all Chinese laborers for 10 years and denied them the right to apply for citizenship following the effective date of the Act. A subsequent 1888 amendment exempted the application of exclusion clause to Chinese officials, merchants, students, teachers, and tourists. Though there was expression of serious concern over the harshness of continuing exclusion, the Chinese Exclusion Act was extended for ten (10) years in 1892, for two (2) years in 1902 and indefinitely in 1904 (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1980). President Theodore Roosevelt fully endorsed the Chinese Exclusion Act and its amendments, stating that the Chinese laborer must be barred from the country permanently (Roosevelt, 1905).

The Japanese

The Japanese started arriving in the late 1890s and experienced discrimination, prejudice, and hostility soon after their arrival. They were accused of taking away jobs from U.S. citizens and working for low wages as domestic and factory workers. Most of the leaders of the anti-Japanese movement were also actively involved in the Chinese exclusion movement and used similar criticisms of Japanese immigrants. Resentment against the Japanese increased in great force and pressure mounted for a national policy to restrict Japanese immigration. In lieu of enacting restrictive legislation, the U.S. and Japan concluded the Gentleman's Agreement of 1907, whereby Japan agreed not to issue passports to laborers except for those previously residing in the U.S. or to wives or children under 21 years of age of these workers. With the admission of female immigrants, the agreement enabled the formation of families in the U.S. and thereby contributing to increasing the number of Japanese persons. The subsequent passage of the 1917 Immigration Act and The 1924 National Origins Act virtually stopped immigration of Japanese as well as others from Asia. By the time of the second World War, persons of Asian descent living in the U.S. were either born or had been residing in the U.S. for many years. Yet, they were subject to suspicion, mistrust and for the Japanese loss of freedom (Daniels, 1971).

With the U.S. declaration of war against Japan, following its attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbour, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 which authorized the War Department and designated military commands to prescribe military areas from which any or all persons may be excluded and to provide the excluded persons transportation, food, shelter and other accommodations. This resulted in the removal of approximately 90% of Japanese-Americans from the West Coast to relocation camps in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming. Though the U.S. government asserted that the relocation camps were humane and utilized for the purpose of national security, the Japanese internees considered the relocation camps to be concentration camps (Kitano, 1971). The relocated internees were forced to sell their property and businesses

at rock-bottom prices. It was obvious that the implementation of the Executive Order 9066 was based on race, as the German and Italian-Americans, whose countries of origin were fighting the United States, viz. Germany and Italy did not receive like treatment (Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, 1982).

The question of the dispersal of the internees after the camps closed received wide attention leading to President Franklin Roosevelt's memo of June, 1944 to the Secretary of the Interior urging a gradual dispersal of internees to the various parts of the country. The War Relocation Authority focused on resettling Japanese-Americans in the Midwest and East, but many of the detainees returned to the West Coast.

The losses incurred by the Japanese-Americans including personal wealth and properties were estimated to be between \$185 million and \$400 million. In 1948 Congress passed the Japanese-American Evacuation claims Act that prescribed a maximum of \$2,500 to be paid to an individual Japanese detainee as compensation for the damage suffered as a result of evacuation or exclusion. Seventeen (17) years elapsed before the federal government completed the processing and payment of all claims for damages which amounted to \$38 million of the total claim of \$131 million based on 1942 dollar value without interest.

In 1980 Congress established the Wartime Relocation and Internment Commission to examine the facts related to the detention of American citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry and to recommend appropriate remedies. The Commission noted that the Japanese-Americans suffered the injury of unjustified stigma that marked the excluded and observed that no amount of money can adequately compensate the excluded people for their losses and sufferings. In 1983 the Commission recommended that the federal government *inter alia* offer an official apology and pardon for persons committed of violating the Executive Order 9066 and establish a \$1.5 billion fund, for reparations and educational purposes, from which a per capita payment of \$20,000 for each of the approximately 60,000 survivors would be made.

The 1940s conviction of three Japanese-Americans, Fred Korematsu, Minoru Yasui, and Gordon Hirabayoshi during World

War II for the violation of military orders restricting the movement of Japanese-Americans and the subsequent erasure of their conviction in 1980s arising out of their petitions for writ of error *Coram Nobis* to correct errors of fundamental injustice, were landmark cases in the struggle for Asian American civil rights. The process engaged in winning the cases highlighted the imperative need for oppressed groups to fight for civil rights and not rely upon the government to provide or protect civil rights, especially in times of crisis and to engage in coalition with allied groups to help enforcement of civil rights and assume a reciprocal obligation (Minami, 1989).

Filipinos and Koreans

The Filipinos and Koreans came to the U.S. later and in smaller numbers than the Chinese and Japanese. Most Filipinos who came to the U.S. before the 1920s were students, domestics, and unskilled laborers. They were exempted from the exclusionary provisions of the 1917 Immigration Act and The 1924 National Origins Act as the Philippine Islands were at the time a territory of the United States. This exemption enabled Filipinos to immigrate to the United States freely, most of them working on sugar plantations in Hawaii, and about 6,000 Filipinos living in the continental U.S. (Knoll, 1982).

After the passage of The National Origins Act in 1924, there was pressure to recruit Filipinos as laborers on the West Coast, and about 24,000 Filipinos came to California. As their numbers increased, anti-Filipino sentiment gathered momentum and race riots broke out between Filipinos and Whites in 1929 and 1930 (Kitano, 1980). In 1934 U.S. Congress passed legislation postponing independence to the Philippines and imposed an immediate annual immigration quota of 50 persons per year (U.S. 48 Stat. 456, 1934). The Act was passed on the basis of U.S. perception that Filipinos represented "yet another Asian horde" migrating to the U.S.

Korean immigration to the U.S. commenced in the early 20th Century and was limited chiefly to Hawaii, similar to that of Filipinos. Approximately 7,000 Koreans migrated to Hawaii between 1903 and 1905 due to political chaos and poverty in Korea, seeking better working and living conditions in the U.S. Later

approximately 1,000 Koreans moved to California in 1905. In that year the Korean government banned all immigration after learning of miserable living and working conditions in other countries and under pressure from Japan which then occupied Korea. This ban virtually resulted in the stopping of Korean immigration to the U.S. until later years (Choy, 1979).

Naturalization and Immigration Laws

The discriminatory immigration laws were slowly chipped away by the U.S. Congress starting in 1943 when the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed, setting an annual quota of 105 Chinese immigrants to the United States according to the provisions of The National Origins Act. The Act also allowed Chinese immigrants to become naturalized citizens. In 1952 the McCarran-Walter Act, the Immigration and Nationality Act superseded all previous laws and unified them under a single piece of legislation establishing three principles for immigration policy viz. (1) the reunification of families; (2) the protection of domestic labor force; and (3) the immigration of persons with needed skills. This Act permitted the naturalized citizenship of any person regardless of race, thus enabling immigrants from Japan, Korea and other parts of Asia eligible for citizenship for the first time (U.S. 66 Stat. 163, Section 311, 1952). It also repealed the outright exclusion of immigrants from Asia although the national origins system continued to discriminate against these groups. This system provided that the number of immigrants from a particular country could not exceed a certain percentage of persons from the country already living in the United States. Because of early exclusion of Asians, the national origins system continued to discriminate against Asians who wished to immigrate to the U.S. For example, only 105 Chinese, 185 Japanese and 100 Koreans were allowed to immigrate each year (U.S. Congress, H.R. Committee on the Judiciary, 82nd Congress, 1952). One of the most oppressive aspects of the bill as it related to Asians was the requirement that a person who was at least one-half Asian, regardless of the place of birth, be counted against the quota of the Asian country, although such a requirement did not apply to immigrants from other countries or of other geographic origins (U.S. 66 Stat. 163, Section 202, 1952).

In 1965 the Congress amended The 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act abolishing the national origins system setting an annual quota of 170,000 immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere, with no more than 20,000 from any one country (Public Law No. 89-236, 1965).

The 1965 Act based immigration on a "first come, first admitted" basis without regard to country of origin, subject only to overall limits in seven broad categories of preference, based primarily on relationship to citizens or permanent resident aliens in the U.S. or on potential contributions of applicants to American society.

Between 1966 and 1983 a million and a half people immigrated from China, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and the Philippine Islands as a result of the abolition of the national origins system and the establishment of higher quotas of immigrants from Asia.

The 1965 amendments allowed for the conditional entry of 10,200 refugees per year under the seventh preference category. In 1975, however, it was evident greater numbers of Indochinese, with the defeat of South Vietnam, would need asylum in other countries. During 1975 itself, 130,000 Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodians came to the United States. Responding to the continued arrival of refugees from Indochina, the Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980 which "provided a permanent and systematic procedure for the admission to the country of refugees of special humanitarian concern to the U.S. and to provide comprehensive and uniform provisions for effective resettlement and absorption of those refugees who are admitted" (Public Law No. 96-212). The Act established the maximum number of refugees at 50,000 for each fiscal year, unless the President notifies the Congress that additional refugees should be admitted for humanitarian reasons. During fiscal year 1992, nearly 51,913 persons from Vietnam and Laos had been admitted under the provisions of the Refugee Act.

Contemporary Civil Rights Issues and Asian-Americans

Asian Americans are an extremely diverse segment of the minority U.S. population. There are variations within each major ethnic group, viz. Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean and Indian in terms of socioeconomic class, number of generations in this country, as well as the degree of assimilation and acculturation.

The ethnic and cultural distinctiveness of the diverse groups has aided to preserve our indigenous strengths. The dominant society, however, has blanketed Asian Americans as one monolithic group, for administrative purposes and for distribution of benefits and services. Affirmative Action programs, for example, count Asians and Pacific Islanders in one category. It is imperative that we draw attention to the diversity among Asian Americans and identify culturally sensitive services that are necessary within our ethnic communities. In this country, we have been victimized by the social system and this has brought us together. While on the one hand, we appreciate our diversity, on the other, we recognize that united we can be enabled to influence policy impact on our communities.

The general perception of the dominant community is that we are foreign due to our racial distinctiveness, regardless of how long or how many generations we have lived in this country. As the dominant society feels insecure and anxious about its standing in the global arena, it is ready to scapegoat groups that are foreign in times of economic and political uncertainty.

Asian Americans still face extensive prejudice, discrimination, and denials of equal opportunity, contrary to the popular perception that they have overcome discriminatory barriers. Additionally, many Asian Americans, particularly those who are immigrants and Southeast Asian refugees are deprived of equal access to public services, including police protection, education, healthcare and the judicial system (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

Various factors affect the civil rights problems, currently facing Asian Americans. Chief among them, are the general public stereotypes of the Asian Americans that foster prejudice against them and deprive them of their individuality and humanity. The "model minority" stereotype that portrays Asian Americans as an exceptionally successful minority group has led federal, state, and local agencies to overlook and sometimes ignore the problems encountered by Asian Americans and has often caused resentment of Asian Americans in the external communities. The cultural and language barriers of many immigrant Asian Americans prevent them from gaining equal access to public services and from participating fully in the political process. The governments

at the local, national, and state levels and public school system have failed to meet the needs of immigrant Asian Americans such as the provision of interpretive services to help the immigrants with limited English language proficiency in their dealings with public and private service agencies and culturally appropriate healthcare, and bilingual/English as a second language education. Another equally important factor contributing to the Asian American civil rights problems is a lack of political representation and know-how to use the political process effectively, in addition to the fact they are ineligible to vote until they become citizens. As the Asian Americans do not yet wield sufficient political clout, the needs and concerns of Asian Americans fail to receive active consideration on the policy agenda of the nation.

The bigotry and violence against Asian Americans continues to be a serious national problem. The incidents of hate crimes include the cruel ethno-violent murders of Vincent Chin, Jim Loo, Navroze Mody and Hung Truong, the recent massacre of Southeast Asian school children in Sacramento, California, assaults on Asian American homes and places of worship; racially motivated boycotts against Asian-owned businesses, racial harassment of Asian Americans on college campuses, etc. (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1986).

Racial prejudice; misplaced anger caused by economic competition or war with Asian countries; resentment of the real or perceived success of Asian Americans; and a lack of understanding of the histories, customs, and religions of Asian Americans have played a major role in precipitating incidents of bigotry and violence. The media have contributed to prejudice by promoting especially the model minority stereotype, by sometimes highlighting the criminal activities of Asian gangs, and by failing to furnish the in-depth and balanced coverage that would help the public to understand the ethnically diverse Asian American population. Further, the media give little attention to hate crimes against Asian Americans, thereby impeding the formation of a national sense of outrage about bigotry and violence against Asian Americans, an essential ingredient for positive social change. Educational institutions contribute to the problem by not teaching students about multiculturalism and the histories, cultures, and contributions of Asian Americans. Political leaders contribute to

the problem when they severely attack Japan as the cause of U.S. economic difficulties. More important, government and political leaders have yet to assign a national priority to prevent and condemn violent crimes and prejudice against Asian Americans (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

Civil Rights and Education

In examining the civil rights issues affecting Asian Americans in the educational arena, it is useful to distinguish between primary/secondary education and higher education policy. In the public school arena, the main issues have been matters of legal protection for limited-English proficient (LEP) students and interethnic tension among students. In higher education, the growth of Asian American Studies programs, university-wide curricular reform, faculty diversity, and admissions policy towards Asian American applicants are the major concerns. In the workplace, the "glass ceiling," which hampers the ability of Asian Americans to progress into executive and managerial positions in the labor market, is the main issue. Finally, in the area of voting rights, multilingual balloting, jurisdictional reapportionment, and Asian American political representation are the leading issues.

Bilingual Education

The civil rights issue confronting LEP students in primary and secondary schools fundamentally relates to the question of whether special programs are necessary to provide students with equal educational opportunities. In 1970, parents of twelve Chinese American students raised a class action suit against the San Francisco Unified School District because they felt that school officials were not devoting sufficient attention to the special needs of their LEP children. After defeats in two lower courts, the plaintiffs won a unanimous decision in 1974 at the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Lau vs. Nichols*, it was found that the school district had violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by not taking affirmative steps to provide special English-language instruction, since "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from

any meaningful education." (Kiang and Lee, 1993; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

Funding for these special programs was available through Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1968 (otherwise known as the Bilingual Education Act), which designated government money, but did not officially mandate the creation of bilingual education programs. Many states responded to the 1974 *Lau* decision with special legislation; by 1983, twelve states had passed their own laws permitting bilingual education programs and twelve more states had laws *mandating* bilingual education (Fuchs, 1990). Some localities were still unresponsive, however, prompting continuing legal challenges by Asian American communities. In 1988, a contingent of Asian American parents represented by the Education Law Center, a public interest law firm, reached an out-of-court settlement after over two years of litigation with the Philadelphia School District, which agreed to immediately implement, under court supervision, bilingual programs for thousands of Southeast Asian LEP students. Southeast Asians joined with Hispanic plaintiffs in another successful lawsuit in 1987 in Massachusetts, against the Lowell School Committee (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

Bilingual education programs mainly serve Hispanic LEP students, but Asian immigrant children proportions (especially Southeast Asian) reach high proportions in some localities. In San Francisco public schools, for instance, Asian Pacific Americans represent 31% of the total student body. Asians comprise some 20% of students in Long Beach (where Cambodians are the majority) and Fresno, California (where Hmong are the majority). The city of Lowell, Massachusetts is the second largest (following Long Beach) Cambodian community in the country (Kiang and Lee, 1993).

Improving student performance also depends on parental involvement, but the participation of many Asian American parents is also complicated by limited-English proficiency. School boards may assist in this effort through culturally-sensitive outreach and parent/school partnerships, but parent empowerment also depends upon organizing and advocacy within the Asian American community itself. This kind of empowerment is gradually being achieved nationwide as Asian Americans run for election in school districts (Kiang and Lee, 1993).

Racial Tension in Public Schools

Interethnic tension in public schools affects Asian American students in the form of anti-Asian prejudice and parody, and in the worst cases, violence. Physical harassment and assaults have been reported in New York City Schools, anti-Asian tension in the San Diego and Houston school system, and interethnic tension in the Houston school system (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

Racist killings of Asian American students include those of Vandy Phornng, a 13-year-old Cambodian boy from Lowell, Massachusetts, Thong Hy Huynh, a 17-year-old Vietnamese high school student in Davis, California. Perhaps the most horrifying killing was in January 1989 at Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California. Five Southeast Asian students were killed and 30 more wounded when Patrick Purdy fired over one hundred rounds with an automatic assault rifle into the school yard, then killed himself. An investigation by the California Attorney General found Purdy was not acting out of random violence, but in fact attacked out of a strong sense of racial resentment and hatred (Kiang and Lee, 1993).

Higher Education 1: Asian American Studies

Asian American involvement in the issue of civil rights in higher education began with the 1968 student strike at San Francisco State College (now San Francisco State University-SFSU). Asian American and Latino students formed a Third World Liberation Front to support black students, who had long sought a Black Studies Department and more minority admissions. The student strike was prompted by anti-war sentiment at the height of the Vietnam War (which was seen partially as an anti-Asian neo-imperialist intervention), and the firing of an African American English instructor, George Murray (who raised controversy because of his criticism of college policies and his membership in the Black Panther Party). The four month strike eventually led to the establishment of the nation's first School of Ethnic Studies. The success of the strike sparked similar action at the neighboring University of California, Berkeley, which now has the nation's only Ph.D. program in Ethnic Studies. Worried about similar action, the chancellor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA),

independently created research centers of Black, Chicano, Asian American, and Native American studies on his campus.

Student strikes and administrative action spread in the 1970s to other U.S. colleges and universities. Particularly dramatic was a 1971 occupation of the Asian Studies building at City College of New York (CCNY), which led to the creation of an Asian American Studies (AAS) program within Asian Studies. A sympathetic trustee initiated administrative action to set up an AAS program at Cornell University in 1987. An Asian American Research Center was created at Queens College of the City University of New York, in response to the rapid growth of Asian immigrant population in that borough.

Early AAS programs had a strong activist focus which translated into community action in neighboring low-income Asian American neighborhoods. The CCNY program received foundation grants to work with artists, historical documentation, and community health, housing and social service programs in Chinatown. Similar community orientations were strong at SFSU and UCLA. This community activism focus began to decline, however, in the 1970s for a variety of reasons, including budgetary retrenchment (especially at CCNY), ideological factionalism (especially at Berkeley) and a growing interest in improving academic recognition among AAS faculty.

In the late 1970s, however, growing enrollments of a new generation of Asian American students U.S. colleges and universities, including many of the most elite institutions, brought new momentum to the Asian American movement in higher education. As community activism has receded in emphasis and AAS programs have become more institutionalized, these students have sought to defend and promote AAS as a means of achieving *social change within the academy itself*. They continue to see AAS as a way of promoting group history and culture and strengthening identity and pride, in confronting institutional racism (Wei, 1992). New initiatives, however, include efforts towards more sophisticated linking of AAS with other Ethnic Studies departments, and linking with broader efforts at campus-wide curricular reform, chiefly through campaigning to make these new "multicultural curricula" part of the general education requirements in the college-wide core curricula. These efforts are closely connected

with faculty diversity campaigns, since promoting diversity in the core curriculum usually demands the recruitment of new ethnic faculty who have an interest in teaching these subject areas.

These new efforts at curricular reform have met with varying degrees of support and opposition at campuses around the nation. Many of the battles have taken place at the most prestigious colleges and universities, where Asian American student enrollments have continued to rise dramatically through the 1970s and 1980s. As enrollments increased, the issue of admissions policy itself emerged as perhaps the most dramatic civil rights controversy affecting Asian Americans in the 1980s.

Higher Education 2: Admissions Policy

In the mid-1980s, accusations of institutional discrimination against Asian Americans in higher education admissions policy were raised at some of the most elite universities in the nation, beginning at the University of California at Berkeley, and carrying on into Stanford, Harvard, Brown, Yale, and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). The common pattern detected at these institutions was that though applications from Asian American students were continuing to rise, the rate of admissions of Asian Americans had begun to fall. This was similar to the experience of Jewish Americans in the 1920s at places like Harvard, Yale, and Columbia University. Rapidly rising proportions of Jewish Americans at these schools led administrators to limit enrollments through thinly masked devices; Yale employed a system of alumni preference, Columbia used psychological testing, and Harvard implemented regional diversity quotas, since Jewish applications were predominantly from the northeast (Woo, 1993).

Charges that discriminatory quotas or "ceilings" were being placed on Asian American admissions began initially at Brown University in 1983, where the Asian American Students Association found that whereas Asian American applications had increased nearly nine-fold in the previous 8 years, admissions had only increased twofold. That same year, the East Coast Asian Student Union (ECASU) released a study which uncovered similar trends at 25 East Coast schools, and concluded that the high rejection rate of otherwise highly-qualified Asian American applicants was "the result of low personal ratings by admissions officers who

considered that Asian American students were overrepresented and presumed that they had narrow career interests and passive personality" (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992). In 1984, an examination of enrollment data at UC-Berkeley found a dramatic decrease of 21% (231 students) in the admission level of Asian Americans between 1983 and 1984 (Wei, 1992). An Asian American Task Force was quickly formed to more closely study this situation. Similar studies began at many of the nation's top colleges and universities. Universities were compelled to launch in-house investigations, state governments conducted studies, and finally federal investigations by the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education, of admissions policies at Harvard and UCLA.

National media, including the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, which had only recently been focussing their reporting on the "model minority" phenomenon of exceptional educational attainment and performance of Asian Americans, seized upon the "discriminatory quota" issue during this period. Academic and professional policy journals devoted similar attention. In 1988, neoconservative politicians entered the debate, attempting to frame the issue within a broader questioning of affirmative action policies in education and other policy arenas. Then President Reagan endorsed the efforts of Asian American students, making statements opposing the use of Asian "quotas." Asian activists, however, preferred to disassociate themselves from the neoconservative campaign. Rather than viewing the Asian American admissions problem as being the result of "reverse discrimination" caused by affirmative action, they viewed Asian ceilings as a separate phenomenon indicative of a specific climate of anti-Asian bias (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992; Woo, 1993).

Administrative response at the various schools varied dramatically. There were concessions of institutional bias by officials at Stanford and Brown, and moves to correct the problem. By contrast, bias was denied, and claims that investigations had only unearthed statistical errors and fictions at Berkeley, Harvard, and Yale. At Berkeley, the nerve center of the controversy, the Asian American Task Force and the administration finally issued a "joint statement" of mutual cooperation, after years of negotiation in

1989, but no official changes in admissions policy were ever announced. In 1990, however, the University of California Board of Regents appointed a Chinese American engineer, Chang-lin Tien to be new chancellor (Takagi, 1990). The issue of Asian American admissions remains an active policy concern at many U.S. colleges and universities into the 1990s.

Civil Rights and the Workplace

The issue of barriers against promotion into top managerial or executive positions in the workplace, the so-called "glass ceiling," is the most significant occupational issue affecting Asian Americans. Recent surveys support the contention of a "glass ceiling" for Asian Americans in the professional and managerial occupations. A 1990 survey of Fortune 500 companies found that only 0.3% of executives were Asian Americans, less than one-tenth of Asian American representation in the U.S. population as a whole. In a survey of over 300 Asian American professionals and managers in the San Francisco area, respondents identified racism, management insensitivity, corporate culture, difficulties in networking, and lack of mentors as factors limiting their upward mobility (Cabezas, *et al*, 1989). Studies in particular localities, occupations or industries have found glass ceiling barriers for Asian American engineers, in the San Francisco civil service, and in the aerospace industry (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

A "blame the victim" explanation would explain the glass ceiling as a reflection of certain aspects of Asian personality—inwardness, self-reliance, deferentiality and non-aggressiveness. These cultural explanations, however, neglect the presence of strong evidence of institutional discrimination in the form of anti-Asian prejudice and of negative stereotypes regarding Asian American personality characteristics. Civil rights organizations such as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, the Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and the U.S. Congress made the "glass ceiling" issue a priority for both study and monitoring. The glass ceiling is conceived as a barrier which affects not only Asian Americans, but women, Hispanics, African-Americans, and other minorities. Asian Americans themselves seem to have a great tolerance for

this discrimination, however, since Asian American discrimination complaints filed with federal and state enforcement agencies are barely one percent of all complaints filed, a much lower proportion than the representation of Asian Americans in the total U.S. population (Der, 1993). From this standpoint, the Asian American community itself needs to both educate and motivate its members to respond more actively to confront the glass ceiling if there is going to be any improvement.

Voting Rights

In the area of voting rights, multilingual balloting is important issue to Asian Americans, since many potential voters in this group are of limited English proficiency (LEP). Latino voters have been unproblematic beneficiaries of the Voting Rights Act amendments of 1975, which required that political districts with more than 5% language minorities provide multilingual balloting. Asian American populations sometimes fell short of the 5% cutoff, however, particularly in large cities (there were almost 100,000 Chinese Americans of voting-age in New York City in 1980, for instance, but this accounted for less than 5% of the total metropolitan population). This problem was resolved in 1992, when the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was given another 15-year extension with a new amendment which mandated bilingual balloting in districts with at least 10,000 minority LEP voters (in addition to districts that meet the 5% benchmark). The city of Los Angeles, as a result, will now provide balloting in four Asian languages (Chinese, Tagalog, Japanese and Vietnamese) as well as Spanish and English. Asian American political action organizations such as the Japanese American Citizens League, the Organization of Chinese Americans, and the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association have lobbied for bilingual ballots in alliance with Latino organizations such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF).

Political district apportionment is also another critical voting rights policy concern of Asian Americans. At issue is the precise configuration of political district boundaries. Areas of concentrated minority population are frequently split-up in separate districts. District boundaries disadvantageous to racial minorities

were historically the consequence of "gerrymandering" on the part of white political candidates who preserved their electorability by perpetuating the same political district boundaries from year to year. Voting rights act amendments in 1982, however, made it possible for minority plaintiffs to challenge any jurisdiction for engaging in electoral discrimination if election results showed that the number of minority candidates elected were not commensurate with the overall population proportions in a city, county, or larger political jurisdiction. The U.S. Justice Department became more of a jurisdictional "watchdog," employing staff to monitor redistricting plans throughout the country (Fuchs 1990).

Court decisions have bolstered the strength of minority challenges to political districting process. In 1986, the *Thornburgh v. Gingles* Supreme Court decision ruled that it was "illegal for a state or locality with racial bloc voting not to create a district in which minorities are in the majority if such a district can be created" (Wei, 1993). The legal support for reapportionment was further buoyed by *Garza vs. County of Los Angeles*, 918 F.2d 763 (oth Cir. 1990), *cert denied*, 12 L. Ed.2d 673 (1991), which found that a minority group doesn't have to constitute over 50% of a district's population to be protected by the Voting Rights Act (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

In California, an organization called the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Reapportionment cooperated with other minority advocacy groups in 1991 to advance proposals for reapportionment of political districts advantageous to the Asian electorate. A 28% Asian Pacific population percentage was achieved in Southern California state assembly district 49, in the San Gabriel Valley, which includes the cities of Monterey Park, Rosemead, San Gabriel and Alhambra. This new district had previously been split up into three districts in the 1981 redistricting (Kwoh and Hui, 1993). This district would give Monterey Park city councilperson Judy Chu a chance at election to the state legislature.

In New York City, by contrast, City Council reapportionment efforts in 1991 were complicated by conflict rather than cooperation in the Asian American community. In New York City's Chinatown, now the largest Asian residential community in the

U.S., redistricting proceedings were marred by political divisiveness between competing organizations with rival agendas. Since Chinatown's population by itself was insufficient to support a district of 140,000 voters on its own, adjoining populations had to be linked in coalition. A group called Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) proposed linking Chinatown with the affluent voters of the Wall Street/Battery Park City area. A group called Lower East Siders for a Multi-Racial District, by contrast, endorsed a district linking Chinatown with the adjoining Latino community of the Lower East Side. It was argued that Chinatown and the Latino Lower East Side were more suited because both neighborhoods had a low-income population. The AAFE district was eventually accepted, but the AAFE candidate, Margaret Chin, lost in a bitterly contested primary to a white candidate, Kathryn Freed, a Democratic party leader and a tenant lawyer. Many Chinatown voters were urged to vote for the non-Chinese candidate, Freed, who was promoted as a better advocate of low-income interests.

Another variable in the failure of New York City's Chinatown to elect an Asian American was the fact that Chinese still did not constitute a majority, despite redistricting. The Chinatown/Battery Park district was actually only 31% Asian American in voting-age population. Whites were actually in the majority, constituting a 41% proportion. Compounding this problem was additional factor of voter registration. In 1989, only 8000 Asians were registered in the entire borough of Manhattan. In Flushing, an area of Asian American population in the borough of Queens, a district was created in 1991 which included 31% Asian American, but only 6.7% of Asian Americans were registered (U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 1992). There is a similar problem in California, where Asian Americans constitute only 2% of the registered electorate, even though they comprise 10% of total state-wide population. Low registration rates are partially a reflection of the fact that many Asian immigrants are still not naturalized citizens. The Asian American population is also somewhat skewed to younger, non-voting age cohorts. In New York City, only 31% of the Asian American population were citizens of voting age in 1980.

