

Not Your Model Minority: Breaking Barriers in the Asian American Movement

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The latter half of the American twentieth century was marked by a number of well known social movements, such as those for civil rights, Black Power, and withdrawal from the Vietnam War. However, there exists another struggle that has been often left out of the books: the Asian American movement of the 1960s and 1970s. This movement had neither a crusading Martin Luther King Jr. nor an impassioned Malcolm X, yet this did not take away from its importance. Throughout the movement's lifetime, activism focused on local issues and grassroots organization. Although its activists did not rally around a single shining figure, they still set out to accomplish many things in the name of social justice, including organizing workers, fighting for housing, working alongside other minority groups, and providing social services to Asian communities.<sup>1</sup> Most importantly, the people sought to redefine and self-determine the identity of Asian Americans, from confronting racist tropes of the past to challenging the 'model minority' mold of the present.<sup>2</sup> And despite omission from the history books, these activists left a significant legacy of ideas and accomplishments that are still relevant today. The Asian American movement sought to break the barriers created by divisive stereotypes, collaborating across racial and ethnic lines in the struggle for greater equality and belonging.

By the 1960s, people of Asian descent had been in the United States for over a century. During the majority of that time, their image was that of a 'Yellow Peril'<sup>3</sup>: foreign invaders that were dangerous to the United States. Immigration from Asia started with the Chinese laborers of

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<sup>1</sup> Daryl Joji Maeda, "The Asian American Movement," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History* (2016): 1, <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-21>

<sup>2</sup> "Asian American History," Japanese American Citizens League, 2006, accessed February 11 2020 at <https://jacl.org/asian-american-history/>.

<sup>3</sup> John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats, "Yellow Peril: 19th-Century Scapegoating," *The Margins*, Asian American Writers' Workshop, last modified March 5, 2014, <https://aaww.org/yellow-peril-scapegoating/>.

the mid-to-late nineteenth century, working in mining and railroad construction in fledgling Western states. Employers preferred these immigrants because they could be forced to accept lesser pay.<sup>4</sup> Yet when hard times hit, economic tensions between Chinese and white laborers led to racism against the Chinese, and, to a lesser extent, Japanese and Filipino immigrants as well. The public branded them undesirable and unwelcome foreigners<sup>5</sup> or ‘coolies’ that threatened American morals.<sup>6</sup> As a response to these tensions, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which barred Chinese people from entering the United States and anyone residing from obtaining citizenship<sup>7</sup> until 1943.<sup>8</sup> By this time, the beacon of animosity had turned towards Japanese people living in the United States. During World War II, 117,000 Japanese Americans were forcibly removed from their homes and detained in camps on suspicion that they were loyal to and spying for Japan, despite over two thirds of them being American-born citizens.<sup>9</sup> A remark made by an American general summed up how the public felt towards Japanese in America: “A Jap’s a Jap. It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen or not,”<sup>10</sup> illustrating how a person’s heritage, and not their identity, or even citizenship itself, determined

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<sup>4</sup>“Asian American History,” Japanese American Citizens League.

<sup>5</sup> “THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHINESE,” *The Daily Record Union* (Sacramento, CA), May 13, 1882, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82014381/1882-05-13/ed-1/seq-4/>.

<sup>6</sup> “Flyers Distributed by Silver Bow Trades and Labor Assembly and Butte Miners' Union in Support of Chinese and Japanese boycott,” *National Archives Catalog*, accessed February 15, 2020, <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/298113/>.

<sup>7</sup> “Transcript of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882),” accessed February 14, 2020, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=47&page=transcript/>.

<sup>8</sup>The Magnuson Act of 1943 partially repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, allowing only 105 Chinese immigrants to the US each year. See Kat Chow, “‘Model Minority’ Myth Again Used As A Racial Wedge Between Asians And Blacks,” National Public Radio, April 19, 2017, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/04/19/524571669/model-minority-myth-again-used-as-a-racial-wedge-between-asians-and-blacks/>.

<sup>9</sup> “Japanese Relocation During World War II,” *National Archives*, last modified April 10, 2017, <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation/>.

<sup>10</sup> William Pettersen, “Success Story, Japanese-American Style,” *New York Times* (New York: NY), January 9, 1966, <https://www.nytimes.com/1966/01/09/archives/success-story-japaneseamerican-style-success-story-japaneseamerican.html/>.

who was welcome in the United States. Asians, it seemed, did not qualify; their ancestry was a barrier to belonging.

