



volume IV

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April 2003

2003

Brian Lee

Envisioning and building a stronger

Asian American community

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events



Interested in issues related to South Asia
and South Asian Americans?

Attend the **Brown SASA Political Action Weekend**,
April 18-19, 2003!

Participate in a weekend of forums, lectures and
performances with activists from all over the East Coast.

Japanese Cultural Association Presents:
3rd Annual
Japanese Spring Festival



Friday, April 11th, 11-3
Main Green

Japanese Cultural Association Presents:



Saturday, April 5, 1-2 pm
Emery Lounge (near the V-W)

*Affirming
Solidarity
In
Art
NOW!*

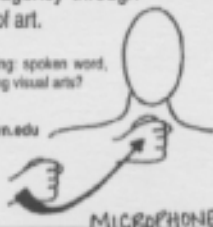
ASIAN ARTS FEST 2003

Brown University
Salomon Hall 101
Thursday, April 17, 8 pm

an annual event intended to
foster a sense of self-love and
appreciation, to explore our
selves and our unique and
diverse cultures, and to
advocate a sense of social
awareness and agency through
the expression of art.

Interested in performing: spoken word,
dance music, displaying visual arts?
Contact AASA:

Juhyung_Lee@brown.edu



Children's Day

May 3rd 11:30AM -3:30 PM
Brown University
Petterutti Lounge
Sponsored by KASA

CSA BBQ



April 27th
Pembroke Field
4pm

An Open Letter to the Faculty, Staff, and Students of Ethnic Studies

melissa koh '03



"Ethnic Studies was created so students could learn and acquire knowledge to take back to their communities. So with that founding spirit in mind, Ethnic Studies today has a responsibility to student and community issues."

—Clement Tsao, ET '03

"I think it's important to keep listening to student voices as Ethnic Studies grows." It was lunchtime at "Race, Globalization, and the New Ethnic Studies" (March 6-9, 2003), and I was trying to express the need for a conscious inclusion of students in the process of developing Ethnic Studies.

There were seven of us at the table—grad, professors, and undergraduate students—of approximately 100 in the room. This discussions was facilitated by students who wanted to collectively envision the future of the Ethnic Studies program.

"I think no matter what race or color you are, you need to know that if you're a Brown student, you have advantages. You need to think about that." One man spoke suddenly, angrily, directing his accusation towards the students at the table.

Wait...did I miss something?

I am concerned about disjointed lunchtime dialogue and mis-directed anger. I am concerned about miscommunication. I am concerned because I believe that this is an important time for Ethnic Studies.

Please don't get me wrong—as a senior Ethnic Studies concentrator, I am grateful for many things: to have a permanent program director for the first time in four years. To believe at long last that this program will grow, not die.

And in 2003, I am grateful to be asking not for Ethnic Studies but for a future legacy within the Ethnic

Studies program. In 1999, when the first-ever Ethnic Studies concentrators graduated from Brown, such a conference—boasting a \$60,000 budget and panels stocked with nationwide intellectuals—would have been unthinkable. Ethnic Studies was finally implemented after decades of student demands for a more relevant, community-oriented education. But as Ethnic Studies moves towards institutionalization, I fear that the voices of students will be excluded as the program grows.

Faculty, staff, and students of Ethnic Studies, I hope that missed-communications will not be our downfall.

Please, let us remember that bridging theory and practice is something that can be modeled within the institution as well as outside, and that in the history of Ethnic Studies, students have never been an enemy—in the past, we have aligned ourselves in opposition but only to work towards what would ultimately become a common vision.

Today, we hope to work side by side as allies. But, in this open letter to the Ethnic Studies faculty, I cannot repeat enough—that whether this relationship is forged is in your hands.

And I would like to ask you to open them.

with special thank yous to Jennifer Edwards, Nikhil Laud, Nyla Rosen, Professor Gutorf, and ET190 for educating this perspective

addressing diversity at core of asian-american community retreat

iris chung '05

On March 1, students, faculty, staff, and alumni had the opportunity to collectively discuss issues regarding personal identity and social activism, and more specifically—the recognition of diversity among Asian Americans and the hope of building a stronger and more unified Asian American community at Brown. Organized by Assistant Dean of Student Life, Kisa Takesue, and student programmers, Delphine Huang '05 and Chris Yee '04, this Asian American Community Retreat served as a constructive time for students to foster valuable connections, identify challenges facing the community, and to develop a plan of action to effectively address its needs and goals.

The morning began with a historical overview of Asians and Asian Americans at Brown given by John Eng-Wong '82, Director of Foreign Student Faculty Staff Services. Eng-Wong traced the early origins of this history by discussing the presence of Asian artifacts located at the John Brown House, the development of the "Asian Pacific American" category in the U.S. Census, and the 1931 admission of John Aiso, the first Asian American student at Brown. Prevalent attitudes towards Asians and the expression of racial tensions in the media and popular culture could be seen in an old article of *Time Magazine* showing its readership how to distinguish amongst different Asian ethnicities in order to differentiate between "Friends and Enemies" during WWII. Looking back to WWII, the Vietnam War, and other times of national conflict, certain themes emerged of how "we [Americans] feel about Asians and how that gets reconstituted," Eng-Wong stated.

Following the presentation, students listened to the faculty, staff, and alumni as they shared how their own experiences at Brown had been influenced by their ethnic or racial identity. As older alumni recalled what it was like to be a student during a time when they could see few other familiar faces on campus, younger alumni reflected upon their individual struggles and processes in defining their identity as Asian American, experiencing feelings of both comfort and displacement in relating to other Asian American students and third world activism at Brown.

Hanna Rodriguez-Farrar '87 articulated, "As an undergrad, I never participated in any Asian American events nor did I take part in any

programming offered by the TWC. I have no explanation for my lack of participation other than I worked like a maniac at Brown. Looking back on my undergrad years, I have some sense of how much I missed, but Saturday's program allowed me to capture a little bit of what was missed." Older alumni, in particular, lacked the student resources that Asian American Brownians are offered today—some of these including Asian American faculty, mentors, history month, website, newsletter, and alumni. Pre-1970, there was a total of 159 Asian American alumni; today, there are approximately 3,221.