The growing availability of multilingual balloting will certainly assist in efforts to improve registration and electoral

participation among eligible Asian American voters. A more vital challenge, perhaps, is the raising of political awareness and belief in the Asian American community at large that participation in the U.S. democratic process is both important and valuable.

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Poverty Among Asian Americans: Theories and Approaches

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Asian Americans are not immune to poverty and its consequences. This paper has reviewed several poverty-related concepts and theories and examined their relevance for understanding and dealing with poverty among Asian Americans. Social work interventions are proposed at both macro and micro levels together with the professional skills necessary for those interventions.

Even in our affluent country, poverty abounds and affects people of all races, colors and cultures. Asian Americans are no exception. They are not immune to poverty and its consequences. Asian Americans are the third largest racial and ethnic minority in the country. Despite differences in the cultures of the lands of their origin and the degree of acculturation, most Asian Americans share some common values and world views that set them apart from the majority community and rest of the population. Like other minorities, they suffer from racism and other disadvantages of being a minority. They also have an added disadvantage—that of invisibility. They have tended to struggle with their problems themselves without much help from the society at large and thereby, earned the title of “model minority”. A model minority is conceived as one that has successfully overcome its social handicaps and one that does not require special attention and aid. This makes their poverty particularly painful because no one knows it exists.

In terms of the demographics, let us see who Asian Americans are. In a recent report on the Asian and Pacific Islander Population in the United States, Bennett (1992) has compared Asian Americans with the White population. Some of the highlights of that report are:

Asian American population is younger than the White population with its median age being 30.4 years compared with 33.9 of the White population.

Among persons 25 years old and over, the percentage of Asian Americans with 4 years of high school or more is slightly higher than that for White population (82 versus 80).

The proportion (39%) of Asian Americans 25 and over who had completed 4 or more years of college is almost twice the proportion (22%) for Whites.

Despite these pluses, in 1991, (1) the labor force participation rate for Asian Americans 16 years old and over (64%) was lower than that of White population (66%); (2) the per capita income of Asian Americans (\$13,420) was lower than that of Whites (\$15,270); and (3) a larger proportion (11%) of Asian American than of White families (8%) were below poverty.

Other reports on the specific Asian American groups reveal a similar picture. For example, Gold and Kibria (1993) assessed the economic situation of Vietnamese refugees and concluded that far from a success story, the economic status of these is characterized by unstable, minimum-wage employment and welfare dependency.

How do we explain poverty among people who are eager to work, who believe in the American dream of success, wealth and happiness, and who are willing to make the needed efforts to realize that dream? We will examine the various poverty-related concepts and theorist for an understanding of poverty among Asian Americans and draw from them ideas for dealing with it.

What Is Poverty?

There is no universally accepted definition of poverty. Even defining it is difficult. Some would deny the reality of poverty and thereby avoid the task of defining it. They go to the extent of calling poverty as "a pseudo-concept, the invention of social scientists and humanitarian liberals" (Hartman, 1984, p. 3). Others take a subjective view of poverty. According the them a person is poor only if he/she feels poor. For them poverty is as much a state of mind as it is a state of one's pocketbook. "The Kentucky backwoodsman is sometimes seen not as impoverished but as

enjoying the rich benefits of a bountiful and uncluttered natural world. He is not to be pitied, but rather idealized. To lift him out of financial destitution would be to corrupt him" (Schiller, 1984, p. 10). Poverty is also a relative concept. Those considered poor at one time in a country's history may not be viewed as poor at another time. The poor in one country may not appear to be poor when compared with the poor in another land. We may say that the poor are poor in relation to the dominant, richer middle class but there is a looseness about this definition as well. The Council of Economic Advisors has defined poverty as the inability to satisfy minimum needs. The poor are those whose resources—their income from all sources, together with their asset holdings—are inadequate to meet those needs (Snedden, 1970). However, there can be divergence of views about what the minimum needs are.

Money has been used to determine the presence and extent of poverty on the assumption that most of the indices of poverty can be reduced to monetary figures. A monetary figure is used as the "cutting point," "a poverty line" for separating the poor from the non-poor. The poverty index developed by Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration in 1963 is the most widely used standard for the purpose. This index is based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's measure of the cost of temporary, low budget, nutritious diet of households of various sizes. The poverty index is this food budget multiplied by three, reflecting the fact that food typically represents one-third of a low income family's expenses. The resulting figure is the minimum income needed to buy a subsistence level of goods and services. The people whose incomes fall below the index are considered poor (Orshansky, 1965). Over the years, there has been considerable sophistication of this poverty index but it is still far from a perfect measure of poverty. This approach does help to determine who the poor are but does not go beyond that.

Segalman and Basu (1981) have talked about levels of poverty and categorized the poor into three groups—*transitional poor*, *marginal poor*, and *residual poor*. The *transitional poor* are experiencing poverty temporarily because of a brief spell of unemployment, expensive medical problem, legal litigation or some other circumstance. They climb out of poverty sooner or later and become self-sufficient. The *marginal poor* are economically marginal. They

earn just enough to meet their basic needs. A down-turn in the national employment picture or a family mishap throws them into dependency. Some climb out but others stay in poverty. Most of the "working poor" fall in this group. The *residual poor* stay in poverty and for most of them poverty is a transgenerational experience. They are governmentally supported through welfare programs such as AFDC.

What Are the Theories of Poverty?

Segalman and Basu (1981) have presented four theories of society (structural-functional [consensus] theory, exchange theory, conflict theory, and interactionist theory) and discussed how each of those theories provides a different perspective on why this society creates/tolerates poverty in the midst of plenty and how it has sought to deal with it.

The *consensual theory* views society as self-balancing, self-regulating, boundary-maintaining, and self-sufficient. It strives to maintain a homeostasis of relationships among its systems and subsystems and the individuals therein. The poor are the outsiders who are unable or unwilling to enter the system. The *exchange theory* explains society in terms of the societal components and individuals entering into and completing meaningful exchanges. Social transactions occur because each actor hopes to gain something from the other. The poor lack either the "what" and "how" of potential exchanges or tradable skills or opportunities to effect meaningful exchanges. The *conflict theory* assumes that individuals' interest can be served only by encroaching on the interests of others. Those with more power will coerce those with less power into accepting bargains that are not fair trade of goods or services. Poor are the powerless who are exploited by others. According to the *interactionist theory* the nature of the transactions between/among people is not as important as the meaning attached by them to those transactions—i.e. one's own actions as well as others'. Social organization results from behavior patterns that evolve from attempts to achieve goals perceived to be desirable. A fully functional person has "a broad spectrum of well-understood roles, role behaviors, norms, symbols, and role equipment" (Segalman & Basu, 1981, p. 43). The poor lack these

attributes. These perspectives on poverty suggest different approaches for intervention to be utilized by helpers with different identities and roles. In the words of Segalman and Basu (1981),

The consensualist policy promotes corrections, psychotherapy, and social control personnel; the exchange theory orientation, vocational rehabilitation and rehabilitative welfare workers; the conflict theorist, defenders and trainers of self-defense; and the interactionist, education to prevent confusion and misunderstanding" (p. 48).

Besides these general theories of society reflecting different perspectives on poverty, there are theories of poverty based on economic, social and cultural phenomena on the one hand and psychological attributes of the poor on the other. Therefore, according to one set of these theories, the understanding of the "why" of poverty lies in the forces—economic, social and cultural—operating outside the poor, over which they have no control. According to the other set of these theories, the explanation of poverty is to be found in the variables within and around the poor over which they may have some control. There are two extreme perspectives on the cause of poverty—the *Restricted Opportunity* and the *Flawed Character* arguments respectively. The first blames the society for the poverty of the poor and the second holds that the poor are poor because of individual defects in aspiration, ability, motivation or work ethics. There are several variations on these two themes depending on the perspective—radical, conservative and liberal—of various theorists.

The *Restricted Opportunity* is viewed as resulting from the faults in the economy. Sheldon Danziger blames the high rate of poverty today on the failure of the economy since 1973 (Pear, 1993). "No matter how poverty is measured, the decline in poverty that began in the sixties slowed and then stopped in the seventies; since 1978, the numbers below the poverty level have steadily risen" (Ehrenreich, 1986, p. 86). Labor market forces create and contribute to poverty in many ways. They determine not only the demand for labor but also the worth of human capital characteristics, the skills and abilities that individuals bring to the labor market. Hence we have people who cannot find jobs because there are none; others who suffer intermittent periods of employment and unemployment; and still others who work

full-time year around but do not earn enough to pull themselves out of poverty. These market forces are largely controlled by the few at the top into whose hands the country's wealth is concentrated. Most of the capital is owned by corporations, banks, insurance companies, and pension trusts and the nature of these entities has changed over the years.

Many U.S.-owned corporations no longer are U.S. corporations, and investment in them does not mean investment in the United States. Multinational corporations have no allegiance to any country, although they maintain bases in one, and they avoid paying taxes to the United States or reinvesting in their U.S.-based factories to increase jobs. As American jobs are lost, so is purchasing power, pushing the economy downward (Day, 1989, p. 230).

Moreover, the various statuses of the poor—as being out of the labor force, unemployed, or underemployed—are dependent on the forces of aggregate demand which emanate from the decisions made regarding the utilization of the society's economic resources.

Fiscal and monetary policies largely determine the number of available jobs. Because these policies are the outcome of conscious activity on the part of a federal administration and not autonomously formulated by an invisible hand, we may say that the level of unemployment is part of society's matrix of goals (Schiller, 1984, p. 57).

Who determines society's goals? The search for the answer to this question points to another theory, the elite theory, which can thus be treated as another theory of poverty.

The *elite theory* states that (1) American society is divided into two groups: the few who rule and the many who are ruled; (2) elites are disproportionately drawn from upper socioeconomic groups, are better educated and with better skills of communication, and are primarily WASP males; (3) new members are accepted into the inner circle only if they have the "right" characteristics and accept the basic legitimacy of the elite rule; (4) elites share a consensus about certain rules of the game, the key rule being that the elite system is legitimate and must be maintained; (5) public policy, the decisions made by elites in the form of legislation, most usually reflects the values of elites and not the demands of the public, and changes in public policies reflect changes in

elite values more often than citizen wishes; and (6) public is largely apathetic, ill-informed and passive. Elites control public information and democratic symbols and can generally manipulate nonelites to accept their policies and prerogatives (Dye & Pickering, 1978). Our political leaders generally do not come from the poor or the blue collar or even the low-income white collar groups. Power, thus, is in the hands of the people who are not accountable to the poor and who consider programs for assisting the poor as destroyers of incentives for work and economic self-sufficiency. These political realities also contribute substantially to poverty.

The *Flawed Character* argument pervades the various *cultural* and *racial theories of poverty*. These theories hold that the poor are poor because of their cultural and/or racial inferiority. They have patterns of behavior and values characteristically different from those of the dominant society. These patterns of behavior and values are believed to be transmitted intergenerationally through socialization and become determinants of the poverty of the poor (Waxman, 1983). This *culture of poverty* is marked by a lack of aspirations and motivation to get ahead with the result that the poor have nothing or little human capital to bring to the labor market. The culture-of-poverty poor may not be "psychologically geared to take full advantage of changing conditions or increased opportunities which may occur in their lifetime" (Oscar Lewis as quoted by Waxman, 1983). The Flawed Character argument not only explains poverty but also justifies the privileges of the non-poor.

Theories explaining poverty in terms of the deficiencies of the poor are based on the prejudices of the non-poor against the poor. A less prejudiced view is provided by the Situational perspective which holds that the poor behave differently not because they possess their own unique value system but because they have internalized the dominant societal values but do not have the opportunity to realize these through socially sanctioned avenues.

Waxman (1983) has examined *poverty as a stigma* and says that the situation of the poor is determined not only by societal conditions and opportunities but "also by the interpretations given to them by both the poor and non-poor, and this is inexorably linked with the stigma of poverty" (Waxman, 1983, p. 100). This stigma

attributes to the poor a status of being "less than human." The stigma of poverty, he claims, explains what the culturists and the situationalists have not considered, the possibility that the stigma results in the isolation of the poor from the material as well as cultural provisions of the society. As a result of the stigmatization and isolation of the poor, "there is a somewhat less than successful internalization of any cultural system" (Waxman, 1983, p. 98).

Racial discrimination in the labor market is another element of the economic reality. Minority workers are denied entrance or full use of their productive abilities with the result that their earnings are low and they are heavily represented in the ranks of the poor. Past and present discrimination results in occupational, employment and wage disparities all of which lead to disparities in earnings (Schiller, 1984). Discrimination in the labor market takes many forms. Some employers willfully exclude minority workers, others rely on recruitment procedures that result in their exclusion, still others do not hire them because of the doubts about their capabilities, notions of what kind of work is "proper" for them, and the fear of employee and community disapproval. "The cumulative impact of these practices is evident: Members of minority or poor populations end up working less often, for fewer hours, at less attractive jobs—and, ultimately, for less income" (Schiller, 1984, p. 162).

Of all these theories of poverty, most Americans tend to believe the ones that hold the poor responsible for their poverty. According to Rodgers (1979),

Rather than accept the fact that poverty in this country results primarily from racism, sexism, and a scarcity of genuine opportunity, many attempt to delude and comfort themselves with the belief that the poor are the victims of their own weaknesses. Elaborate myths about the poor are perpetuated by the mass media, written into textbooks, and transmitted from one generation to the next" (p. 209).

These observations have a lot of validity even today.

Like every other social problem, poverty is too complex a phenomenon to be adequately explained by any one theory. Nevertheless, despite providing a limited and biased view of the reality, every theory has an element of truth in it. Hence, ideas must be

drawn from all of these theories for effective strategies to deal with the problem.

Theories of Poverty and Poverty Among Asian Americans

Looking at the poor Asian Americans by the level of poverty classification, it appears that most of them fall in the transitional group and the others in the marginal group. They do not share most of the attributes of the residual or chronic poor. This does not make their suffering any less real but does provide even to the marginal poor among them a brighter ray of hope. "It is with such families that a continued period of employment, a rising level of expectations, and a willingness to invest in themselves and their children's education, will help them into secure self-sufficiency" (Segalman & Basu, 1981, p. 11).

Economic theories of poverty have as much relevance to the situation of the Asian American poor as it does to that of all other poor in the country. These suggest that the economy needs to improve and job opportunities at all levels need to be created and expanded so that there is a demand for workers with all kinds of skills.

The *elite theory* points out the preeminence of elites in the society and the need for educating and influencing them in the fight against poverty.

The theories of poverty based on cultural and racial phenomena seem more powerful in explaining the plight of the Asian American poor. They are among the last to be hired and first to be fired; they are often employed in positions where their educational and experiential assets are ignored or devalued; their lack of language facility (in case of first generation immigrants) is generalized to all dimensions of their ability; and the stereotypical view of the poor is imposed on them with the result that negative qualities are attributed to them and then those negative attributes are used to treat them negatively. These theories are based on the prejudices of the non-poor against the poor. The solution lies in efforts directed at changing attitudes and attitudes-dictated environments, and letting the larger society know the costs of discrimination.

Some of the *culture of poverty* explanations also yield ideas that have relevance to the situation of the Asian American poor

as well. Distrust of authority, resignation to the existing situation as fated, tendency for submission, little access to sources of information, lack of verbal facility, and political invisibility are some the factors that contribute to the poverty of Asian Americans. The elimination or modification of these factors must be built into the approaches for intervention with them.

Approaches to Poverty Among Asian Americans

Since poverty is a multi-causal phenomenon, it requires a multi-pronged approach involving both macro and micro interventions. Social workers and social service agencies concerned about the poor Asian Americans should have a dual focus addressing the basic causes of poverty as well as the needs of its victims, and build into their interventions insights provided by the theories of poverty discussed above. As a macro issue, poverty in the United States reflects the political priorities of the county, the biases and deficiencies of its political and economic systems, and the extent to which the elites have become the victims of their own efforts to miseducate the public about economic and political realities (Rodgers, 1979). At the macro level, therefore, social work intervention must be multi-fold with its thrust on influencing the elites and educating the general public for economic and social changes. Important issues and strategies can include the following.

1. In view of the global nature of the American economy and its need for repair, social workers should start thinking globally and shift to what Day (1989) calls "an activist mode that is attuned to social action and social change" (p. 232). They should add their voice to the demand for strengthening the economy of the country through the creation of jobs both in the public and private sectors. Unemployment and underemployment are not only unessential to a healthy economy but quite dysfunctional (Rodgers, 1979). Day (1989) has suggested a number of approaches to limiting the baneful activities of multinational corporations such as (1) reducing capital allowances allowed to corporations, (2) taxing all corporations more equitably, (3) ensuring that prices are not raised to pass costs on to consumers, (4) making the corporations that move out compensate the nation for the cost of their departure, and (5) treating them as if they were nation-states. These approaches

are not likely to be adopted unless the elite change their attitudes and/or are compelled to do so.

2. Social workers should become active contributors to the efforts for reforming the country's welfare system. The system needs to become more efficient and responsive in terms of meeting the immediate needs of the poor, giving them aspirations beyond the here and now, and helping them get out of poverty. This should happen at all levels from national to local. After reviewing the contemporary strategies for fighting poverty, Atherton (1992) has suggested programs for improving the housing situation of the chronically poor families and the healthcare and overall conditions of the working poor. Social workers in other communities can further test the efficacy of such programs and make the lessons learned from these experiences a part of their repertoire of knowledge and skills. O'Donnell (1993) has described a program that involved clients in the problem formulation, policy and program development, and implementation of a welfare-to-work effort. Social workers with agencies exclusively or extensively serving Asian Americans can emulate and adapt such approaches.

3. Social workers should make efforts to eliminate the stigma of poverty while avoiding the "blaming" game. "(T)he poor cannot be blamed for they are the subjects of stigmatization, and the non-poor cannot be blamed for the stigmatization which has deep roots in the country's cultural history" (Waxman, 1983, p. 70). Reducing the isolation of the poor and increasing their integration into the larger society would lead to the elimination of the stigma of poverty. Social workers should work toward a culture of inclusiveness—economically and politically as well as socially. This should "involve the creation and expansion of services and income maintenance that are available to all members of the society, thus affording the non-poor a basis for identifying with and seeing self-interest in these changes" (Waxman, 1983, p. 128). Isolation along with self-centeredness and insecurity creates what Mohan (1988) calls *ethnophobia*, a kind of negative consciousness of the kind which leads to intraethnic group conflict and demoralization. In the case of Asian Americans this breaks their ethnic support system and saps its strength.

4. Social workers should work on educating the society at large about the *myths* regarding the poor and their responsibility

for their poverty, the damage that these myths are doing, and the costs of discrimination. In the words of Schiller (1984),

Where discrimination against minorities is pervasive, society as a whole loses potential human capital. The abilities and creativity of the minority communities remain underdeveloped. Hence, total output of goods and services is less than it would be in the absence of discrimination. Estimates of the size of this loss run into tens of billions of dollars a year. In addition, much of the output we do produce is directed to relatively unattractive uses such as the surveillance of homes, street, jails, and welfare case loads (p. 131).

Social workers are well suited to play leadership roles in the task of breaking these myths. They deal with the poor and get to closely observe the reality of their poverty. They can show to the larger society how poverty is the cause of many social problems by constantly feeding the media with correct and graphic facts on the lives of the poor from the data collected in the process of work with these clients. This is likely to have many other positive side-effects as well.

The benefits for clients may consist of a reduced sense of guilt, an improved self-esteem, renewed energy and even a greater consciousness about their conditions. For pressure groups functioning in the community, the information conveyed by social workers on their clients' poverty would help those groups to work more effectively in lobbying for changes in social policy (Larochelle & Campfens, 1992, p. 110).

Social workers working with Asian Americans should help in the projection of an image of Asian Americans as hardworking, honest and loyal Americans despite their non-white features and accented English. These efforts need to be directed at the larger society of today as well as of tomorrow through the media of mass communication and school systems. Efforts to help children in schools to understand racism and discrimination and their ill-effects on everyone need to be further strengthened. Teachers, administrators and counselors can be sensitized and involved as leaders in a movement toward a more humanistic society. Teaching of history can become inclusive and incorporate the contributions of minorities to the development of the country.

This is important because the standard textbooks generally either fail to mention Asian Americans or do not portray their role in American history in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

In communities with large Asian American populations, social workers can teach Asian Americans what their rights are and how the political system works; identify and educate Asian American leaders, help them organize their communities and build coalitions with others; assist Asian Americans to become politically visible and sources of influence on the elites; and involve them as advisors, consultants, and members of policy making bodies in order to make the services of human service agencies more appropriate, acceptable and effective. For meeting the needs of Asian American clients effectively, this author has elsewhere discussed organizational arrangement for a multi-purpose social service agency which is simultaneously client-concerned and community-oriented (Dhooper, 1991).

At the micro level also, social work efforts have to be manifold.

1. Social workers should help Asian American clients feel pride in their culture and its positive aspects such as the importance of the family for the individual's well-being, progress and happiness; importance of education as the passport to enlightenment and better economic status; self-control; and religious faith.

2. They should help Asian American clients acquire or regain faith in the political and legal system of the country and learn how to make the system work for oneself.

3. They should help these clients retain hope and maintain their morale despite their discouraging experiences and belief in the force of fate. "When appropriate leadership roles are denied, when responsibility is not backed by authority, when educational and experiential skills are not adequately compensated, and when there is an ever-present job insecurity, loss of morale is unavoidable" (Dhooper, 1991, p. 68).

4. They should help them reduce the sense of powerlessness by (a) teaching them language and interpersonal communication skills, (b) acquainting them with the American problem-solving skills, and (c) helping them acquire marketable skills, and (d) assisting them in expanding and strengthening their social support systems.

Social Work Skills Needed for These Interventions

Social work skills appropriate for intervention with Asian Americans are both generic and special. At the macro level, the worker should use the community organizational and group skills for educating and empowering the Asian Americans on the one hand, and lobbying and influencing those in politically and economically powerful positions on the other.

At the micro level, skills involved in culturally sensitive casework both with individuals and families would be appropriate. Models of culturally sensitive practice are appearing in the social work literature. Acknowledging one's own prejudices and biases and considering one's clients as culturally equal are necessary for this type of practice.

Social workers working with Asian Americans may find the following observations helpful in acquiring and refining other appropriate skills.

Most Asian Americans are not likely to seek social work help on their own. Those who have been here for generations are used to fend themselves, turn inward for strength and/or seek solace and support from their families, those who are new may not know of and/or feel comfortable in asking for help. For many Asian Americans new to this country social work is an alien concept. In the countries of their origin social work establishment—social workers and social service system—does not exist. Moreover, taking one's problems outside the family is a taboo. These people must be reached out to in creative ways that address both the culturally-created barriers and practical difficulties of disadvantaged individuals. In these efforts, the status and importance of the man of the household should be recognized and respected. It would be wise to acquire the appropriate outreach skills for effective work with Asian Americans. Dhooper and Tran (1987) have summarized techniques found to be effective in casework with Asian American clients.

Since powerlessness of Asian Americans is pervasive and is experienced at several levels—individual, interpersonal, organizational, institutional, and societal—both individually and collectively, their empowerment has to be the guiding principle of social work practice with Asian Americans. There are several empowerment strategies relevant for both micro and macro level

of practice. Hirayama and Cetingok (1988) have recommended the provision of four sets of resources for the empowerment of Asian Americans: (1) knowledge about where and how to secure needed basic necessities such as money, job, house, health care and education, (2) knowledge about civil, political, and legal system as well as American methods of problem solving, (3) attitudes and behavior or interpersonal skills effective in dealing with social systems and organizations, and (4) social support system within and outside one's ethnic community. Evans (1992) has included skill building, the enhancement of feelings of self-efficacy, and consciousness raising as the major processes which facilitate empowerment. Social workers should master the techniques involved in these processes. Overall, they should use their creativity in dealing with the problem of poverty among Asian Americans both at the macro and micro levels reminding themselves that creating newer roles is as much their professional responsibility as is playing the assigned roles. New roles emerge from analyzing human problems from different perspectives and broadening the scope of those analyses. Ideas discussed in this paper may help in doing so.

This paper has analyzed poverty among Asian Americans from various theoretical perspectives, proposed approaches to dealing with that poverty at both macro and micro levels, and discussed the appropriate social work skills.

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Family Functioning and Psychological Well-Being in Vietnamese Adolescents

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This paper presents an exploratory study that examines the influences of family functioning on the psychological well-being in a sample of Vietnamese adolescents. Thirty Vietnamese families from the King County area in the state of Washington participated in this study. Thirty adolescents between 13 and 19 years of age and 53 parents (27 fathers and 26 mothers) responded to self-reported questionnaires. Data analysis was conducted to provide a descriptive "picture" of family and individual characteristics associated with Vietnamese adolescents' psychological well-being. Gender differences were apparent with Vietnamese female adolescents reporting higher mean scores on depressive symptoms and lower mean scores on self-esteem. These findings are consistent with prior research on Euro-American adolescents, where females reported more depressive symptoms and lower self-esteem than did their male counterparts. Further, mean scores on adolescents' reports of problems relating to parents were higher for females than males. These adolescents reported more family cohesiveness and parental supports, particularly from their fathers. Implications for future research, practice, and policy are also discussed.

This paper presents an exploratory study that examines the influences of family functioning on the psychological well-being in a sample of Vietnamese adolescents.

Although over one million refugees have resettled in the United States from Southeast Asia since 1975, knowledge derived from empirical study regarding refugee adjustment remains

limited. More than half of those who resettled in the U.S. are children, most of whom enter this country with a history of deprivation and multiple traumas (Hunt, 1991). In general, SEA refugees who were forced to leave their home countries have experienced many changes in their personal beliefs, behaviors, and social milieu (e.g., Nguyen, 1983; Nicassio, 1983; Rumbaut, 1986). Southeast Asian (SEA) refugees experience traumatic and stressful life events in escaping from their home countries to the persistent psychological, emotional, and social strains in establishing a new life in the host country. The literature on refugee mental health documents many difficulties that SEA individuals have experienced during the refugee transition. For example, psychiatric illnesses such as depression, anxiety, psychosomatic disease, and psychosis were identified in various refugee camps in Southeast Asian (e.g., Carlin, 1977). Similar psychiatric dysfunctions were commonly seen among SEA refugees in mental health centers in the U.S. (e.g., Flaskerud & Nguyen, 1988). However, there are refugee individuals and families who face similar difficulties during the refugee transition and have managed to establish a new life in the U.S. and maintain adaptive functioning. Nonetheless, there has been little attention paid to factors that contribute to adaptive functioning among SEA refugees.

Family Influences on Adolescent Functioning

The rapid changes which normally occur in the social environment of the adolescent from early to late adolescence present a complicating factor in the study of adolescent coping behaviors. Given this changing environmental context, the way in which an adolescent copes with a particular stressor must be examined within the context of the salient social environment and the phase of psychosocial development (Compas, 1987). The family's level of functioning and organization are important elements of the social environment potentially affecting the adolescent's effort to adapt to life stressors (Felner, Aber, Primavera, & Cauce, 1985). At this developmental stage, adolescents are more vulnerable to the effects of environmental stressors because of the adolescent's dependence on the family (Swearingen & Cohen, 1985). For example, a study of adolescent adjustment reported that adolescent

perceptions of family cohesion and family stress were significantly more powerful predictors of adolescents' well-being than reported specific negative life events (Walker & Greene, 1987). Other studies have also concluded that the quality and nature of the family environmental climate (e.g., levels of cohesion, conflict, and organization) are strongly associated with the style of coping adopted by the adolescent and its effects on adjustment (e.g., D'Arcy & Siddique, 1984; Gottfried & Gottfried, 1983; Moos, 1984; Moos & Moos, 1981, 1983; Rutter, 1983).

A Model for Studying Family Functioning

The SEA family is viewed as central and critical in ensuring survival by establishing ties between the individual and the society (Rottman & Meredith, 1982). Since family life is the cornerstone of Southeast Asian cultures, Rottman and Meredith (1982) believe that an appropriate approach to the study of adjustment outcomes and the subsequent development of effective interventions must involve examination of relevant intervening variables within the broad framework of family systems. The Circumplex model, a conceptual framework for understanding family adjustment, proposed by Olson and colleagues, is predicated on two dimensions—family cohesion and family adaptability (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1983). According to this model, family cohesion is described as the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another. Family adaptability is defined as the ability of a family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress. Each dimension is characterized as a continuum of different levels of functioning. *Enmeshed* (i.e., families are overly close) and *disengaged* (i.e., not close enough) levels of functioning polarize the extremes of family cohesion; likewise, *chaos* (i.e., too much change) and *rigidity* (i.e., not enough change) characterize the extreme ranges of family adaptability. Empirical evidence suggests that functioning levels near the middle of these continuums is desirable in Euro-American families (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1983).