However, in the few decades following World War II, the narrative shifted. Suddenly, Asian people in America were no longer seen as the ‘Yellow Peril’ of the past, but instead as a docile and hardworking ‘model minority’. From the 1960s onwards, overt discrimination against Asians sunk slowly back into the dark. The Immigration Act of 1965 put an end to the national origins system, which set a quota for the number of immigrants from each country. Under this old system, the majority of visas were granted to Northern and Western Europeans, with the number available for Asian immigrants being near zero.<sup>11</sup> The new immigration act sought to choose immigrants through ‘merit’ instead of nationality. As a result, this system selected for Asian immigrants from well-educated or wealthy backgrounds, transforming the Asian American demographic. Suddenly, the well-educated immigrants and their descendants became the face of Asian Americans. Papers such as the New York Times popularized accounts of their success. These stories portrayed them as hardworking – if not a little robotic – people who succeeded without protest, citing low crime rates and good ‘moral character’ to illustrate their obedience to rules.<sup>12</sup> This newly minted image quickly became an inaccurate stereotype of Asian Americans as well as a barrier, because it discouraged people from taking action against racism. The stereotype painted Asian Americans as complacent people who worked hard in school to rise above any sort of oppression or disadvantage they might face. This trope was then used as an argument by pro-segregationists to undermine the civil rights movement and “deflect

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<sup>11</sup> “The Legacy of the 1965 Immigration Act: Three Decades of Mass Immigration,” Center for Immigration Studies, September 1, 1995, <https://cis.org/Report/Legacy-1965-Immigration-Act>.

<sup>12</sup> William Pettersen, “Success Story, Japanese-American Style.”

responsibility for the affects[sic] of racism.”<sup>13</sup> To other marginalized groups, especially African Americans, the ‘model minority’ myth implied that experiencing racism was a *personal* problem and that anyone could overcome centuries of systemic oppression and racism in the United States if they just kept their heads down and worked hard. To Asian Americans, the myth nullified their own history of systemic racism and oppression they faced in the United States by glossing over it with a veneer of selective success stories. In both of these cases, the model minority stereotype acted as a barrier to minorities talking about racism because it redirected the blame at the people who were speaking out; furthermore, it pitted minorities against one another, creating barriers between them as well.

The premises the Asian American movement founded itself upon were in a direct challenge to the stereotype of the ‘model minority,’ enabling activists to break these barriers from the very beginning. Asian Americans of the 1960s found inspiration in two key movements of the decade – that against the Vietnam War, and that of Black Power<sup>14</sup> – to form their own movement demanding self-determination and empowerment. American involvement in the Vietnam War manifested in anti-Asian language and rhetoric, such as the slur ‘gook’ or the consistent dehumanization of Vietnamese – and, more importantly, *yellow* – people. Furthermore, Asian American activists regarded the war as an imperialistic venture by the United States and sought to protest it by expressing their own point of view. At the same time, the Black Power movement inspired many Asian Americans to look inwards at their own identities; it was key to building the Asian American movement, as “engaging with [Black Power] helped Asian Americans build an understanding of their own racial positioning in the United States.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> “Asian American History,” Japanese American Citizens League.

<sup>14</sup> Maeda, “The Asian American Movement,” 2.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

Throughout American history, Asian immigrants and their descendants faced racism and violence similar to the experience of African Americans during post-Civil War Reconstruction. Asian Americans – especially early Chinese Americans – dealt with systemic job and housing discrimination,<sup>16</sup> as well as race riots, and, on occasion, even lynching.<sup>17</sup> These similarities were not a coincidence, as both Asian and African Americans were racial minorities and subsequently experienced scapegoating and oppression at the hands of the larger society. Understanding that racism had touched Asian American history, as it had Black history, encouraged Asian activists and leaders to listen and learn from the Black Power movement. By doing so, they could begin coming to terms with their own painful history of oppression through building a new Asian American identity.

The Black Panthers invited the youth of the San Francisco Chinatown to learn political theory and encouraged them to form the Red Guard Party. This group adopted the Panthers' ideas of racial pride and self-determination alongside their practices of providing services, like free breakfast programs, to their communities.<sup>18</sup> The influence of the Black Power movement was instrumental to the formation of the Asian American movement, as it provided a model of activism and organization as well as a vision of empowerment. Many leaders of the Asian American movement, such as Yuri Kochiyama<sup>19</sup> and Fred Ho,<sup>20</sup> cited the Black Power movement as an influence on their Asian-centric activism; some, like Kochiyama, even had direct ties to

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Kelly Wallace, "Forgotten Los Angeles History: The Chinese Massacre of 1871," *Los Angeles Public Library Blog*, May 19, 2017, <https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871>.

<sup>18</sup> Maeda, "The Asian American Movement," 3.

<sup>19</sup> Yuri Kochiyama, interview by Megan Asaka, Densho Digital Archive, July 21, 2009, <http://ddr.densho.org/media/ddr-densho-1000/ddr-densho-1000-257-transcript-f256359343.htm/>.

<sup>20</sup> Fred Ho, "Beyond Asian American Jazz: My Musical and Political Changes in the Asian American Movement," *Leonardo Music Journal* 9 (1999): 45, [www.jstor.org/stable/1513476](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1513476).

