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Deconstructing the Politics of Being Yellow

Keywords

Asian Americans politics, Latin politics, Pan-ethnic identity

DECONSTRUCTING THE POLITICS OF BEING YELLOW

By LeeAnn O'Neill*

I like to stop by the office of my favorite undergraduate professor at the George Washington University, a Japanese American professor of Japanese Language and Literature with strong opinions on just about everything. Sometimes we talk about the things we could not talk about when he was my professor; other times, we simply talk. This time, we discussed why he thought Asian Americans were so politically inactive, especially given their seemingly advantageous position in society. Our consensus was that Latinos have found an identity unifying multiple ethnic groups, otherwise known as a pan-ethnic identity, that Asian Americans have not. I originally stopped by his office with the intention of soliciting an article on this very topic from him. Instead, he challenged me to write this article myself.

A couple weeks later, I was drinking coffee with one of my more politically savvy friends, a prominent Chinese American K Street attorney. Recalling my conversation with my professor, I asked him who some of the prominent Latinos are in politics that he could think of off the top of his head.¹ He swiftly replied Alberto Gonzales, Antonio Villaraigosa, Mel Martinez, Anthony Romero, and Bill Richardson.² Then I asked him the same thing about prominent Asian Americans in politics.³ I was stunned to hear his answer –“Norman Mineta, that Hawaiian guy...does Connie Chung count?”⁴ It was at that moment I knew this article would come to fruition.

INTRODUCTION

The 2000 census reported that at 12.6% of the total population, Latinos outnumbered African Americans as the largest minority group in the United States. Asian Americans numbered only 3.6%.⁵ In 2003, however, Asian Americans had the highest median income of any racial group, including Caucasians, at \$63,251.⁶ Conversely, Latinos tied African Americans for the lowest median income at \$34,272.⁷ Given Asian Americans' history of disenfranchisement, continued discrimination by mainstream America, and vast potential economic power, why has there been such little political coalition building among Asian Americans? Why have Latinos, with a similar history of disenfranchisement and discrimination, successfully banded together politically to bring many Latino political figures to prominence?

Critical race theorists argue that race is a social and legal construction, a political device to keep people of color subordinated beneath mainstream America.⁸ Race refers to a “vast group of people loosely bound together by historically contingent, socially significant elements of their [...] ancestry.” Race should be understood as a unique social phenomenon that connects physical features to the essence of a social group.⁹ As such, mainstream America replaces ethnic identity with broad labels such as Latino and Asian American.¹⁰ Consequently, so-called racial groups like Latinos and Asian Americans exist as

social and political constructs against mainstream America.

This essay argues that although mainstream America views Asian Americans as a pan-ethnic political unit, in reality, there is no viable Asian American political identity today.¹¹ Why could Latinos use this construct to create a secondary identity outside of their ethnicity and establish a political coalition? In contrast, why did Asian Americans rebuff this racial construct? This essay attempts to illustrate why the politics of being Asian American has failed in comparison to the relatively successful politics of being Latino. Acknowledging the importance of the social aspect of pan-ethnic identity, the scope of this essay specifically focuses on political manifestations against or in support of racial constructions.

THE FACTORS THAT FUEL PAN-ETHNIC POLITICAL IDENTITY

General coalition building requires that a group consist of like-minded people whose backgrounds, experiences, or positions in the social structure make them receptive to the ideas of a new political movement.¹² Pan-ethnic political group identity, however, has two separate sources for coalition-building: (1) physical characteristics which induce mainstream America to treat members of separate ethnicities the same, transcending ethnicity or nationality and (2) social characteristics such as language, education discrimination, and job discrimination.¹³

THE ORIGINS OF THE LATINO POLITICAL IDENTITY: THE CASE OF CHICAGO AND THE UNLIKELY POLITICAL UNION BETWEEN MEXICAN AMERICANS AND PUERTO RICANS

“Mexicans see Puerto Ricans as U.S. Citizens who come to this country with a lot of privileges and we don't take advantage of those privileges.”¹⁴

– Interview with Puerto Rican in Chicago

“The thing with Mexicans is that they know they are wetbacks.”¹⁵

– Interview with Puerto Rican in Chicago

“Mexicans don't go on welfare; welfare is for Blacks, Americans, and Puerto Ricans, because they're lazy.”¹⁶

– Interview with Mexican American in Chicago

Chicago's Latino population is dominated by two ethnic groups: Mexican Americans, who comprise approximately 70% of the Latino population, and Puerto Ricans, who make up approximately 15% of the Latino population.¹⁷ Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago have a history of intense discrimination and stereotyping against each other; for example, the Southside Mexican American stereotype versus the Humboldt Park Puerto Rican gangster stereotype. For Chicago Latinos, a Mexican American should never identify or associate with

Puerto Ricans or vice versa.¹⁸ Even semantics of language, the most apparent commonality between the two groups, was a salient source of division. Rather than unifying Spanish speakers, it became a mechanism for self-stratification based on competing notions of proper upbringing and civility.¹⁹

Contrary to such tensions and isolation, the development and success of a Latino coalition reflects the unified response of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans to common discrimination by mainstream America. The affirmative action policy that emerged out of the 1964 and 1968 Civil Rights Acts laid the foundation for the formation of a pan-ethnic Latino political coalition.²⁰ Chicago corporations' blanket job discrimination against Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans gave birth to the Spanish Coalition for Jobs in the 1970s, which strove to enforce the affirmative action statutes.²¹ "At the center of Latino ethnic affinity and mobilization were the structural and circumstantial conditions of working-class solidarity" and collective oppression.²² Under these conditions, the political coalition in Chicago between Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans grew to encompass broader issues based on their common socio-economic status within the Black-White paradigm, including bilingual education and work-sponsored "English as a Second Language" classes.