It is not clear how or if these patterns of family functioning are applicable to SEA families. Family cohesion may have a

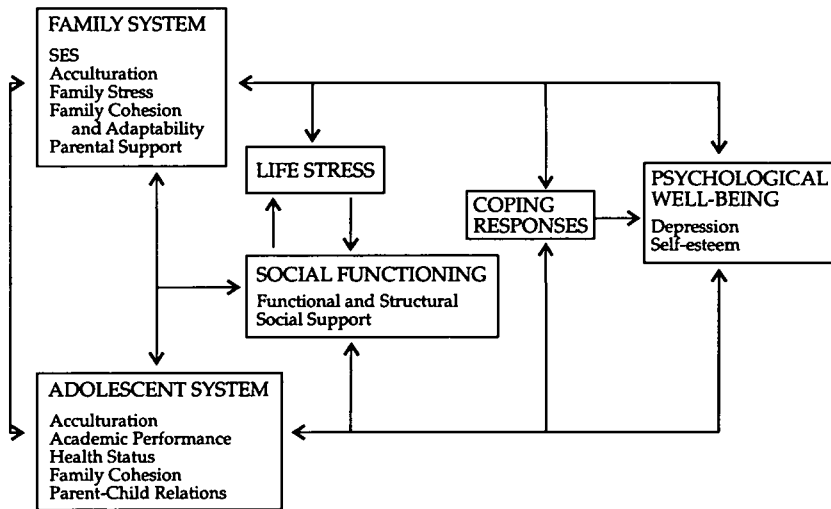
different meaning to members of a SEA family than to members of a mainstream Euro-American family. For example, a well-defined family structure with clearly prescribed roles is traditionally nurtured in a Vietnamese family, but may be seen as enmeshment by those unfamiliar with SEA cultures. However, according to the curvilinear hypothesis of the Circumplex model, "enmeshment" is hypothesized as an unfavorable condition for achieving positive family functioning. Again, a level of functioning between the extreme ranges of "disengaged" and "enmeshment" has been empirically determined as desirable in a "typical well-functioning" mainstream American family (Olson et al., 1983). Less functional families are either overly close (enmeshed) or not close enough (disengaged). For a typical Vietnamese family living in the U.S., enmeshment is likely problematic if and only if traditionally prescribed roles for its family members are subjected to differential acculturative pressures unevenly in the new society. Family tension may rise as certain family members begin to resent traditional Vietnamese rules and prescribed roles. The concept of adaptability as flexibility in adjusting to change probably has similar meaning in a typical SEA family. Again, Olson and colleagues suggest that moderation on the rigidity continuum is critical to positive functioning in a typical Euro-American family. However, a typical SEA family is socialized in the Confucian traditions that hierarchy and structure define roles for its members. Thus, the perception of rigidity or inflexibility of family rules is likely a source of tension and family conflict when members begin to question or object to the traditional roles and rules.

A Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicts a conceptualization of family influences on adolescent social functioning and psychological well-being that has influenced the formulation or design of the present study. The diagram was originally developed to illustrate theoretical linkages between family risk factors, parental attitudes, and adolescent maltreatment in the Family Interaction Project (Garbarino, Schellenbach, Sebes, & Associates, 1986). Based on this theoretical model, Vondra and Garbarino (1988) were interested in the antecedents and effects of social functioning and social network

Figure 1

A Hypothetical Model of Family Functioning and Its Influences on Southeast Asian Adolescent Social Functioning and Psychological Well-Being



characteristics among adolescents. According to Vondra and Garbarino, positive family relationships characterized by cohesion, nurturant concern, and mutual respect are likely to promote social competence in adolescents and their involvement in supportive social networks. In addition, supportive familial experiences directly affect adolescents' psychological well-being.

In Figure 1, hypothetical relationships among SEA family functioning, personal resources (i.e. acculturation, coping skills), adolescent social functioning and psychological well-being are diagrammed. According to this framework, positive functioning families may mitigate the negative impact of stressful life events, promote adaptive coping skills, and facilitate involvement in supportive social networks among Vietnamese adolescents. Consequently, positive family relations may influence in effective

social functioning and better psychological adjustment in these adolescents.

Specifically, this research attempted to identify adolescent psychosocial factors such as coping skills, cultural competencies, social support, social network structures, and family influences that may be salient among positively functioning Vietnamese families. In effect, Vietnamese families adjusting positively and coping adaptively to their refugee transition experience can serve as models of coping for dealing with difficult changes and cultural readjustment. Examination of psychosocial factors in positively functioning Vietnamese families provides information about the adaptive and moderating effects of coping processes, support systems, and interpersonal competencies on refugee transition. In turn, this information can inform social service program and policy development for Vietnamese families.

The following summarizes specific questions that were examined in this research study:

1. What are the characteristics of Vietnamese families, that are functioning positively including cohesiveness, flexibility, parental support?
2. What are the effects of adaptive family functioning on Vietnamese adolescents' experience with life stress?
3. What are the effects of adaptive family functioning on Vietnamese adolescent psychological well-being?

Method

Sampling Design

Thirty Vietnamese refugee families from the King County in the State of Washington participated in this research study. The total sample consisted of 53 parents (27 fathers and 26 mothers) and 30 adolescents (15 sons and 15 daughters). An eligible family included both parents and at least one child between 13 and 19 years of age living in the household. Two inclusion criteria chosen as indicators of positive family functioning were: (1) families that resettled in the U.S. before 1981; and (2) no member of the family was currently involved in any professional treatment services (i.e., mental health, juvenile delinquency, chemical dependency, or children's services).

Data were collected using self-report questionnaires. A nine-page self-report questionnaire was administered to all parents. Adolescents responded to a 23-page self-report questionnaire.

Measures

Family Indices

Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales III. (FACES-III; Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1983) is a 20-item paper-and-pencil scale that measures the degree of family adaptability and cohesion using a five-point response option.

Index of Family Relations (IFR). This instrument measures the degree, severity, or magnitude of problems family members have in their relationships with each other. The IFR can be used as a measure of intrafamilial stress and as a rough index of quality of family life as perceived by specific members (Hudson, 1982). The instrument contains 25 items (e.g., "I can really depend on my family") and uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "rarely or none of the time" to "most or all of the time." High total score indicates severe family distress.

Index of Parental Attitudes (IPA). This scale measures the degree of contentment a parent has in his/her relationship with his/her child (Hudson, 1982). It contains 25 items (e.g., "My family is a real source of comfort to me") and uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "rarely or none of the time" to "most or all of the time." Positive items were reverse-scored. Total high score indicates severe discontentment.

Adolescent Indices

The *Center for Epidemiologic Study—Depression Scale* (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) is a 20-item scale that measures the current level of depressive symptomatology in the general population with emphasis on the affective component of depressed mood. The response categories range from 0 (symptom lasting less than one day) to 3 (symptoms lasting five to seven days). Higher scores indicate cumulative depressive symptoms. Although the CES-D is not a diagnostic instrument, a cutoff score of 16 or above is traditionally used as measure of significant depressive symptomatology (Radloff, 1973).

Self-Esteem Measure is a seven-item scale used by Oetting and Beauvais (1984) and was adapted from the Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale. The measure has a reliability of .85 based on American Indian adolescent samples. Scale items range from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always).

Southeast Asian Adolescent Stressful Event Inventory (SAASEI-A) is a 90-item instrument composed of stressful life events derived from available inventories (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974; Zitzow, 1984). Items focus specifically on stressful life events for Southeast Asian adolescents. The stressful life events inventory intends to measure generic stressful life events (e.g., death of a parent) as well as culturally-specific stressful life events (e.g., parent still alive but currently living in home country). The response format ranges from: (0) stressful life event never happened; (1) happened but no stress now; (2) little stress; (3) some stress; and (4) a lot of stress.

Family Environment Scale. Family environments were assessed by means of a set of items derived from Lewinsohn's (1987) pilot work in which he factor-analyzed the Conflict, Cohesion, and Expressiveness subscales from the Moos Family Environment Scale (Moos, 1974), the Conflict Behavior Questionnaire (Prinz, Foster, Kent, & O'Leary, 1979), the Parent Attitude Research Instrument (Schaeffer, 1965), and the Perceived Social Support-Family (Procidano & Heller, 1983). Four factors were derived reflecting "Mother Support" (e.g., I enjoy the talks my mother and I have; 6 items); "Father Support" (e.g., My father believes in showing his love for me; 5 items); "Cohesiveness" (e.g., There is a feeling of togetherness in our family; 5 items); and "Mother Guilt" (e.g., My mother tells me of all the things she has done for me; 5 items). Cronbach's alphas for all scales in prior studies were high (.71 to .84), test-retest reliability was also high ($r = .68$ to $r = .81$), and all scales correlated in expected directions with the CES-D based on the direction of scoring (Cohesion, $r = .40$; Mother Guilt, $r = -.28$; Mother Support, $r = -.27$; Father Support, $r = -.25$).

Child's Attitude toward Mother (CAM). This instrument measures the degree of contentment a child has in his/her relationship with his/her mother (Hudson, 1982). It contains 25 items (e.g., "I get along well with my mother"). Similar to other Hudson scales,

respondents use a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from "rarely or none of the time" to "most or all of the time." Higher total score indicates serious discontentment.

Child's Attitude toward Father (CAF). This instrument measures the degree of contentment a child has in his/her relationship with his/her father (Hudson, 1982). It contains 25 items (e.g., "I feel that I can really trust my father," "My father does not understand me"). Similar to the CAM, respondents use a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from "rarely or none of the time" to "most or all of the time." Similar to CAM, high total score indicates discontentment toward father.

Results

Demographic Data

Parents reported having lived in the United States an average of 12 years. The average age was 46 years ($SD = 5.79$) with a range from 36 to 69 years. Adolescents were evenly divided between males and females with a mean age of 16 years ($SD = 1.50$; range = 13 to 19 years). Adolescents enrolled in public schools in the Seattle suburban area were mostly in the upper grade classifications of junior and senior with 18 adolescents (60%) in the twelfth grade. The mean length of time residing in the United States was 12 years ($SD = 2.28$).

Adolescent Psychological Well-being

Both the Rosenberg's self-esteem and CES-D depression scales show good internal consistency (Table 1) and are in accord with findings from other studies with adolescents (e.g., Roberts, Andrews, Lewinsohn, & Hops, 1990). Mean CES-D score for the total sample was 16.93 ($SD = 10.28$) ranging from 1 to 38. Females reported a mean of 18.60 ($SD = 10.22$), and males had a mean of 15.27 ($SD = 10.41$). The Pearson product-moment correlation between adolescent self-esteem and depressive symptoms was in the expected negative direction ($r = -.67$; $p < .01$). A higher sense of self-esteem statistically associates with fewer depressive symptoms. Correlations between self-esteem and depressive symptoms for Vietnamese male and female adolescents were $-.64$ and $-.69$, respectively (both with $p < .01$).

Table 1

Mean Self-Esteem and Depression Scores among Male and Female Vietnamese Adolescents

	Self Esteem (alpha=.90)	CES-D Scores (alpha=.90)
Total Sample		
M	26.17	16.93
SD	5.45	10.28
Female		
M	25.27	18.60
SD	5.48	10.22
Male		
M	27.07	15.27
SD	5.44	10.41

Adolescents' Perceptions of Family Cohesiveness and Parental Support

Table 2 summarizes adolescents' perceptions of relationships with their mothers and fathers, family cohesiveness, and parental supports for the total adolescent sample, and for males and females separately. *T*-test scores showed Vietnamese adolescent females perceiving more problems in relating to both mothers ($t = 2.00$, $df = 28$, $p = .055$) and fathers than males ($t = 1.78$, $df = 28$, $p = .086$). Although mean scores on problematic relationship with father reported by females and males were not significantly different, the trend is particularly notable.

The four adolescent family functioning scales (i.e., family cohesiveness, mother support, father support, and mother guilt), in Table 2, show moderate internal consistency except the mother guilt scale ($\alpha = .52$). Amount of guilt from interactions with mother, where higher scores suggest minimal guilt, is statistically significant between adolescent males and females with females reporting more guilt ($t = 2.57$, $df = 28$, $p = .016$). Other mean scores, though not statistically significant, suggest that female adolescents reported slightly more support from their mothers but less from their fathers than did the male adolescents. No

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations on Measures of Adolescent Perceptions of Family Functioning Variables by Total Sample and Gender

Variables	Total Sample	Male (n=15)	Female (n=15)	t _a	p
CAM (alpha = .91)				2.00	.055
M	20.30	15.87	24.73		
SD	12.75	12.92	11.30		
CAF (alpha = .97)				1.78	.086
M	37.37	29.67	45.07		
SD	24.54	17.46	28.55		
FESCOHES (alpha = .77)				-.23	.822
M	8.67	8.60	8.73		
SD	1.58	1.68	1.53		
MSUPPORT (alpha = .69)				-.75	.457
M	8.83	8.47	9.20		
SD	2.29	2.29	2.98		
FSUPPORT (alpha = .83)				.43	.670
M	6.93	7.13	6.73		
SD	2.50	2.39	2.69		
MGUILT (alpha = .52)				2.57	.016
M	7.03	7.73	6.33		
SD	1.63	1.49	1.50		

^a df = 28

Notation: CAM = Child's attitudes toward mother; CAF = Child's attitudes toward father; FESCOHES = FES family cohesiveness; MSUPPORT = Mother support; FSUPPORT = Father support; MGUILT = Mother guilt.

statistically significant difference in mean scores for females and males was noted for perceived family cohesiveness.

Parents' Perceptions of Family Functioning

Table 3 summarizes mean scores on perceived family functioning reported by mothers and fathers. IFR and IPA scales are

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Stressful Life Events Scales by Total Adolescent Sample and Gender

Variables	Total Sample (n=30)	Male (n=15)	Female (n=15)	t _a	p
DEATH				.00	1.000
M	2.40	2.00	2.00		
SD	.49	2.73	1.46		
ACADEMIC				1.71	.099
M	16.37	13.80	18.93		
SD	1.55	7.74	8.67		
PEER				1.97	.059
M	16.23	12.87	19.60		
SD	9.83	8.94	9.78		
FAMILY				1.24	.225
M	14.10	12.53	15.67		
SD	6.98	7.14	6.68		
LIFEFAIL				.84	.408
M	4.73	5.93	6.93		
SD	.44	2.69	3.75		
PTSD				1.10	.280
M	19.40	16.47	22.33		
SD	2.67	15.21	13.94		
ACCULTUR				1.33	.195
M	10.63	9.13	12.13		
SD	6.27	6.57	5.78		
FINANCE				.249	.805
M	4.63	4.80	4.47		
SD	3.60	2.69	2.75		

^a df = 28

Notation: DEATH = death-related stress; ACADEMIC = academic stress; PEER = peer stress; ACCULTUR = acculturative stress; PTSD = traumatic stress; FAILURE = fear of life failure; FINANCE = financial stress.

intended to measure the degree of stress and problems perceived by parents in the family and in relationship with their children, respectively. Thus, higher scores on these scales indicate higher severity of perceived family stress and problematic parent-child relationships. As seen in Table 3, fathers perceived more family stress ($t = 2.02, df = 51, p = .048$) than mothers and more problems in their relationships with their children ($t = 2.08, df = 51, p = .043$). The FACES-III subscales (Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985)—Cohesion and Change—show moderate internal consistency coefficients, .79 and .70 respectively, for these parents. Mean scores on Cohesion and Change show little difference between mothers and fathers. This pattern suggests that Vietnamese mothers and fathers in general are in accord with their perceptions of family cohesion or emotional bonding within the family, and with their perceptions of adaptability or the family's ability to adjust to change.

Adolescent Perceptions of Family Functioning, Stressful Life Events, and Depression

Problems relating to mother significantly correlate with peer and acculturative stress in the positive direction as summarized in Table 4. Problems relating to father correlate positively with academic, peer, and life failure stress. Perceived support from father shows reverse relationships with peer and life failure stress. Further, less guilt from mother correlates with less peer and acculturative stress. As a reminder, MGUILT has an unfortunate negative connotation to its label, but it depicts a positive source of support from mother. In other words, higher scores indicate lower guilt feelings in relating to mother.

As summarized in Table 5, SLE mean scores were consistently higher on all eight scales among those with CES-D scores higher than the clinical cutoff of 16. Mean scores on Peer, Family, Acculturative, and PTSD stress scales were statistically different between adolescents who reported more or fewer depressive symptoms. The mean scale differences provide support to a well-established theoretical linkage in mental health research that life stress globally relates to depression in adults and adolescents. Chronic pains as a source of stress have been known to be most predictive of negative mental health outcomes (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978).

Table 4
Intercorrelations among SLE and Adolescents' Perceived Family Cohesiveness and Parental Support Scales

	CAM	CAF	FESCOHES	MSUPPORT	FSUPPORT	MGUILT
DEATH						
ACADEMIC		.45*			-.40	-.33
PEER/SOCIAL	.51*	.55**		-.32	-.45*	-.44*
FAMILY	.36	.36			-.35	
LIFEFAIL		.53*			-.45*	-.39
PTSD	.39	.28			-.31	
ACCULTUR	.67**	.30		-.42	-.41	-.43*
FINANCE						

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$

Note: Coefficients below .30 are excluded from matrices.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations of Stressful Life Events Scales by Below and Above CESD Cutoff Scores, and Intercorrelations with Self-Esteem and Total CES-D Scores

Variables	< 16 CESD Score (n=14)	≥16 CESD Score (n=16)	t _a	p	Self- Esteem	CES-D
DEATH			1.57	.130	-.16	.42
M	1.36	2.56				
SD	1.60	2.45				
ACADEMIC			1.74	.092	-.29	.35
M	13.57	18.81				
SD	7.08	9.08				
PEER			3.93	.001	-.58**	.73**
M	10.07	21.63				
SD	6.65	9.05				
FAMILY			3.48	.002	-.51*	.64**
M	10.07	17.63				
SD	5.64	6.18				

continued

Table 5, continued

Variables	< 16 CESD Score (n=14)	≥16 CESD Score (n=16)	t _a	p	Self- Esteem	CES-D
FAILURE			1.89	.069	-.36	.37
M	5.29	7.44				
SD	3.36	2.87				
PTSD			3.28	.003	-.71**	.73**
M	11.29	26.50				
SD	10.38	14.35				
ACCULTURATION			2.16	.039	-.47*	.62**
M	8.14	12.81				
SD	4.67	6.79				
FINANCE			1.22	.234	-.42*	.42*
M	3.79	5.38				
SD	3.51	3.61				

^a df = 28

* p < .01

** p < .001

Notation: DEATH = death-related stress; ACADEMIC = academic stress; PEER = peer stress; ACCULTUR = acculturative stress;
 PTSD = traumatic stress; FAILURE = fear of life failure; FINANCE = financial stress.

Correlations among SLE scales, self-esteem, and depressive symptoms (CES-D) are also presented in Table 5. Self-esteem correlates negatively with five of the eight SLE scales. This pattern shows that Vietnamese adolescents who have a good sense of self-worth reported experiencing less stress. On the contrary, depressive symptoms correlate positively to peer, family, PTSD, acculturative, and financial stress.

No significant mean differences were found between the below and above clinical cutoff groups (i.e., 16 CES-D cutoff score) in adolescents' perceived family functioning scores. Table 6 summarizes the means on the parents' family functioning scales. For adolescents with CESD scores below and above 16, mean differences were nonsignificant. Pearson product-moment correlations were also calculated among these variables and the dependent variables. In Table 6, self-esteem correlates negatively to perceived family stress (IFR). CESD scores correlate positively to IFR and negatively to family cohesion. Thus, Vietnamese adolescent depression appears to be associated with parental reports of higher family stress and conflict, and lower levels of family cohesion.

Discussion

This exploratory study provided a glimpse of family functioning among 30 nonclinical Vietnamese families in the Pacific Northwest, and the influences of these families on adolescents' psychological well-being. Thus, the primary goal of the study is not to draw causal inferences about individual and family relationships, but rather to present a preliminary "empirical picture" of 30 positively functioning Vietnamese adolescents and their families one point in time.

There appear to be two distinctive family profiles of Vietnamese adolescents in this non-random sample of positively functioning families—one is a "supportive" family and the other is a "less-than-supportive" family. In a "supportive" family a Vietnamese adolescent is likely to have positive relationships with both mother and father, receive positive support from father, and experience minimal guilt in relating to mother. In this family, parents perceive minimal familial stress and problems relating to the adolescent child. Further, parents perceive a high degree of

Table 6

Means of Parent Perceived Family Functioning Variables by CES-D Cutoff Scores, and InterCorrelations with Self-esteem and Total CES-D Scores

Variables	< 16 CESD Scores (n=14)	≥16 CESD Scores (n=14) _a	t _b	p	Total CESD	Self- Esteem
IFR			-1.33	.196	.31*	-.38*
M	15.93	21.21				
SD	11.30	9.71				
IPA			-1.74	.094	.17	-.22
M	9.00	14.57				
SD	6.01	10.40				
COHESION			2.93	.007	-.51**	.28
M	37.79	31.20				
SD	6.14	4.71				
CHANGE			1.06	.297	.07	.05
M	21.50	21.00				
SD	4.13	7.97				

_a 2 parents had missing data

_b df = 26

* p < .05

** p < .005

Notation: IFR = Index of family relations; IPA = Index of parental attitudes toward child; COHESION = FACES-III family cohesion; CHANGE = FACES-III adaptability

cohesiveness in the family. In this "supportive" family, the adolescent is likely to have a mean CES-D (i.e., depressive symptoms) score of depressive symptoms well below the clinical cutoff of 16, high self-esteem, and infrequent experiences of stressful life events.

A "less-than-supportive" family would be characterized by excessive familial stress and problematic relationships with the adolescent child. In this family environment, parents perceive less cohesiveness in family relationships. The adolescent is likely to experience some problems relating to mother and particularly

father, little support from father, and guilt feelings relating to mother. It is also likely that the adolescent is a female with a high score on the depressive symptom scale, low self-esteem, and high mean scores on stressful life events scales.

Practice Implications

An indirect practice implication based on the findings in this exploratory study is the promotion of strengths perspective in the development of preventive interventions for Southeast Asian families. It is critically important to promote individual and family well-being at the various ecological levels as conceptualized by Bronfenbrenner (i.e., micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-level intervention). In the present study, parental pressures on Vietnamese adolescents to do well in school are a major source of stress from the point of view of the adolescents themselves. An example of a meso-level family intervention to facilitate positive school performance among adolescents is to involve SEA parents in school activities. A benefit for SEA parents to be involved in their children's school activities is an increasing appreciation for extracurricular activities that are not academically related. For example, SEA adolescents might be interested in team school activities such as sports or theater that do not necessarily interfere with their school performance. One way to facilitate more parental involvement would be to assist SEA parents to overcome factors that influence the quality of their involvement. Several factors include their literacy level (both native language and English), educational status, size of the refugee's native community, and parental perceptions of their "expected" educational involvement (Morrow, 1989). In the native countries, for example, school administrators are expected to decide all matters, from curriculum to discipline, without regard to parental concerns or desires (Chan, 1986; Tran, 1980). As a result, little or not contact with the schools is expected or practiced by most Southeast Asians in their native countries (Tran, 1982). One practice recommendation is for school social workers, administrators, staff, and teachers to innovate strategies to increase flexibility in institutional procedures, mechanisms, and programs to promote more effective involvement by Vietnamese parents in their children's schooling.

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Domestic Violence in the Korean Immigrant Family

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This study examines the prevalence of wife abuse among Korean immigrant families in the United States and factors contributing to domestic violence in this population. One of the most serious problems facing the Korean community is spouse abuse. Immigrant Korean families are reported to experience the highest rate of domestic violence among diverse Asian American groups in Los Angeles. Research findings indicate that wife abuse is much more prevalent among the immigrant Korean population in comparison to other ethnic groups. Correlates and factors contributing to the high occurrence of domestic violence include: (1) a cultural variable of higher than usual levels of male domination in Korean immigrant families; (2) environmental factors such as immigration stress and frustrations stemming from adjustment difficulties for Korean men; and (3) heavy drinking among Korean men and permissive attitudes toward male drinking in Korean culture.

Violence against women in the family has been a long-standing problem affecting all segments of the population throughout history. Although aggressive acts between intimates are relatively universal and exist across all income levels and classes of the society, the extent and frequency of violence within the family and coping strategies and attitudes toward violence may vary from one culture to another (Gelles & Cornell, 1983; Pagelow, 1984; Song, 1992; Yim, 1978).

One of the most serious and urgent problems facing the Asian communities in the United States is spouse abuse. Among diverse Asian immigrant groups, Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, and Asian Indian communities are reported to experience a serious problem of spouse battering (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992; Chin, 1994; Ho, 1990; Agtuca, 1994). However, in terms of prevalence, immigrant Korean families are recognized as having the highest rate of domestic violence among various Asian immigrant groups in Los Angeles County. According to the records of the Los Angeles County Attorneys' Office which handles domestic violence cases prosecuted in Los Angeles County each year, Korean immigrant males comprised the highest percentage of all Asian defendants accused of spouse abuse (Chun, 1990). The author's informal contact with several prosecutors of the Los Angeles City District Attorneys' Office reveals that the most severe cases in terms of physical or emotional injuries are found among Korean victims. The statistical report presented by the Korean American Family Service Center (1995) also indicates that violence against women accounts for the highest percentage (30.3%) of all cases served by the Center. Currently, Koreans represent the majority of the wife abuse victims in the Asian American Battered Women's Shelter in Los Angeles.

During the last twenty years, the problem of spouse abuse has attracted great interest in the study of sociocultural and psychological factors leading to domestic violence. The amount of family violence research and written materials has increased remarkably in the United States. However, despite the urgency and seriousness of the problem in the Korean community, there are very few studies specifically focused on this population. The overall purpose of this paper is (1) to examine the extent and severity of the problem of spouse abuse among Korean immigrant families; (2) to identify critical variables and factors contributing to wife abuse and domestic violence; and (3) to present implications for future research and social work practice.

Background

The majority of Koreans in America are foreign-born first-generation immigrants who have arrived since the 1970s. For the

past two decades, the Korean community in the United States has experienced an incredible growth in population size, mainly through the influx of the largest wave of immigrants from Korea. According to the 1990 Census data and a recent study of the post-census emigration, there are approximately one million Koreans in the United States (Bureau of the Census, 1993; Yu, 1993).

The new immigrants have settled in Metropolitan urban areas in which they develop a cohesive Korean community with a variety of business sectors and ethnic organizations including Korean grocery markets, restaurants, churches, temples, and other interest groups. Large ethnic enclaves are found in Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, Honolulu, Seattle, and Washington, DC. The 1994-95 Korean Business Directory for the Los Angeles area lists more than 420 ethnic churches conducting services in the native language, 300 Korean restaurants, 200 ethnic schools, and 315 special interest groups (Korea Times, 1994). The formal structure of the Korean community as well as the informal network among Korean immigrants provide a familiar social setting in which they meet fellow Koreans, communicate in their own language, and participate in ethnic social activities.

Koreans come to America in search of better occupational opportunities for themselves and better education for their children. Over 40 percent of Korean immigrants had received some college education before coming here as opposed to only 20 percent of all other Los Angeles County residents, and more than 70 percent of Korean immigrant males held white-collar occupations in Korea (Bureau of the Census, 1993; Yu, 1987; Hurh & Kim, 1984). Despite their high educational attainment, most of them feel that their English skills are very inadequate for their survival needs. As Finnan (1981) pointed out, foreigners from similar linguistic circles generally learn English faster than those from different linguistic backgrounds. Basically, most of the first-generation Korean immigrants are monolingual Korean speaking.

Due to language difficulties and lack of adequate job opportunities, many Korean immigrant males are confronted with a grim situation of downward occupational mobility in the labor market. It is difficult for the majority of the Korean immigrants to find jobs commensurate with their education. Only a small portion of Koreans secure the kind of employment for which they were

trained (Kim & Hurh, 1987). It is common throughout the nation that well-educated Korean immigrants work as unskilled laborers in liquor stores, grocery markets, dry cleaning businesses, and gas stations.

Many Korean immigrants start family-owned small businesses after several years of hard work. Survey studies conducted in Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago show that one out of three Korean households run their own businesses such as small groceries and liquor stores mostly in high-risk inner city neighborhoods (Hurh & Kim, 1984; Yu, 1993). Hours of work are particularly long for those in small business. Usually, husbands and wives are working together more than 12 hours a day, 7 days a week sacrificing their vacations for years for an expeditious settlement in the new environment. Extended work hours, menial employment capabilities, poor English skills, and the consequent erosion of self-esteem are closely related to a high degree of emotional difficulties and stress for many Korean couples (Nah, 1993).

Immigrant Korean Families

Traditionally, the Korean family system provided a well-defined set of marital roles in which the husband earns a living and commands his wife, while the wife is confined to a domestic role in her husband's family serving her husband, children and in-laws (Choi, 1977). Korea has maintained a patrilineal and patriarchal family system for many centuries. In contrast to women who are expected to accept the submissive role as housewives, husbands have the ultimate authority and control over all matters inside the family. The traditional family structure has been significantly weakened for the past few decades along with the rapid industrialization and the improvement of women's status in Korea. However, the basic family structure is still characterized by a tradition of male-dominance in contemporary Korea.

