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Over-Represented and De-Minoritized: The Racialization of Asian Americans in Higher Education

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When scholars and policy makers examine minority student needs, they often focus on African Americans, Latina/os, and Native Americans, groups who remain underrepresented in postsecondary education. It is less clear, however, where Asian Americans¹ fit into the higher education diversity discussion. A popular conception is that Asian Americans were disadvantaged at one time, but they have since overcome adversity due to their cultural values and hard work. Unlike other minority groups, Asian Americans are *overrepresented*. They are also described as the *model minority* who seem to be doing just fine and no longer need minority services and policies such as affirmative action. Because they are no longer defined as minorities, Asian Americans have been *de-minoritized*.² The primary question of this essay is: What forces propel this de-minoritization of Asian Americans in higher education?

Higher educational policy has shaped the ways in which racial formations of Asian Americans have been constructed. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994) define racial formation as "the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed" (p. 55). Racial formation arises within a historical context through racial projects that intentionally structure the organization and stratification of a society. Racial projects operate simultaneously as "an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines" (p. 56). A project is racist when it "creates or reproduces structures of domination based on essentialist categories of race" (p. 71). Scholars in the fields of Asian American history, law, and sociology have outlined how Asian American racial formation has involved two interconnected primary figures—the *yellow peril foreigner* and the *model minority*. This essay demonstrates that these figures have predominated the discourse of Asian Americans college students; policymakers, administrators, and the media have constructed these essentialist figures as racist projects to maintain the racial status quo in higher education.

This essay will outline the racist projects of the yellow peril foreigner and the model minority, articulate their inter-connection, and demonstrate how their manifestation in higher education reinforces white dominance. I begin by examining the historical constructions of these projects and then examine how they have taken form in higher education via the removal of Asian Americans from affirmative action, the anti-Asian campus backlash, the Asian admissions controversy, as well as through popular representations of Asian Americans as victims of affirmative action. I conclude with an analysis of how these racist projects have effectively de-minoritized Asian Americans and marginalized them from both majority and minority communities.

The Racist Projects

Yellow Peril Foreigners

While racialization as non-whites connects Asian Americans and African Americans, there are significant differences between the two groups' experiences. Asians were not and are not subject to the same representations or legislation as blacks. As legal scholar Angelo Ancheta (1998) astutely outlines, one distinct component of the Asian American experience is that Asians have been primarily racialized as foreigners and aliens. Historical examples of this racialization include legislation that excluded Asian groups from immigration.³ Naturalization rights were also denied to Asian immigrants, despite Supreme Court challenges by Takao Ozawa in 1922 and Bhagat Singh Thind in 1923 (Chan, 1991). Because Ozawa was not Caucasian and Thind was not-White, Supreme Court justices ruled that they were ineligible for naturalization, deeming them unassimilable by nature. Asian immigrants were not granted naturalization and citizenship rights until after World War II. Even U.S.-born Asians have received precarious citizenship rights. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, war-time hysteria led to the incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans in ten internment camps; two-thirds of the detainees were U.S. citizens.⁴ The suspicion of loyalty and the specter of foreign-ness are central to understanding the historical and present-day racializations of Asian Americans.

Closely tied to the notion of foreign-ness is the symbolic threat of Asian hordes taking over the white nation. The yellow peril figure, as understood through history, emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as a response to the growing presence of Asian immigrants in the United States and the greater influence of Asians in international politics. Rising immigration to the United States from China, Japan, and the Philippines fueled backlash from white labor groups who resented Asian immigrants as unfair competitors. Internationally, the rise of Japanese power following the 1905 Russo-Japanese War and U.S. expansion in Asia (which included the 1898 annexation of the Philippines), made the menacing "Oriental" a threatening figure within the Western imaginary. Robert Lee (1999) documents how journalists and writers used the yellow peril image to demonize Asian immigration in the wake of threats to white labor, national unity, and the white republic.

The depictions of Asians as non-white, forever foreign, and yellow peril hordes were part of a racist project in which the goal was to subjugate Asians in the United States. As historian Gary Okihiro (1994) notes, "I do not believe that racism or the idea of the yellow peril is irrational or fantastic; instead, I hold that they are constructed with a purpose in mind and function to sustain the social order" (p.137). As with other non-white groups, Asian immigrants' economic,

political, and social lives were delimited by policies and laws that defined them as aliens and racial *others* and barred them from full and equitable inclusion in the United States.