Black Power organizations and actively worked with them. These instances of interracial cooperation broke the barriers between African and Asian Americans that the ‘model minority’ sought to create. Instead, Asian Americans recognized the similarities between them and collaborated with the Black Power movement to act upon the issues in their own communities.

In addition to organizing, members of the Asian American movement also created spaces for their voices to speak in. Activists established grassroots publications, such as the *Gidra*,<sup>21</sup> to organize and inform their movement.<sup>22</sup> The monthly *Gidra* was founded independently by UCLA students in 1969 after university administration refused to endorse the periodical. It started out reporting on topics such as current events and activism within Asian communities but expanded to include many issues important to the Asian American movement, such as the Vietnam War, anti-imperialism, and the military draft.<sup>23</sup> This periodical harbored critical thought pieces such as *The Emergence of Yellow Power*,<sup>24</sup> an essay written by activist Amy Umeyatsu describing the need for racial pride. In comparing Asian and African American experiences, Umeyatsu evokes Black Power language such as the cry ‘Black is Beautiful’ to argue that a similar need exists for ‘Yellow’ people. She goes on to acknowledge the racism within Asian communities, both internalized – meaning Asian Americans’ *own* shame of being Asian – as well as external racism towards Black people, calling for a need to change. She also addresses the ‘model minority’ stereotype head on, criticizing its perpetuation in an effort to shame and silence Black as well as Asian activists. Finally, she demands the end of the silent, “passive

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<sup>21</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>22</sup> Brian Niiya, “Gidra: Now Available Online,” *Densho Blog*, December 15, 2017, <https://densho.org/gidra-now-available-online/>.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Amy Umeyatsu, “The Emergence of Yellow Power In America,” *Gidra* vol I. no. 7 reprint, (Los Angeles, CA), [http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/US\\_History\\_reader/Chapter14/AmyUyematsuYellowpower1969.pdf/](http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/US_History_reader/Chapter14/AmyUyematsuYellowpower1969.pdf/).

Oriental stereotype” and “the birth of a new Asian – one who will recognize and deal with injustices.”<sup>25</sup> These very ideas circulated among Asian activists via small, grassroots publications and efforts such as the *Gidra*, shaping the chief goals of the movement. Alongside these formative thought pieces, the *Gidra* also promoted unity with other ‘Third World’<sup>26</sup> activist groups in its publication.

This emphasis on ‘Third World’ solidarity by the Asian American movement is well illustrated by the student strikes starting in 1968 and 1969 on the campuses of San Francisco State University<sup>27</sup> and the University of California, Berkeley,<sup>28</sup> respectively, where coalitions of students belonging to the Black Student Union and the Third World Liberation Front protested against university administrations. The Third World Liberation Front was composed of a variety of affinity groups, including Asian American, Chicano, and Native American student organizations that had banded together under a common cause to protest.<sup>29</sup> The main demand of both striking groups was the same: they wanted the establishment of a Third World College<sup>30</sup> for ethnic studies, with a curriculum “designed for, and taught by, people of color.”<sup>31</sup> The establishment of the College, strikers and supporters argued, meant educational

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> The ‘Third World’ refers to the Latin America, Asia, and Africa of the three worlds model that was used to classify nations after World War II: the First World was capitalist nations, notably the United States and those of Western Europe, the Second World the communist nations like the Soviet Union, and the Third World the rest. Here, the use of the ‘Third World’ refers to nations recently de-colonized by either European powers or Japan, as well as Indigenous peoples in the US and elsewhere.

<sup>27</sup> Karen Grigsby Bates and Shereen Marisol Meraji, “The Student Strike That Changed Higher Ed Forever,” National Public Radio, March 21, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/03/21/704930088/the-student-strike-that-changed-higher-ed-forever/>.

<sup>28</sup> “The Third World Liberation Front,” The Berkeley Revolution, accessed February 17, 2020, <http://revolution.berkeley.edu/projects/twlf/>.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>31</sup> “The Third World Liberation Front,” The Berkeley Revolution.



self-determination for students of color; creating the College would also create a space where students of color could reclaim their histories and identities.<sup>32</sup>

The strikes lagged on for months on both campuses, turning violent as police sprayed tear gas and mace on protesters, often as a response to physical clashes; at UC Berkeley, it escalated to the point that the National Guard was called onto campus.<sup>33</sup> After nineteen weeks at San Francisco State University,<sup>34</sup> the longest in collegiate history,<sup>35</sup> and ten weeks at UC Berkeley,<sup>36</sup> the strikers and the administration finally came to settlements over the establishment of an Ethnic Studies college and department alongside other student demands. The establishment of these colleges and departments set a precedent for hundreds of other colleges and universities to follow suit.<sup>37</sup> In addition, these accomplishments broke previously existing barriers in education. Many students of color had little room in academia to learn about their own heritage, much less have a chance to narrate and discuss their histories. With the establishment of Ethnic Studies programs, people of color gave themselves a space for self-determination and narration of their own identities.