Upon coming to the United States, Korean immigrant families are experiencing a rapid change in their role structures. An unusually high proportion of Korean wives who carried the traditional role of homemakers in Korea have entered the labor market. Insufficient income earned by husbands makes it necessary for many women to seek employment immediately after their arrival. The

1995 Korea Central Daily poll found that more than 70 percent of the Korean married women in Los Angeles were employed, with most of them being full-time workers (Jung-Ang Il-Bo: April 27, 1995). Several researchers compared the rate of Korean working mothers with the American average, and found that the Korean wives are working at much higher rate than the national figure (Kim & Hurh, 1987; Hong 1982).

When compared with the pre-immigration period, Korean wives are becoming more influential and independent economically by participating in income generating activities with their husbands. Changes in role performance from traditional patterns to those needed for the adjustment to the new environment require an accommodation by the entire members of the family including the husband. However, there is no indication that Korean husbands have changed their traditional beliefs of rigid marital roles. They tend to adhere to a traditional definition of the female as subservient to her husband, while American society values more equality between men and women. In comparison to other ethnic communities, women experience higher than usual levels of male domination in Korean immigrant families (Bonacich et al., 1987).

Korean immigrant wives generally carry a double burden of performing overall household tasks and working outside the home. Kim and Hurh (1987) interviewed 615 Koreans (281 males and 334 females) to examine the division of household tasks among Korean immigrant families. According to their findings, the involvement of husbands in household chores was very limited regardless of the employment of wives or the presence of children. Women often work longer hours than men and, sometimes, in more adverse conditions because of their limited job skills or training opportunities. Many Korean working wives feel overburdened with the hardships of their lives and their multiple roles as wife, mother, worker and daughter-in-law. An interview with a 41-year-old Korean working wife demonstrates high levels of life stress among Korean immigrant families:

My husband is working at a liquor store, and I am running a beauty salon in Koreatown. I go to work at 8 o'clock in the morning and come home at 8:30 in the evening, Monday through Saturday. I am

on my feet all day to do my customers' hair. Sometimes, I don't even find time for a lunch break. When I come home, I usually feel exhausted and want to rest a little. But I have to go straight into the kitchen to cook because my husband complains about being hungry and there is no one else in the family to do this kind of housework. While I prepare the dinner, my husband either watches TV or reads newspaper in the living room. I have to do the dishes after dinner and spend some time to take care of my children's home work. The earliest I can get to bed is usually around 12:30 in the morning.

Domestic Violence in Korean Immigrant Families

Song (1992) conducted a community sample study with 150 Korean women who were 18 years or older and had lived in the United States less than 10 years. According to her findings, the prevalence of wife abuse among Korean immigrant families is exceptionally high. Of those interviewed, 60 percent ($n=90$) reported being battered during the entire marriage period. This figure is twice as high as those obtained from national studies (Straus et al., 1980). With regard to the frequency and intensity of violent acts, 37 percent of the battered women reported wife abuse at least once a month, and additional 24 percent reported at least once a week. Among those who were physically abused by their husbands, 70 percent suffered from bruises; 17 percent had concussions; 10 percent had damaged teeth; 9 percent experienced miscarriages, and 7 percent were hospitalized as a result of domestic violence.

According to the national study conducted by Straus and his colleagues (1980), approximately 12 percent of American wives experienced domestic violence during the previous year of the research. Recently, Shin (1995) surveyed the problem of wife abuse with a special focus on Korean immigrant males. She interviewed 99 Korean men in the Los Angeles area and found that 35 percent of the respondents in the sample admitted at least one incidence of wife abuse during the previous year. 67 percent reported to have at least one incidence of verbal aggression toward their wives during the year preceding the study. These findings indicate that wife abuse is much more prevalent in the immigrant Korean population.

The author's recent study of marital dissolution among Korean immigrants also suggests that domestic violence is more

serious in the Korean community than in other ethnic groups (Rhee, 1995). As implied in the concept of model minority, there is a general notion that Asian American families are relatively stable and immune from problems. However, surprisingly, the divorce rate for Korean immigrants is one of the highest among various ethnic groups in the United States. The author collected data from divorced immigrant Korean women in Los Angeles with a special aim to determine the leading causes for separation and divorce in this population. The most significant reasons for divorce among the immigrant Korean subjects by rank order include (1) frequent physical violence by husband; (2) husband's extramarital affairs; (3) gambling; (4) husband's heavy drinking; and (5) lack of financial support from husband. There is a clear difference in the perception of the leading causes for divorce between the Korean immigrants and the general population. The author's research findings were compared with the study results presented by Albrecht and his colleagues (1983) who surveyed 500 American divorced respondents. According to their findings, in terms of rank order, (1) infidelity, (2) loss of love, (3) emotional problems, (4) financial problems, and (5) physical abuse were the leading causes for divorce among the American respondents. Unlike the Korean immigrant group, domestic violence was identified as relatively less significant in the majority population.

Factors Contributing to Wife Abuse

An individual's tendency to use physical force against his wife is associated with a wide array of social and psychological factors (Gelles & Loseke, 1993; Straus, 1980, 1983; Pagelow, 1984). The existing theoretical approaches and empirical studies on family violence suggest that wife battering is not a series of randomly occurring private episodes. According to the feminist approach, it is rather a consequence of deeply ingrained patriarchal values and attitudes of sexual inequality and male dominance inherited from generation to generation (Martin, 1981; Dobash & Dobash, 1979). The feminist theorists emphasize that wife battering should be viewed in the historical context of the patriarchal family structure. This approach is based on the idea that violent acts within the family have been legitimized historically for control and subordination of women.

The patriarchal explanation of domestic violence can be a culturally appropriate and useful theoretical framework for the problem of wife abuse in the Korean immigrant family. As discussed previously, Korean society has a long history of male domination in which women are taught to obey their husbands and accept their submissive role as wives. As immigrant Korean women are increasingly recruited to the labor market, Korean families confront new marital roles. Korean women are no longer confined to traditional domestic duties as homemakers. Despite these changes, many immigrant Korean husbands tend to hold the traditional attitudes of strict hierarchical distinctions between man and wife. Hong (1982) surveyed the patterns of the distribution of power among Korean immigrants in Los Angeles and found that the incidence of husband dominant families far exceeds that of egalitarian families.

It is clear that the tradition of power imbalance between husbands and wives and ascribing superior position for the husband have a great potential for serious family conflict and subsequent domestic violence for many Korean immigrant families:

Throughout history Korean women have been the victims of physical and psychological abuse. Specifically, the battering of women has been justified by the conventions of Korean culture, which is deeply rooted in the philosophy of male domination. . . . Korean society has taught men not only to expect services from and to have authority over women, but also discipline their wives by any means, including violent punishment (Song, 1992: 213).

The earning power or the household workload of the Korean immigrant woman does not necessarily enhance her position nor change her traditional role in the family. The traditional Korean man simply cannot accept a role reversal in the family even though his wife has become the main breadwinner. As women become partners in economic activities, however, they no longer obediently accept the traditional superior position of men (Yu, 1987: 194).

The full-time employment status of Korean wives, lack of cooperation from husbands in carrying out household tasks, and an authoritarian spouse relationship based on rigidly defined marital role expectations can create severe strain for the Korean immi-

grant wives. Korean immigrant women are increasingly aware of their disadvantaged status in the family and likely to seek greater gender equality. While Korean women have greater potential to adopt American norms and values of more egalitarian relationships between spouses, their husbands remain reluctant to accept such changes. Those who resort to violence against their wives tend to believe that their position and authority in the family are challenged. The Korean men who perceive their position in the family as being weakened may find it difficult to tolerate any assertive responses or attitudes of their wives. Those husbands can rely on the use of verbal abuse or violent act in times of stressful events or when confronted with complaints or protests. Yu (1987) reports that collision between the two cultural traditions has resulted in an exceptionally high rate of domestic violence, family breakdown, and the increasing divorce rate among Korean immigrant families.

Added to this cultural factor, environmental variables such as immigration stress and frustrations stemming from adjustment difficulties for Korean men also significantly contribute to the high occurrence of wife abuse in the Korean community. The ecological-systems perspective which emphasizes the influence of external reality and the world of work on individual and family problems lays a theoretical framework for the incidence of violence in the Korean immigrant family (Germain, 1979). It was briefly mentioned above that the majority of Korean immigrant men who held white-collar positions in their home country are likely to lose their occupational status in the United States because of the difficulties in coping with a new language and lack of compatible job experience. A high proportion of well-educated Korean men are currently working as small business owners or unskilled laborers in the American labor market. Most of them are employed in jobs which require working unusually long hours and on weekends. A person's social status and self-esteem depend largely upon occupation and type of work in Asian culture. The loss of occupational status among Korean men has a serious impact on their psychological well-being.

The amounts of stress the Korean men receive every day are unusually high and those who are frustrated in the outside world

tend to ventilate their feelings on their wives. The correlation between domestic violence and the presence of adjustment stress has a strong empirical support. Hong (1993) interviewed 51 Korean men between the ages of 23 and 61 with questions ranging from "How often do you insult your wife?" to "Within the past year have you threatened your wife with a knife or a gun?" He found that wife battering was most commonly found in households where husbands were having difficulties adjusting to their new environment and lifestyles. These findings are consistent with other recent survey results. Shin (1995) also found that, between Korean male batterers and nonbatterers, the batterers experienced higher levels of immigration stress such as underemployment and unemployment. Similarly, Song (1992) found that there was a statistically significant relationship between wife abuse and discrepancy in the pre-immigration and post-immigration employment status of husbands.

In addition to those cultural and environmental factors, there is a strong relationship between drinking and wife battering in Korean immigrant families. There is general agreement that violent acts such as assaults and fatal accidents frequently involve heavy drinking. Theories of alcohol's role in battering range from the indirect-cause perspective that alcohol serves as an excuse for the battering to the direct-cause approach that batterers become violent under the influence of alcohol due to physiological changes in the brain (Conner & Ackerley, 1994). Most research reveals that approximately 60 to 70 percent of male batterers abuse alcohol (Roberts, 1988). The husbands with alcohol problems are likely to abuse their wives more frequently and seriously than those who have no alcohol problems.

Culturally, Koreans are highly tolerant and permissive toward male drinking while females seldom drink. Chi and her colleagues (1988) found in their survey that, unlike other Asian groups, alcohol abuse and dependence were strikingly high among Korean males in Los Angeles. Koreans comprise the greatest number of Asian Americans arrested for Driving under the Influence of Alcohol (DUI) in Los Angeles County. The author's study of divorce among Korean immigrants also shows that alcohol related battering is one of the most significant correlates to separation and divorce among Korean immigrant families (Rhee,

1995). For many Korean males who experience adjustment difficulties, drinking can be an avenue to cope with their stressful life situations and it may in turn leads to wife battering.

The following case example illustrates the aforementioned factors and variables contributing to domestic violence in Korean immigrant families:

Mrs. Kim, a thirty-seven-year-old clerk working for a Korean-American trading company, has been married for 12 years. Her husband, forty-two-years-old, is currently working as an independent house painter. Like many other Korean wives, Mrs. Kim was a full-time housewife before coming to America, while her husband held down a job as a highly capable, and respected high school teacher in Korea. When the couple came to America, Mrs. Kim's husband struggled in vain to find a job which is in line with his professional background. He discovered soon after the immigration that the English language barrier was too high to overcome for many new comers and that the teaching credentials he obtained in Korea were useless here. During the rainy season in California, Mr. Kim is short of work, and Mrs. Kim becomes the main breadwinner. When Mrs. Kim secured the current clerical position five years ago, her husband appeared to feel threatened, and somewhat ambivalent about his role as the head of the household. Ever since they came to this country, Mr. Kim has complained that his wife has an attitude problem, neglects her housework, and does not obey her husband any more. Recently, her husband drinks at least once a week with his friends outside the home and comes back drunk very late at night. When Mrs. Kim complains about his drinking, he attacks her verbally and physically.

Implications For Research and Practice

Emotional stress and violence in the family are two serious problems that Korean immigrants are increasingly exposed to in the process of adjusting to the new environment. A cultural variable of male domination, high levels of immigration stress, and heavy drinking among Korean men are identified as the major factors contributing to domestic violence in the Korean family. However, it should be noted that there are considerable variations among Korean immigrants in terms of levels of acculturation, socio-economic status, and types of immediate family problems leading to wife abuse. It will be valuable to examine whether

differential income levels, economic independence of Korean immigrant women, and long-term residence in the United States have significant effects on the occurrence of serious domestic violence.

The devastating impacts of domestic violence on the victims and their family members are numerous and manifold. The life-threatening experience of battering results in various social and psychological responses including fear, feelings of shame and embarrassment, helplessness, social isolation, damaged self-image, depression, and eventual despair among female victims. Little empirical data are available regarding the main social and psychological effects of family violence on Korean female victims and their children. There is a need for in-depth examination of how extensively the life-long experience of abuse is reflected in social and emotional difficulties and physical morbidity among Korean immigrant women.

Since the Korean women were brought up in the male dominant culture and taught to value tolerance for oppressive treatment within the family, they tend to show more passive reactions to physical or emotional abuse in comparison to American women who are reported to be more assertive in coping with domestic violence. While some of the Korean victims choose to leave their abusive husbands by obtaining temporary restraining orders or marriage dissolution from court, many other women are trapped in their own values and remain in the abusive relationship hoping that time would resolve their problems. The majority of the police reports in Los Angeles county concerning domestic violence in the Korean community are made by neighbors or relatives of the victims. Not many Korean female victims are willing to report the incidence of wife abuse to the police or get assistance from family service agencies. The lack of assertiveness or expressiveness may reinforce their husbands' violent acts against them and further endanger not only the victims themselves, but their children as well.

Like other Asian immigrant groups, the Koreans usually do not discuss their family problems with strangers or even close friends with a strong cultural belief that such an expression might bring in social stigma. Community family service agencies and mental health facilities serving diverse Asian immigrant groups

need to establish domestic violence intervention and prevention programs for Korean victims at high risk and batterers. A program which is designed to assure anonymity and accessibility is a culturally appropriate practice strategy in working with Korean immigrant families. For example, establishing a telephone hot line which provides confidential crisis intervention services to female victims, and publishing educational articles periodically in local Korean newspapers about the extent of the problem, prevention strategies, and the legal aspects of domestic violence will be helpful in reducing the urgent problem of family violence in the Korean community.

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Asian-American Elderly: A Review Of The Quality Of Life And Social Service Needs

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This paper briefly reviews the historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors that affect and define the lives of Asian-American elderly. A close examination of the present quality of life of Asian-American Elderly is made to determine if there are differences between that population and other populations. This paper provides information about existing social services and a summary of culturally relevant social work intervention. In conclusion, the paper underscores the urgent need for additional data collection regarding the Asian-American elderly that will help guide appropriate policy decisions and social services for this neglected group.

Introduction

Even in the last two and a half decades of multi-ethnic consciousness which has led to the recognition of minority groups and subgroups in the United States, the elderly among Asian-Americans have received scant attention from social service agencies as well as from the government. Much research has been conducted on the Asian-American population itself but, again, very little on the elderly. This paper provides an overview of the factors affecting the quality of life of Asian-American elderly, the few services available to them, and the socio-cultural considerations that ought to be taken into account by social service providers and social workers if they wish to be effective service agents for this fast growing population.

Context of Neglect

The reasons for the neglect of Asian-American elderly are various, including the historical one of racial discrimination against Asian-Americans as a whole that goes back to the 1850s when Asians first began to immigrate to the United States (Miller, 1969; Barth, 1964; McWilliams, 1944). Asian-Americans often complain of their "invisibility" as an ethnic minority when it comes to public assistance and equal opportunities in education and employment (Beckett and Dungee-Anderson, 1992; Crystal, 1989; Commission on Civil Rights, 1975). Crystal (1989) suggests that when mainstream America occasionally takes notice of Asian-Americans as diligent, thrifty, and self-sufficient, it is often for ulterior political reasons: (a) as a proof against the existence of racism in the United States, since this ethnic minority has supposedly prospered in the American system; (b) as a way to condemn other minorities by contrasting them with such stereotypes as the "lazy" African-American, the native American "drunk", or the irresponsible Hispanic; or (c) as an argument for excluding them from federal funding and public assistance programs.

Seen in this light, the much publicized image of Asian-Americans as the "model minority" (O'Hare and Felt, 1991) that has "succeeded economically, socially, and educationally without resorting to political and violent confrontations with whites" (Shaefer, 1990) must be taken with extreme skepticism, for that is the story of only a small percentage of the Asian-American population. When President Ronald Reagan referred to Asian-Americans as "our exemplars of hope and inspiration" (Shaefer, 1990), he was either thinking only of the Asian-American elite (Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1992) or was engaging in a verbal gimmick to cover up the government's neglect of, and discriminations against, Asian-Americans (Crystal, 1989; Murase, 1978).

The median income of the Chinese male, for example, is the lowest in the country, and the proportion of Japanese-American elderly living below the poverty level is the highest among all ethnic groups. And yet Asian-Americans as a group receive the lowest average public assistance (Murase, 1978). Given this history of Asian-American neglect by the dominant society, it is neither surprising that there should be poor quality of life for the

vast majority of Asian-American elderly nor that little is being done to alleviate the problems of aging for the most vulnerable section of this minority population.

Aging and the Quality of Life for Asian-Americans in America

In 1980 there were 211,736 Asian-American elderly in the United States. In 1990, this figure more than doubled; 1990 Census shows that there about 454,458 Asian and Pacific Islanders in the age group of 65 and over (US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1992). Recent studies highlight that the Asian-American population is the "fastest growing minority group" in America (Exter, 1992; Burr and Mutchler, 1993). Exter (1989) reports that the most rapid growth in this population will be specifically found among women aged 75 and over. The Asian American population over 75 is expected to increase by 325 percent for women and 173 percent for men from 1990 to 2010. Following Lum (1983), Beckett and Dungee-Anderson (1992:288) divide the Asian-American elderly population into the following categories:

1. retired single males, mainly Chinese and Filipino, who were denied marriage because of immigration restrictions;
2. elderly females, mainly Japanese, who entered the country as picture brides;
3. immigrants or Americans born during the early 1900s;
4. parents who accompanied their children to America from China, Taiwan, Korea, and the Philippines during the last two decades; and
5. persons who came to America in recent years with their families as a result of the Vietnamese and Cambodian wars.

Diversity among the Asian-American occurs through differences in country of origin (now over 30 countries), lack of a common language or religion, cultural values, and a very diverse socio-economic status (Browne and Broderick, 1994). Despite this diversity and the circumstances in their native countries that led them to migrate, such as political instability and persecution, overcrowding and poverty, and lack of economic and educational opportunities, this group of immigrants came to the United States

with certain common expectations, mainly economic advancement and a more comfortable life than they thought was possible in their home countries.

For most Asian-Americans, however, life in the United States, especially after retirement age, does not offer the quality of life they had expected. They face the same urban overcrowding in the United States from which they thought they had escaped; about 90 percent of Asian-Americans live in metropolitan areas. Those living in rural areas fare no better; 40 percent of them live below the poverty line (Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1992; Kim, 1983). Also, a very small percentage of the elite urban elderly live in households with incomes that are higher than many non-Hispanic white households. This tends to overshadow the increasing poverty rates, nearly double that of non-Hispanic whites (O'Hare and Felt, 1991), of the majority of the Asian-Americans. Hurh and Kim, (1989) aptly note that the "success" image of Asian-Americans appears primarily to be situational and a gross overgeneralization of that population within the United States.

Asian-American elderly retire later and generally put in more working hours when employed than do their counterparts of other ethnic groups including whites. Thirty percent of Asian-American elderly work after the age of 65, and 16 percent of those who are 75 and older continue to work (Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1992). Further, because nearly three-fourths of Asian-Americans over 65 years and older in 1980 were foreign-born, they have minimal or no social security retirement benefits. Only 64 percent received social security benefits in 1989 as compared to 92 percent of non-Hispanic whites, and the average benefits for Asian recipients was less (O'Hare & Felt, 1991). Stanley Sue (1980) has also shown that the proportion of the elderly poor in the Asian-American population is much higher than that of elderly African-Americans or Hispanic-Americans.

The consequences of changing one's domicile are unsettling for people of any age, but they can be devastating to the elderly. Like others in the general population, Asian-American elderly experience aging as "a cultural, behavioral, psychological, chronological, social, and biological process" (Beckett & Dungee-Anderson, 1992). But these multidimensional problems are further complicated and compounded for many Asian-American

elderly by their living in a condition of uprootedness. In addition to physical decline, as well as the loneliness and depression that often accompany the loss of friends and congenial surroundings, they experience a cultural vacuum which can lead to psychological problems.

The effects of impoverishment must be severe on the aging. Poor living conditions, inadequate nutrition, and hard work produce physical and emotional stress quite contrary to quality of life. Added to these are the social and personal pressures of starting life over in a new culture with a different language and unfamiliar surroundings, especially for refugees, and recent immigrants. In some cases, the strange, indifferent life in urban America has had a cruel impact. Mental illness is common, and the suicide rate among some Asian-American subgroups is three times the national average (Murase, 1978; Report of the San Francisco Chinese Community, 1969). The suicide rates rise sharply in some states such as California and Hawaii (Lester, 1992). However, admission records to social service agencies, emergency rooms and hospitals are not the best gauge of the magnitude of the problem, since such cultural attitudes as loyalty to family and sensitivity to shame among most Asian-American communities lead to dramatic under-utilization of mental health services (Browne and Broderick, 1994; Crystal, 1989).

What Asian-American elderly find most disturbing is the loss of traditional cultural values of the family they had in their native countries (Browne and Broderick, 1994). The extended families and close associations which they nurtured for mutual support are largely absent in the United States, and here, even the members of the immediate family tend to become independent of one another. Increased mobility and the contingencies of the American economic system promote independence and living apart. With the break of close ties comes the loss of the father's position as the patriarch and the mother's position as the emotional center of the family. This loss of authority and respect is more painful when the aging parents realize and blame their own inability to function in the new society. They are locked into a double-bind, where the generational gap between them and their children and grandchildren is exacerbated by the ethnic and cultural marginality of their lives in this country. Typically, tensions regarding their

marginal status arise with the older and younger generations pulling in opposite directions.

The problems of aging for Asian-American elderly, such as ill health and poverty, are much the same as those experienced by the general population living in inner city neighborhoods. However, these problems are compounded by the experience of social and cultural displacement which severely affect their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being (Browne and Broderick, 1994). Lack of data on the Asian-American and particularly the elderly is obvious from the literature (Lee, 1994). Lee points out that only recently has there been an attempt by the United States Bureau of the Census to publish additional data on the Asian-American population (1994). However, a lack of data often leads to a lack of social services designed to provide assistance to this special population. The present services may suffice should they become more sensitive to the problems listed above.

Existing Social Services for the Asian-American Elderly

The largest and best known social service agency for the Asian-American elderly is the Asian Human Care Center (AHCC) in Los Angeles, started in 1986 by the Synod of Southern California and the Hawaii Presbyterian Church (Tsukahira, 1988). It provides a host of services but concentrates mainly on providing information about the existing network of social services that the elderly can use, and teaching English to new immigrants and refugees. AHCC's "The Senior Empowerment Project: A Training and Awareness Program for Care Givers" has become a source of information not only for Asian families in the West who wish to learn about social service agencies but also for other agencies that are interested in providing care to Asian elderly. The AHCC has a videotape containing basic information on a variety of subjects aimed at Asian "senior empowerment." It also contains interviews with a home-health care consultant, and immigration attorney, a tenants' rights lawyer, and other service professionals. To ensure that the information reaches its multilingual and cultural target population, the videotape has been translated into several Asian languages (Tsukahira, 1988).

Besides English classes, AHCC's other programs include health screening, advice on Medicare, Medicaid, and in-home care, as well as an assortment of social activities to dispel boredom and loneliness. The positive response to AHCC's programs in Los Angeles should encourage the opening of similar centers in other major cities with large Asian populations.

The majority of the services currently available for Asian-American elderly, including those of AHCC, emphasizes dissemination of information on the utilization of existing service systems and methods. The aim is to bring the elderly and the services together. Important as that is, it is only the first step. The next step is the most crucial: to tailor the programs and modify the content and method of existing services, if necessary, to successfully address the particular needs of the target population. We believe there has been more theorizing than practice about culturally sensitive services for Asian-American elderly. To address this discrepancy, specific recommendations for practice with Asian-American elderly are presented in this article.

Suggestions and Recommendations

More than a decade and a half ago Murase (1978) outlined a set of principles which still apply for making social services culturally relevant to Asian-American communities. Among her suggestions are the following: immediately accessible service delivery site within the community itself; involvement of the community in decision making; employment of bilingual and bicultural staff; utilization of existing indigenous care/support system, including churches, associations, hometown clubs, and professional caretakers in the community; and intervention methods specific to Asians, such as (a) "actively supportive, directive, and highly personalized relationships" between not only the social worker and the client but also with the family unit; (b) flexibility in schedules, and establishing informality to obtain full and free communication; (c) differentiating "'cultural paranoia' from real pathology, cultural resistance from depressive withdrawal, traditional family needs from abnormal dependency needs"; and (d) recognizing the importance of a culturally familiar Asian milieu for those undergoing loneliness and alienation (pp. 46-7).

Because inability to speak English is a major barrier to the social and cultural adjustment of Asian-American elderly, some organizations are experimenting with innovative ways of teaching English as Second Language (ESL). Project LEIF (Learning English through Intergenerational Friendship) of Philadelphia brings together college-age tutors and elderly Asians on the one hand, and retired native speakers of English and young refugees on the other, in both community and private settings (Grognet, 1989).

Grognet's (1989) ESL teaching strategies closely reflect Murase's principles of client involvement. The first step, according to her, is to eliminate "affective barriers" to learning or removing from both the tutor's and the learner's minds the idea that adults are poor language learners. Grognet offers a theory of adult learning called *andragogy*, which entails that learning occurs easily and effectively when what is being learned is directly related to the learner's everyday needs and experiences. For example, while young learners approach arithmetic as a subject, adults learn it not as arithmetic but as additions and subtractions to keep a check book. Language learning, in other words, occurs best when it is related to fulfilling the learner's personal, social and cultural needs. For this to happen learners must be consulted about their goals and needs. In California and Washington, D.C., for instance, women learn English around their household chores such as baby sitting, cooking and sewing.

Like others, Grognet points out the connection between mental problems and inability of Asian refugees and new immigrants to function in the English language. Unable to express themselves or to communicate with others their traumatic experience of war, torture, rape, and death of loved ones, they go into depression and develop psychosomatic conditions. Hence the importance of effective and easily accessible ESL programs.

Two other services that can greatly alleviate the mental and emotional problems of the Asian-American elderly have to do with health care and companionship. Many Asian-American elderly have greater faith in traditional folk therapy than in modern medicine. The combined use of indigenous treatment and western medication will create the right psychological condition for recov-

ery. As for companionship, social policies and service programs should facilitate the sharing of homes and mutual interdependence among those living alone. This can be done by modifying existing policies that discourage such relationships by reducing the benefits of persons living with friends and family (Kim, 1983).

As indicated before, the lack of data on the Asian-American population and more specifically the aged is indicative of a general lack of professional awareness. Although the United State's Census has begun to collect more Asian-American sensitive data very recently, further effort can be made. The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), a clearing house for data sets, can begin to collect and publish more data sets specific to this population. Additionally, the General Social Survey (GSS) may include more specific questions to distinguish respondent's race instead of categorizing race into the three present categories of white, black or other. The current format of GSS data collected and the overall lack of data inhibits the ability of scholars to conduct research useful to this particular population. Once useful data collection takes place the myths and overgeneralization of populations, such as the model minority, may be dispelled or indeed even supported. Until then, little substantial empirical knowledge can be acquired.

Conclusion

Researchers on Asian-American communities and social workers familiar with their problems agree on the pressing need to pay attention to the welfare of this diverse, fast-growing minority group. But, as David Crystal has noted, if one were to go by degrees of need, "the plight of the Asian elderly deserves first priority" (1989). The rate of growth of the Asian-American elderly is stunning. The special needs of any population, Asian-American elderly included, must be met adequately in this culturally diverse country. Present data collection methods can be improved quite easily to distinguish differences in populations. Failure to collect and analyze data on any special population is to figuratively turn one's back on those people's needs. Even those social service agencies that attempt to reach out with a lot of

zeal and vigor may miss the mark due to misunderstanding and inadequate information.

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Asian-American Women: An Understudied Minority

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This paper describes Asian-American women with their inter-ethnic, inter-generational connections. Diversities in race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status influence their lives in family, participation in education, the labor force, and community life. Issues and implications about the myth of Asian-American as model minority, the influence of feminism, and social work service for Asian-American women are also discussed.

Asian-American Women: Backgrounds and Struggles

Asian-American women include immigrant women and their female descendants in America whose ancestry originates from Asia and the eastern Pacific. They should be appreciated for their inter-ethnic and inter-generational connections, for their common Asian heritage, and specific cultural diversities, for their common and unique struggles related to being Asian women in America. Because of the recent influx of Asian-Americans in the United States, especially Asian-American women, they have been an invisible minority and have been understudied by social scientists.