The Model Minority

The model minority is another racialized construct of Asian Americans, and is used to essentialize Asian Americans and pit them against other groups, primarily African Americans. The idea of Asian Americans as model minorities—paragons of hard work, strong family values, and respect for authority—chastises African Americans for being unable to overcome racial barriers. Asian American Studies scholars have discarded the model minority image as a myth and have revealed it to be a purposive device (Lee, 1999).⁵ This construct overlooks persistent racial discrimination against Asians in the United States and the historical and structural reasons that account for Asian American socio-economic mobility.⁶ Instead, the model minority attributes success to a basic and static Asian culture.

The model minority figure has deep historical roots. In the mid to late nineteenth century, labor recruiters saw Chinese immigrants as an ideal cheap labor source, as they were viewed as disenfranchised non-whites. Frank Wu (1995) notes how journalists lauded Chinese immigrants over freed slaves during Reconstruction, hailing them as more obedient and industrious. The intent of this figure is clear when Wu quotes a Reconstruction governor of Arkansas:

Undoubtedly the underlying motive for this effort to bring in Chinese laborers was to punish the negro for having abandoned the control of his old master, and to regulate the conditions of his employment and the scale of wages to be paid him (p. 231).

In the North, newspapers proffered similar messages favorably comparing Chinese laborers to Irish immigrants. These images divided the labor force along racial lines and maintained the existing power structure.

Not coincidentally, the contemporary model minority figure emerged in the late 1960s during politically contentious times when other non-model minorities were engaged in social protest. One of the earliest depictions of the model minority appeared in William Petersen's *New York Times* article titled "Success Story, Japanese American Style," published in 1966.⁷ While recognizing historical racial discrimination, Petersen praised Japanese Americans for their cultural values and exceptional educational and occupational success. Inherent in this praise was a message chastising African Americans and other minorities for their civil rights activism. Keith Osajima (2000) contextualizes this and similar articles in a time of increasing black militancy:

Asian American success also sent a distinct political message to the nascent Black Power Movement. The achievements of Asians diffused the black militants' claims that America was fundamentally a racist society, structured to keep minorities in a subordinate position. The Asian American experience identified cultural values and hard work as the keys to success. The political implication for those who had yet to make it was that their culture was not "good" enough. This delineation of good and bad culture deflected attention away from societal factors and placed the blame for racial inequality on minorities (pp. 450-451).

As a racist project, the model minority representation asserts that Asian Americans have achieved success and blames African Americans for not being able to do the same. It serves as a particularly powerful rhetorical strategy for diverting resources away from race-conscious programs for African Americans and other minorities, and from de-legitimizing policies such as affirmative action. Although laudatory, the depiction of the model minority limits Asian Americans from achieving full equity.

The Yellow Peril Foreigner and Model Minority Dialectic- Racial Triangulation

While the yellow peril foreigner (which defines Asian Americans as more like blacks) and the model minority figure (which defines Asian Americans as more like whites) appear to be contradictory, they are, in fact, inter-connected. For one, there are limits to the benefits rendered through the model minority representation. Wu (1995) points out how the positive attributes associated with the model minority can be quickly redefined as negative attributes during times of competition. If taken too far, the model minority depiction evokes the yellow peril foreigner:

To be hard-working is to be unfairly competitive. To be family-oriented is to be clannish, "too ethnic," and unwilling to assimilate. To be law-abiding is to be rigidly rule-bound, tied to traditions in the homeland, unappreciative of democracy and free expression (Wu, 1995, p. 241).

Okimoto (1994) details how the yellow peril and model minority representation "form a seamless continuum" (p. 141). The two figures create a circular relationship in which models can become perils and perils can become models. Okimoto (1994) writes: "Moving in one direction along the circle, the model minority mitigates the alleged danger of the yellow peril, whereas reversing direction, the model minority, if taken too far, can become the yellow peril" (p. 142).

Also articulating the inter-relation of the yellow peril and model minority figures, Claire Kim (1999) posits "a field of racial positions" in which Asian Americans have been racialized *relative* to whites and blacks. She describes Asian Americans as "racially triangulated" vis-à-vis whites and blacks through two inter-related processes of "relative valorization" and "civic ostracism" (p. 107). Whites valorize Asian Americans relative to blacks through the model minority and ostracize Asian Americans as other through the yellow peril foreigner.