The rest of the afternoon was devoted to specifying the goals and challenges facing the community—some of the most pressing included the building of a sustainable infrastructure, the lack of Asian American faculty in higher educational institutions like Brown, and the need for increased unity and communication between Asian American groups and other groups of color, in addition to the creation of a stronger Pan-Asian movement on campus. "I came to meet other Asian American students and really have conversations comparing the ways in which each ethnic group is run. [Asian Americans are] a huge, huge group, but here's not enough interaction between us," affirmed Quyen Truong, '05.

It is this space for dialogue provided by the retreat that marks another vital step towards reaching the vision of a more empowered, cohesive community among Asian Americans at Brown.



speaking
ben wise '05

untitled

doreen wang '05

My new name is Tania Aparecida
 My husband
 Belle bastion of barely nude baptisms
 Everything is melting outside
 You said that water is tasteless
 Ultimate neutral balance pH? ? sevan Evan
 evlan?
 You liar
 My accuser, soothsayer, my piano tuner——was
 Who fuck Mary Shelley?

My thigh in deep
 My eat my taste my advertisements
 Add up
 Everyone knows-
 When water is a little too sour
 When wata is water
 When wota is somewhat off
 In the blue, was pierce:
 Why Mary fuck Shelley?

My merry F# minor music
 Seas ships saints and sorrow, Shelley
 Today appellated Christians
 Appear in Taipei Paint-over Jobs
 Marfuckyshelley was who?
 I will never be pretty I am cute
 Wandering for man-made meat buns
 The tip of the tongue smarter than all my fingers
 praying combined...
 Cry pitches of sinful soymilk, "Dude, it's fresh
 made!"

Dona Chia Pet
 Breakable phlyer
 When do lucky alphas
 The circumcision shed air leave be
 Always maryshellfuckey !
 Crossing of the Staten Island toll gate bridge
 From question to structure
 To mouths moving for meaning under the Moon
 Who married Shelley was fucked
 What is it about public crying that intensifies every
 Moment into a freeze? in class, on TV, in the
 theater...



tired

courtney yan '06

Stage lights fade to long distance wireless: "Testing,
 can she (rea)lly hear me?"

Short-circuited black boards, all of a sudden an
 anxious airbus splash formation
 Dialectics crisscrossed over icy tundra, soft craters
 the distant earth

Out of the customary customs crisis (good-
 intentioned arthritic grandmother found smuggling
 jackfruit) Static interprets "Start My first time here
 out"

Wait-interrupts, the latest: juice-importing
 grandmother's god-uncle's son... of a family baggage
 When the first ten apparated- chartered 1st world
 Immigrants with cotton candy pants, hush puppie
 pullovers, billowing white gowns in the jet wind
 Popped out to plant umbilical tubes, sound byte
 sweat drip, surrender (?) strength
 flag/picket fence/ maiden appellations/signifiers/scent
 They asked, she asked first-
 Fuck Mary Shelley

\$156,000: the story of shim mi-sun and shin hyo-soon

juhjung harold lee '06



It is local election day in Samguk-Ri, Korea on June 13, 2002. Shim Mi-sun and Shin Hyo-soon, close friends since early childhood and currently 8th graders at Yijungbu Joyang Junior High School, are walking on the right side of a country road on their way to their friend's birthday party. They are both 13 years old.

Meanwhile, a U.S. Military Armored Vehicle Launched Mine Clearing Line Charge (AVLM) has completed a routine exercise and is driving to rendezvous with a group of Bradley armored vehicles. The driver and commander of the machine, Sgts. Mark Walker and Fernando Nino respectively, are both operating under less than five hours of sleep after a three-day and two-night maneuver. In the opposite direction, the convoy of Bradley armored vehicles are approaching. Both these vehicles and the AVLM are too wide for the narrow lanes of the country road on which they are traveling. The road begins to rise and turn around a bend. As the noise of the vehicles approaches, Mi-sun and Hyo-soon cover their ears. Walker swerves the AVLM to the right to avoid the head-on collision.

Mi-sun and Hyo-Soon are crushed to death underneath the 48-ton war machine.

The gruesome and shocking details of this tragic story are almost as appalling as the reasons behind the tragedy. The construction of the AVLM is such that the driver has a very narrow line of sight, so the commander of the vehicle, who sits in a perch above the driver, must pay careful attention to the road and relay information to the driver below him. On this day, the AVLM was preceded by two much narrower vehicles: a Jeep carrying the company commander and an M113 armored vehicle. It is the responsibility of the company commander to warn the trailing

vehicles of any possible hazards along the way—yet the commander, Capt. Mason (his first name was withheld by military spokespeople) admitted that he did not send any warning signal, and he refused to answer why not. Even more startling, he told his lawyer that he would plead the 5th if asked by the court, which didn't matter anyway because the court refused to accommodate the jury's request to bring Mason to the stand. Indeed, he was made "unavailable to testify" throughout both court martial proceedings.

The soldiers involved also conveniently blamed the tragedy on faulty communication equipment—the AVLM operates on tracks, and therefore is extremely noisy, so functional communication equipment such as earphones are absolutely crucial, especially when traveling on civilian roads. It is required that this equipment be checked multiple times prior to operation of the vehicle. Moreover, the commander and driver of the AVLM are required to maintain constant communication throughout travel—if this communication is for any reason interrupted (by, for example, faulty equipment), then the vehicle must immediately stop. The AVLM had been on the road for approximately twenty minutes, and it is hard to believe that all of a sudden the communication equipment just suddenly stopped working. Even if the communication equipment was faulty, a veteran AVLM commander testified that Nino, who had only been an AVLM commander for one month when this tragedy occurred, could have done a number of other things to attract the attention of his driver: wave his arms, stand up on his seat and reach over to tap the driver, or use a stick to extend his reach to hit the driver's head or shoulder. Nino first claimed that he didn't tap Walker's shoulder when his verbal warnings went unheeded because he was afraid that a sudden stop would cause the vehicle to come off of its tracks—after realizing this meant that he

thought keeping the machine on its tracks was more important than the lives of two girls, he changed his story and claimed that he did not think of using his foot to attract his driver's attention.