Chicago illustrates the political reaction of Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans to mainstream American discrimination against Latinos as a racial group. Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans found common ground in the "political ethnicity" of being Latino, "a manipulative device for the pursuit of collective political, economic, and social interests in society."²³ Job discrimination manifested itself as discrimination against Spanish speakers as a racial group for the corporations in Chicago. The common thread of speaking Spanish was not the basis of the coalition, but rather a tool for strengthening their group consciousness.²⁴ Thus, Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago remained Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans first, but together, they identified as Latino.

THE LATINO POLITICAL IDENTITY TODAY: THE CASE OF LOS ANGELES AND THE ELECTION OF ANTONIO VILLARAIGOSA

Los Angeles is home to one of the most diverse populations in the United States, with a population of 48% Latino, 31% Caucasian, 11% Asian American, and 10% African American.²⁵ On May 17, 2005, Mexican American Antonio Villaraigosa beat incumbent mayor James Hahn as the first Latino mayor of Los Angeles in over a century. Villaraigosa found broad support across all key demographics: racial, ethnic, economic, and geographic groups. *Time Magazine* hailed his election as a symbol of "a bridge-building, post-ethnic style of politics."²⁶ Post-

election news coverage, however, glossed over the importance of the fact that an overwhelming 84% of registered Latinos voted for Villaraigosa. The 2000 Census indicated that while about a million Mexican Americans reside in Los Angeles, well over half a million Latinos are from other countries of origin, making Mexican Americans 63% of Los Angeles' Latino population.²⁷ For the non-Mexican American Latinos in Los Angeles, Villaraigosa may have been just a Latino mayoral candidate; even though in the broad context of the election he was more than just that.

Approximately 41% of registered Latino voters in the United States indicated that they are more likely to vote if there is a Latino on the ballot. Nearly a quarter of these voters would pick a Latino candidate even when a more qualified non-Latino candidate appears on the ballot.

In Villaraigosa's failed 2001 bid for mayor, he garnered nearly the same percentage of the Latino vote as the 2005 election. Furthermore, in 2005, he generated a record voter turnout among Latinos in Los Angeles.²⁸ Pre-election data reflects that a dominating 82.4% of registered Latino voters in Los Angeles indicated that they would participate in the runoff election.²⁹ Approximately 41% of registered Latino voters in the United States indicated that they are more likely to vote if there is a Latino on the

ballot.³⁰ Nearly a quarter of these voters would pick a Latino candidate even when a more qualified non-Latino candidate appears on the ballot.³¹ In other words, a vast majority will vote for a Latino candidate if running against an equally qualified non-Latino candidate.³² Consequently, the perception of Villaraigosa as a Latino candidate in the eyes of Latinos played a large role in the participation and voting patterns of Latinos in Los Angeles.

Just as job discrimination became a uniting force in Chicago, the primaries indicated that Latino voters favor candidates who talk about *their* issues and reach out to them.³³ Although some Latino voters admitted to voting for Villaraigosa because he was "one of their own," his platform spoke to the top three issues for Latinos - education, health care, and labor.³⁴ Rather than focusing on his Mexican American heritage, which he wears proudly, he identified with his constituents as someone who grew out of poverty and championed the collective socio-economic interests held by Latinos in Los Angeles.³⁵ Instead of using language as a basis of unity, he used it as a political tool. He appealed to the Latino vote with appearances on Univision and adopted Cesar Chavez's mantra "Si, se puede," which means, "It can be done," as his campaign slogan.³⁶

Villaraigosa's victory illustrates the growth of the Latino political entity from a citywide campaign to a nationwide phenomenon. Mainstream America fears the sleeping voting superpower of Latinos and Villaraigosa's victory has heightened that fear.³⁷ Latinos across the nation see Villaraigosa's victory as one for Latinos, not just for Mexican Americans. His victory symbolizes the new Latino political power in the Democratic Party.³⁸ The Latino political movement has turned him into a

tool of the movement, motivating and facilitating the advancement of other Latinos. Consequently, Villaraigosa has paved the way for future political candidates labeled as Latinos to draw on his success.