These Third World Liberation Front strikes count as an important part of the Asian American movement because of the active involvement of Asian American student organizations. During the strike, Asian American students engaged with other Third World

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<sup>32</sup> Kanji, "A Response to Oppression," *Gidra* (Los Angeles, CA), vol. I no. 1, April 1969, <http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-297-1/>.

<sup>33</sup> Raskolnikov, "Gas Over Berkeley," *Berkeley Barb* (Berkeley, CA), March 7, 1969, <http://revolution.berkeley.edu/gas-over-berkeley/?cat=440&subcat=1/>.

<sup>34</sup> "Campus commemorates 1968 student-led strike," SF State News Online, September 22, 2008, <https://www.sfsu.edu/news/2008/fall/8.html/>.

<sup>35</sup> Helene Whitson, "The San Francisco State College Strike Collection," online essay at San Francisco State University J. Paul Leonard Online Library, accessed February 16, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20150224071740/http://www.library.sfsu.edu/about/collections/strike/essay.html/>.

<sup>36</sup> "The Third World Liberation Front," *The Berkeley Revolution*.

<sup>37</sup> "Campus commemorates 1968 student-led strike," SF State News Online.

activists and movements, breaking racial barriers to stand for a common cause. Furthermore, by participating actively in the strike and demanding a College that would oversee their inclusion in academia, Asian American strikers broke the barrier of silence that the model minority cast over them, and demanded their needs be met instead of being complacent and docile.

Finally, the Asian American movement was also a linguistic bid for acceptance. Prior to the movement, people of Asian descent living in the United States were labelled as ‘Oriental’ or ‘Asiatic,’ names that many Asians found to be demeaning and pejorative.<sup>3839</sup> As Richard Aoki, a Black Panther and leader in the Asian American movement put it, “Oriental was a rug that everyone steps on, so we ain’t no Orientals.”<sup>40</sup> Looking for a good alternative description, Berkeley graduate student Yuji Ichioka coined the term ‘Asian American,’ an inclusive and meaningful name to describe those of pan-Asian descent.<sup>41</sup> By adopting the label ‘Asian American,’ people could declare their identity through language, choosing to address the racial part of themselves while asserting that they were still American as well. This new addition to the identity lexicon overcame the barrier that prevented Asian identities from fully belonging to America; it was an option that didn’t string together two nationalities, like ‘Chinese American’ or ‘Japanese American’ did. Instead, it allowed people to identify themselves as racially Asian and wholly American.

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<sup>38</sup> “Flyers Distributed by Silver Bow Trades and Labor Assembly and Butte Miners' Union in Support of Chinese and Japanese boycott.”

<sup>39</sup> “Some reasons for Chinese Exclusion,” American Foundation of Labor (Washington D.C., 1902), from the Yoshio Kishi / Irene Yah Ling Sun Collection of Asian Americana at Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University, qtd. in John Kuo Wei Tchen and Dylan Yeats, “Yellow Peril: 19th-Century Scapegoating,” *The Margins*, Asian American Writers’ Workshop, last modified March 5, 2014, <https://aaww.org/yellow-peril-scapegoating/>. This flyer, as well as the one above, are examples of the demeaning language associated with the usage of the words ‘Oriental’ and/or ‘Asiatic,’ such as in phrases like “Asiatic Coolieism.”

<sup>40</sup> Nina Wallace, “YELLOW POWER: THE ORIGINS OF ASIAN AMERICA,” *Densho Blog*, May 8, 2017, <https://densho.org/asian-american-movement/>.

<sup>41</sup> Maeda, “The Asian American Movement,” 3.

In its struggle for self-determination and belonging, the Asian American movement rebuked common stereotypes of Asian people and broke the barriers that these tropes created. In response to the idea that Asians in America would always be foreigners, the movement fought for acceptance within higher education and created the new term 'Asian American,' a label that is now widely used in the present day. In response to the misleading, constricting idea of the 'model minority,' the movement crossed racial lines to find solidarity with Third World people of color, refusing to let Asian Americans be used as a tool of political convenience against other minorities. With the continued prevalence of the 'model minority' myth today, the Asian American movement stands for future generations to look back on as a guide to breaking barriers and challenging stereotypes.