In addition, the driver of the M113 and the commander of the lead Bradley both claimed that they sent signals to the AVLM to warn of the walking girls. Nino admitted that he saw the warning signals but did not have enough time to react. According to Nino's defense attorney, he spotted the girls when he was about 30 meters from the murder location, and he had approximately 9.5 seconds to react. A number of questions remain about exactly how fast the AVLM was moving—Nino initially claimed that he was only going 5 MPH, but after realizing that a slower speed would indicate that he had more time to stop the vehicle, he changed his answer to 7 MPH, the speed limit for AVLM's on country roads. However, eyewitnesses placed the speed of the vehicle at much faster than that. Finally, the gunner on the first Bradley in the approaching convoy testified that he saw Nino, the tank commander, "look down at the driver and say something," and it looked like Nino was "smiling and laughing" right before he struck the girls.

During the subsequent court martial on negligent homicide charges (requests to have the case transferred to a South Korean civilian court were denied), juries comprised solely of male U.S. soldiers found both Nino and Walker not guilty. The defense for both asserted that their clients had followed every required military regulation and that they were merely part of an unavoidable accident. In a laughable attempt to provide just "compensation" to each of the girls' families, a payment of 195 million won (about \$156,000) was offered and accepted—\$156,000 to make up for the negligent loss of an innocent human life.

Who is responsible for this senseless tragedy? Certainly, the military personnel directly involved in the incident are partly at fault—but those in command of the operation are also to blame. First of all, why were the two convoys traveling on this small country road in the first place? Spc. Joshua Ray, a member of Nino and Walker's company, claimed that "the wrong roads were being used for travel. On those small roads where farmers, children and other pedestrians frequently walk, they had our unit as well as others moving quickly, not thinking about pedestrians as much as we were thinking about 'enemy fire' in the theater of training operations." Ray also said that they could have traveled on a different road that "is the equivalent of an American two-lane highway," but that they didn't because it

required some detours. Furthermore, why were both convoys of vehicles traveling on the same road when they were clearly too large to do so? "Those Bradley's were the ones that we were supposed to link up with where we already were. All we had to do was stay put and they would have come to us; we could have fallen in behind them (still outside the training environment) and entered the battle, rather than going the opposite way and meeting them," Ray said. These concerns had been brought up to the commanding officer's attention, but they were ignored as "the 'I am the almighty leader of this company' attitude came shining through."

The nature of the U.S. military presence in South Korea is quickly growing in importance—especially if tensions with North Korea continue to rise. South Korea cannot become another staging ground for military invasion, as Turkey and other Middle Eastern countries appear set to become—the circumstances surrounding this case, and the other numerous instances of off-base misconduct perpetrated by U.S. soldiers in Korea, Japan and all over the world clearly show that the U.S. lacks sensitivity towards the people of Korea and other countries that its military forces occupies. Though a complete pullout at this point remains unfeasible, something must be done to increase the accountability of U.S. soldiers all over the world.

Some may argue that the U.S. saved South Korea from certain destruction during the Korean War, and that it continues to protect the country to this day—that the Korean people should stop being ungrateful. However, it is clear that the Korean War was in many ways the product of aggravated international tension—tension created by superpower imperialism. After all, it was the U.S. and USSR that divided the Korean peninsula in the first place, and the only reason why these two nations found themselves in the convenient position of divvying up territory that they had no claim to was because of the previous occupation of Korea by Japan. Indeed, the Korean people—both those that live north and south of the 38th parallel—have led a tragic existence, one marked by the horrors and hardships of imperialism.

Regardless of the past, two families are now mired in utter sadness and ruin, and countless others have also been adversely affected by this tragedy. Nothing can change that. As for those responsible for causing this pain, may the weight of their crime forever rest upon their hearts.

God Bless America.

south asians face new government "special registration" policies

faizah malik '06 and sushil jacob '05

Following the 9/11 attacks, the Bush administration undertook several measures to ensure "homeland security," including its elusive war on terrorism. Other practices included implementation of racial profiling among Arab and South Asian communities. The Passage of the PATRIOT Act and its newest component, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) has led to the detainment and deportation of a few thousand immigrants mainly from Middle Eastern and South Asian ethnicities amid fierce protests and court suits from many civil rights and activist groups. Hamid Khan, executive director of the South Asian Network (SAN), said, "There has been already five plane loads of (Pakistani deportees) that have left...The policy is putting people in a difficult position. People are afraid to go out in the public spaces because this policy has criminalized an entire community." The INS holds people in detention centers for months even, refusing to release the names of the detainees and deporting them at will. Recent joint police-INS actions have given up hard won immigrant rights for the illusion of a secure homeland.

Under the controversial program, funded earlier this year by Congress, males over the age of sixteen from specified countries have to register with the INS. Those from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were required to register by March 21 with their local INS office. Men from Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, and Kuwait have until April 25. In addition to securing pictures, fingerprints, and current addresses, there have been reports of verbal abuse and people being mistreated. The mass detention of immigrants who comply with the law, assuming it is a routine process as told to them by INS advertisements, has led to community-wide panic and shock. The *Report* has stated that many detainees may have in fact submitted their forms by the deadline, but were still removed from the US.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) charges that the INS did not appropriately publicize the registration dates or provide translation in the appropriate languages for these immigrant populations. The INS also did not provide a registration facility in every state, nor did it provide enough time for people to meet the deadline, according to an ACLU report. Organizations are working intensely with individual

detainees in New York City and New Jersey. Monami Maulik, director of Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM), a grass-roots organization that works with South Asian immigrants, says that her group has launched an "End the Disappearances Campaign" that is demanding the

"Now, [the INS is] arresting legal immigrants –people with petitions pending to legalize their status...every day, we have three of four arrests. People are being picked up from the street, from their work," said Pakistani social activist Bobby Khan.

release of immigrants who have been secretly arrested and detained since September 11th. Maulik worries that the INS detention centers in which immigrants are currently being detained are a lot worse than the prisons. She says about the INS detention centers, "it's a pretty new system... Because a lot of that is new, the standards and procedures are often extremely inefficient. The INS is probably one of the most inefficient government agencies." Maulik believes that there is a definite connection between United States' choices to invoke war upon countries such as Iraq and the fact that the PATRIOT act has targeted immigrants from Muslim countries.