Kim (1999) also articulates, as do Wu (1995) and Okihiro (1994), the limitations of the model minority valor. She points out how Petersen (1966) credits Japanese American success to Japanese cultural traditions despite the presence of a large American-born generation of Japanese in the United States at the time. By focusing on *Asian* culture, the model minority image continues to ostracize Asian Americans, marking them as inherently different from the majority and barred from full majority privileges.

Racist Projects in Higher Education

The Model Minority, Affirmative Action, and the De-Minoritization of Asian Americans

The model minority racist project has played a decisive role in the phasing out of Asian Americans from affirmative action protections in higher education. Initially, affirmative action policies defined Asian Americans as protected beneficiaries. The Office of Civil Rights required institutions of higher education to develop affirmative action programs with the specific goal of hiring qualified minorities and women. As Kathryn Swanson (1981) writes, the Department of Labor defined minorities as "Negroes, Spanish-surnamed, American Indians, and Orientals" (p. 27). Asian Americans thus benefited from affirmative action programs in higher education and were included in affirmative action admissions policies at private Ivy League schools throughout the 1960s and 1970s (Chan & Wang, 1991).

However, the model minority racist project facilitated the misconception that all Asian Americans were successful in higher education and thus were no longer minorities who needed affirmative action protections. Thus, starting in the late 1970s, Asian Americans were phased out of affirmative action programs. In the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark case, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), the Justice Department and Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell questioned the inclusion of Asian Americans in affirmative action policies, noting that Asian Americans were doing just fine in the regular admissions process and did not need affirmative action protections.⁹ Administrators began to remove

Asian Americans from affirmative action admissions programs. For example, University of California, Berkeley's law school, Boalt Hall, removed Asian Americans from affirmative action admissions consideration starting in 1975. In response, groups such as the Asian and Pacific American Federal Employee Council (1977) and Boalt Hall's Asian American Law Students' Association (1978) protested the school's interpretation of Asian American parity and success, arguing that the model minority representation collapsed all Asians together and ignored Asian American subgroups that still struggled with poverty.

Despite these claims, the phasing out continued. Throughout the 1980s, Asian Americans were touted as overrepresented in higher education and no longer needing affirmative action and support services. University of California, Berkeley ceased considering Asian Americans as an underrepresented group in 1984. Historian John Douglass (1997) describes this policy shift as part of an "attempt to redefine who was and who was not an under-represented minority" (para. 43). As a result of Berkeley's decision, most Asian American groups were no longer considered part of Educational Opportunity Programs or deserving of special admissions consideration. They were arguably de-minoritized in the eyes of Berkeley administrators.⁹

*Campus Backlash to the Yellow Peril
and the Overrepresented Model Minority*

In the public's eyes, the model minority project helped to rationalize Asian American enrollment growth in higher education during the late 1970s and early 1980s. For instance, in 1976, there were 198,000 Asian Americans at all levels of higher education. In 1988, this figure grew to 497,000, which increased the percentage of Asian Americans enrolled in postsecondary institutions from two to four percent (Escueta & O'Brien, 1991). This growth occurred at competitive private and public institutions; between 1976 and 1986, the proportion of Asian Americans in freshman classes grew from 3.6 to 12.8 percent at Harvard, from 5.3 to 20.6 percent at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), from 5.7 to 14.7 percent at Stanford, and from 16.9 to 27.8 percent at Berkeley (Chan & Wang, 1991).

Reminiscent of the 1960s, American popular media lauded Asian American academic achievement in the 1980s with stories about Westinghouse Talent Search winners and enrollment statistics at prestigious colleges. These successes were described in mainstream magazines whose headlines aggrandized Asian American success. Examples included *The New Republic's* "The Triumph of Asian Americans" (1985), *Fortune's* "America's Super Minority" (1986), and a *Time* cover depicting Asian students as "Whiz Kids" (1987). While Osajima (2000) points out that these articles acknowledged some of the downsides to the

model minority (such as the pressures Asian American students faced), the message was fundamentally the same: family values, reverence for learning, and hard work—rather than structural changes to an unjust racial system—were the keys to success.