## APPENDIX A:

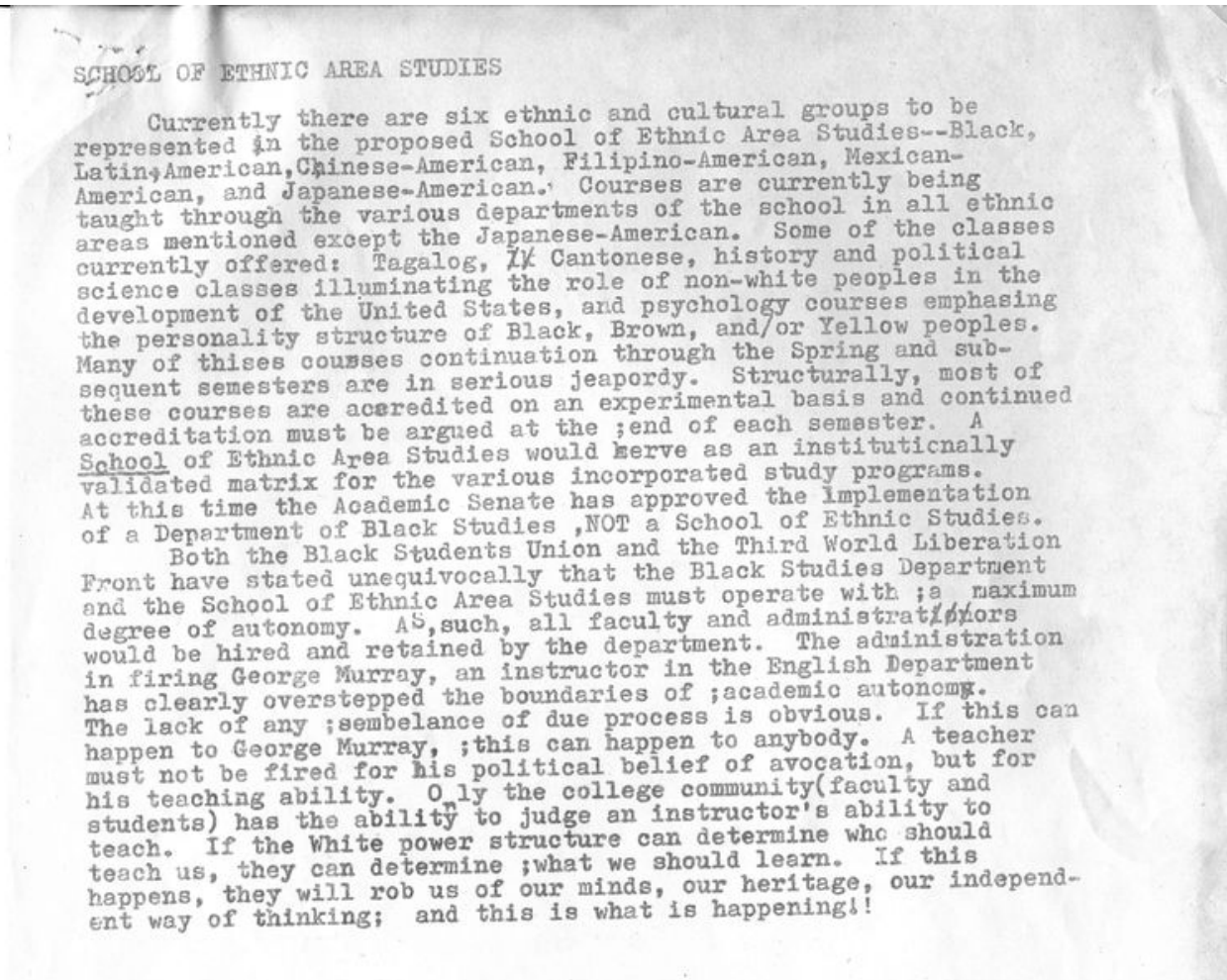


The cover page of the *Gidra* from the February 1971 issue. The juxtaposition of East Asian iconography (such as the crane and the woman in kimono) against American styles of pop art and fashion serves to emphasize and assert the twofold aspect Asian American identity: an Asian heritage and an American home.

*Gidra* (Los Angeles, CA), vol. III no. 2, February 1971,

<http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-297-22/>.

## APPENDIX B:



A flyer from the 1968-1969 San Francisco State University strike by the Black Students Union and the Third World Liberation Front, calling for the formation of a College of Ethnic Studies.

The incendiary language of the flyer, the description of "Black, Brown, and Yellow" people, and the emphasis on the need for racial self-determination in one's education all appeal to the identity movements strikers were inspired by.

"Asian American Political Alliance," SF State College Strike Collection, 1968,

<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187908/>.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Primary Sources

Asian American Movement 1968. Accessed February 10, 2020. <http://aam1968.blogspot.com/>

This blog is a digital archive of materials from the Asian American Movement at UC Berkeley, an important location in the movement for its involvement in the Third World Liberation Front Strikes, as well as the strong presence of Asian American student organizations on campus. The blog's artistic content - posters especially - really showcase both the 'pan-Asian' language and the aesthetics of the movement. Posters are designed with characters reading EAST in Chinese characters (a script used throughout much of East Asia) and emulate stereotypical Asian-styled art with slashed and curving lines. There isn't a specific focus on any one ancestral land - the language always veers towards describing 'yellow' or 'Asian' people instead of a specific ethnicity. It helped me gain a better understanding of how important determining a collective 'Asian American' identity was to this movement - it was what drove it altogether.