"Now, [the INS is] arresting legal immigrants – people with petitions pending to legalize their status...every day, we have three of four arrests. People are being picked up from the street, from their work," said Pakistani social activist Bobby Khan of the Coney Island Avenue Project, a Brooklyn-based advocacy group, preceding the one-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Sangeeta Tripathi '04, who worked with detained immigrants this past fall, believes that the string of INS detentions and deportations is immigration law being arbitrarily enforced. She says, "What we're seeing is door-to-door sweeps." According to her there are three stages in the process of round-ups of immigrants: in the first stage the INS picks up the "sketchy people", in the next stage the INS goes to all the shops and "physically removes any boy ore male over 16 who does not have valid documentation." Finally, in the last stage, the one most terrible according to Tripathi, the INS arrives at

houses in the early morning and removes fathers and sons who do not have the proper paperwork directly from their homes.

By its own count, the Justice Department, had reported 1,182 detentions by November 5th, but amidst protests from civil and immigrants rights organizations to stop the detentions, the Justice Department has refused to give more counts as to how many immigrants are currently in detention, according to the *Report*, and David Cole, professor at Georgetown University Law Center.

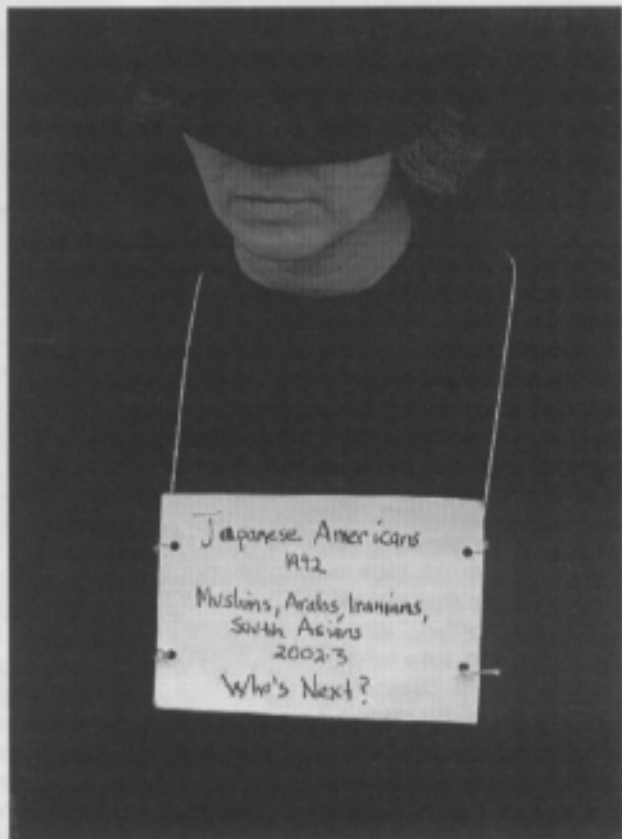
There is undeniable proof, however, from speaking with immigrant communities and civil rights organizations that the detentions have not stopped as evidenced by increasing numbers of men disappearing from their homes, according to Tripathi.

Justice Department officials defend the program, claiming it has successfully apprehended people who pose risks to the public. Mark Corallo, Justice Department spokesman, said that more than 400 "known criminals" and seven "known terrorists" have been taken into custody as a result of the system. The administration had asked for \$362 million to cover all the costs of the special registration system. NSEERS imposed periodic in-person interviews and check-ins with INS officers at specific exit points upon leaving the country. Even though the system is supposed to affect new immigrants, it also applies to those males older than sixteen from twenty-five specified countries, most of them predominantly Muslim, who were already in the United States last September 30.

This "special registration" policy targets populations based on religious affiliation and national origin. The policy also implies that these individuals are threats to the "homeland security" and should undertake government scrutiny. "[I]t further disenfranchises and alienates law abiding, peaceful communities which have already been harrowed by the government's initial terror investigation, during which several thousand

[Muslims] were rounded up and deported—more than 98% for minor immigration violations or crimes unrelated to terrorism," says Nicholas Rathod, member of the South Asian American Leader of Tomorrow's (SAALT) Board of Directors.

When Tripathi asks some of the detained men if they hate America because of the way they have been treated, she is surprised to hear them respond that they love America and want a better life for their children. Tripathi thinks that the current detention of thousands of



South Asian immigrants resembles the sentiments behind the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII in our country. However, now there is even more support for INS policies because the INS is able to claim that these people are "criminals" and because we are in a "state of war", according to Tripathi.

In his State of the Union Address on January 28, 2003, President Bush stated, "We have the terrorists

finding formosa

jenny partivit '03

The aptly named Taiwanese culture week *Finding Formosa* is a celebration and exploration of the sometimes abstruse Taiwanese culture. The name creates a play on words about Taiwan's location as an island nation dwarfed by its continental neighbors. For many Asian Americans and even Taiwanese-Americans, the term *Taiwanese* usually refers to those from Taiwan who are of Chinese mainland ancestry. This misperception often obscures the many facets of Taiwanese identity.

The Brown student convocation speakers for *Finding Formosa* shared personal statements about being Taiwanese-American that seemed to echo one another. Taiwan's historical relations with China have rendered the meaning of *Taiwanese* elusive for many. Growing up in America, student speakers, Michelle Lin '03 and Richard Hsieh '03, had trouble understanding what being Taiwanese entailed, but during their time at Brown, both have been able to enhance their understanding of Taiwanese culture through conferences they have attended.