The early phase of Asian immigration to the United States (1848–1940) was marked by a virtual absence of female immigrants due to repressive immigration laws, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and the Immigration Act of 1924, which barred Asians from entering the U.S. In contrast, the new regulations admit Asians with needed skills and stipulate annual quotas for Asian women and their children; recent Asian immigration has been distinguished by the relatively increasing predominance of female immigrants. According to the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 51% to 60% of all immigrants from Japan, China, the Philippines, and Korea between 1950 and 1975 were women.

The main reason for Asian women to immigrate is the reunion of their families. Others have also come for occupational preference and as refugees. The recent wave of immigration has increased the percentage of foreign-born Asian-American women, especially in the younger age cohort, increased the level of education, and decreased the male-dominated sex ratio in the Asian population. According to the 1990 census, Asian- and Pacific Island-Americans are among the fastest growing ethnic minorities (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1991).

Asians are culturally varied according to nationalities, languages, and religions. Tsui (1989) described Asian-American women as needing "the armor of warriors" to survive the past 150 years, in which they have raised families and struggled against racism and exploitation from the earliest days as farm workers, prostitutes, and domestic servants. Presently they are viewed as a model minority with stable families, and are represented in prestigious managerial and professional positions (Suzuki, 1989). The failure to recognize ethnic and status variations among Asian women has helped to perpetuate the myth of success surrounding Asian-Americans (Chow, 1983; USCCR, 1980).

Ethnic Identity of Asian-American Women

Because they are also members of racial and ethnic minority groups, Asian-American women develop their identification, self-esteem, and personality differently from either Asian or American women. In the midst of conflicting values, identity crises, and consciousness-raising, Asian-American women are in the process of building their Asian-American womanhood. Despite interethnic variations, Asian-Americans have a number of cultural values in common. Some of their values such as valuing education, achievement, hard work, and frugality, are similar to American values. Other Asian values, however, like filial piety (Nievera, 1980), obedience to authority (Chow, 1982), subjugation of the individual to the group (Fujitomi & Wong, 1976), a quiet and passive acceptance of one's situation (Matsudo et al., 1970), self-control, self-abasement, and a strong sense of family solidarity, are quite in contrast to American values which emphasize individualism, egalitarianism, independence, future-orientation, and mastery over one's environment (Furuto, 1992; Kluckhohn, 1951).

As Asian-American women emerge as a significant group, their acculturation experiences and their relationships to self-concept formation deserves to be carefully examined. A central issue in the adaptation of Asian-American women is the extent to which they retain their own cultural traditions relative to acculturation and assimilation into American society. A review of existing literature reveals three major perspectives, all of which relate the degree of acculturation to the self-concept, behavior, and status attainment of Asian-Americans: (a) the retention of certain Asiatic values (Kuo & Lin, 1977); (b) subscription to American values (Kitano, 1976; Montero, 1982); and (c) the compatibility of Asian and American values (Connor, 1976; Fong, 1990).

Chow (1982), in studying Asian-American women on the east coast, examined how Asian and American values can differentially influence the personality development of Asian-American women. Four types of ethnic identities emerged from her data:

1. The traditionalist (low on American values, high on Asian values) tends to confine herself to her ethnic enclave, retain traditional values, and to be negatively disposed toward American culture. Her self-worth is defined by obedience to parents and by bringing honor to the family and her ethnic group. Tension occurs when feelings are in conflict with traditional expectations and when the individual experiences difficulties in dealing with members of the host society.

2. The assimilationist (high on American values, low on Asian values) tends to question traditional values, to defy parental authority, and to reject her native ethnic culture. Existing between the margin of two cultures, she suffers from an identity crisis and from intense feelings of guilt, self-denial, and even self-hatred (Sue & Sue, 1971). She defines her self-worth in terms of acceptance by Caucasians and considers herself more American than Asian; she desires access to all avenues of opportunity in American society.

3. The pluralist (high on both American and Asian values) tends to incorporate the useful aspects of both minority cultures by integrating her past experiences with her present conditions. She attempts to balance her responsibilities at home, at work, and in the community. She tries to be aware of intergroup relations. Her self-worth is defined by ethnic pride—frequent association

with her own people and the ability to retain many aspects of traditional culture while fully participating in mainstream American society. This type of adaptation is an outgrowth of continual attempts to reconcile the two cultures for a pluralistic cultural coexistence. It has a dialectic element that includes conflict and contradiction as part of the dynamic process of acculturation. Thus, each integration is only a temporary state leading to an affirmative and flexible identity.

4. The ambivalent (low on both American and Asian values) tends to reject both traditional and American cultures and to exhibit a great degree of social and cultural alienation. She is relatively isolated from her ethnic group and the host society, and she derives little cultural meaning from either world. She will withdraw from social participation when she feels ambivalent about her socio-cultural situation. She defines her self-worth individualistically, as it fits each situation, and she also develops anomic (normlessness) feelings.

The acculturation process is not linear from less to more assimilated into American culture. It is a complex process involving cultural (e.g., values, norms, language) and structural dimensions (e.g., primary groups, class, status, power) (Fong, 1990). For example, Meedmeduma (Furuto et al., 1992), in describing the support networks of Sri Lankan women living in the United States, examined issue of trust and gossip of family/kin member among co-nationals, as compared to non-family/kin member among non-nationals as support networks at different stages of the acculturation process.

Gender Role

An important component of the ethnic identity of the Asian-American women is her gender. While Asian values affect ethnic identities of Asian men and women, other cultural values define traditional sex role expectations and gender relationships. Generally, Asian culture tends to reinforce traditionally "feminine" characteristics—submissiveness, passiveness, affiliation, altruism, adaptiveness, and timidity—and to discourage the so-called "masculine" traits of independence, assertiveness, and competitiveness (Fong, 1965; Hsu, 1971; Weiss, 1973). Related studies have

found that Asian men and women generally to be more "feminine" in comparison to their Caucasian counterparts (Fong & Pelskin, 1969; Meredith, 1973). Some studies have suggested a highly restrictive feminine identification expected of Asian-American women, who, for the most part, are confined to more traditional roles and are perceived as subservient to the males in their ethnic subcultures (Kim, 1975; Yun, 1976). The traditional sex-type orientation is transmitted by the family and other agents of socialization and reinforced in the gender roles Asian-Americans adopt.

The Asian family contains a hierarchy of authority based on sex, generation, and age. Young women are at the lowest level, subordinate to the dominant father-husband-brother-son and are restricted to well-defined sex roles. The father is conceived of as breadwinner and decision-maker; the mother is expected to be the compliant wife and homemaker (Fujitomi & Wong, 1976). Asian families tend to encourage the development of the male's personality and aspirations, while discouraging women to have self-esteem and individuality (Payton-Miyazaki, 1971). Although most Asian-American families have followed the Western conjugal nuclear family style, remnants of traditional culture still affect many of these families.

The racial and sexual stereotypes of Asian women subtly force Asian women to respond according to expectations. They are frequently perceived through media promotion, as shy, docile, quiet, exotic, submissive, demure, and erotic (frequently stereotyped as "China doll," "Suzie Wong sex pot," the "Geisha girl," or negatively as the devious and dominating "dragon lady"). They are also seen as good housekeepers and dutiful wives. The view of Asian women as sex objects and as worthy of little respect is part of a larger dichotomy contracting virtuous, pure Madonnas (white women), with exotic, evil whores (Asian women). These racial and sexual stereotypes are detrimental to the development of positive self-identity for Asian-American women. The racial stereotypes (e.g., slanted eyes, petite stature, flat chests) contribute to feelings of inferiority and self-hatred. Fujitomi and Wong (1978) stressed that even favorable stereotypes are dehumanizing and are aimed at legitimizing Asian women as eligible marriage partners for American males. Asian men stereotype their own women by defining for them what it means to be "traditional" and

"unfeminine." The Asian men may be attracted by the American standard of beauty and prefer women other than their own. These stereotypes make it hard for women to develop their full potential as persons.

Androgyny, the integration of masculinity and femininity within the same person, is being found increasingly among Asian women (Chow, 1981). Androgyny was associated with a high level of occupational attainment. More importantly, it was closely related to work satisfaction and self-esteem. This association supports the relationship between androgyny and psychological well-being found by other researchers (Kaplan & Bean 1976).

In the transitional phase of acculturation, old images are discarded and new ones are developed; the sex-role attitudes of Asian women have begun to shift from a "traditional" stance to a more egalitarian one. Fong (1973) found the traditional pattern of social interaction between Chinese males and females was steadily moving away from the traditional pattern of male dominance toward more equality. Asian women can be expected to be more amenable than Asian men to accepting and actualizing sex role changes. As awareness of sex role variations increase, Asian women can be expected to discard the older images and develop new gender identities for themselves.

Many Asian-American women can be expected to uphold their ideal as women from their Asian tradition. For instance, many of the Vietnamese refugee women uphold the Confucian ideal of "cong" (versatile ability in the home), dung (subtle beauty), ngon (soft speech) hanh (gentle behavior), and "phuc Duc" (accumulation of family strength through generations and accomplishments of the past) (Sloat, 1977). Similarly, Chinese culture values women as good wives and good mothers, as well as valuing their contributions to the well-being of the family be working at home or engaging in employment to glorify ancestry and the family name. Asian-American women's motivation and success in family and labor force can be attributed to the cultural values for self-effacement, trustworthiness, hard work, and moral strength, so as to maintain the family in the generations to come (Sloat, 1977). Korean-American women work excessively hard at home as wives, and at work long hours in primarily family-run

businesses in order to keep the family economically and socially viable (Rhee, 1993).

Socio-Economic Status

Asian-American women occupying different levels of the socioeconomic structure experience acculturation and its associated success differently. While Asian-American women from middle-class backgrounds may have more opportunities to experience some degree of educational and occupational mobility, those from working class backgrounds tend to be trapped in traditional sex-role arrangements and to feel limited in their self-development and job advancement (OCWA, 1984). U.S.-born Japanese and Chinese women are more likely (21% and 47%) to hold professional and clerical jobs than foreign-born Japanese and Chinese women (22% and 24%, respectively). Still, about one-third of foreign-born Japanese and Chinese women are employed as craftsmen or operative workers. Asian women with higher levels of occupational attainment tended to be more accepting of American values, to have a high level of self-esteem, and to feel more satisfied at work than Asian women with lower levels of occupational status. Working class women, including those who are less visible (such as women in Asian enclaves, Indochinese refugee women, and wives of U.S. servicemen) are clearly disadvantaged, with their needs and wants often ignored or inadequately addressed. On the other hand, professional Asian-American women face problems such as inability to obtain licensing and certification due to restricted license rules and procedures (Cordover, 1976), underutilization and underemployment (USCCR, 1978), discrimination in firing and hiring, wage inequality with men for comparable work, and a lack of training in different areas (e.g., administration) (Fong & Cabezas, 1976).

Asian working class women yet face another set of problems: lack of English language proficiency (OCAW, 1984); the relative illiteracy of Asians (USDHEW); low level of education; low self-image and confidence (OCAW, 1984); high concentration in low-ranking, low-prestige, and low-paying jobs (US DHEW, 1974); lack of opportunities for training and job advancement; racial and

sex-based discrimination; and lack of child care arrangements and transportation (OCAW, 1984).

Model Minority

The "model minority" stereotype, first discussed in *The New York Times* in 1966, highlights the economic success of some Asians while masking the persistence of poverty and exploitation among Asians as well as the presence of virulent anti-Asian sentiment. There are many signs of Asian-American economic success. Much higher percentages of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipina women (30%, 20%, and 41%, respectively) have college or advanced degrees than do white-American women (13%). Poverty rates for Japanese and Filipina women were lower than for whites. Asian-American women who worked full-time and year round had 1980 median earnings of \$11,519, more than the average for women of all races, \$10,380. In many primary sector jobs, such as executives, engineers, and health diagnosticians, the relative concentration of Asian-American women was higher than that of white-American women. Compared to other minority women, Asian-American women have higher education levels, disproportionate representations in professional and technical fields (Owan, 1980; Woo, 1985). Although the economic successes of a segment of Asian American appear to support the model minority myth, the myth obscures the fact that many Asian-Americans are at the bottom of the economic hierarchy, at the other end of the bipolar distribution of income among Asians. A full 74% of Asian Americans are foreign born; of these, many speak little English, are segregated into low paying secondary labor market jobs, often in the hidden economy. Between economic exploitation, lack of legal protection, and maintenance of traditional domestic chores, many Asian-American women live in virtual slavery.

Woo (1985) found that Asian women do not earn incomes commensurate with their educational levels when compared to Euro-American men and women, even when employed in professional or technical fields with full-time employment. Labor market discrimination has continued to exist. Equivalent resumes from Filipino workers and white American workers were sent out, with white-Americans receiving requests for interviews

five times more than the Filipino applicants (Skrobanek, 1985). Asian-American have filed suits against a number of employers, including United Airlines and Pacific Telephone, alleging discrimination.

Many Koreans heading small businesses have been unable to put their higher education in use because of discrimination, lack of English skills, and lack of certification by U.S. educational institutions. Their success extracts a high toll in self-exploitation, with the entire family working long hours from day to night. Korean-American women, while expecting to work in the family enterprise at upwards of 50 hours per week are still expected to carry on a full domestic load (Rhee, 1993).

Often, the economic success of Asian-Americans can be explained by high rates of labor force participation and high numbers of workers in the family. Hence, considering income per person rather than per family, Asian-Americans earn 10% less than Caucasians per capita. Since many Asian-American families are concentrated in high-cost urban areas in prosperous states with high costs of living (e.g., New York, Hawaii, California), their higher family incomes generally do not translate into higher standards of living.

The disproportionate overachievement of Asian-Americans has been a barrier to schooling and employment. Recent examples of racial preference practices include job ceilings that limit non-whites who are as competent or more competent than their Anglo-American peers from competing for and obtaining desired professional levels, higher pay for white Americans having lower educational qualifications than their non-white peers, and discriminatory university admissions policies at our most esteemed universities favoring less-qualified Anglo-American students (Chan, 1991; Devillar et al., 1994; Takaki, 1989). Asian-Americans are often denied opportunity in favor of less qualified Anglo-Americans. Asian-American groups have charged that the top colleges and universities are now discriminating against Asian-American applicants. For instance, the U.S. Department of Education has been investigating Harvard and the University of California at Los Angeles to see if they have established illegal quotas to limit the number of Asian-Americans admitted. Finally, the model-minority myth, combined with the increasing

economic power of Japan, may actually be responsible for intensified anti-Asian violence. The Justice Department found that anti-Asian incidents increased by 62% between 1984 and 1985.

Education

There are very few differences in high school completion and college attendance rates by gender within Asian-American ethnic groups or across ethnic and national groups. Compared to other minority women, Asian-American women are as likely to have received four years college education as white female Americans. The overall college enrollment across ethnic groups increased from 1976 to 1982, and tapering off from 1982-84. Despite this decline, Asian and Hispanic female enrollment has continued to grow. Compared to white Americans and other minority groups in which women gradually surpassed men at the bachelor's and master's levels among most groups, only Asian women remained below their male counterparts in degrees awarded.

Asian-Pacific American (APA) females face similar cultural and socioeconomic barriers to higher education as APA males. Females also are socialized into traditional roles that do not require a college degree. Behavior appropriate at home, such as not "showing off" in front of adults or fear of incurring shame by responding incorrectly, may not only be not valued, but could be interpreted in school as being uncooperative or too shy. Competition for grades and individual achievement is appropriate in school, while emphasis on group cooperation is more approved of at home (Clark, 1983).

Teaching styles based on competitive standards, creativity, individual responses and problem-solving are incongruent with experiential, cooperative group learning, and learning by rote that are the modes within APA culture. Lack of proficiency in English for many bilingual, foreign-born APA students may affect their understanding and problem solving abilities in American schools (Cole & Griffin, 1987).

Family Roles

The traditional Asian family system is a patriarchal kinship and a corporate unit, with the emphasis on preserving the patriarchal blood line. The traditional extended family typically includes

the head of the household, his wife, his married sons, their wives, his unmarried children, and his son's children. The principle of primogeniture, that is succession to the family headship and inheritance of the family property by the eldest son, is a feature of the traditional Asian family unit. Daughters usually hold a low status in the household, because they do not figure in the continuity of the family. Because traditional Asian families are patrilocal, daughters usually leave their family of origin upon marriage and become the daughter-in-law in the new family.

Traditionally, the Asian woman was to work for the family, and to bear children, especially a male heir. An Asian woman could not initiate a divorce; if she should leave the family, all the children she bore belong to the family, so she would have no legal claim to the children or to any family property (Glenn, 1986). Marriage often has been seen as a matter of duty and procreation rather than love and romance. Girls are socialized into traditional roles, with the older children taking responsibility for housework and taking care of the younger children. They unknowingly exempt themselves from nontraditional jobs with higher pay and status because of their traditional role socialization in their homes and schools.

Generally, Asian culture values self-reliance and interdependence within the family. The traditional Asian family is a cohesive extended network, with strong ties of obligations and respect for parents and siblings. This suggests that multiple workers may contribute to the well-being of a family unit in times of economic need. Chinese, Japanese, and Asian-Indian women preserve a reverential attitude towards work and education for all family members (Furuto, 1992; Jiobu, 1988). A strong commitment to employment combined with the cultural values of helping family members in times of need, suggests they can expect to seek financial support of other family members in lieu of receiving public assistance. Korean-American women, for example, often spend nearly every waking hour in domestic labor or work outside the home to keep the family economically and socially viable (Rhee, 1993). Southeast Asian (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Khmer, Hmong, and Mao), Hawaiian, Korean, and other Asian women may share the common cultural commitment to hard work and family.

Many Asian-American women experience much stress as their families go through process of cultural transition from their Asian country of origin to the new country in America (Hurh & Kim, 1987; Rhee, 1993). Recently arrived women often experience loneliness and isolation. With no or little English, many have to remain unemployed, or are employed in locally owned sweat shops. Amidst keeping the house and raising the children as traditional roles, working multiple jobs, Asian-American experienced much stress (Hurh & Kim, 1987; Rhee, 1993).

In transition from native to American cultures, women's status is destabilized because they have increased value in the marketplace. They may be able to obtain jobs that pay higher than that of their husbands. Employment outside the household exposes them to a new world of opportunity, cultures, and styles of living. The marital relationship, based on male dominance, may experience a strain sometimes resulting in violence directed at the wife.

Asian-American women are more frequently married but separated, than the general populations of female heads (17.1% versus 3.7%, respectively). They become female heads of households more frequently as a result of widowhood rather than divorce or out-of-wedlock pregnancy. These figures show that Asian women have greater marital stability, a significant factor for reducing poverty (Bane & Ellwood, 1983).

Differential rates of acculturation across generations, with children Americanized the fastest, create rifts between Asian-American women and their children, as if prior authority as parent was undermined by her children who managed to master the language and the American system better. Domestic violence, with wife battering, or physical abuse of children by frustrated father or mother, become common.

Asian-American feminists have been concerned about domestic violence. Although it is as prevalent in Asian-American communities as in the country in general, it remains hidden under the model minority myth and by victims' extreme reluctance to speak out and seek help. The traditional male dominance in Asian culture has resulted in Asian women being victims of physical and psychological abuse. For example, Song-Kim described that in traditional Korean culture, men were brought up to expect

services from women and to have authority over them; as such they were allowed to discipline their wives by any means, including violent punishment (Furuto et al., 1992). Rimonte (1989), the Filipina founder of the Center for the Pacific Asian Family, and of the first shelter for Pacific Asians in the United States, reported that Asian-American women are especially vulnerable to battering when they are employed, and traditional roles are upset or even reversed. The traditionally closed and hierarchical nature of Asian family, and the social stigma against divorce increase Asian American women's vulnerability to battering. Mail-order brides, who are on temporary visas for the first two years of their marriages, are particularly exposed. Shelters have been established for Asian-American battered women in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York City.

Sexual Exploitation of Asian-American Women

U.S. involvement in wars in Asia (Japan, Vietnam, Korea, the Philippines) and the presence of U.S. bases in these countries, has brought U.S. servicemen into contact with Asian women. Women who have married U.S. servicemen and came to the United States have faced social isolation on military bases, lack of familiarity with U.S. culture, and language problems, including poor communication with their spouses. Lacking information on their legal rights, wives have often been divorced, lost child custody and financial support, and have even been deported. The war bride problem has been compounded by the recent growth of a mail-order bride industry, which supplies Asian women to U.S. and European men by agencies through newspaper advertisements. Grace Lyu-Vockhausen, an Asian-American feminist activist and member of the New York City Commission on the Status of Women, regarded the mail-order bride industry as an international sex ring and another form of economic exploitation for women from countries of the capitalist periphery to sell their labor and sexuality to men in a commercial marriage market in capitalist core countries (Skropanek, 1985). Asian women are also commonly featured in tourist campaigns and in pornography. These forms of sexual exploitation undermine all Asian women in the United States. Assuming Asian-American women are particularly pleasing and unaggressive, employers deny them raises

and claim they lack leadership qualities needed for executive positions. Such stereotypes have also led to sexual harassment of Asian-American women.

In addition to coping with the strain imposed by the myth of the "model minority" stereotype, Asian-American women experience the current and historical effects of multiple oppressions, much like other women of color. The struggle of Asian-American women is rooted in the structural conditions of their lives in the form of racism, sexism, classism, and ethnic hatred (Fisher-Manick, 1981; Hirayama & Centingal, 1988). Within the Asian cultures, sexism can be illustrated by preference for male children, female infanticide, and in families giving birth to as many children as necessary until a male child is born. When compared to other women from the mainstream cultures, the prevalent stereotype and traditional expectations of Asian women being valuable primarily in their roles in child-bearing, child-rearing, and serving in the kitchen, predisposes Asian-American women to discrimination and oppression as part of the work-force. Socioeconomic barriers and discrimination experienced by many Asian-American women makes it necessary for them to counteract such forces with courage and resilience. Often they demonstrate endurance through working more than double, triple hard, in order to earn their credibility, and establish their competency before their non-Asian clients, colleagues, and employers. Such dynamics are often present when it comes to assuming leadership positions with comparable remuneration within the hierarchical structures of their occupations. The success of Asian-American women and their families has rested much in their reverential attitude about work and education for all family members while maintaining their equally important roles as traditional wives to their husband and others to their children.

Feminism and Asian-American Women

Although women's movement struggles for sexual equality for all women, its impact on Asian-American women has been minimal (Chow, 1983). Those who consider themselves feminists are primarily from middle class, college educated, and have professional backgrounds. Loo and Ong (1982) charged that feminism has failed to address the specific concerns of Chinatown

women who face multiple oppressions because of their class, culture, and race. Impediments to feminist organizing include: (a) Asian-American women are concerned about alienation from their male counterparts and face hostility from Asian-American men who claim they are destroying community solidarity (which is based upon male domination); (b) racism of white women who lack knowledge of the history or present status of Asian-American women; (c) the vast differences among Asian-American women, including ethnicity, language, and class; and (d) many women's needs to concentrate their energies on economic survival.

A few consciousness-raising groups were established in the 1970s among Asian-American women. They began to recognize their gender identity limited their role alternatives. They united and discussed issues, problems, and needs specific to Asian women. Asian-American women have founded Asian women's studies courses and study-groups, a writer's group, such as Pacific Asian American Women's Writers West, and regional feminist organizations, like the National Organization of Pan-Asian Women United. Asian lesbians have formed nationwide political groups such as Asia/Pacific Lesbian Network.

Asian-American women's economic history displays many common themes across ethnic groups, yet each group has its unique experience. They all begin as low-wage workers who were imported into a U.S. economy dominated by whites. They all were restricted from coming with their husbands at the beginning.

Community Participation

Besides playing a continually important role in the family, and entering into the labor force, Asian-American women have been very active and have contributed to the community in many other ways. For instance, in ethnic and American churches and temples, Asian women have been very active, and are increasingly involved in ministerial capacities than before. Women often organize themselves into women's clubs, whose main function was to facilitate church activities, such as the "fujunkai" of Japanese issei (first generation) women. The "fujunkai" helped in many community activities, including providing refreshment, visiting the sick, providing congratulations, dispensing janitorial services,

helping to raise funds by contributing handcrafts, needlework, and art work for sale at bazaars, teaching in religious and ethnic language classes, taking part in parent-teacher meetings, and supporting "undo kai," popular sports competitions for children. The Japanese tanamoshi, resembling the "hui" among Chinese, and "gyeh" among Koreans, function like an informal ethnically organized credit union. Asian-American women, through their voluntary participation are therefore able to use much creativity and judgment in serving the community (Nakano, 1992).

Conclusion

The self-development of Asian-American women has to be examined in the context of their social, cultural and economic circumstances. Cultural pluralism has emerged as a viable alternative for Asian women. With this perspective, Asian-American women could enjoy the best of both East and West. As they increase their gender consciousness, Asian women should be able to discard their old sex-typed images and develop a new, positive identity for themselves. They would be able to move from a traditional to a more egalitarian orientation with respect to their male counterparts. Through the inattention to class differences, Asian American women are often identified as socioeconomically successful while the exploitative circumstances of working class Asian-American women are generally ignored. Hence their needs should be addressed by feminists and by women of higher socioeconomic status.

To understand Asian-American women, we must understand their multiple statuses. Their issues and problems are imbedded in economic, historical, cultural, and social realities that should be treated as public policy issues. Policies and programs for Asian-American women should be nonracist, nonsexist, reflect the concerns of Asian women, and meet their specific needs. To help solve the specific problems of Asian-American women, existing governmental and private programs should include Asian women as beneficiaries, providing needed resources, funding, and facilities. At the same time, Asian-American women should become politically active in order to control their lives. They should also join force with other groups that aim to promote social equality and humanity for all people.

Asian-American women are multicultural and multiethnic. Asian women's contribution to social change in this country and in other parts of the world includes the Japanese women who survived the interment camps during World War II, Hawaiian land activists, Filipino revolutionary movement leaders, unionizers of the Chinese garment workers, Cambodia refugee camp workers, and Korean "picture brides" (Gutierrez, 1990). In appreciating the hard work, strength, and female solidarity of their mothers and immigrant foremothers, Asian-American women are linked historically and currently to the international Third World women of Asian descent (Hirayama & Centingal, 1988). Asian-American women seek opportunity and acceptance to speak their minds, express their experiences, define their priorities, and devise their strategies for survival from their own cultural perspectives.

Further research needs to be conducted into the lives of Asian-American women using the life history method. The life history method sets out to document the everyday life experiences of ordinary individuals in their own sense. Feminist historical and anthropological conceptual frameworks of women as active strategists and creators of women's culture in the social/historical/cultural context can be applied to analyze Asian immigrant women's life histories (Chai, 1985). The mere remembering that there had been a history, a culture, and a story could be empowering to all women. While sharing the spirit of their fellow middle-class, white feminists, Asian-American women have also sought to cultivate a true sisterhood in their own terms for themselves. Thus, in their professional work, instead of westernizing themselves in philosophy, outlook, and approach, Asian-American women can use their additional Asian perspectives to sensitize their awarenesses of cultural similarities and differences, to generate new dimensions for analyzing issues, and to design paradigms and models for practice intervention and policy development. Rather than considering the men of their ethnic groups as the enemy, Asian-American women should value themselves and their roles as women as being different but complementary and reciprocal, with their men and their corresponding roles, within the circular yin-yang balance. In this light, Asian-American women pride in such processes that enhance mutual empowerment for both Asian men and Asian women, which will enhance the con-

tinual perpetuation of their strong, coherent family units and communities. Yet, at the same time, feminine solidarity must be used to protect women from masculine use of terror through rape, sexual harassment, physical violence, and economic exploitation of vulnerable females.

Asian-American women need to develop coalitions with other women of color to transform and expand Western feminism into Global feminism. From Fa Mu-Lan in ancient China who dressed as a man and lead her male army against the enemies of her people (Hunt, 1985) to Mila Aguilar in the Philippines, who became politically active against the oppression of the Marcos regime through both prose and poetry writing (Chan, 1986) to Benazir Bhutto, who emerged as the first Asian female Muslim leader, the spirit of women from Asia from past to present carries on in Asian-American women in America. Their struggles continue across generations, across cultures, towards success for themselves, their families, and the human race over the globe.

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Notes Toward a Theory of Secondary Integration: Aporias of a Lost Paradigm

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Asian Americans' contributions and experiences add a unique dimension to the nation's ethnic mosaic. While they share many a commonality with other ethnic groups, excursus on the duality of their triumph and failure unfold a host of emerging issues in the study of post-industrial alienation. The premise of this article posits the Asian American experience in the context of secondary integration: a possible reality that, despite delimited access, allows space and humanity in the promised land.

You see now that the Takers and the Leavers accumulate two entirely different kinds of knowledge. . . . Now, you know that the knowledge of what works well for production is what's valued in your culture. In the same way the knowledge of what works well for people is what's valued in Leaver cultures. And every time the Takers stamp out a Leaver culture, a wisdom ultimately tested since the birth of [humankind] disappears from the world beyond recall, just as every time they stamp out a species of life, a life form ultimately tested since the birth of life disappears from the world beyond recall.