"Asian American Political Alliance." *SF State College Strike Collection*. 1968.

<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187908/>.

These posters were handed out during the San Francisco State TWLF Strike, and introduced the Asian American Political Alliance. Surprisingly enough, there is not as much advertisement for the AAPA on these as there is a rallying cry to continue the strike and push for student demands for all students of color, which illustrated for me how integral to the movement that it was to ally and organize with other 'Third World' groups instead of just promoting themselves.

"THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHINESE." *The Daily Record Union* (Sacramento, CA), May 13,

1882. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82014381/1882-05-13/ed-1/seq-4/>.

This Sacramento newspaper has a column in it discussing Chinese immigrant workers in California. Despite defending companies' rights to employ Chinese workers, for the reason that they were cheaper to hire, the paper also states that Chinese people were

undesirable and unfit to build the American nation. This statement showed that despite acknowledging practical benefits of having Chinese immigrants, people of the time still considered them invading outsiders that could not belong in the United States.

“Flyers Distributed by Silver Bow Trades and Labor Assembly and Butte Miners' Union in Support of Chinese and Japanese boycott.” *National Archives Catalog*. Accessed February 15, 2020. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/298113/>.

This flyer, issued by a labor union in Montana, calls for people to boycott Chinese and Japanese businesses as an effort to get them to leave town. The clear statement that they refuse to have their morals degraded by “Asiatic standards” illustrated how Americans viewed Asians as an unwelcome ‘Yellow Peril’ that was a real threat to their way of life.

*Gidra* (Los Angeles, CA), vol. III no. 2. February 1971.

<http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-297-22/>.

This printed cover of the *Gidra*, as analyzed in Appendix A, shows a mixing of Asian and American artistic influences. It was a visual and artistic example that enhanced my understanding of the different ways the Asian Americans constructed their identity to propel their causes forward.

Ho, Fred. "Beyond Asian American Jazz: My Musical and Political Changes in the Asian American Movement." *Leonardo Music Journal* 9 (1999): 45-51.

[www.jstor.org/stable/1513476](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1513476)

This personal essay by a musical leader in the Asian American movement, Fred Ho, talked about how he was influenced by Black art and politics on how to create racially influenced music, showing how important the Black Power movement was to the Asian American movement defining itself along racial terms instead of ethnic ones, pushing it to create a new ‘Asian American’ jazz instead of re-interpreting music from specific Asian cultures.

Kang, K. Connie. "Yuji Ichioka, 66; Led Way in Studying Lives of Asian Americans." Los Angeles Times Online. September 7, 2002. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/La-xpm-2002-sep-07-me-yuji7-story.html>

This obituary for Yuji Ichioka, the man who coined the term "Asian American" and founded the AAPA at Berkeley, described a number of achievements throughout his life. It helped me better grasp the timeline of the Asian American movement and its aftereffects, which then helped me organize my ideas when structuring this paper.

Kanji. "A Response to Oppression." *Gidra* vol. I no. 1 (Los Angeles, CA). April 1969. <http://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-297-1/>.

This column from the *Gidra* was written during the TWLF Strike at UC Berkeley. It was interesting for me to read an account of the strike as it was happening, as opposed to articles writing about it after; a quote from Richard Aoki, using powerful and sometimes inflammatory language such as 'brother' for fellow strikers or 'pigs' (for policemen) helped me understand how intensely personal the issue was to strikers because of how deeply they connected the issues of the strike to their identities as people of color. Just like in the larger Asian American movement, that - the feeling that they had to defend their right to determine their identity - was what kept them going.

Kochiyama, Yuri. Interview by Megan Asaka. Densho Digital Archive, July 21, 2009, <http://ddr.densho.org/media/ddr-densho-1000/ddr-densho-1000-257-transcript-f256359343.htm/>.

The section in this interview with prominent Asian American activist Yuri Kochiyama about her experience living in Harlem and working with Black Power movements. Kochiyama states here that the most important thing she did with the Panthers was *learn* - that was an example that supported my understanding on how the Asian American movement really took cues from Black Power on how to structure their own activism.

Pettersen, William. "Success Story, Japanese-American Style." *New York Times* (New York:



NY), January 9, 1966. <https://www.nytimes.com/1966/01/09/archives/success-story-japaneseamerican-style-success-story-japaneseamerican.html/>.