For student speaker Abraham Young '04 whose personal statement was about his childhood experience of attending pro-democratization rallies in Taiwan with his parents, Taiwan is a symbol of democracy. He believes that, despite the sensitivity surrounding Taiwan, there needs to be more discourse about the island nation. Even though Young sees identifying Taiwan with the political as a positive thing, some believe that the political connection with Taiwanese identity causes misperceptions. For example, Americans often associate identifying as Taiwanese with taking a political stance since the tumultuous cross-strait relations between Taiwan and China often overshadow the cultural aspects of Taiwanese identity.

At the convocation of the first annual Taiwanese Cultural Week organized by the Brown Taiwan Society, the keynote speaker was Professor Khinhoan Li, a poet and a professor of linguistics at Harvard University. Rather than focusing on the island's political history with China, , briefly traced



the island's history of colonialism for the audience and then carefully explored the culture, history, and language of the Austronesian people who are Taiwan's aboriginal inhabitants. They currently comprise about 1.7% of the population.

Taiwan, a product of colonization by the Dutch, Spanish, Japanese and, most notably, by the Chinese Nationalist mainlanders who fled there after the rise of Communism in China, is in the mist of a nationalist movement calling for the reclamation of ethnic identities. This movement has advocated the preservation and practice of aboriginal Taiwanese languages. Currently, the government requires that Mandarin, English and one other Taiwanese dialect be taught in school. Professor Li, himself, is a Taiwanese of aboriginal descent and predicts that Chinese culture in Taiwan will decline as the movement gains more strength.

Most international dialogue about Taiwan pertains to its position in the world economy as an East Asian economic power house and to its peaceful and successful transition to a democracy since the late 1980s. As a result, Taiwanese culture has often been overlooked. Perhaps the Taiwanese nationalist movement will bring to Taiwan the global attention it deserves.

the unsung hero: min chueh chang

brian james lee '06

During the summer of 2001, I had the chance to visit an amazing Smithsonian exhibit about Dr. Min Chueh Chang, a pioneer of the birth control pill. It was exciting to learn about an Asian American who had done such revolutionary research, and I was astounded when I discovered that he was the father of a family friend. An interview with Dr. Chang's son, Francis Hugh "Pancho" Chang, provided me with much of the information I needed to write this piece so that I may share the truly inspirational story of an unsung hero.

Chang was born on October 10, 1908, in Shanxi Province, China. After completing high school there, he went on to earn a bachelor's degree in psychology at Tsing Hua University in Beijing. In 1940, with biologists F.H.A. Marshall (after whom his son is named), Sir John Hammond and Hammond's son, Pip, he began his research in reproductive biology by cross-breeding various animals at Cambridge University. He worked alongside Gregory Pincus in 1945 to research the techniques of in vitro fertilization and contraception. He joined Pincus, along

with Hudson Hoagland, in founding the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology in Massachusetts, which later became an important biomedical research center. Chang received a Ph.D. in animal breeding in 1961 from Cambridge and continued his research for more than a decade after.

At Cambridge in 1951, he discovered that sperm must incubate in the female reproductive tract before they become capable of fertilization – a phenomenon later named capacitation. In simpler terms, according to his son's more humorous description, capacitation is both "the fact that sperm become capable of fertilizing eggs only after enough time in the right place and the put down for folks who believe that test tube babies

come from putting sperm and egg together in a test tube and shaking." In 1959, this finding allowed Chang to become the first person ever to demonstrate in vitro fertilization (i.e. artificial insemination) in mammals. He used bunny rabbits in his tests, whose two-horned uteri gave their experimenter two shots at fertilization.

In 1960, Chang's research from the previous decade heralded in the invention of the first birth control pill, released under the name Enovid. (The use of this drug thickens fluids within the human vagina, making sperm entry and capacitation difficult.) The interview with the scientist's son provided great insight to his feelings

regarding his groundbreaking research and its effects on people around the world: "Quite a long time after the Pill, [he] surprised folks by appearing to regret the social revolution he'd been part of starting. Conservatives jumped on this 'seeing the light'. Actually, [he] said consistently that he regretted the indiscriminate use of oral contraceptives ("Any damn fool..." he'd mutter), not their creation.... He was proudest that the Pill provided poor women in sub-Saharan Africa and China a cheap and (relatively) foolproof way to avoid unwanted babies."

Although his name may not appear as frequently as one might expect

or hope for in history books today, Min Chueh Chang was a remarkable person whose works have helped transform culture and society in both the U.S. and abroad. It is very clear that his selfless and revolutionary research and discoveries have affected large populations around the world, but the question is: why do so few know his story? Chang passed away on June 5, 1991. Over ten years later, many still do not know his name. He was a pioneer not only for the scientific world, but also for Asian Americans. And I believe that he should be recognized for these two very important achievements.

For more information about Min Chueh Chang, go to: <http://books.nap.edu/html/biomems/mchang.html>.



different perspectives: asians and a

race, class, and politics

chris hu '06

Traditionally, debates over the fairness and efficacy of affirmative action tend to overlook the role of Asian-Americans in the racial politics of college admissions. The current University of Michigan controversy, like seemingly all other spats over affirmative action policy since the landmark Bakke case in the late 1970s, stems from white backlash against the alleged injustice of admitting "underqualified" African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans over "qualified" whites. If Asians are included in this discourse, it is often in the divisive capacity of model minority or "super-minority," used as supposed proof of intrinsic black and Latino failings and as a wedge to drive apart solidarity among people of color. Also, the practice of stereotyping Asians as high-achieving and affluent is damaging because it fails to account for the striking levels of class diversity between various Asian-American subgroups. What is needed is a radical, nuanced Asian-American stance on affirmative action that both recognizes the significant class divisions within the Asian-American community and refuses to play into the imposed role of model minority.