Daniel Quinn (1993: 206–207)

When appearance becomes a substitute for substance, life tends to lose its elemental quality. Ethnicity is more than appearance; it is a consciousness of the Being. Nonetheless, appearances ontologized by race, gender and class outweigh human essence and its meaning. The politics of objectivity thus obscures rational considerations; it demeans the purpose of democratic ideals.

I. Premise and Formulations

The diversity of Asian Americans is both a complex and confusing phenomenon.¹ While most Asian Americans—Chinese,

Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, and Vietnamese—owe historical ties in military and economic affairs with the United States, South Asians by and large remain a product of the post-Kennedy immigration policy. Aside from being people of diverse colors and cultures, the commonality of their collective experiences presents certain challenges to the integrity of the American Creed. Henry James, in a letter, once observed that “It is a complex fate being an American.” Identity reconstruction is a daunting challenge if secondary institutions—the custodians of civility—tend to be regressive in a host culture (Mohan, 1989: 199–212). This article represents aporias of a lost paradigm: We the people, Americans, are one nation guided by a common destiny blessed by the American Dream.

The concept of secondary integration is postulated on the motif that the American Dream has a chameleon character. While its meanings vary to different people, its essence has lost its inherent egalitarian edge. This loss of national innocence is represented by a network of barriers that work against the normal processes of assimilation, i.e., acculturation and integration.² The Asian American experience is a byproduct of this irrationality; its vicissitudes represent the death of an ideal. The following discussion analyzes a reality that, while Kafkaesque to many Asians, remains beyond the consciousness of most other Americans.

Milton Gordon conceptualized the notion of ethnic subsocieties which relate to one another mainly through the secondary relations of their members (Gordon, 1964). Since “primary integration” is neither a goal nor a possibility in a pluralist society organized around the principle of race, the notion of “secondary integration” assumes both legitimacy and importance. Its relevance partakes of special meaning for new immigrants who are often alienated from main stream America. Thus secondary integration, a conceptual reality that seeks to humanize the process of assimilation in an otherwise alien culture, is at the heart of being Asian American; without its connection, Asians remain either Asians or non-Americans.

The American ethnic mosaic has changed during recent decades. The complexity of assimilation, unevenness of pluralism and ubiquity of conflict have radically transformed the design of the ethnic mosaic to which pluralists generally refer. The

emerging paradigm is a new reality: The Asian American experience is an undeniable duality of diasporic existence. Notes toward a theory of secondary integration signifies the salience of civility that harmonizes "secondary" institutional culture in the service of the American Dream. The feckless incivility of contemporary culture reminds us "to regress to Martin Luther King's ideal. The content of one's character, not the color of one's skin, is the sole American criteria" (Morrow, 1994: 106). Lance Morrow succinctly sums up:

At the Lincoln Memorial, Martin Luther King said he looked forward to the day—his "dream"—when his four little children would not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. He was right then, and now. But from the time of King's death to the present, the country has sunk deeper into the swamp, the essential error." (Morrow, 1994: 106)

While assimilation takes place in American society as an outcome of interpersonal contacts, people of color generally remain alienated seeking accommodation within an inhospitable environment of conflicts. Primary integration is, therefore, a restricted experience of privilege; secondary integration, however, is a functional reality dictated by the rules of an organizational society that legislates civility but accepts racism as a reality. In other words, Asian Americans' assimilation in society is subject to the logic of secondary integration that allows access to a limited extent before glass-ceilings begin to thwart full actualization of the American Dream. "New racism" has fundamentally altered the rules of a pluralist polity. When race becomes enmeshed in public policy issues—whether it is for the purpose of affirmative action or social welfare—political principles as well as prejudice come into play (Sniderman and Piazza, 1993). The politics of race has confounded the ideals of a democratic society in the interest of the privileged groups. This calculated access-withdrawal design is an organizational strategy of ethnic exclusion. The pervasiveness of this phenomenon is refuted only by a few exceptions. A general exclusionary behavior and policy mark the design of a new paradox: Limited assimilation of an "unwanted" "model minority." The perpetual resentment against the "middleman minorities" is a baffling situation. Thomas Sowell wrote: "Middleman minorities

are most hated where they are most needed" (quoted by Raspberry, 1993: 9B). William Raspberry observes:

The outrage, curious enough, is less likely to be directed at the wealthy classes than at the middleman minorities who may be only a step or two above poverty themselves. It's as though even their modest success is a rebuke to poor among whom they do business. (Raspberry, 1993: 9B)

This analysis reflects the hope and despair of an alienated voice who seeks survival with dignity in "the swamps of unreason" (Mohan, 1996a: 59).

The population of Asian Americans has nearly doubled during the last two decades. Demographics aside, they have collectively established themselves as a stable, "overachieving" minority whose contributions are generally recognized in business, academia, medicine, science and the arts. Yet, it seems, Asian Americans have become a victim of their own success: Their delimited access to the reward and recognition system of the host society leaves behind a source of constant stress and strain that has not been adequately explored, let alone analyzed, by many social scientists. Fairness in the reward system is a necessary agent in the lubrication of an otherwise rusty process of integration. Since people of color with alien origins tend to maintain their ethnic identities, primary integration will remain confined to the emerging new ethclasses. Secondary integration, however, serves as the main bridge in the process of Becoming American. The Asian Americans, however, confront a daunting situation. Clarence Page clarifies this paradox:

Today's persecution often consists of benign deafness to Asian complaints since Asian immigrants have a higher household income than the national average for whites. Often left out is the salient fact that, while Asian immigrant income is high, individual Asian immigrant income still ranks below the national average for working whites. (Page, 1995: 7B)

The process of secondary integration in America is fraught with circumstances and barriers that are inherently Un-American. Nonetheless, Asians' divergence and exclusion is as glaring as their visibility and success. The duality of this Asian American

experience is at the heart of a paradox. "X" may be the most accomplished professional in his/her field, but s/he cannot get a well deserved merit raise, let alone due promotion. In the promised land, Anti-Asian stereotypes and prejudices mar the ethos of Being American. Rampant discrimination against Asians goes unnoticed, unprotested, undocumented and unacknowledged despite a general awareness of the phenomenon. The futility of legal and professional recourse to justice is usually marked by the Asians' powerlessness to represent their grievance. The politics of equity is so well designed that Asians by and large remain unrecognized in the overall structure of the social justice system. It is ironic that even in a culture that rewards merit, the rules of the game are not evenly followed in the competitive market of talents. Criteria are often arbitrarily used and unfairly imposed at the expense of organizational productivity. While adversely affected individuals and groups silently suffer, society as a whole pays a heavier price.

The purpose of a theory is to formulate and explain a possible causal relationship of/and/or a phenomenon. Assimilationist conformity is no substitute for the secular homogeneity of secondary relationships that constitute the fabric of a civil order. A plausible theory of secondary integration seeks to unravel the contradictions of Asian American diversity. Notes toward such a theory help unravel the complexity of the hyphenated Asian American existence that represents a perplexing dualism between Being and Becoming. A glossy passport, an acquired accent, and a new environment are not enough to smoothen the rough edges of a competitive secondary culture. To ward off the undesirable consequences of a possible dysfunctional encounter, it is imperative that regressive behaviors are avoided through strategic self-engineering which implies: goal-substitution, sublimation, and creative perceptual reorganization. This adaptive behavior, however, is a coping mechanism at best; it also is an escape from reality. To better understand the dynamics of secondary integration, three formulations are proffered here; each one relates to the identity, the ethos, and the Being of Asian Americans.

1. The experience of Being Asian American is largely a function of voluntary decisions and migratory patterns and policies.

2. The prevalence of prejudice and discrimination against Asian Americans is an evidence of denial, dissonance, and double standards.
3. The integrity of the American Dream is best reflected in the performance and promise of America's oppressed people regardless of their color and origin.

These three premises lay down the structure of Asian American existence. A unified generalization is offered as the synthesis of this framework: In the backdrop of the traditional Black and White paradigm, Asian American dualism emerges as a new dimension of the pluralist society. The polyglot mahogany of Asian Indians, for example, adds color to American diversity and enriches the American spirit of self-reliance by its own Karma. Secondary integration, postulated as a vehicle against incivility, is a surrogate force of immense significance for the survival of the American Dream.

II. Diversity: Contact, Context, and Conflict

Diversity is an exterior of essence. Contemporary discourse on diversity is largely oppositional and dichotomous. This approach is "flawed because it has made the assumption that similarities between people are opposite from the differences between them" (Jones in Trickett, Watts, and Birman, 1994: 27). James M. Jones writes:

When he was asked to compare himself with his famous father Yogi, Dale Berra observed: "I am a lot like him, only our similarities are different!" . . . Specifically, the apparent nonrationality of this statement is so judged because of our cultural penchant for dichotomous, absolute logical thinking. . . . Our conceptual, methodological, and statistical approaches operate so that the more difference we discover, the less similarity we posit. Conversely, the more alike things are, the less different they are. (Jones, 1994: 27-28)

Asians are a conspicuous minority in America. Their appearance—color, collar, and creed—defines their basic character which, in most organizational settings, threaten the latent culture of localism and mediocrity. White America lives in a state of denial; Asian Americans cannot afford this luxury. They live in

a state of unmitigated ambiguity. Stoically, they bear the pain of exclusion, exploitation, and humiliation. Their suffering goes unacknowledged because they have neither advocates nor any protective avenues. This is in contrast with a fellow immigrant from Europe who receives instant acceptance. If s/he is an "under-represented minority," the system nearly adopts him/her. On the contrary, Asian Americans begin their journey in a rather cold, sometimes even hostile, environment. Since their plight does not evoke any white guilt, their problems remain their own. Eventually, in spite of so many cultural and political barriers, they survive. American pluralism does lend them a framework that helps maintain their basic security. In many cases, this strange hospitality of the host society is far better than the given conditions of their native land. A folded-paper sculpture of two bald eagles—symbolizing the dreams and nightmares of 300 Chinese immigrants—is a "still-unfolding story about the endurance of the American dream" (Hirshberg, 1996: 68–75). Chau Tsai-Yun's experience is documented by Charles Hirshberg and Gregory Heisler in *Life*:

Three years ago, the *Golden Venture* ran aground just a few miles from the Statue of Liberty and 300 Chinese immigrants crawled ashore hoping to find freedom in America. What they found instead were American prisons. . . . The Clinton administration was putting new teeth into its immigration policy, and polls showed most Americans approved. The *Golden Venture's* passengers began to run a bureaucratic gauntlet, which, for most, continues to this day. After a few months of imprisonment, one refugee would remark to a reporter: "The United States is a lot like China." (Hirshberg, 1996: 69–72)

Immigrants' saga for freedom beyond their own oppressive cultures is a glaring testimony to the loftiness of the sparkling American dream. I came to this country in 1975 with \$8.00 by Air France. My plight is nowhere close to Chau's. I may be one of America's text book success-failure stories. I had suffered worse discrimination in India than any place in America. However, I had both friends and foes there. I could fight and even win. In the United States, I have only acquaintances that do not go beyond a secondary contact. This realm of functional and shallow

secondary relationships is, nonetheless, crucial for my survival. With a few exceptional encounters, I still remain a stranger despite my twenty years of dedicated service. Appeals and protests have limited value; their strength in a political environment depends on the clout of the petitioner. A documented appeal may well offer a cathartic outlet, however, it is an impotent vehicle of recourse without political support. "Act locally," has become a motif of attaining instant success by thriving on the malignancy of the latent power. It is about time to change this euphemistic paradigm: we must think critically and act globally (Mohan, 1996b).

We are unlike other ethnic groups yet our similarities abound in countless ways. With the sole exception of African Americans, most of us came to the promised land voluntarily. Our diversities affirm our common commitment to the ideals of this nation. Unlike many others from Asia, I unequivocally support affirmative policies for the uplift of historically oppressed people. I have never made a claim, nor do I intend to do so now, for myself based on ethnic or other similar ground. I believe in hard work and I expect due recognition based on my merit. The problem arises when the quality of one's work and contributions is conveniently ignored and the appearance factor becomes a measure of humanity. This amounts to the perversion of the American Creed.

My humanity transcends my ethnicity. However, I have seldom come across an organization which would look at my resume from a color-origin-blind perspective. I am given a "minority" status without being a "minority." The contextual outcomes define my minority status. In other words, my humanity and productivity have lost their meanings in a system which is wedded to the constitutional guarantees against prejudice and discrimination. Each organization has its own work ethic and norms of behavior. Racist organizations, however, look at Asian Americans purely as functionaries devoid of humanity. We are "unwanted minorities" who are marginally accepted to perform a specific role at the lowest rate. Since our horizontal mobility is restricted due to lack of network, the old boys' culture muffles our vertical development under the shadows of glass ceilings. Apartheid is a strong term and slavery is much too strong a word. But I know cases where careers have been ruined when

eminent Asian scholars have been subjected to virtual academic slavery in the Ivory towers. Asian American acquiescence is a general phenomenon born out of fear, anxiety and insecurity. A neoplantation mentality characterizes certain organizational cultures. Social institutions that sustain such barriers to human equality promote *democracies of unfreedom* (Mohan, 1996). To the contrary, the arrogance of "super yankees"³ from Europe, South Africa, and Australia demonstrates the evidence of a privileged class which dwarfs the intensity of the traditional Indian caste system. In other words, a new caste system is developing in America; Asian Americans are the new victims of this oligarchy. Obviously Asian ingenuity is no match to the power of the "Wasp Ascendancy."⁴ Diversities, in such a hierarchical culture, promote "new sovereignties" (Steele, 1992) which are at best insensitive to the needs and aspirations of "strangers from different shores" (Takaki, 1989).

I was recently interviewing at a nationally prominent university for an administrative position. In a large public gathering mainly thronged by students, a female student asked: "A majority of us are females in this school. Why should we hire you?" Obviously the outcome of my interview was predetermined by my anatomical features. Feminism is fraught with its own contradictions. The system applies double—in fact multiple—standards when it comes to assessing the merits of different immigrant groups. Usually, African Americans, Jews and Asian Americans get a raw deal in the general drama of recognition and reward. Some groups are expendable. Their vulnerabilities, however, make a mockery of the system that prides itself on its civility.

Asian Americans' appeals for justice are usually ignored and overlooked. "Lack of communication" is euphemistically used as an alibi to justify blatant injustice. An Asian American once wrote a lengthy letter to an administrator protesting against his rude and arbitrary behavior. Instead of receiving a sympathetic hearing, the aggrieved author was crudely declared mentally sick. The officially commissioned diagnosis was based on the review of his memorandum which was replete with indignation and pain grammar. Documentation of acts and events of harassment, bigotry, and injustice seldom transcends a cathartic value because the system protects and promotes its own people. One tends to

give up if the guardians of equality and justice pamper the perpetrators. The echoes of silence convey an eerie message: "Why don't you go back to your own country?"

In 1986, I was invited to present a paper at the XI *World Congress of Sociology* (Mohan 1986) held in New Delhi. Also, on the heels of this congress, I delivered a paper to the XXIII *International Congress of Schools of Social Work* in Tokyo (Mohan, 1986a). In spite of pre-approved travel authorizations for both conferences, the Vice chancellor I reported to declined to reimburse any expenses, even the registration fee, on the ground that I "had gone over to India." "I did not go to India," I said. "I was invited to deliver a paper to the World Congress of Sociology which was held in New Delhi." The Anti-Asian travel allowance policy of an administration is not an issue here.⁵ The point I am trying to make is that even our best moments are sometimes tastelessly trivialized, arbitrarily rejected and ungraciously belittled in the interest of our competing rivals who subtly use 'race' by denying the prevalence of racism. In other words, our affiliation to and contact with our origin is used against us. We are shortchanged by our own diversity. The "conspiracy of silence," to use Clarence Page's expression (1996), exonerates the perpetrators and condones bigotry at the expense of America's new citizens.

White skin is worth more than any other color. Ted Koppel's recent investigation vividly showed how prevalent and explosive is the issue of race in America (ABC, 1996). African Americans' oppression is a staggering outcome of institutional racism and the legacy of slavery. Asian Americans are not slaves of the old system; they are servants of an organizational culture that needs them for particular roles and positions to a certain level. Beyond this functional necessity, their existence is a meaningless presence under the fabulous glass ceilings.

The promise and pitfalls of the American Dream have systemic implications for our children. Author Nicholas Lemann explores what happens when Asian Americans become the "new jews":

There is another ethnic group in America whose children devote their free time not to hockey but to extra study. . . . This group is Asian Americans. At the front end of the American meritocratic machine, Asians are replacing Jews as the No. 1 group. They are

winning the science prizes and scholarships. Meanwhile Jews, at our moment of maximum triumph at the back end of the meritocracy, the midlife, top-job end, are discovering sports and the virtues of being well rounded. Which is cause and which is effect here is an open question. But as Asians become America's new Jews, Jews are becoming . . . Episcopalians. Scratching out an existence in Phase 1, maniacal studying in Phase 2, sports in Phase 3. Watch out for Asian-American hockey players in about 20 years (*Slate in Time*, 1996: 16–17).

The primary immigrant of my generation may never see the Phase 3 but most of our children are unlikely to become Episcopalians. Their strife—thanks to the Jewish model—will remain confined to the secondary institution from the ivory towers to the hockey field. It is heartening to foresee the sprawling lush of Asian hockey; it's suffocating to feel the continued venality in the ivory towers. Few documented case studies are available about the magnitude of oppression that the Asian Americans suffer. However, there is no lack of evidence that the phenomenon is rampant on the campuses despite a general neurosis of denial. Derick Bell's *Faces at the Bottom of the Well* (1992) and Monte Piliawsky's *Exit 13: Oppression and Racism in Academia* (1982) allude to the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

Diversity, as a manifestation of "multiculturalism," is both transcendental and universal. According to Samuel Fleischacker it is deeply rooted in the Western tradition. J.G. von Herder, whom Fleischacker considers the founder of "multiculturalism" emphasizes a relativism that synthesizes nationalist and universalist elements at the expense of ethnocentrism:

We must look outside our own culture, he says, indeed to all the cultures in the world, to determine how and why our life is valuable, but he says this because relation is to be found precisely in that variety of views. And because he looks to *all* cultures as a source of revelation, rather than to *other* cultures as a consequence of the bankruptcy of the West, Herder manages to be simultaneously a nationalist and universalist, a promoter of German folk traditions and a denouncer of all, including German, ethnocentrism (Fleischacker, 1996: 18).

Post-industrial diversity is both functional and postcolonial. In the new world order one finds little room for myopic parochialism

and triumphal expansionism. Yet the reality is that internationalism and imperialism seem to overlap in the fog of the post-Cold War era. This dubious development of diverse cultures is thriving in the wallows of American pluralism. The emergence of "diverse" hues beyond the traditional black-white model, is changing the whole calculus and design. The paradigm lost is not this established pattern but the transcendental ideal of diversity that springs from Western tradition.

In celebrating the flowering of the diversity movement, some of us have lost sight of the affirmative-positive dimension of diversity. Instead, a cultist orthodoxy permeates the new culture of diversity where a valueless—or, let us say, a sectarian, parochial point of view—is the only way to approach. This perspective is unAmerican and anti-diversity. Freedom of ideology and/or religion does not absolve a particular group of its civic obligation to others. However, acceptance of wholesale diversity is "essentially a form of normlessness" (Longres, 1996: 159). John Longres has a point:

Diversity is not an inherent good, as the standard implies, nor is it an inherent evil. Diversity is a fact of social life. It leads to richness, as we so often hear in the social work literature, but it also leads inevitably to conflict. (1996: 158)

The politics of race, gender, and class has obscured the value dimension of diversity. Individuals and groups that do not "fit into" an established pattern instantly become pariahs of the emerging exclusionary culture which demeans ethnic groups that are alien to the established norms.

Asian Americans find America a fertile land of promises and disappointments. The future of their children as "new jews" is fraught with stereotypes that die hard. Their present is mired in a divisive culture that has increasingly become less tolerant. By and large, they all remain anchored in a past that is simmering in the subconsciousness of their dualistic existence. Secularization of culture may not be a panacea for all social ills but it is a preferable paradigm against the perils of incivility. New immigrants, especially from Afro-Asian countries, bring along with them a cultural baggage that is usually at odds with the latent elements of the primary institutions of the host country. Their own politics

perpetuates regressive behaviors that are incompatible with the ideals of American democracy. Hopefully, it is the humanity of the secondary institutions that will safeguard the contexts, contents, and constructs of multiversity.

The Takers' neoplantation mind set is a regression of the American Dream. The Leavers' seduction in a culturally alienating prison exemplifies a classic dilemma that the hunter-gatherers have always lived (Quinn, 1993: 220; 228). The new paradigm—eclipsed under the Hobbesian-Darwinian clouds—of human existence is still an unborn reality. However, the old one can be reinvented if bridges can be built across the barriers of race, gender, class and national origin. This may eventually vindicate the triumph of the American Creed.

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Notes

- 1 The term "Asian American" is identical to the U.S. Census Bureau category of "Asian and Pacific Islander." According to the 1990 census, there are 28 different Asian groups and 21 different Pacific Islander groups. The growth of Asian-American community, both in size and diversity, is noteworthy: The 1.6 million people of Chinese decent top the list, followed by Filipinos (1.4 million), Japanese (848,000), Asian Indians (815,000), and Koreans (799,000). Koreans, Vietnamese, and Asian Indians are likely to overtake the Japanese. However, Chinese and Filipinos doubtless will remain the two most populous groups (*The Advocate*, 1992: 4B). Asian-Americans will grow to 20 million, or more than 6 percent of the total population by the year 2020, according to a report entitled "The State of Asian Pacific America." Shirley Hune, University of California at Los Angeles, writes in the introduction of this study: "For over a quarter of a century, Asian Pacific Americans have been the fastest growing minority group in the United States. We are an integral part of the country's

historical development and its future." Paul Ong, one of the contributors, divided most Asian-Americans into six ethnic groups: Chinese 23 percent; Filipino, 19 percent; Japanese 12 percent; Indian and Korean 11 percent each; and Vietnamese 8 percent. Asian-Americans now number about 7.3 million or 3 percent of the population. Ong's study showed that 64 percent of the Asian-American population is foreign-born now. This percentage will fall but still be more than half in 2020. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. population is projected to be 320 million in year 2020 (*The Associated Press*, 1993: 6A).

- 2 There is an evidence of rise in racially motivated violence in the South (Sullivan, 1993). Asian-bashing is not a new phenomenon, however. Public and social policies continue to be divisive and discriminatory. The concept of "model minority" itself is stereotypical attempt to isolate and disengage the Asians from the mainstream America. Frank H. Wu, Stanford Law School, is right in his contention when he says that much of the current concern voiced on behalf of Asian Americans is disingenuous since it puts Asians against African-Americans, as if one group could succeed only by the failure of the other. "The real risk to Asian-Americans," he writes, "is that they will be squeezed out to provide proportionate representation to whites, not due to marginal impact of setting aside a few spaces for African-Americans" (quoted by Page, 1995: 7B).
- 3 Phrase owed to Gunnar Myrdal (*See* Southern, 1987).
- 4 Joseph Alsop's expression (quoted by Blumenthal, 1996: 225).
- 5 A well documented administrative appeal was submitted to the President, LSU System, on November 8, 1989. It chronicled the plight of an individual against institutional racism in general and certain manipulative administrators in particular. Officially, it never received any attention but, unofficially, the murky events that followed became my nightmare. I am yet to recover from the irreparable loss that I suffered during those years.

Asian American Experiences: A View from the Other Side

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President Truman is said to have complained about his assistants for giving him advice "on the other hand" as well as the first one. He joked about his wish to find an advisor who has only one arm. As one of the two guest editors for the present special issue on Asian American Experience, I have been surprised by the fact that all manuscripts submitted discuss what I call "negative" side of the Asian American experiences.

Beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Japanese Internment in 1942 through the arrival of Indochinese refugees in recent years, the Asian American experiences have been primarily negative: discrimination, exclusion, exploitation, humiliation, oppression, prejudice, and the trauma of transition. During these periods, Asian Americans had often been depicted negatively by the majority as inscrutable Orientals, or immoral, treacherous heathens (Daniels, 1971; Gold & Kibria, 1993; McKenzie, 1928; Morales & Nishinaka, 1981).

These negative sides of the Asian American experience continue to exist. In fact, Asian American bashing as part of immigrant bashing in general, and hate crimes against Asian Americans are increasing. The glass-ceilings are not coming down. The double standards of the Affirmative Action applied to Asian Americans are being strengthened (Tsang, 1994; Watanabe, 1995a, 1995b). Although Shibutani and Kwan (1956) believed that assimilation of Asian Americans is inevitable, it is only a secondary, not the primary, integration (Gordon, 1964). The primary integration of Asian Americans is still far away, although Okihiro (1994) believes that they are moving from margin to the mainstream of the American society.

These negative experiences are a reality. I am living a daily life of this reality myself. But it is only a partial reality, not the

whole reality. There is another, a positive, side of the reality. It is desirable, if not a requirement, for a scientific journal such as this one to present both sides of the reality. I have therefore waited until the last day of our "Call for Papers." No luck. This article is presented as a "last resort."

Observers of the positive side of Asian American experiences describe Asian Americans as "model minority" (Petersen, 1966, 1971) or "paragons" (Rose, 1985). Even when they studied the negative aspect (prejudice), Daniels and Kitano (1970) found Asian Americans to be "the most successful, the most middle-class, the most respected" of the non-white groups in America (see also Kitano, 1969). Kitano and Daniels (1988) now characterize Asian Americans as "emerging minorities" (see also Kitano & Sue, 1973). The public image has also become more positive by characterizing Asian Americans as "hard-working, successful model minorities" (Hurh & Kim, 1986).

Proponents of the model minority thesis are in general mass media reporters, while its critics are mostly social scientists (Kim & Hurh, 1986). I should not, then, have been shocked by the absence of manuscripts submitted in response to the "Call for Papers" for this special issue. If the trend is still in vogue, I should not have expected to receive articles describing positive aspects of Asian American experiences.

Critics argue that the notion of Asian Americans as a model minority is a myth, not a reality. They do not believe the laudatory remarks by the majority about Asian Americans as the successful minority are sincere, nor do they believe that the majority truly admire Asian Americans. In the critics' view, the majority simply use this myth as a way of overlooking the needs of Asian Americans or creating a new form of discrimination. Thus, Chun (1980), for example, noted that the model minority thesis began emerging in the 1960s when the nation was groping for solutions to its racial unrest. At that time, the portrayal of Asian Americans as a successful minority seemed to serve a need, which was to blame African Americans and other minorities for their own failures (Hurh & Kim, 1986). Gould (1988) believes that this myth is also used by the majority to argue that Asian Americans no longer need protection under the Affirmative Action (see also Hopps, 1982; Longress, 1982; Maguire, 1980).

The debate in the social science literature result, in part, from the confusion over the definition of the population under consideration. Asian Americans are, of course, people from Asia and their descendants. But it is not easy to say who Asian Americans are. The difficulty is in part due to the fact that Asia is a vast continent ranging from eastern Turkey to eastern Russia (Siberia) including Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has recently decided to classify the following five former Soviet Republics as Asian nations: Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) classifies people from all Asian nations as Asians including those from Middle East but excluding those from Turkey, Russia, and former Soviet Republics (the most recent IOC-member nations).

The Bureau of the Census, on the other hand, exclude people from Middle and Near East (all nations west of Pakistan) from the classification of Asians. However, the census classification adds Pacific Islanders to form a broader category of Asian/Pacific Islanders. Pacific Islanders in the census reports include Hawaiians, although they may be better combined with Aleutians, Eskimos, and American Indians to form a new category of "Native Americans."

In the social science literature, it is customary to use the census category rather than the INS classification. According to the Census Bureau, there are 18 Asian groups and 9 Pacific Islander groups (see Table 1). The 1990 census data shows that there are 7,273,662 Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, of which 6,908,638 (2.8 percent of U.S. population) are Asians and 365,024 (0.1 percent) Pacific Islanders (Bennett, 1992). The majority (57.8%) of the Pacific Islanders are Hawaiians.