This New York Times article was one of, if not the first to use the term ‘model minority,’ effectively coining it and bringing it into popular use. In here, it talks about *issei*, *nisei*, and *sansei* Japanese Americans, describing them as hardworking and complacent ‘squares’ that lived formulaic lives in pursuit of success. Its tone and content better illustrated for me how Asian Americans were perceived when the stereotype was being built. It also included a brief recollection of the Japanese internment, providing me with a quote I used in my essay to prove how the attitude towards Japanese Americans had shifted quickly from ‘outsider’ to ‘obedient citizen’ in order to construct a narrative of the model minority.

Raskolnikov. “Gas Over Berkeley.” *Berkeley Barb* (Berkeley, CA). March 7, 1969.

<http://revolution.berkeley.edu/gas-over-berkeley/?cat=440&subcat=1/>.

This article in the *Berkeley Barb*, written by a student under the pen name Raskolnikov, bashes the police and the presence of the National Guard on campus during the TWLF Strike during the time students were pseudo-rioting. Its language is even more intense than “A Response to Oppression” from the *Gidra* - it is openly sarcastic, uses swear words, and likens the strike to a war (whoa!) - which showcased both the intensity and the scale of the conflict, as well as showing how deeply and personally invested strikers were in their demands for a Third World College.

“Transcript of the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882).” Accessed February 14, 2020.

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=47&page=transcript/>.

This is a transcript of the Chinese Exclusion Act, where I got the fact cited in footnote 7.

Umeyatsu, Amy. “The Emergence of Yellow Power In America.” *Gidra* vol I. no. 7 reprint, (Los Angeles, CA). [http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/US\\_History\\_reader/Chapter14/AmyUyematsuYellowpower1969.pdf/](http://inside.sfuhs.org/dept/history/US_History_reader/Chapter14/AmyUyematsuYellowpower1969.pdf/).

Umeyatsu's essay was published in 1969 at the beginning of the movement. In it, she criticizes the assimilationist fervor that many Asian Americans experience, in that they desire to be white. She then goes on to explain how the Black Power movement is relevant to Asian Americans, and how they can redefine it for themselves as 'Yellow Power.' This essay was what introduced to me the fact that Yellow Power and the Asian American movement was deeply inspired by Black Power, and it shaped my argument for solidarity between racial minorities in the movement, as I viewed the Asian American Movement / Yellow Power to be fundamentally connected to and supported by Black Power ideas and guidance.

### Secondary Sources

Aguirre, Adalberto, and Shoon Lio. "Spaces of Mobilization: The Asian American/Pacific Islander Struggle for Social Justice." *Social Justice* 35, no. 2 (112) (2008): 1-17. Accessed February 16, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/29768485](http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768485).

This essay provides a concentrated look into the history of Asian American/Pacific Islander activism, ranging from feminism to LGBTQ+ rights to community organization. Although this essay focuses on the racial aspect of the Asian American movement, reading certain parts and looking over the rest of this paper broadened my view and understanding on the nature of Asian American, as well as Pacific Islander, activism as a whole, showing that advocating for racial equality and solidarity also opened up spaces for activists to talk about other intersecting issues and identities.

"Asian American History." Japanese American Citizens League. 2006. accessed February 11 2020 at <https://jacl.org/asian-american-history/>.

This overview of the history of Asians in America helped me better understand the process Asian Americans went through in the public - and political - eye to arrive at what they are perceived as today, the 'model minority.' This helped me better understand how to chronologically structure my contextualization and my arguments about stereotypes being barriers for Asian Americans.

Bates, Karen Grigsby, and Shereen Marisol Meraji. “The Student Strike That Changed Higher Ed

Forever.” National Public Radio. March 21, 2019. <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/03/21/704930088/the-student-strike-that-changed-higher-ed-forever/>.

This article looks back at the SFSU Third World Liberation Front Strike as a historic moment that set the precedence for other institutions to establish colleges or departments for ethnic studies, shaping my understanding of how the actions of the TWLF and its constituents broke barriers to pave the way for future students of ethnic studies.

“Campus commemorates 1968 student-led strike.” SF State News Online. September 22, 2008. <https://www.sfsu.edu/news/2008/fall/8.html/>.

This page provided me with the dates, which I used to determine the duration of the SFSU strike (about 19 weeks, from November 6, 1968, to March 20, 1969!).

“Chinese Exclusion Act.” African American Policy Forum. Accessed February 15, 2020. <https://aapf.org/chinese-exclusion-act>

This brief online article explained to me *why* anti-Chinese sentiment was prevalent in the 19th century in economic terms, helping me better realize the context around Chinese Exclusion and how the idea of ‘Yellow Peril’ was crafted out of resentment against low-wage Chinese laborers, and used as a weapon of political convenience to justify the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Chow, Kat. “‘Model Minority’ Myth Again Used As A Racial Wedge Between Asians And Blacks.” National Public Radio. April 19, 2017.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/04/19/524571669/model-minority-myth-again-used-as-a-racial-wedge-between-asians-and-blacks/>.