Current thinking about Asian-Americans and affirmative action incorrectly assumes the primacy of race over class. It is absurd to operate under the assumption that all Asian-Americans are presented with similar educational opportunities in preparation for admission to selective universities. At the considerable risk of oversimplification, one might assert that this breaks down roughly into two groups, largely created by the historical biases US immigration law: 1) more affluent East Asian and South Asians 2) and less affluent Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders. In the 2000 US Census, separate calculation of statistics for Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) demonstrated that there are significant economic gaps between this group and other Asian-Americans. The poverty rate among NHPI individuals was measured at 17.7%, slightly lower than the rates of poverty among black and Hispanic Americans; the poverty rate among non-NHPI Asian-Americans was 12.6%, placing them close to non-Hispanic whites. Furthermore, 44.1% of Asian Americans over the age of 25 had earned a bachelor's degree or higher, while only 13.8% of NHPIs had. It is reasonable to expect that if separate statistics were compiled for Southeast Asians—Cambodian-Americans, Vietnamese-Americans, Filipino-Americans, etc.—similar disparities between that group and other Asian-Americans would be revealed. With



family income and parental education levels among the most important determining factors in the success of students, it should be impossible to ignore the problems inherent in failing to recognize class diversity within the Asian-American community.

Ed Hu, an admissions officer at Brown in the late 1980s and early '90s, was quoted in a recent New York Times article as saying that his colleagues were oblivious to high poverty and low education levels among Filipino-Americans, statistics that should have made them "natural candidates for affirmative action." To be upper middle-class, half-Chinese and fifth-generation American is to occupy a position of considerable privilege and opportunity (and likely a good deal of assimilation) in American society; to be poor, Hmong, and a recent immigrant is to occupy one of severe disadvantage. But from the perspective of a college admissions officer, these two situations are identical in regards to affirmative action policy. Of course, the consideration of race in college admissions is not intended to act entirely as shorthand for socioeconomic status; cultural diversity is not synonymous with class diversity. And certainly much should be done to increase representation of working-class whites on college campuses. But it is inadequate to completely replace racial affirmative action policies with ones designed to increase socioeconomic diversity. Affirmative action's core goal is to mitigate the effects of historical and current discrimination and disadvantage among people of color, and it seems clear that for Southeast Asians and Pacific Islanders these difficulties still exist.



"The role of the racial middle [ie. Asian America] is a critical one. It can reinforce white supremacy if the middle deludes itself into thinking it can be just like white if it tries hard enough. Conversely, the middle can dismantle white supremacy if it refuses to buy into racial hierarchy, if it refuses to abandon communities of Black and Brown people, choosing instead to form alliances with them..." — Mari Matsuda

affirmative action and higher education

vincent chong '03

To this day, institutional racism looms over our education system, manifested through a lack of resources, books, funding, diversity of course options, and the spread of larger class sizes, more uncertified teachers, losses of accreditation, and frequent vocational tracking in predominantly people of color schools. Affirmative action practices were implemented in the 1960s to address such institutionalized inequalities that were pervasive in the United States.

However, the Asian American community is torn about offering support for such programs. Why should Asian Americans support affirmative action? The community that the panethnic label "Asian American" purports to represent is very bipolar, yet much of its politics are dominated by upper-class professionals who believe that affirmative action takes opportunities from them and gives them away to less qualified minorities, namely Blacks and Latinos—a sad internalization of the model minority myth. How come no Asian Americans say that their opportunities are being taken away by undeserving whites? This may be an indication of which side of the white-black binary Asian Americans would rather be on. However, in order to truly understand Affirmative Action's influence on Asian Americans, we must break out of this binary and see race relations for what they are, not what they have been co-opted to be. Furthermore, the idea that Affirmative Action hurts the Asian American community is predicated on ignoring other sectors of the community—namely, the working class.

The Universities of California provide a good example of the complexities of Affirmative Action for Asian America. Proposition 209 in California banned the use of race as a factor in university admissions. For the years following this decision, the percentage of Black, Latino, and Native American students enrolled in these schools dropped dramatically as enrollment for whites increased. Enrollment for Asian American students as a whole, in contrast, did not fluctuate much. Different subgroups within Asian America, however, were affected differently. Filipinos and Southeast Asian enrollment declined dramatically. Thus, this shows that Affirmative Action does not bar Asian Americans from higher education, but rather that racism and classism does; without race-based admissions, Asian Americans did not regain any enrollment that was supposedly taken from them under Affirmative Action.

It goes without question that Affirmative Action must be defended, as it is in immediate danger of being ruled unconstitutional by the supreme court¹. However, Asian Americans must also be critical of its implementation and hold it accountable to our community. We must brainstorm ways in which different class components will address inequities faced by different Asian American subgroups, thereby ensuring that Affirmative Action programs are not merely for the middle classes, and that poor, working classes and recent immigrants also benefit. Furthermore, Affirmative Action in college admissions should not be the final word on educational inequities. Universities should implement stronger programs to recruit, support, and retain students of color, efforts which will nonetheless be barred if Affirmative Action is defeated this spring. Affirmative Action should also be part of a larger movement for racial equality, including structural changes for educational access, health care, employment, etc., and should never be discussed in a social and historical vacuum.

nights

aicia chang '04

You said you liked my "exotic look" in a voice soaked in impermanence
That slipped through the smoke filled space between us
And I tried to convince myself that the shadows from the blue stage lights
And the chaos of flushed sticky faces
Made it ok to cut and paste conversation
In the teased reality of this Friday night.

Three hours before I met you I opened a fortune cookie and read that
Discontent is the first step in the progress of a man or nation
See, I gave it to you and you nodded your head righteously in approval
And I became aware that you share the addiction for using stoic statements
As justification that you are a progressive person
And as you sat there waiting for me to uncross my legs at
Your alcohol-induced convictions
Your eyes asked why I couldn't just let you
Fuck my "exoticness"
Because aren't all Asian women eager to please?
Because isn't that why I bought you a drink in the first place?