Despite this praise, campus climates grew hostile to Asian Americans, as the pendulum swung back to the yellow peril foreigner. The model minority had gone too far. The yellow peril foreigner and model minority dialectic emerged as Asian Americans became *too successful* in education—they were likened to taking over the campus, and became victims of their own success. The model minority super-student sparked backlash on campuses in the 1980s, evidenced by racist nicknames denoting prestigious schools (MIT became "Made In Taiwan"; UCLA was "United Caucasians Lost Among Asians"). In addition, white students began complaining that Asian American students were curve breakers (Wu, 1995, p. 239). This campus backlash reveals the limitations of the majority's full acceptance of the model minority and the persistence of the yellow peril foreigner racist project. Despite Asian American success and the fact that Asian Americans could not utilize minority services, white students clearly did not see them as equals; in their view, Asian Americans were taking over the campus and were thus a threat.

The Admissions Controversy: Yellow Peril Model Minorities

The yellow peril foreigner and the model minority representation emerged yet again during the Asian admissions controversy. Despite the growing Asian American applicant pool, between 1983 and 1986 declining percentages of Asian American students were being admitted to prestigious universities across the country. In response, Asian American professors, students, and activists levied charges that these universities were setting quotas on the number of Asian American students they would admit. Major controversies developed at Brown, Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, UCLA and Berkeley, the site of the largest controversy and investigation. The charges centered around two basic complaints: (1) the admissions rate for Asian Americans was lower than that for whites, and (2) Asian American enrollments had not risen in proportion to their sharp increases in the applicant pool.¹⁰ As the controversy unfolded, Asian Americans were depicted as both models and as perils.

Dana Takagi (1992) chronicles how universities responded to allegations of quotas in two ways—both of which involved use of the yellow peril foreigner and the model minority projects as explanations to justify the admissions status quo. One explanation was that Asian Americans were qualified but not competitive enough; they were not well rounded and were too focused in math and science. This explanation turned the model minority image into that of non-

diverse academic nerds who were too narrowly driven for their own good. Despite their strong academic records, Asian Americans were still missing that certain something that made them desirable university students.

Another common explanation proffered by university administrators was that Asian Americans were overrepresented in their institutions, compared to their proportion of the population. University of California (UC) President David P. Gardner stated in an Associated Press story on December 12, 1986 that: "Asian students have been so successful they have become over-represented at the university" (Scott-Blair, 1986, p. A1). Changes in admission policies were needed because Asians comprised more than 20 percent of the undergraduate enrollment at UC campuses but made up only 6 percent of the state's population. This overrepresentation and racial imbalance concerned Gardner, who stated that it created new racial tensions and that it might be time to reconsider policies that call for enrollment to more accurately reflect the state population (Scott-Blair, 1986, p. A37). To Gardner, Asian overrepresentation was a challenge to diversity and racial balance. This reasoning assumes that Asian Americans are all basically the same and that they contribute to diversity in the same exact way. In other words, Asians are faceless, yellow perils of which the university has too many.

Affirmative Action—Asian Victims and Black Villains

The model minority project that chastises African Americans emerged as the Asian admissions controversy shifted into a debate about affirmative action in which Asian Americans were portrayed as victims. In 1988, at a conference on Asian Americans in higher education, Attorney General William B. Reynolds, head of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, blamed affirmative action for the unfair treatment of Asian Americans in admissions decisions. Takagi (1992) quotes Reynolds' argument: "In other words, the phenomenon of a 'ceiling' on Asian American admissions is the inevitable result of the 'floor' that has been built for a variety of other favored racial groups" (p. 104). This speech signaled a new discourse that valorized Asian Americans in order to discredit affirmative action, thus creating both "Asian victims" and "Black villains" (Kim, 1999, p. 122).

Takagi (1992) interprets this new championing of Asian Americans as an important political tool in the fight against affirmative action. She writes:

By bringing Asian *achievement* into the ring of conflict over Black and White differences in academic achievement, neoconservatives insisted that their free market vision of admissions was not racially motivated but, rather, inspired by fairness. Still, several neoconservative authors were acutely aware that their struggle to gore affirmative action once and for all was possible because the high achievers were *Asian*, not White (p. 120).

As the good model minority who had overcome adversity through hard work, Asian Americans were compelling victims.