Critics of the model minority thesis such as Gould (1988) usually show data on Pacific Islanders such as Guamians and Samoans or more recent immigrants from Southeast Asia—Cambodians, Hmongs, Laotians, and Vietnamese to describe their conditions in need of services and support. Proponents, on the other hand, generally refer to Asians to mean a more narrowly selected subgroups—Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, and Koreans to indicate their success in America. In fact, when the

Table 1

U.S Population by Race, 1980 and 1990

Race	1980		1990	
	Population	%	Population	%
U.S.	226,545,805	100.0*	248,709,873	100.0*
White	188,371,622	83.1	199,686,070	80.3
Black	26,495,025	11.7	29,986,060	12.1
Hispanic ^a	14,608,673	6.4	22,806,579	9.2
Other	5,767,668	2.5	9,804,847	3.9
Native ^b	1,534,336	0.7	1,959,234	0.8
Asian/PI	3,725,987	1.6	7,273,662	2.9
Asian	3,466,481	1.5	6,908,638	2.8
Chinese	812,178		1,645,472	
Filippino	781,894		1,406,770	
Japanese	716,391		847,562	
Indian	387,223		815,447	
Korean	357,393		798,849	
Vietnamese	245,025		614,547	
Laotian	47,683		149,014	
Thai	45,279		91,275	
Cambodian	16,044		147,411	
Pakistani	15,792		81,371	
Indonesian	9,618		29,252	
Hmong	5,204		90,082	
Malayan	**		12,243	
Bangaldashi	**		11,838	
Sri Lankan	**		10,970	
Burmese	**		6,177	
Okinawan	**		2,247	
Other Asian	26,757		148,111	
Pacific Islander	259,566	0.1	365,024	0.1
Hawaiian	172,346		211,014	
Samoaan	39,520		62,964	
Guamanian	30,695		49,345	
Tongan	6,226		17,606	

Continued

Table 1

Continued

Race	1980		1990	
	Population	%	Population	%
Fijian	2,834		7,036	
Palauan	***		1,439	
N. Mariana Is	***		960	
Tahitian	***		944	
Other PI	7,945		13,716	

* 100 percent without Hispanic

** Included in other Asian

*** Included in other Pacific Islander

^a Hispanic of any race^b American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleutian

term "model minority" was coined by Petersen (1966), he was referring to only one subgroup, Japanese Americans. In their study on Asian Americans, Gardner, Robey and Smith (1989) focused on six largest groups: Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, Japanese, Koreans, and Vietnamese. I will do the same in this article.

Critics of the model minority thesis usually describe the negative aspect of Asian American experiences at personal or interpersonal levels. Therefore, data they use in their writings are mostly those collected from the individuals. Proponents, on the other hand, tend to use aggregate data. In this article, I will use data primarily on proportions and averages.

Critics also write about negative experiences in political terms. When Asian Americans are denied promotions unfairly, for example, and appeal this injustice, their grievances are usually dismissed. An INS report indicates that 36.6 percent of all immigrants to the United States in 1994 were from Asia. Welfare "reform" and immigration "reform" bills, if adopted into law, will have a significantly great negative impact on Asian American community. So, they sent their messages of opposition to Washington, but their voices of protest are largely ignored. They can do very little about these, because they have no political power to

do so. Democracy is, after all, a rule by and for the majority. The majority is essentially defined in terms of the number of votes at the elections. Although the size of Asian American population is increasing "rapidly," it is still very small at 3.7 percent in 1994 and that doesn't count very much.

Proponents of the model minority thesis, on the other hand, tend to focus their observations on education and economic status of Asian Americans. In this article, I will also discuss achievements of Asian Americans in education and economic arena.

Educational Performance

Perhaps the most salient area in which Asian Americans are successful is in the field of education. In 1987 Mike Wallace reported on the model minority in the CBS program, 60 Minutes, a success story of four Vietnamese high school students who were boat people. By the same token, Doerner (1985) noted that Asians represented far beyond their population share (1.5 percent) at virtually every top-ranking university: 18.7% at Cal Tech, 18.6% at Berkeley, 10.9% at Harvard, and 8.7% at Princeton. At Columbia, enrollment in the engineering school is more than 20 percent Asian. In the 1985 Westinghouse Science Talent Search, nine of the 40 semi-finalists were Asians, as were three of the 10 winners. In 1980 only 1.5 percent of the U.S. population were Asians. In contrast, Asian Americans represented 26 percent of the undergraduate enrollment at Berkeley (Levine, 1988; for similar reports, see, e.g., *Christian Science Monitor*, 1985; *Los Angeles Times*, 1977; *Newsweek*, 1971; *Time*, 1983; and *U.S. News & World Report*, 1966). As a result of the recent decision by the University of California System Board to repeal the Affirmative Action policy, the enrollment of Asian American students at Berkeley and other UC campuses may further increase.

The success stories of Asian American students are supported by data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education. NCES conduct a number of studies including National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS). The 1988 NELS data show that among all 8th graders, Asian American children had the highest percent (35%) of "Advanced" proficiency in mathematics, in contrast to 23 percent of

white, 9 percent Hispanic, 6 percent African American, and 6 percent Native American children (Foster, Landes & Binford, 1990). One may argue that the high educational performance of Asian American children is a reflection of the high family income. Thus, data on "Advanced" proficiency was decomposed into those from low SES families and high SES families. The disaggregated data reveal a similar result. See Columns E and F in Table 2. In both cases, Asian American children performed better than children of all other races.

Another NCES study is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The 1986 NAEP data indicate that the percent of Asian American 11th graders who performed at the "Advanced" level of reading (English) proficiency is about the same as that of white students (see Table 3), dispelling the myth that Asian American children excel only in mathematics or sciences (Foster, Landes & Binford, 1990). In fact, Asian American children in the 1988 NELS study (Table 4) scored higher in all four subjects (history, reading, mathematics, and science) than all other four groups (Snyder & Hoffman, 1994).

Table 2

Percentage of 8th Graders by Mathematics Proficiency Level and by Race, 1988

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Asian	14	30	21	35	18	54
White	16	37	24	23	7	40
Hispanic	28	46	17	9	4	25
Black	30	48	16	6	2	21
Native	32	49	13	6	—	—

Source: National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS)

— Data not available

A Below basic level

B Basic level

C Intermediate level

D Advanced level

E Advanced level among children of low SES (bottom 25 percent) families

F Advanced level among children of high SES (top 25 percent) families

Table 3

Percentage of 11th Graders by Reading Proficiency Level and by Race: 1986

	Below Basic	Basic	Advanced
White	10.4	50.7	38.9
Asian	14.8	47.3	37.9
Hispanic	21.0	58.6	20.5
Black	23.6	58.1	18.3
Native	27.3	52.4	15.4

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress

Table 4

Tenth Grader's Achievement Test Scores on Four Subjects by Race: 1988

	History	Mathematics	Reading	Science
Asian	55.1	57.3	54.3	55.7
White	54.6	54.5	54.3	54.8
Hispanic	53.7	52.2	52.2	52.6
Black	51.6	49.3	49.8	49.7
Native	46.0	44.9	45.0	45.9

Source: National Education Longitudinal Study

The educational success of Asian Americans is also demonstrated in their average SAT scores (Table 5), and the average number of Carnegie units earned (Table 6). Their verbal scores are lower but their mathematics scores are higher than those of whites with their combined scores being almost the same (937 and 934). The Asian American children's combined SAT score is higher than those of all other minority groups.

More Asian American children are in college preparatory programs and plan to go to college than white or any other minority children. For example, in 1992, 50.9 percent of Asian American students were in college preparatory programs, and 83.4 percent

Table 5

Average SAT Scores by Race: 1980 to 1990

	Verbal			Mathematics		
	1980	1985	1990	1980	1985	1990
All students	424	431	424	466	475	476
White	442	449	442	482	490	491
Asian	396	404	410	509	518	528
Other Race	390	391	410	449	448	467
Mexican	372	382	380	413	426	429
Puerto Rican	350	368	359	394	409	405
Black	330	346	352	360	376	385

Source: Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

Table 6

Average Number of Carnegie Units Earned by Public High School Graduates by Subjects and Race: 1982 to 1992

	Total	English	Soc Sci	Math	Science	Other
Asian	22.18	3.82	3.19	3.14	2.59	9.43
White	21.51	3.84	3.19	2.59	2.24	9.65
Native	21.32	3.92	3.22	2.09	1.96	10.14
Hispanic	21.19	3.88	3.02	2.26	1.79	10.24
Black	21.13	4.06	3.09	2.53	2.04	9.41

Source: Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

planned to go college, as compared to 45.7 percent and 76.6 percent respectively of white students, less of other minority students (Table 7).

Positive or successful characteristics of Asian American students are also evident in their attendance record. The dropout rate of Asian American children (8.2 percent) is lower than that of white (14.8) and other minority children. They miss school less, and are tardy less often than children of any other groups (Table 8).

Table 7

Percent of High School Seniors by Programs and Race: 1982 and 1992

	College Prep		General		Vocational		Plan*	
	1982	1992	1982	1992	1982	1992	1982	1992
All	37.9	43.0	35.2	45.3	26.9	11.7	58.3	76.6
Asian	55.9	50.9	27.5	40.3	16.6	8.8	81.7	83.4
White	40.6	45.7	34.8	43.3	24.6	11.0	60.2	76.6
Black	33.3	35.6	35.1	48.9	31.6	15.4	57.5	75.2
Hispanic	24.9	30.6	37.4	56.4	37.7	13.1	45.6	75.4
Native	19.1	22.6	55.3	60.8	25.6	16.7	48.5	65.7

Source: Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

* Plan to go to college right after high school

Table 8

Dropout and Completion Rates, and Median School Years Completed by Race

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Asian	8.2	24.4	38.3	87.1	22.7	50.0	72.7	13.7
White	14.8	35.4	34.2	85.8	26.5	45.0	76.5	12.8
Black	22.2	27.1	41.1	86.5	22.1	53.9	77.7	—
Hispanic	27.9	41.9	45.5	75.8	27.1	56.6	67.9	—
Native	35.5	41.9	50.1	81.4	28.6	55.6	73.7	—

Sources:

For A, Foster, Landes, & Binford (1990)

For B–G, Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

For H, Bennett (1992)

A: High school sophomore cohort dropout rate, 1980

B: Percent of 10th graders who missed 5 or more days in first half of 1990

C: Percent of 10th graders who are late (tardy) 3 or more days in first half of 1990

D: Percent of 10th graders who never or almost never cut classes in 1990

E: Percent of 12th graders who missed 7 or more days in first half of 1992

F: Percent of 12th graders who are late (tardy) 3 or more days in first half of 1992

G: Percent of 12th graders who never or almost never cut classes in 1992

H: Median school years completed, 1991

A majority of Asian American students do go to college, as planned. Their college enrollment is higher than their population share, at all three levels. Only 2.9 percent of the general population are Asian Americans, but 4.3 percent of undergraduate, 3.8 percent of graduate, and 7 percent of professional students are Asian Americans (Table 9).

As more Asian American students are enrolled in colleges, they do complete their programs in higher proportions. Only 2.9 percent of the general population are Asian Americans, but they earned 3.8 percent of baccalaureate, 3.3 percent of master's, 3.2 percent of doctoral, and 4.8 percent of professional degrees (Table 10). It is noteworthy that Asian Indians ranked number 1 among Asian Americans (and probably among all racial/ethnic groups) in this regard. More than half of Asian Indian adult (25 or older) population earned a college degree—25.3 percent baccalaureate, 27.3 percent master's, and 5.8 percent doctoral degrees (Table 11).

Asians do better in sciences. According to the 1993 Survey of Doctoral Recipients conducted by the National Science Foundation, 36.5 percent of all Ph.D.'s in engineering, 30.5 percent

Table 9

Percent of Population and College Enrollment by Race, 1980 and 1990

	1980				1990			
	Pop	UE	GE	PE	Pop	UE	GE	PE
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	83.1	82.7	85.5	90.4	90.3	79.0	86.6	82.6
Black	11.7	9.9	6.0	4.7	12.1	9.8	5.9	5.9
Hispanic	6.4	4.2	2.6	2.4	9.2	6.2	3.3	4.0
Native	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.4
Asian	1.6	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.9	4.3	3.8	7.0

Sources: Bureau of the Census (1994); Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

Pop: Population

UE: Undergraduate enrollment

GE: Graduate enrollment

PE: Professional school enrollment

Table 10

Percent Distribution of Degrees Earned by Level and Race, 1990

	Population	A	B	M	D	P
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	80.3	82.1	83.6	78.1	67.9	85.2
Black	12.1	7.8	6.0	4.8	3.0	4.8
Hispanic	9.2	4.9	3.4	2.5	2.1	3.4
Native	0.8	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.4
Other	3.9	1.4	2.7	11.1	23.5	1.5
Asian	2.9	3.0	3.8	3.3	3.2	4.8

Sources: Bureau of the Census (1994); Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

Notes: For population data, white and black include Hispanic origin and "other" includes both citizen and noncitizen

For degree data, white and black exclude Hispanic origin and "other" means nonresident aliens.

A: Associate degrees

B: Baccalaureate degrees

M: Master's degrees

D: Doctoral degrees

P: Professional degrees

in mathematics and computer sciences, 23.4 percent in physical sciences, and 13.9 percent in life sciences were received by Asians in comparison to only 6.8 percent in social sciences (Table 12).

Economic Accomplishments

The Doerner (1985) article mentioned earlier also featured success stories of Asian immigrants in their economic activities (see also Washington Post, 1978). These observations are supported by census data. The higher level of educational attainment of Asian Americans result in higher level of employment (lower level of unemployment). In 1992, the percentages of Asian Americans with a college degree in civilian labor force were 55 percent for males and 47 percent for females, twice the figures for non-Hispanic whites (Carnoy, 1984).

The unemployment rate of Asian Americans (4.2 percent) was lower than that of whites (4.8 percent) in 1990 (Bennett, 1992).

Table 11

Educational Attainment of Asian Americans 25 years of age and over, 1990

	Population	%	A	B	M	D
Chinese	1,074,009	100	59.3	21.7	15.6	3.5
Filipino	866,022	100	60.3	31.9	7.3	0.5
Japanese	623,511	100	65.6	24.4	8.8	1.3
Indian	461,631	100	41.6	25.3	27.3	5.8
Korean	452,333	100	55.6	21.9	10.6	1.9
Vietnamese	300,999	100	83.2	12.4	3.9	0.5
Laotian	65,002	100	93.4	4.6	1.8	0.2
Cambodian	62,367	100	93.6	4.8	1.2	0.4
Thai	57,443	100	66.8	19.9	12.3	1.0
Hmong	27,114	100	96.8	2.2	0.7	0.3
Other	136,082	100	58.3	21.9	17.4	2.4

Source: Shinagawa (1996)

A: Less than baccalaureate

B: Baccalaureate degrees

M: Master's degrees

D: Doctoral degrees

Table 12

Percent Distribution of Asians receiving Doctoral Degrees by Field, 1993*

Field	Percent
Engineering	36.5
Mathematics/Computer Sciences	30.5
Physical Sciences	23.4
Life Sciences	13.9
Social Sciences	6.8

Source: National Science Foundation, Survey of Doctoral Recipients

* includes non-residents

Japanese Americans have the lowest (2 percent) unemployment rate, and four other groups (Chinese, Filipino, Asian Indian, and Korean) also have 4 percent or lower unemployment rate (Table 13).

As they attain higher education, Asian Americans land themselves in "higher" occupations. The percentage of Asian Americans in the managerial and professional occupations (35.9) is

Table 13

Percent Distribution of Asian Americans Labor Force and Unemployment

	A	B
Chinese (a)	68	3
(b)	65	3
Filipino (a)	72	4
(b)	76	4
Japanese (a)	69	2
(b)	55	2
Indian (a)	48	4
(b)	74	4
Korean (a)	56	3
(b)	64	3
Vietnamese (a)	58	6
(b)	65	5
Thai (a)	58	6
(a)	65	5
Laotian (a)	51	2
(b)	58	5
Cambodian (a)	63	16
(b)	48	4
Hmong (a)	20	—
(b)	29	5

Source: Jiobu (1996)

A: In labor force, percent of population

B: Unemployed, percent of labor force

a: Native (U.S.) born

b: Immigrant (foreign born)

higher than that of whites (27.2) or total population (26.4) in 1990. It is noteworthy again that Asian Indians ranked number one of all Asians (and probably all others). Nearly 30 percent of Asian Indians are in professional occupations (Table 14). One of the examples of the professional occupations is, of course, college professorship. While only 2.9 percent of the population are Asian Americans, they constitute 10.3 percent of faculty in medical schools and 11 percent of faculty in engineering schools (Table 15).

With higher education and in higher occupations than other groups, Asian Americans have higher income than others (Table 16). Their median family income (\$47,021), household income (\$38,450), and individual income (\$26,051) in 1990 were higher than all other groups including whites. It is noteworthy again that Asian Indians rank number 1 among all Asians (and probably all other groups) in terms of the mean income of workers (\$60,903). This is expected in a way as they rank number 1 in

Table 14

Percent Distribution of Asian Americans, by Occupation 1990

	Managerial	Professional	Both
U.S.	12.3	14.1	26.4
White	—	—	27.2a
Asian	12.6	18.1	30.7
	—	—	35.9a
Chinese	15.1	20.7	35.8
Filipino	10.3	16.4	26.7
Japanese	17.5	19.4	36.9
Indian	14.0	29.6	43.6
Korean	12.0	13.5	25.5
Vietnamese	6.1	11.5	17.6
Thai	9.6	14.0	23.6
Laotian	1.8	3.3	5.1
Cambodian	4.0	5.8	9.8
Hmong	3.4	9.4	12.8

Sources: Bennett (1992) for a; Shinagawa (1996) for the rest

Table 15

Percent of Population and Full-Time Regular Instructional Faculty in Institutions of Higher Education (Fall, 1987) by Race

	P80	P90	FT	FM	FB	FE	FH	FS
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	83.1	80.3	89.5	85.3	88	87	88	91
Black	11.7	12.1	3.2	3.0	4	*	2	2
Hispanic	6.4	9.2	2.3	*	1	2	1	1
Native	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.4	1	*	1	*
Asian	1.6	2.9	4.2	10.3	6	11	7	6

* Less than 0.5 percent

P80: Population 1980

P90: Population 1990

FT: Faculty total (Fall 1987)

FM: Faculty in medical schools

FB: Faculty in business

FE: Faculty in engineering

FH: Faculty in health

FS: Faculty in science

Source: Snyder & Hoffman (1994)

Notes: For population data, white and black include Hispanic origin

For faculty data, white and black exclude Hispanic origin

the proportions of doctoral degrees earned and of being in the professional occupations.

Asian Americans also have higher percentages of households and families earning \$100,000 or more (8.3 and 9.7 percent respectively) in 1992 than any other groups including whites (Table 17). There are also more Asian American households and families than those of whites who earned \$75,000 or more in 1990 than those of whites (15.0 and 17.7 percent vs. 9.7 and 12.2 percent respectively). In addition, 13.9 percent of Asian American males in civilian labor force had earnings of \$50,000 or more in 1990, as compared to 12.5 percent of whites. Similarly, more Asian American (5.3 percent) year-round, full-time workers earned \$75,000 or more in 1990 than white (4.1 percent) workers of this category (Bennett, 1992).

Table 16

Median Income by Race, 1980 and 1990

Race	1980a	1990a	1990b	1990c
All	\$19,917	\$35,353	\$29,943	\$24,965
White	20,835	41,922	31,231	25,638
Black	12,598	23,550	18,676	—
Hispanic	13,712	23,431	22,230	—
Native	13,723	23,912	19,900	8,284
Asian	22,713	47,021	38,450	26,051
	—	—	53,104*	22,579*
Japanese	27,354	—	59,689*	28,257*
Indian	24,990	—	60,903*	27,815*
Filipino	23,680	—	58,718*	21,416*
Chinese	22,559	—	52,774*	22,908*
Korean	20,450	—	47,958*	20,079*
Vietnamese	12,840	—	44,040*	17,590*
Thai	—	—	49,124*	19,738*
Laotian	—	—	33,110*	13,634*
Cambodian	—	—	32,518*	14,364*
Hmong	—	—	20,648*	9,923*
Other	13,890	—	47,218*	21,104*

Sources: Bureau of the Census (1983a, 1983b) for 1980a; Bureau of the census (1992) for 1990a,b; Bennett (1992) for 1990c; Shinagawa (1996) for data with * a: Median family income b: Median household income c: Median income of year-round, full-time workers 25 years old and over (Bennett data) *: Mean wage/salary income of workers between the ages of 18 and 64 (Shinagawa data)

A study by the Rand Corporation about the wage gap between wages of immigrant workers and those of the native-born (the majority) workers has just been released. The study found that immigrants from Mexico and Central America enter the U.S. labor market with very low wages and experience a persistent wage gap, and the gap tends to become wider over time. Immigrants from Asia, especially those from Japan, Korea, and China, on the other hand, enter with wages much lower than those of the native-born (white) workers but their earnings increase rapidly. Within

Table 17

Median Income and Earnings

	Households			Families		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
All	\$30,786	4.9	—	\$37,222	6.3	—
Asian	38,153	8.3	15.0	43,418	9.7	17.7
White	32,368	5.3	9.7	39,320	6.8	12.2
Black	18,660	1.5	—	21,761	1.9	—
Hispanic	22,848	1.8	—	24,926	2.0	—

Sources: Bennett (1992); Bureau of the Census (1994)

A: Median income in current dollars, 1992

B: Percent of households/families earning \$100,000 or more, 1992

C: Percent of households/families with income of \$75,000 or more, 1990

10 to 15 years, their wages reach parity with those of native-born workers (Schoeni, McCarthy & Vernez, 1996).

With higher earnings and income, Asian American families (11.9 percent) and individuals (14.1 percent) are below poverty line less than three other minority groups, although more than whites (6.9 and 9.0 percent respectively). Except for "boat people" of Cambodians, Hmongs, Laotians, and Vietnamese, 5 percent or less of Asian Americans receive public assistance payments (Table 18). The Indochinese refugees on welfare are much higher than the rest of Asian Americans because of special circumstances which led them to come to the United States. Hmongs are mostly settled in Minnesota, primarily because of rather liberal welfare benefits of that state. With no prior exposure to industrial world but recruited by U.S. to assist CIA for its covert operations during the Vietnam War, Ungar (1995) argues that Hmongs "deserve" American public assistance.

Other Factors

A variable related to educational and economic factors is the ownership of computers. According to a study conducted for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the highest proportion of

Table 18

Percent Distribution of Poverty and Public Assistance

Race	1980A	1990A	1990B	C
All	9.6	—	—	—
White	7.0	6.9	9.0	—
Black	26.5	27.8	31.0	—
Hispanic	21.3	26.2	29.3	—
Native	23.7	27.2	31.2	—
Asian	10.7	11.9	14.1	—
Japanese	4.2	—	4 a	2
			12 b	1
Filippino	6.2	—	7 a	3
			6 b	4
Indian	7.4	—	8 a	2
			10 b	2
Chinese	10.5	—	8 a	2
			16 b	5
Korean	13.1	—	12 a	2
			14 b	4
Vietnamese	35.1	—	6 a	14
			25 b	11
Thai	—	—	7 a	1
			12 b	2
Laotian	—	—	40 a	15
			33 b	19
Cambodian	—	—	43 a	8
			40 b	27
Hmong	—	—	63 a	25
			63 b	36
Other	32.2	—	—	—

Sources: Bureau of the Census (1983a, 1992); Jiobu (1996) for data with (a) and (b)

A: Families below poverty line

B: Persons below poverty line

C: Persons receiving public assistance payments a: Native (U.S. born) b: Immigrant (foreign born)

computer owners are Asian Americans (39.1 percent), followed by whites (28.6 percent), Native Americans (20.7 percent), Hispanic Americans (13.1 percent), and African Americans (11.1 percent). Of course, the computer ownership *per se* is not a "proof" of success in general. But it may be an indicator of educational and economic success. Referring to this information, Marriott (1995) tries to explain the lowest percent ownership of computers by African Americans in terms of their history, culture and psychology, although she admits that education and economics are also powerful factors.

This article is concerned more with educational and economic factors and less with history, culture or psychology. But we may comment on one area of culture. Asian Americans are better law-abiding citizens, as they violate laws less than any other groups. In 1980, when 1.6 percent of the general population were Asian Americans, they accounted for 1 percent of arrests for violent and property crimes. While 2.9 percent of the general population Asian Americans, they comprise only 0.2 percent of population on probation (Table 19).

Discussion and Conclusion

Asian Americans score higher on SAT and other standardized tests, more of them go to colleges and graduate and professional

Table 19

Percent Distribution of Arrests and Probation

Race	Pop80	Arr80	Pop90	Pro88
All	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	83.1	81.9	80.3	69.0
Black	11.7	41.0	12.1	30.1
Hispanic	6.4	—	9.2	12.3
Native	0.7	1.1	0.8	0.7
Asian	1.6	1.0	2.9	0.2

Sources: Kitano & Daniels (1988) for Arr88; Shinagawa (1996) for Pro88

Arr80: 1980 arrests for violent crimes and property crimes

Pro88: Persons with a known status in 1988

schools, more of them earn doctoral and professional degrees. The data from the National Center for Education Statistics indicate that Asian Americans do perform better than all other groups including the majority most of the time, and almost always better than all other minority groups. In this sense, Asian Americans are truly the "most successful" minority.

Critics of the model minority thesis are not impressed with this type of "educational success." Instead, they want more bilingual education and other educational programs emphasizing diversity. Diversity, however, is neither an inherent good nor an inherent evil. It is a fact of social life that leads to enrichment as well as conflict (Longress, 1996). It seemed to have gone toward conflict. Multicultural education has been advocated by other minority groups as well, but when Asian Americans did so, it led to a fear, among whites, of a new "yellow peril." Ungar (1995) proposed "the new ground rules" under which a group can "choose to stand apart" and "stick together" to get ahead. His writings are used, as evidence, to justify ordinary Americans' (whites') fear that their country is being taken from them (Brimelaw, 1996). Schlesinger (1992) goes one step further and blames the hyphenated Americans for their "disuniting" of America by means of diversity education.

Whether we should advocate for traditional (Eurocentric) education or multicultural education is a theoretical or an ideological question. Whether Asian American students perform better than other students in one or another type of education is an empirical question. This article deals with the latter question.

Critics of the model minority thesis point out that while earnings and income of Asian Americans are higher, more family or household members have to work and they have to work longer hours to earn these returns. See Louie (1996) for a recent example. They are true, but they are also indicators of "positive" characteristics for success. Asian Americans are scoring higher in standardized tests, earning higher degrees, and earning more income than other groups, not because they are "created" or "evolved" more intelligently than other groups. Unless one is willing to advance such a theory of genetic causation, we can only contend that Asian Americans are more successful because they work harder and longer hours. Working hard is a positive trait.

Critics also indicate that Asian Americans may be in professional occupations, but they usually occupy undesirable positions. Many Asian American physicians, for example, are employed by large county or state hospitals as emergency room doctors, positions shunned by the majority doctors, earning less income than other doctors in private practice. Asian Americans in the academia, especially those in the science fields, also face similar experiences. They are belittled, humiliated, and denied promotions to administrative or other leadership positions (Manrique & Manrique, 1994; Watanabet 1995a, 1995b).

These observations are true, but what would be the alternatives? I don't think critics are suggesting that these doctors and professors "go back to their countries" or to change their careers. Asian Americans' willingness and ability to endure hardships are positive traits.

This article has reviewed census data and analyzed them in *aggregate* and *proportional* terms. It only says that proportionally there are more Asian Americans earning doctoral degrees and engaged in professional occupations. The absolute numbers are not greater than those of whites. It only says "on the average" (such as median income) Asian Americans earn more than all other groups. It noted that proportionally there are more Asian Americans who earn, say, \$100,000 or more than any other groups. In this sense, Asian Americans are indeed the "most middle-class" minority.

I don't know what Daniels and Kitano (1970) meant by "the most respected," but Shinagawa (1996) recently came up with a Socio-Economic Prestige (SEP) scale. The SEP scores for Asian Americans (58.6) and for whites (58.7) are almost identical (Table 20). Among Asian Americans, Indians have the highest SEP score (64.4), higher than that of whites. This is not surprising, as they rank number 1 in doctoral degrees earned, in professional occupations, and in mean wage/salary income, as noted earlier. Of course, these SEP scores were obtained from recent immigrants. But, except for Japanese, immigrants are the majority among Asian Americans (Jiobu, 1996). If we can accept the SEP scores as an indicator of respect, then Asian Americans are certainly the most respected minority.

Table 20

Socio-Economic Prestige (SEP) Scores of Recent (1990–93) Immigrants by Origin

Origin	Both	Male	Female
Europe	59.4	59.9	58.7
Asia	59.9	60.8	58.6
Indian	66.9	67.6	64.4
Japanese	63.2	64.9	60.5
Chinese	62.5	64.0	60.5
Korean	62.2	63.3	60.2
Filipino	60.2	59.7	60.6
Vietnamese	50.4	50.2	50.7
Other Asians	60.1	60.7	58.8

Source: Shinagawa (1996)

Asian Americans are having a great impact on this country that far exceeds their numbers, yet Americans know surprisingly little about them (Gardner, Robey & Smith, 1989). Historically, Asian Americans have made positive contributions to American society. They have worked hard and paid taxes; they have developed businesses and established industries; they have created stable family units and cohesive communities; they have participated in civic activities and have fought in America's wars. In all these and other ways, they have continually moved from marginal "sojourners" (Siu, 1952) to the mainstream of American life (Okihira, 1994). The 1990 census data do not suggest a different outcome for today's immigrants from Asia (Jiobu, 1996).

Okihira and Ojibu may be overly optimistic, as Asian Americans still have a long way to go to reach the mainstream of American life. In areas of education and economy, however, we are making a good progress. If we do the same in political arena, our journey to that elusive goal will be accelerated. Anti-immigrant mood of the day seems to move Asian Americans toward that direction (Holmes, 1996).