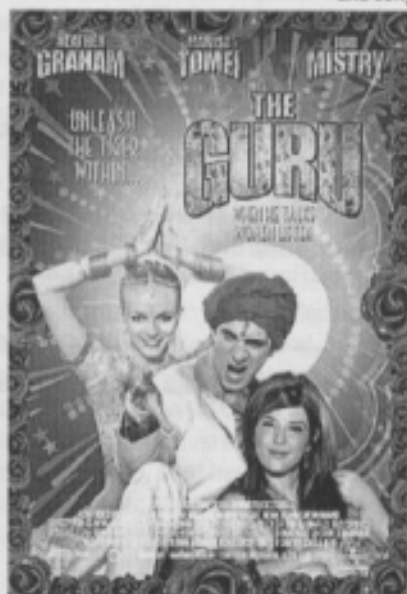
I wanted to say so many things to you I couldn't even speak.
I know I should be used to this but I'll never be used to this.
Maybe this is part of my discontent spurning progression spurning mental peace
It's hard to find compassion in dim lit nights like these.
I collapsed in bed hoping for a lighter day.



movie review

the guru

zhu song '06



"God wants us to have sex!" Epiphanic news for anyone who has ever wished that sex wasn't so antagonistic to the bearded old guy perching in the sky. How many people think of God when they have sex and of sex when they think of God? How many think that God actually approves? Exactly. In comes guru Ramu who seems to irresistibly combine the two. In this predictable tale, a dance teacher from India, Ramu Gupta (played by Jimi Mistry), sets off for the USA in search of Hollywood and fame. What he gets instead is a porn movie career, a fake reputation as a spiritual guru and eventually, the girl.

Much of the humour is derived from the scene where Ramu is forced to pretend to be a guru at an upscale birthday party given by rich parents for their daughter Lexi (played by Marisa Tomei). Using the confidential wisdom of his porn co-star Sherrona (played by Heather Graham) on how to act porn convincingly, he shocks, mesmerizes and liberates the guests by announcing that "the pussy is the door to our soul" and by leading everyone in dancing the Macarena. Thus he wins his own Broadway show and a phenomenal following. However he must make serious amends to

win back Sherrona's trust and more importantly, her love.

The acting is what one would expect from a stereotypical Bollywood goes to Hollywood story. Most of it is happy clappy and without much depth. Although Lexi's mother (played by Christine Baranski) is very amusing, none of the characters in the film are developed or have much emotional content. Although Americans embrace the Indian 'wisdom' that Ramu teaches, it is more of a 'spiritual' phase which will end as soon as the next fad calls. 'The Guru' is not in the least revolutionary in its portrayal of Asians/Asian Americans and does nothing to diffuse the usual stereotypes. Ramu's first job on arrival in New York is a waiter in an Indian restaurant. Enough said.

This is a sugary movie that provides the occasional surprising and amusing line – certainly not a masterpiece but somewhat effective relief for an overworked brain.



elliott

courtney yan '06

movement

J.M. Sambour '03

You move me

You move me when you talk about saving the world
 And I picture you with one fist in the air, marching along
 with the beat of a new day
 But instead both your hands are wide open
 Giving precious acceptance

You move me

When you write love poems about your brother,
 When you reclaim voice for your mother,
 When you speak to me in a language of broken
 dreams, but still hopeful
 Always hopeful
 Your words sizzling on my mind like summer rain on a
 hot car hood
 Steam rising to clear up any misconceptions

You move me

When you dance in the subway although people are
 busy trying not to stare
 At your beautiful naked soul
 When you laugh with your heart, belly shaking with joy

You move me because

Your breath exhales freedom songs, sounds tripping
 off your tongue to land sweetly in my ear

And I thank you
 For releasing me



J.M. Sambour

awakening of a dispersed seed

mena ramos '05

Tatays are Filipino fathers, farmers blistering hands beguiled beneath blistering heat, planting seeds to harvest me and my generation. My tatay was born under a leaky roof, drip, drip sheltering a makeshift home in the hills of Lahug on the Island of Leyte. His land percolated honeydew, dripping from the branches of green. Trees upon rows of coconut trees marked by one inch indentations dispersed throughout the log allowing young boys to climb and reap the benefits of mother's milk. My tatay was once one such young boy, harvesting coconuts for centavos to feed his siblings, nestling beneath, swaying palms dancing in Gaia's invisible current.

Nanays are Filipino mothers, harvesters of planted seeds, bequeathed with tough skin and straw hats to withstand the ignorant sun rising in the West. "Lintek mga bataa mo," she yells. Nanay's frustrations exhume themselves in a torrent of Filipino reprimands passed on by her nanay, my lola. Three faces, three fat crayons, three pairs of hand-me-down snowsuits pause and look up from a trail of water, salt, and dirt marking the kitchen floor leading into the sala, our living room. Chicago winters are hard, and our floor paid the brunt of it. The sala was half of our apartment. It was where Nanay, Bonifacio Jr, Lea and I curled together and slept every night. It was where we made caves with the couch pillows and shot hoops using a bent metal nangar and a ball of paper covered in duct tape. I didn't know it at the time, but Nanay's reprimands were manifested frustrations seeded in burning inquiries, whispering, wondering "Tatay, where are you?"

At the age of twelve, Tatay's father passed on, leaving him to care for five younger siblings and an aging mother limited to a sixth grade education. Armed with the name of the Philippine revolutionary war hero, Bonifacio set out to meet the demands of a nation praying and preyed upon. He climbed upon the shoulders of education and joined the Philippine Military Academy. He married my nanay who later moved to Chicago to be with her siblings, to sacrifice for her children, to do what was expected. My tatay was forced to stay, fighting the insatiable hunger for misunderstanding between a Muslim contingent in the Southern Philippines vying for separation and a Spanish colonized Philippines, truncated and recycled by current powers.

The phone rings at 8:00 in the morning. I turn over, wince at the sun creeping in through the blinds streaking across my neck and forehead. It's my mom. She heard of a fire in a nightclub in Rhode Island and wanted to be sure I was okay. I had not yet heard of the fire and assured her I was okay. My other half was atop geologic remnants of volcanic ash in the South Pacific, preoccupied and unaware. Tatay did not call.