The fight to repeal affirmative action in University of California admissions gained momentum as a result of the Asian admissions controversy. In the 1990s, anti-affirmative action advocates held up Asian Americans as affirmative action's biggest victims. In their article titled "Situating Asian Americans in the Political discourse on affirmative Action," Omi and Takagi (1996) chart this racist project. During the debate over the University of California's Special Policy-1, which ended the university's use of race, religion, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in admissions, then-California Governor Pete Wilson expressed his support for abolishing affirmative action in all state policies. Wilson argued, "Racial preferences are by definition racial discrimination. They were wrong 30 years ago when they discriminated against African Americans. And they're wrong today, when they discriminate against Asian or Caucasian Americans" (Omi & Takagi, 1996, p. 156).

Asian American victimization persisted in the 2003 University of Michigan cases *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger*. For example, attorneys for Grutter argued that the consideration of race in admissions at Michigan "especially" hurt Asian Americans (National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium et. al., 2001, p. 4).¹¹ Asian Americans continue to be held up as poster children in the fight against affirmative action.

The Power of Racist Projects: The De-Minoritization of Asian Americans

The intertwined racist projects of Asian Americans as overrepresented in postsecondary institutions (yellow peril foreigners), and as de-minoritized (model minorities) support white dominance in higher education. Over time, the creation and sustenance of these projects by policymakers, journalists, administrators, and politicians served the purpose of diverting resources away from racial minorities. The yellow peril foreigner diverts resources from Asian Americans and bars their full inclusion in higher education through campus backlashes and potential quotas. The model minority representation diverts resources away from Asian Americans because it propels the essentialist idea of Asian American success (implying all Asians are the same), which obscures the educational barriers that persist for Asian Americans in certain academic disciplines, in achieving faculty tenure or earning administrative positions, and among certain ethnic sub-groups.¹² The model minority depiction also diverts resources from African Americans and other racial groups by valorizing Asian Americans as *racial mascots*, proof that affirmative action is no longer necessary (Kidder, Serrano & Ancheta, 2004).

The model minority representation diverts resources away from Asian Americans in another important way. Although it implies full majority embrace of Asian Americans, it fails to deliver. Still, this powerful discourse of Asian American de-minoritization is often accepted by other racial or ethnic groups that do not accept Asian Americans as full-fledged minorities. S.B. Woo, former national president of the Organization of Chinese Americans, discusses the effect of this exclusion. He quotes an Asian American conference participant who stated, "Asian Americans feel like orphans. The majority says 'You are not us.' Minorities say 'You are not us.' Our interests are ignored whenever convenient" (Woo, 1997, p. 7). Woo (1997) was also told by a civil rights activist: "S.B., you guys [Asian Americans] will have to wait. There are more blacks than Asian Americans. We have to seek justice for blacks first" (p. 7). Asian Americans are thus rendered invisible (or at least secondary) in a black-white paradigm in which Asian Americans are valorized as models.

While scholars have critiqued the political Right's use of Asian Americans to justify the repeal of affirmative action, they are equally critical of the Left's erasure of Asian Americans in the debate. The Left does not know what to do with Asian Americans so they ignore them (Choy, 2005). Omi and Takagi (1996) articulate how the Left has failed to adequately respond to the Asian American model minority figure. They write: "If Asian Americans assume the status of newfound victims of discrimination in Right narratives, they occupy a kind of racial pariah position in Left and progressive accounts of affirmative action" (p. 158).

This confusion over the position of Asian Americans in the affirmative action debate is partly understandable because Asian Americans defy easy racial categorization in a black-white paradigm. Omi and Takagi (1996) assert that the Left either omits Asian Americans from the affirmative action debate (because they prioritize black issues) or they simply lump them into a united front of minority interests. *Both* of these tactics are problematic, given the very different racial formations of Asian Americans. Omi and Takagi (1996) note that Asian Americans face a different kind of racism, one that emerges out of resentment of the model minority that does "too well" (p. 159). Asian Americans cannot be easily categorized as *like blacks* or *like whites*.

The racial triangulation of Asian Americans has been so effective that minorities who suffer under Asian American valorization reject Asian Americans as well, leaving them in a problematic racial space. Asian Americans are not white as the yellow peril foreigner reminds them, but they are not black or seen as an authentic minority. Wu (1995) comments on this conundrum:

Another form of stigma altogether arises from the symbolism of being excluded. To be excluded from affirmative action is to be excluded from American society:

affirmative action programs purport to be for all minorities, and if Asian Americans are not a minority, then they are nothing (p. 275).

So while the model minority representation seems to embrace Asian Americans, in effect it ostracizes them from both whites and blacks.