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Book Reviews

Victor R. Fuchs (Ed.), *Individual and Social Responsibility: Child Care, Education, Medical Care, and Long-Term Care in America*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press and The National Bureau of Economic Research, 1996, 353 pp, hardcover.

Individual and Social Responsibility: Child Care, Education, Medical Care, and Long-Term Care in America is an edited volume of papers presented at a conference held by The National Bureau of Economic Research in October 1994. Those attending the conference represented a distinguished group of economists including some Nobelists and some would be Nobelists. This book is excellent in its individual parts, yet it fails to overcome the overall difficulty inherent in any edited volume: common areas of interest but no coherent theme holding everything together. Each of the ten chapters is interesting, comprehensive, and stimulating. We are certain that those who read this volume will gain an enormous amount of information, but they should be forewarned that there is little connection between the four service-related chapters and the rest of the book. Fascinating as the reading is, the book reads more like a high-quality journal issue. Compliments are due Timothy Taylor, managing editor of *the Journal of Economics Perspectives*. He has done a splendid job in summarizing the conference on which this volume is based and even provides material from the roundtable discussions that were not included in the book. Yet even he was unable to pull the papers together into a balanced whole, and he reports on each separately. For those pressed for time, we would recommend Taylor's overview.

Reviewing *Individual and Social Responsibility* can be a humbling experience for social workers due to difficulties with some of the vocabulary. Many of this Journal's readers would have difficulties with terms such as *externalities* (unaccounted consequences of an action, such as future political involvement as an outcome of education); *moral hazard* (lack of incentive to the insured party to avoid risks which may result in over-consumption of the insured service); or *market failure* (a situation in which markets do not function properly due to lack of information,

externalities, etc.) Consequently, this review was jointly written by a social worker and an economist.

We found the connections between the title and the book somewhat tenuous. Victor Fuchs, the editor, writes that he chose the title *Individual and Social Responsibility: Child Care, Education, Medical Care, and Long-Term Care in America* and notes that "the issue can be formulated as the tension between individual responsibility and social responsibility." Yet in a later paragraph, he hedges: "The papers and comments in this volume do not, for the most part, explicitly engage the issue of responsibility" (p. 5). Now, if the first part of the title doesn't really mean what it says, how about the second? Does this book really deal with child care, education, medical care, and long-term care in America? We had hoped so. We really wanted to learn what this impressive group of experts had to say about these service issues. However, it seems that many contributors had been asked to write on whatever they wished. As a result, the book provides many interesting and thought-provoking ideas that really have little to do with the purported theme of the book. Four chapters in the first part of the book are each devoted to each of the four service issues. The other six chapters are free-standing and only slightly related to the four issues of the title. Paul Romer discusses voting patterns vis-a-vis political threats on and people's sense of entitlements promised in social security benefits. Robert Frank has an interesting chapter on vouchers. According to Frank, if the government gives a voucher to all, the vouchers will not change the quality of service in the long run, but will escalate its cost. Kenneth Arrow provides insights into the economics of information and the ways in which problems arise (in medical care, education and child care) when full information is not available to those with the greatest personal interest in the outcomes. Henry Hansmann examines the roles of the public, for-profit, and nonprofit enterprises in providing human services and notes a recent expansion in for-profit firms providing human services. James Poterba raises the issue of whether market failures can provide a framework for the making and implementing of policy; and Theda Skocpol writes on the politics of American social policy: past and future.

Some notes on the four social service-related chapters are in order. Arleen Leibowitz notes that "The single largest government

child care program is the child-care tax credit" (60% of all federal spending) and that "this subsidy is available only to working mothers" (p. 38). She also asserts that "The AFDC program itself can be considered a large government subsidy of child care by mothers" (p. 38). Leibowitz notes that middle-upper class children usually consume the best services whereas children of lower-class parents gain most from formal organized child care.

Eric Hanushek notes that public education accounts for some 25 percent of public expenditures, yet no one "believes that our schools are doing particularly well" (p. 59). Hanushek questions the need for greater spending on public education unless there is a significant change in what additional resources are used for. He cautions that issues such as individual motivation, parents, friends, and community affect educational achievement and therefore aggregate statistics on education may be misleading.

Henry Aaron contends that both public and private health systems "display signs of accident and caprice" (p. 114). His chapter was written at the tail-end of the failed Clinton health reform and thus was highly influenced by the debate. He suggests that one reason for the failure was the large scale of the reform (10% of the GDP). "With the exception of war mobilization and the desperate measures of the Great Depression, U.S. history contains no example of legislation remotely approaching the ambition and complexity of major reform of health care financing and the magnitude of change in behavior and established institutions it requires" (p. 121).

Alan Garber finds that despite the huge expense of long-term care which averages \$20,000 per-person a year, people do not purchase private insurance to protect themselves. Yet, he argues "that it [private insurance] is a promising approach to better risk protection for those persons in situations in which it is most appropriate" (p. 144). Like many of his co-contributors in this volume, Garber concludes that: "Financing universal long-term care insurance from public dollars hardly seems feasible today, and circumstances will not be more favorable in the coming years" (p. 145). This statement is somewhat surprising giving that "Medicaid pays nearly half of all nursing home expenditures . . ." (p. 152).

One issue on which all these economists seem to be in agreement is that America's child care, education, medical care, and

long-term care systems are operating in a less than optimal manner. The authors are also as one in cautioning that, due to fiscal/political reasons, the government cannot be expected to reform/financially increase/support these systems. They claim that increased government support can cause a moral hazard problem and therefore would not produce better services to more people. The fact that these fields of service have tremendous externalities makes them more difficult to study from economic point of view and adds little to their political or financial viability.

In sum, *Individual and Social Responsibility: Child Care, Education, Medical Care, and Long-Term Care in America* is a text for advanced readers that can be used in doctoral courses of social policy. Although this volume has no consistent theme that weaves its chapters into a coherent whole, it does present an original and thought-provoking review of four human-service domains from the perspective of distinguished economic scholars. As such, we believe *Individual and Social Responsibility*, edited by Victor R. Fuchs, deserves the attention of social workers and social welfare scholars concerned with the issue of individual and social responsibility in America.

Ram A. Cnaan
University of Pennsylvania
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William G. Rothstein (Ed) *Readings in American Health Care: Current Issues in Socio-Historical Perspective*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996. \$49.95 hardcover, \$17.95 papercover.

Social work courses and the textbooks used in courses about health and health care are often limited to discussions of the psychosocial effects of and treatments for various diseases, along with issues related to social work practice within a medical setting. Social workers are thus often lacking in knowledge and appreciation for the broader issues that have shaped health care in this country. This lack of context certainly hampers their

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understanding of current controversies, such as the move toward managed care and the call for basic reform. Indeed, the profession's general neglect of such areas has resulted in a leadership vacuum that continues to place social work "one down" to other professions in medical settings.

This book uses mostly previously published articles to provide a broad look at a number of subjects related to health care. Part 1 provides interesting historical perspective on several isolated areas, such as rural medical practice, public health, services provided by industries, and the health practices of persons in one small community. Though limited in applicability for social work practice, the accounts are interesting and lively.

Part 2 provides basic information with which all social workers should be familiar, particularly those who practice in a health setting, such as twentieth century trends in mortality, "disease" as a social construct, and recent advances in medical treatments. These subjects are usually not covered well in social work health texts, but are important for going beyond narrow disease to the broader concept of health.

Part 3 covers several important exemplars of public health, such as fluoridation of water, cigarette smoking, and AIDS. Social workers who are active in the treatment and prevention of AIDS and advocacy efforts on behalf of AIDS sufferers would do well to learn from the lessons of previous public health successes and failures found in this section.

Part 4 covers the development and status of several allied health professions, such as nursing and podiatrists and midwives. This part and Part 8 on medical education, though interesting, may be the least useful sections for social workers.

Part 5 presents important historical information about health care organizations, including Health Maintenance Organization. This section and the ones on financing (Part 7) and current issues (Part 9) probably are most critical to the current evolution of the system within which health care workers practice. No answers are presented, but the questions and background are well presented in the broad context of health care, rather than from the narrow perspective of social work or medicine. Part 6 provides history about mental health policy and treatment; it provides valuable information that many social workers already may have.

As an adjunct to material that provides information about the social factors inherent in good health and participation in the health care system, this book of readings would provide an interesting addition. It has the added advantage of including reading lists and questions for each article, as well. Perhaps most attractive is the fact that discussions are data-based, rather than swimming in rhetoric, but still nontechnical and highly readable.

The major disadvantage of the book is that although it purports to provide breadth, it omits much important information about the role of social work in the health care setting and about some of the issues that most concern social workers. For example, the social work profession has played an active role in advocacy and programs on behalf of disadvantaged mothers and children, and these important efforts are not included, despite a discussion of barriers to prenatal care. Likewise, modern institutions such as community health centers and hospices are not discussed within the broad issue of the impact of poverty on health and health care. These omissions are certainly understandable given the vast number of available subjects, but it would be important for social work educators to call their students' attention to them.

Terri Combs-Orme
University of Tennessee

Paul T. Phillips, *A Kingdom on Earth: Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880–1940..* University Park: Penn State Press, 1996. \$55.00 hardcover, \$16.95 papercover.

"Social Christianity" was a loosely associated body of doctrines and organizations that aimed to reform industrial capitalism by Christian ideals of social harmony and justice. It was allied with many diverse secular humanitarian proposals and movements for reform, in education, health and public health, penal and correctional institutions, city planning, esthetic culture, and political/economic legislation. It appealed to many leaders in the dominant churches in England and North America—Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Unitarian, Quaker, Baptist. Social Christians were prominent supporters of the sentiment and advocacy that, by the 1940s, ushered in the "welfare state."

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There is a large literature on the subject, mostly written from the viewpoint of the history of social reform in the several nations. Professor Phillips seeks to synthesize it around theological ideas that were shared by clergy in England, the United States, and Canada. Social Christianity was criticized by evangelical or fundamentalist Christians, who thought it distracted people from spirituality—the conviction of sin and salvation by God’s grace—and also by many secular humanists and reformers, who thought that belief in Revelation was unscientific, churches were bastions of reaction, and human Reason and social science would point the way toward genuine social reform. He disputes an interpretation that Social Christianity was merely an incident in the emergence of modern secular society. He argues that it was essentially a theological innovation and it made a difference. The traditional Christian doctrine of charity, he says, suited the theology of sin, atonement, and salvation; it separated the sacred hope of heaven from the fallen secular world. Social Christians, by contrast, emphasized the immanence of God in the world (Creation), His Incarnation in Jesus, the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of Humanity, and they believed that the world itself was ripe for redemption by social reform. They were post-millennialists, compared with the pre-millennialists who thought the world was ripe for an apocalypse. The movement petered out after 1940, as highbrow neo-orthodoxy and lowbrow revivalism came to the fore.

Phillips brings out many complications in the story. Constructive ventures were very diverse: getting the denominations to work together; adult education; social science that sought religious objectives by investigating social problems; outreach by way of social services such as settlement houses; the cooperative movement; the temperance movement; labor legislation; and Marxist-style socialism. Moreover he carefully details and differentiates the course of events in England, the United States, and Canada. He notes that evangelicals sometimes actually led in service—the YMCA and Salvation Army, for example—and ultra-conservative upper-class Anglo-Catholics advocated Christian socialism. On the other hand he deliberately ignores the relation between the enlightened leaders and their communicants,

Continental and Roman Catholic versions of the subject, and the later growth of a politically conservative Christian coalition.

Phillips presents an overview not available elsewhere, based on a critical familiarity with scholarship in three nations (the Canadian story is interesting). His understanding of historical complexity makes this book a good corrective for sanctimonious generalities about religious influence on the welfare state—the Hebrew prophets and all that. He doesn't do justice to the Charity Organization Society and the profession of social work that grew out of it (he doesn't mention *Charity and Social Life*, by Charles Stuart Loch [1910], or the publications of Bernard Bosanquet; because, I suppose, they weren't formal theology); he un-deliberately ignores the religious communities and theology discussed in John Humphrey Noyes' interesting *History of American Socialisms* (1870); he doesn't mention the great work of the German theologian Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (1911), because, I suppose, it wasn't Anglo-American and it may not have influenced the Anglo-Americans. But it did, or should, influence scholars on that subject.

James Leiby

University of California, Berkeley

Jill Duerr Berrick, *Face of Poverty: Portraits of Women and Children on Welfare*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. \$25.00 hardcover.

Much is said but little is actually known about the experiences of people who are connected to the American system of welfare. The poor are among us, they are talked about, they are scandalized, they are planned for and schemed against, yet the voices of the poor, the faces of poor children, are largely made unheard and invisible in the rancor of welfare reform. Jill Duerr Berrick's *Faces of Poverty: Portraits of Women and Children on Welfare* does much to raise the tenor of the voices of people on welfare.

It almost doesn't bear repeating that there has been a dearth of both qualitative and quantitative research in the area of welfare. All too frequently, research on welfare has been done with a moralizing or politicizing bent so as to render statistics and

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It almost doesn't bear repeating that there has been a dearth of both qualitative and quantitative research in the area of welfare. All too frequently, research on welfare has been done with a moralizing or politicizing bent so as to render statistics and

data soberingly impersonal or highly charged. The paucity of diligently-collected information has contributed to wrongful policies, reified stereotypes, and malingering attacks on specific groups of people. Welfare recipients, the clients of social workers, are being blamed for many social ills, a war has been waged on the poor. Research on the people on welfare is needed as fight this most pernicious battle. Social work researchers have a unique vantage point from which to conduct inquiry into the lives of people on welfare.

Duerr Berrick's book is a much-needed armament in the battle for accuracy and information about people on welfare and the varied welfare reform proposals. The author's brilliantly simple research should go far towards filling the knowledge gap related to welfare. Duerr Berrick spent one year with five families on welfare. Each family is different and each provides rich detail about just how being on welfare affects individual opportunities and expectations. This book is wrongly subtitled for while each of the five families is headed by a woman, it should not be assumed that men (fathers, husbands, boyfriends and sons) are not included in the family portraits or in the families' decision-making and lives' events. Indeed, as is often the case with female-headed households, the men are around, though their names may not be on the lease or on the birth certificate. By and large, this book is an intimate revealing about what goes on in the households where monthly welfare checks are delivered. The author seems to have taken great pains to capture families from distinct vantage points on the welfare plateau. All of the women have children. Each of the five families is on welfare for a different reason. And each of the five families may some day get off of welfare for a different reason. There is great diversity in this book; the people profiled come from urban and rural settings, from multiple ethnic groups, are various ages and come from different class orientations. And the women have varied lengths of attachment to the welfare system. The tie that binds these dissimilar people is the much-pilloried welfare check.

The five women profiled, Ana, Sandy, Rebecca, Darlene, and Cora have tales not dissimilar to millions of other welfare and non-welfare recipients across the country. If there is strength in numbers, the stories of these families could represent a powerful

constituency. Ana, for example, seemed to embody an American dream; she held a solid-paying, benefit-providing job, saved enough money to invest in a business and still ended up on welfare. Ana went from being a critic to a recipient of welfare literally overnight and she's very frank about her previous assumptions and her on-going experiences with welfare. There is in Ana's portrait a vision of welfare being a temporary salve, of knowing a life independent of a welfare check. In contrast to Ana, there is Cora whose profile is the last of the five portraits presented in the book. Cora's profile is aptly titled "A Portrait of Dependency". Cora's latest (and most long-lasting) dependency is on the welfare system. Her life, her very being, is organized around the receipt of a monthly welfare check. Cora's household is a collection of co-dependencies, all somehow related to living a welfare life. The complexity of lives in poverty is made resoundingly clear by the telling of these vulnerable tales.

While these intimate portrayals are effective in providing much-needed qualitative (and some quantitative) data about welfare families, Duerr Berrick adds greatly to this already great book by including a discussion of welfare terminology, myths, and rhetoric in effort to present as much factual grist as possible. Additionally, the final chapter includes an analysis of welfare reform proposals. Though always changing, the terrain of reform proposals does allow for some pragmatic comparisons which Duerr Berrick provides in the context of the families profiled in her book; the reader is forced to consider what might be Cora's fate if she lived under the Wisconsin model.

Duerr Berrick is to be commended for collecting this substantial data from the five families on welfare. It is obvious that the researcher spent substantial time in making these families comfortable with her presence and gleaned an impressive amount of direct information. If there is one shortcoming in the book, it is its over-reliance on specific research studies; perhaps this is more related to the dearth of research in this area more than a direct failing of the book. These are unabashedly direct pictures of welfare families; Duerr Berrick is unafraid to show people's limitations, foibles, and the results of their poor decision-making in an economically poor environment. The book tells the full story of dumb decisions made by people who are poor to dumb policies

made by people who are not. This book ought to be required reading for every elected official and every talking head who call for reform without first calling for accurate information.

Tracey Mabrey
Western Michigan University

John A. Vincent, *Inequality in Old Age*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996. \$ 49.95 hardcover.

Inequality generated by distinctions based on class, ethnicity, and gender is a social and economic concern that transcends age. Unfortunately, inequality tends to be exacerbated in old age, assuming a greater impact that leads to more hardships and deprivation for many elderly persons. Individuals who have experienced discrimination and social or economic marginalization throughout the life cycle are even more susceptible in old age.

This text explores the relationship between inequality and old age by examining the impact of social stratification, class, gender, race and ethnicity over the life course. The author suggests that most sociological studies of inequality and old age provide a limited snapshot view of the conditions faced by the elderly. What is needed, it is argued, is a method that examines inequality as a process over the life course to address the central question of "how do old age and inequality fit together in society?"

A process analysis method sheds light on the conditions that historical and contemporary structures have created under which elderly people are more likely to be exploited. In addition to class, race, and gender, for example, inequality in old age reflects the afflictions of capitalism, patriarchy, and imperialism. These economic and social developments have led to an exploitation of labor, including the artificial and detrimental development of the concept of dividing the life course into pre-work, work and post-work. They also reflect the economic subordination of women based on the gender division of labor which is carried into old age. The discussion on how these and other structures impact inequality in old age is quite detailed and informative.

This book is particularly valuable for those interested in theories of inequality and social theories of aging. The author provides

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This book is particularly valuable for those interested in theories of inequality and social theories of aging. The author provides

a useful overview and cogent analysis of predominant theories. There is also an insightful chapter on old age and the symbolic order which discusses the cognitive categories and the structural meaning of "old." While most of the references are related to the British experience, many are equally applicable to the United States.

This is not an easy book to assimilate in a brief period. It does, however, make an excellent reference text. Its strength is that it informs and stimulates thinking about the interaction of theories of inequality and aging while arguing convincingly for a systemic or process oriented analytical method.

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Book Notes

Zvi Bodie, Olivia S. Mitchell and John A. Turner. *Securing Employer-based Pensions: An International Perspective*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996. \$44.95 hardcover.

As calls for the privatization of state social programs intensify, the issue of retirement income protection has become a major concern. While state owned retirement systems such as social security are not in immediate danger of being dismantled, it is likely that alternative approaches will play an increasingly important role in the future. However, as private retirement programs become more prominent, concerns about their long term security have increased. There have already been major incidences in which employer pensions have been raided by corporate owners. In addition, bankruptcy, poor investment decisions and other contingencies threaten the livelihoods of millions of pensioners who rely on the private sector for their retirement incomes.

Like its previous studies, this book from Pension Research Council at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania makes a major contribution to the literature. It draws on the experience of several countries which have sought to strengthen the long term stability of their private pension programs. While advocates of privatization dogmatically argue for the abrogation of all state responsibility, the editors of this volume demonstrate that governments have a critical role to play in ensuring that private pensions systems are viable and secure. Regulation, coordination, actuarial oversight and other policies are needed to protect these programs. If the people who put their faith and money into these programs are to enjoy a secure retirement, the state must be vigilant and active in securing employer-based pensions.

This is an informative book. Its use of material from Britain, Germany and Japan is particularly valuable. The book contains an interesting article on the use of individual retirement accounts by Estelle James and Dimitri Vittas, two World Bank experts who have been advocating the expansion of private sector for some time. The final section of the book deals with the instruments of government pension policy. Although the book is specialized, it

should be consulted by anyone concerned with issues of aging and retirement today.

Pranab Chatterjee, *Approaches to the Welfare State*. Washington DC: NASW Press, 1996. \$34.95 papercover.

The literature on the welfare state is now extensive. Numerous historical studies, commentaries and expositions concerning the reasons for the proliferation of state involvement in social welfare have been published. However, despite this plethora of information, much of the available literature is narrowly focused on Europe and North America. Studies of social policy in the welfare state have not paid adequate attention to other countries.

In this useful book, Pranab Chatterjee seeks to fill the gap by discussing social policy issues with reference to other countries. In the first part of the book, the author explores the dimensions of the welfare state internationally, specifically referencing the experiences of the First World, Second World and Third World. Here he defines key concepts, outlines opposing viewpoints of scholars on the development of state welfare, and discusses the infrastructure of the welfare state in the world system. In the second part of the book, he discusses opposing theses about the welfare state in some detail, linking interdisciplinary theory and research to the practical application of social policy. In the final part of the book, Chatterjee discusses debates regarding the welfare state in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific foundations. In conclusion he offers his own resolution of these issues.

This book offers a broad view of the complexities involved in determining the development of welfare states. It presents a variety of opposing theoretical frameworks that shape the field. It provides an insightful analysis of these frameworks in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific criteria. This book offers a synopsis of the field that will not only serve as a useful text but broaden scholarly horizons as social policy seeks greater international relevance.

Rafat Fazeli, *The Economic Impact of the Welfare State and Social Wage: The British Experience*. Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1996. \$55.95 hardcover.

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Pranab Chatterjee, *Approaches to the Welfare State*. Washington DC: NASW Press, 1996. \$34.95 papercover.

The literature on the welfare state is now extensive. Numerous historical studies, commentaries and expositions concerning the reasons for the proliferation of state involvement in social welfare have been published. However, despite this plethora of information, much of the available literature is narrowly focused on Europe and North America. Studies of social policy in the welfare state have not paid adequate attention to other countries.

In this useful book, Pranab Chatterjee seeks to fill the gap by discussing social policy issues with reference to other countries. In the first part of the book, the author explores the dimensions of the welfare state internationally, specifically referencing the experiences of the First World, Second World and Third World. Here he defines key concepts, outlines opposing viewpoints of scholars on the development of state welfare, and discusses the infrastructure of the welfare state in the world system. In the second part of the book, he discusses opposing theses about the welfare state in some detail, linking interdisciplinary theory and research to the practical application of social policy. In the final part of the book, Chatterjee discusses debates regarding the welfare state in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific foundations. In conclusion he offers his own resolution of these issues.

This book offers a broad view of the complexities involved in determining the development of welfare states. It presents a variety of opposing theoretical frameworks that shape the field. It provides an insightful analysis of these frameworks in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific criteria. This book offers a synopsis of the field that will not only serve as a useful text but broaden scholarly horizons as social policy seeks greater international relevance.

Rafat Fazeli, *The Economic Impact of the Welfare State and Social Wage: The British Experience*. Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1996. \$55.95 hardcover.

Economic considerations are now widely debated in social policy. Although social policy has traditionally neglected the

economy preferring to focus on issues of service delivery, it is clear that the economic dimension can no longer be ignored. It was previously assumed that steady economic growth and full employment would generate the resources needed to fund social programs for the small proportion of the labor force who could not work. Social policy, it was believed, would be concerned with identifying the best methods of caring for those in need. However, it has become apparent that the original assumptions on which social welfare were based are no longer valid. Economic performance has not been able to create full employment in most industrialized nations and, as populations have aged, larger numbers of people than previously anticipated have come to rely on governmental expenditures for their livelihoods. As these trends have become more marked over the years, it has been claimed that social programs have retarded economic performance. The welfare state, it is argued, is a major reason for the economic decline of the Western industrial nations.

Fazeli's book provides an excellent opportunity to examine this argument in detail. However, while its title suggests that the author will provide a definitive analysis of the subject, the book fails to meet expectations. Unfortunately, its discursive overview of diverse economic aspects does not adequately address the basic economic challenges facing the welfare state. The book does contain a short section on the neo-classical critique of the welfare state but it devotes far too much space to Marxist accounts, analysis of the British social budget, income distribution impacts and other matters. While the book contains much that will be of interest, particularly to those who wish to know more about social policy in Britain, an opportunity to comprehensively address the economic critique of state welfare has been missed. It is to be hoped that the author will find the time to produce another volume focusing specifically on this critical issue.

Gordana Rabrenovic, *Community Builders: A Tale of Neighborhood Mobilization in Two Cities*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996. \$54.95 hardcover, \$22.95 papercover.

Throughout the United States, medium cities, like their larger metropolitan counterparts, suffer from a multitude of social problems. These include a deteriorating physical infrastructure, increased crime, abandoned homes and businesses and blatant

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poverty. However, these social problems are not new. They have existed since the emergence of the modern city. However, so have community-based organizations. Since the time that migrants first settled the city, local associations have formed to assist people deal with urban problems and enhance the quality of their lives.

This informative book examines the role of neighborhood organizations in the remediation of social problems. It pays particular attention to the economic level of the neighborhood as well as the wider urban context in which neighborhood organization takes place. This is done by examining neighborhood associations in two medium-sized cities, namely Albany and Schenectady in the state of New York. This comparison permits Rabrenovic to examine variations in community organizing in the context of both the local neighborhood and wider city. The distinction between the service-sector city (Albany) and the declining manufacturing city (Schenectady) provides an opportunity to compare gentrifying areas with low-income areas. The income level of each neighborhood, along with these broader structures, are shown to influence the resources available to local organizations, the goals of neighborhood groups and the participation of various social and religious organization.

This book offers a refreshing and innovative look at the often over-simplified topic of community revitalization. Rabrenovic does so by exploring factors relevant to the the emergence of effective neighborhood groups. She recognizes the essential link between the social and economic contexts as well as the need for national support for revitalization efforts. Her discussion of the necessity for these divergent element to cooperate makes a powerful argument which all those interested in community revitalization need to understand.

Sheryl R. Tynes, *Turning Points in Social Security: From Cruel Hoax to Sacred Entitlement*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996. \$39.50 hardcover.

At a time when social security is under increasingly scrutiny, there is a need to have accurate information about social security's contribution to American society over the years. Although critics claim that social security is expensive, bureaucratically rigid, demographically inappropriate and inequitable, many millions of

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people have benefited from the social protection afforded by this important institution. When social security was introduced in the 1930s, its opponents claimed that it amounted a cruel hoax played on the American people by unscrupulous politicians. Later, social security was increasingly viewed as a sacred entitlement. Today, social security's position is tenuous. As the political right seeks to undermine the basis of the welfare state, the battle for social security will be a critical turning point for American social policy.

Sherry Tynes' informative and scholarly account of the historical evolution of social security will be an important resource for those who want to know the facts rather than the rhetoric about social security. Her richly documented study traces the development of social security since its early years right up to the present time. She highlights the turning points in the history of social security when major legislative and policy changes were introduced to reflect changing attitudes and social conditions. Her ability to transcend the limitations of a purely chronological narrative and to draw on wider social and cultural changes is remarkable. She shows how institutionalized beliefs about the virtues of community and shared responsibility have been increasingly replaced since the 1970s by a meaner individualism. To further strengthen her account, the author draws extensively on social theory, testing different conceptual explanations about the dynamics of social security. The book is an important contribution to the literature and deserves to be widely read.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS
(Revised June, 1995)

JSSW welcomes a broad range of articles which analyze social welfare Institutions, policies, or problems from a social scientific perspective or otherwise attempt to bridge the gap between social science theory and social work practice.

Submission Process. Submit manuscripts to Gary Mathews, School of Social Work, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 49008. Send *three* copies together with an abstract of approximately 100 words. Since manuscripts are not returned by reviewers to the editorial office, the editorial office cannot return them to the authors. Submission certifies that it is an original article and that it has not been published nor is being considered for publication elsewhere.

Reviewing normally takes 120 days.

Preparation. Articles should be typed, doublespaced (including the abstract, indented material, footnotes, references, and tables) on 8½ x 11 inch white bond paper with one inch margins on all sides.

Anonymous Review. To facilitate anonymous review, please keep identifying information out of the manuscript. *Only the title* should appear on the first page. Attach cover pages that contain the title, authors, affiliations, date of submission, mailing address, telephone number and any statements of credit or research support.

Style. Overall style should conform to that found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Fourth Edition, 1994. Use in-text citations (Reich, 1983), (Reich, 1983, p. 5). The use of footnotes in the text is discouraged. If footnotes are essential, include them on a separate sheet after the last page of the references. The use of italics or quotation marks for emphasis is discouraged. Words should be underlined only when it is intended that they be typeset in italics.

Gender and Disability Stereotypes. Please use gender neutral phrasing. Use plural pronouns and truly generic nouns ("labor force" instead of "manpower"). When dealing with disabilities, avoid making people synonymous with the disability they have ("employees with visual impairments" rather than "the blind"). Don't magnify the disabling condition ("wheelchair user" rather than "confined to a wheelchair"). For further suggestions see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* or *Guide to Non-Sexist Language and Visuals*, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

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