It has long been since I trudged through Chicago winters in a florescent trimmed snowsuit yet still, the absence of my tatay remains. It remains in the constant reminder of exploitation, the deployment of more American troops to the island of Basilan. It remains in video documentaries of Subic Bay, the American naval base, infesting disease into the waters of poverty stricken women. It remains in the discord of Philippine politics, poisoned by the rhetoric of pride, text messaging into the minds of ignorant youth. It remains in the voices of Archipelaga, Philippine-American women calling upon the blood of ancestors to keep their waters clean. It remains in absent phone calls and Nanay's yearning.

narrative for soundtrack: sumi-e

sayaka yabuki '03

Shell-shocked reason leaves curiosity cozing, masking I...eye that which unknowingly takes all before it without taking time to reconsider the doubt, which led me to find you. Without knowing which way my dot pointed, I tumbled upon a magic tincture capable of healing all wounds. Too bad the label is missing. I left it on the dinner table. Crumpled but still there, like a kernel of corn that has discovered the wonder of navigation, seamlessly finding its way into the crack between you and I. YOU thought it was gone. I cannot help but smile. A picture of you. Your face isn't clear, smudged by the memory that keeps erasing... and for that reason I have alluded you as a green dot, about 90 degrees latitude, 60 degrees longitude. It is centered in the most spectacular garden, a decentralized map of continuous fragments which like crystallized snow spheres form bridges and snowflakes that melt away the sadness that has weaved its way so subtly, so intricately into this hat I wear around my head.

I can almost taste it in the water I drink here, sitting...crisscrossing parallels of people I've met, an inertia shock. The honesty, so hard to come by these days, I have come to believe...Was it ever really there to begin with? The pain sinks in, but so does the joy of hearing something real, just when you needed to see it to believe it. Or did you? Like Rigley's Believe it or Not. Shock therapy. Why have we become so desensitized? Why is it taught to us as children? Is it the lack of honesty? So simple a request and yet to what ends must one go to find it? Our desire to be shown something real remains unsettlingly unsatiated even while watching the lives of thousands crumble into dust before us, because the reasoning behind such action is beyond that which we have acknowledged to be real to be real.

The dots adjust, a realignment of the senses. The dots once connected look starfish-like, with a web of intricate biomorphisms interlocking the tide of emotions. It is low tide here in the white space. The sunrises cast a fishing net so I know I am safe here. Safe to open and close each line of connection between the dots, like one of those puzzle boxes a child might play within a galaxy much like and yet very different from ours, the way you and your sister's voice sound very much the same or so they say...and how different and the same you are! I can throw a dot into the sea of unspoken intangibles and try to catch a fish of tranquility. Like a blind fisherman with a good nose I will catch a fish of unknowns whose scent ferries me to the dot I look at now, my family tree or is it you? What difference does it make? I am still left feeling the same.

I try to unearth the root of my desire, my hands growing numb and blistered by a lack of something inherently simple, but you cannot let it go. I cannot let it go. Why? I try to count the numbers and I find that my fingers were made for other less obvious reasons. How is it we measure our functionality? I open the dot and see the many mirrors and doorways of and through which the living and deceased distort and clarify all at once, all too serendipitously. I close my eyes and cast a straight line to myself. The silence makes the sound much clearer. It is here in the white space where I find you smiling, like a clear stroke of finely tuned ink, a sumi-e on a sheet of white abyss.



art by quyen truong '05

hey A.D.D vegetarian

doreen wang '05

You eat fish (eyes)? Turkey post-Thanksgiving feast in a postcolonial conquistador position, the fridge door kicked open wide, light of god a brief beam in the kitchen dark.

She sells sea shells by the sad sea shore, so?

The Tylenol pills (that I forgot to explicitly geometrically possibly prove) were (thoughtfully) thrown DIVA-happy into your Quasi-, Pesca-, Enviro-friendly mouth, a drama shower gel of pink capped pus pulse pain, the Furies and their silken gold Fate Farm swept together in non-felt rapture to dissolve with/out mucus saliva strands tom-free re-happy. Here I remember the point of grabbing bottle and burner: to laugh.

Shy Shelly says she shall sew shell sheets shipped to sell

Rumor has it- S.U.B tract is also about Alternative Biochemistry Care- which means you may need herbs.

Not me, nor a jean jacket, pigtails, clear bag of bananas to leave this door forever

So if she sits slitting sheets of shells on the the seashore

Loser has to massage Grandmo's feet. Grandpa stuck

to a summer's seditious Socialist March sewn against your sleeve. The rhythm like a needle, a song story shot in the vein.

What-a to do to die today

And a minute or two to two

A thing distinctly hard to say but harder still to do

Sure about the shouts, shits, and shallow hell WE're shelling

She stood upon the balcony



Fairymiao

art by michelle cheng

Aunt's voice in the background popping in one tape after another
He came home everyday after work crying "Eunsuh Eunsuh"

In Chinese

No- now we use VCDs

But it used to be black coils tightly wound

Black track hair 1

Women born with green birthmark on half her face

But I can still remember my displaced love Oska-san!

In general the tissues were busy this weekend short with shaggy hair streak of gold evil - bootleg copy

Half longing half jealousy for a tin pause heart

Only speaking of end never satisfaction of

And hating on language

The hysterically sad subtitles

Narration soundtrack : Life

Welcome to *Visions*, a newsletter for the Asian/Asian American community at Brown University. *Visions* was created in hopes of bringing together a diverse group of people and to reflect on the commonalities and differences within our community. We hope that *Visions* serves a forum for students to share their experiences and thoughts. Some of the Spring 2003 issues covered are South Asian and Arab deportation, the two Korean girls killed by U.S. tanks, Asians and Affirmative Action, Brown's Ethnic Studies Conference, Brown's Asian American Community Retreat, *Finding Fomosa* convocation and features of Mango Tribe, and Min Chueh Chang. There are also a variety of poetry and student-artwork. These contributions are simply a perspective on some of these pertinent issues that affect our community and we hope that it stimulates dialogue and discussion. Within our diversity, we hope to find solidarity and understanding across all ethnic groups.

- Delphine Huang '05, editor-in-chief
- Kisa Takesue '88 Assistant Dean of Student Life

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Questions?

Suggestions?

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