This NPR article discusses the origins of the model minority myth and its modern implications, in that it is still used as a divisive tool to put other minorities down by using Asian Americans as a prop of success, hard work, and obedience to the system. It helped me form the idea that the weaponized ‘model minority’ myth became a barrier that prevented interracial solidarity, as well as any minorities from speaking out about race problems.

“Japanese Relocation During World War II.” *National Archive*. Last modified April 10, 2017, <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation/>.

I obtained the fact here that 117,000 Japanese Americans were detained by Executive Order 9066, and that  $\frac{2}{3}$  of them were American citizens. Its recollection of the Japanese internment also illustrated to me the wider racist sentiment of the time underlying the action: that people viewed the Japanese to always be outsiders, even if they were citizens.

“The Legacy of the 1965 Immigration Act: Three Decades of Mass Immigration.” Center for Immigration Studies. September 1, 1995. <https://cis.org/Report/Legacy-1965-Immigration-Act>.

I used this source for details on the Immigration Act of 1965. I also referenced the timeline included in this source to contextualize my understanding of Anti-Asian legislation in the United States, especially through immigration legislation. The fact that the majority of immigration law during the early 20th century was focused on Asian exclusion only emphasized the impact of the 1965 reform on Asian immigration to the United States.

Maeda, Daryl Joji. “The Asian American Movement.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History* (2016): 1-17. <https://oxfordre.com/americanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-21>.

Maeda’s essay on the Asian American Movement is a comprehensive overview on the actions and efforts of the movement, listing events, organizations, and other specific

facts, which made the movement's accomplishments into something concrete in my mind. I read this essay as one of my first secondary sources, and it shaped my understanding of what the movement was, as well as helping me decide what aspects of the movement I wanted to focus on in my essay.

Tchen, John Kuo Wei, and Dylan Yeats. "Yellow Peril: 19th-Century Scapegoating." *The Margins*, Asian American Writers' Workshop. Last modified March 5, 2014.

<https://aaww.org/yellow-peril-scapegoating/>.

This article provides both a historical recount of 'Yellow Peril,' as well as a look into it in modern day terms, illuminating how the stereotype was and still is used as a barrier to keep people from belonging. It also provided a lot of primary source illustrations that showed how Asians were characterized and shaped in the media to reinforce the idea of a 'Yellow Peril.'

Niyya, Brian. "Gidra: Now Available Online." *Densho Blog*. December 15, 2017.

<https://densho.org/gidra-now-available-online/>.

This article advertising that the *Gidra* was available online in the Densho archive provided me with a description of the paper's origins and content that I used in my essay to argue how it represented the movement's focus on promoting pan-Asian and racially intersectional activism.

"The Third World Liberation Front." *The Berkeley Revolution*. Accessed February 17, 2020.

<http://revolution.berkeley.edu/projects/twlf/>.

This blog post from Berkeley's digital archive of 1960s-1970s protests and struggles provided me with a timeline of the TWLF Strikes at Berkeley, which helped me organize the parts in my paper that discussed the strikes. It also described the extreme scenes of disorder and sometimes violence that happened in the strike, shaping my perception of the TWLF Strikes being active conflicts instead of peaceful demonstrations, showing

how intensely motivated activists were to have their demands met because they felt like it was important to their identities.

Wallace, Nina. "YELLOW POWER: THE ORIGINS OF ASIAN AMERICA." *Densho Blog*. May 8, 2017. <https://densho.org/asian-american-movement/>.

This article describes the progression of the Asian American movement to the present and discusses how it has developed the Asian American identity. It also gave me the quote from Richard Aoki about Oriental rugs, which I found to be a succinct (and amusing) way of summing up how terms like 'Oriental' and 'Asiatic' were demeaning, and further reinforced the importance of the new label 'Asian American.'

Wallace, Kelly. "Forgotten Los Angeles History: The Chinese Massacre of 1871." Los Angeles Public Library Blog. May 19, 2017.

<https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871>

This blog post describes the lynching of 17 Chinese men and children in Los Angeles in 1871, as well as the situation building up to it. This source was evidence – and a reminder – of the painful parts of an Asian American history that echoed that of African Americans' experiences as well.

Whitson, Helene. "The San Francisco State College Strike Collection." Online essay at San Francisco State University J. Paul Leonard Online Library. Accessed February 16, 2020.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150224071740/http://www.library.sfsu.edu/about/collections/strike/essay.html/>.

This essay provided me with confirmation that the SFSU TWLF Strike was, in fact, the longest in collegiate history, which reinforced the historical significance of the TWLF Strikes. It also laid out the specific demands of the BSU and TWLF to the administration, and how they were either fulfilled or denied, adding a layer of nuance onto how I thought about the TWLF strikes - they may not have been an *absolute* victory, but what they did

accomplish was important, setting precedence and breaking barriers for other ethnic studies programs.