Understanding Racist Projects

The aim of this essay has been to understand the forces that have compelled the de-minoritization of Asian Americans in higher education. I have argued that racist projects intentionally create representations of the yellow peril foreigner and the model minority in order to maintain the racial status quo and to resist a tipping point¹³ that threatens to change the racial balance of the institution.

It is important to remember that racial formations are continually contested and are in flux. Asian Americans have been part of the formation of the yellow peril foreigner and model minority representations. Some have actively worked against racist projects, while others collude with the image of Asian Americans as non-minorities and victims of affirmative action.¹⁴ Future work needs to analyze the agency of Asian Americans as they seek to shape these formations, as well as how racist projects affect social movements to overturn the status quo.

Identifying racist projects is necessary if we seek to understand the realities of Asian American students' experiences. Mitchell Chang and Peter Kiang (2002) discuss the dangers of racial representations of Asian Americans in higher education. They caution: "Whether Asian American students are showcased as overrepresented in elite private education or in need of remedial public education, or whether they are portrayed as student activists or politically apathetic, racialized characterizations of Asian Americans are both purposeful and pointed" (p. 147). In order to adequately address real Asian American educational needs, one must be critical and vigilant of these representations and how they intentionally emerge and evolve as racist projects.

Notes

¹ I use the term *Asian American* to denote individuals of Asian descent in the United States (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asian groups) who have been racialized and grouped as *Asian* in policy and legislation. I purposefully do not use the term *Asian Pacific American*

because I am not referring to Pacific Islander groups who have distinct histories and who become marginalized by this conflation. See Diaz (2004).

² I refer to this removal of Asian Americans from minority services and programs in higher education as a process of de-minoritization. This process must be understood critically, as its justification relies on essentialist and problematic representations of Asian Americans.

³ Key legislation excluding Asian Americans from immigration include the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement, the 1917 Immigration Act, and the 1924 Immigration Act. For a history of Asian Americans, see Chan (1991) and Takaki (1998).

⁴ In justification of the Japanese American evacuation of the West coast, General John DeWitt stated that the Japanese were an "enemy race whose racial affinities were not severed by migration and whose racial strains remained undiluted" (Chan, 1991, p. 125).

⁵ Lee (1999) articulates that selective use of information about Asian Americans is intentional, making the model minority myth a "hegemonic mode of racial representation" (p. 186).

⁶ See Sue & Okazaki (1990), Weinberg (1997), Nakanishi (1989), and Lee (1999).

⁷ Chun (1980) notes various other articles around the same time including a 1970 *New York Times* article titled "Japanese Joining Hawaii's Elite"; *Newsweek's* 1971 "Success Story: Outwhiting the Whites"; *Time's* 1975 "The Americans of Japanese Ancestry: Fast Rising Sons"; and a 1977 *Los Angeles Times* article titled "Japanese in U.S. Outdo Horatio Alger."

⁸ See "Amicus Brief in Support of Petitioners: *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*" (1978) and *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978).

⁹ Educational Opportunity Programs were created on University of California campuses in 1964 to increase the enrollments of low-income and minority students through outreach, recruitment, counseling, and support services and financial aid policies.

¹⁰ No university admitted any conscious or deliberate quotas, but investigations revealed problems in the review process. See Takagi (1992).

¹¹ The University of Michigan did not include Asian Americans in consideration for affirmative action at the time of the *Gratz* and *Grutter* cases. The law school considered each individual applicant's background including "the experience of having been a Vietnamese boat person" (Schmidt, 2003, p. A24). But blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians were the only groups to whom the law school consistently gave extra consideration.

¹² Asian Americans are underrepresented in the fields of history, sociology, English, philosophy, education, psychology, political science, and law. Southeast

Asian groups are also particularly under-represented in higher education. See Hune and Chan (1997).

¹³ Kidder (2000) describes Derrick Bell's concept of the "tipping point": when diversification begins to change the very identity of the institution, resistance emerges (p. 60).

¹⁴ The Asian American community is divided on the issue of affirmative action. A prime example is in the two separate amicus briefs submitted in the University of Michigan cases—one by the Asian American Legal Foundation against Michigan's policies, and one by a consortium of 28 Asian Pacific American legal groups defending Michigan's policies. See Ong (2003) for a discussion of the Asian American community's division on affirmative action.

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