THE ORIGINS OF ASIAN AMERICAN POLITICAL DISUNITY: THE CASE OF VINCENT CHIN

In 1982, two Caucasian males murdered Chinese American Vincent Chin in Detroit because he looked Japanese. At a time when Japan was a looming economic superpower, the two men sympathized with Congressman John Dingell's angry speech in Congress blaming "little yellow men" for the demise of American automakers and blamed Chin, as a yellow man, for the loss of American car manufacturing jobs.³⁹ The Chinese American community was not only shocked by the nature of the hate crime, but by the fact that the murderers only received a sentence of probation. The nation had yet to recognize the concept of a hate crime.⁴⁰

Chinese American organizations developed the first pan-Asian political entity, the American Citizens for Justice ("ACJ"), with some support from Japanese American, Korean American, and Filipino American organizations. The ACJ became the first explicitly Asian American civil rights advocacy effort with a national scope.⁴¹ This was an ambitious attempt given Asian Americans' tendency to disassociate themselves from harassed Asian American groups.

Historically, Asian Americans have only attempted to eschew the generic yellow label. For example, during the World War II internment of the Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans hung signs saying "This is a Chinese shop" and Korean Americans hung signs claiming that "We Hate Japs Worse Than You Do."⁴² This antagonism reflected recent Chinese American and Korean American immigrants' backlash against the imperialist policies of Japan against China and Korea back home. More recently, in the aftermath of the 1992 riots and ravaging of Koreatown in Los Angeles, there was a striking absence of other Asian Americans during the peace march to demand the rebuilding of Koreatown.⁴³ A Chinese American editor for the *Los Angeles Times* voiced what no one else wanted to admit out loud – she did not march because she was afraid of being mistaken for Korean.⁴⁴

The ACJ had only limited success and the movement in Detroit waned. The Chin saga ended with the return of Chin's mother to China in 1987, disgusted with the United States legal system for acquitting both murderers of all charges.⁴⁵ The ACJ was only successful because the Chin murder shed light on a horrible truth; Asian Americans did not have a choice in mistaken identity. In the eyes of mainstream America, if the alleged enemy is Korean, then all yellow people are Korean. If the alleged enemy is Japanese, then all yellow people are Japanese. If

Chin *had been* Japanese and murdered *because* he was Japanese, would Asian Americans have come together to fight the injustice of giving probation for murder? It is troubling that the political coalition of Asian Americans has weakened without an imminent civil rights threat based on mistaken identity.

Unlike the Latinos in Chicago, Asian Americans in Detroit found very little common political ground beyond the color of their skin and the shape of their eyes to propel the movement forward.⁴⁶ The Immigration Act of 1965 ushered in a new generation of Asian Americans, including Chinese, Korean, Filipino, and South Asian immigrants in Detroit. The new regulations heavily favored educated professionals and a new Asian

American middle class composed of the children of the laundry and restaurant owners who had completed college by the 1980s.⁴⁷

This upward movement in society removed common factors like poverty and socio-economic status as goals for political unity and consequently, removed factors that would help keep the ACJ a viable organization. Unlike Latinos, who as a group suffer from a growing occupational

divide with respect to mainstream America, Asian Americans have surpassed the success of mainstream America as a group.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Asian Americans in Detroit lacked certain tools of coalition such as the Latinos' power as the largest minority and their common language. Asian Americans were vastly outnumbered, comprising less than 1.5% of metropolitan Detroit's population.⁴⁹

It is worth noting that South Asian Americans were the largest Asian American group in Detroit.⁵⁰ Although South Asian Americans supported the ACJ, they comprised a very small part of the organization. For example, South Asian Americans were not identified as participating in street demonstrations, which consisted mostly of Chinese Americans, with some support from Korean Americans, Japanese Americans, and Filipino Americans.⁵¹ Why? Possibly because South Asian Americans, with their own distinct physical characteristics, were less likely to be mistaken for Japanese. The trend towards the social construct of Asian Pacific American as a distinct group from South Asian American is logical given the purpose for which Asian Americans created the ACJ.

THE ASIAN AMERICAN IDENTITY TODAY: THE CASE OF OREGON AND THE ELECTION OF DAVID WU

The United States Senate has two Asian American Senators. Both, unsurprisingly, are from Hawaii, the only state where Asian Americans make up the highest proportion of the total population.⁵² There are only five Asian Americans in the United States House of Representatives.⁵³ In 1998, David Wu became the first Taiwan-born American elected to Congress. He was

sworn into his fourth term on January 4, 2005 as the Representative for Oregon. Oregon is only 2% Asian American.⁵⁴

Like other Asian American political candidates, Wu avoided playing the race card and ran on a platform appealing to Oregon voters of all backgrounds, including education, health-care, and social security.⁵⁵ In fact, it is likely he alienated Chinese American supporters in the 2000 election when he voted against Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. Many Chinese Americans voted for him in 1998 simply because he was Chinese American and crossed party lines to do so.⁵⁶ When it became clear Wu was not a candidate for Chinese Americans, they crossed back over the party lines during his re-election. His campaign website mentions his ethnicity in one small paragraph at the end of his biography.⁵⁷ A family photo with his blonde, Caucasian wife is juxtaposed against this paragraph, as if to offset the fact he is Taiwanese American.

Even more revealing is the lack of a reaction to the 1998 election. Asian Americans have not turned the election of David Wu into a symbol of the emergence of Asian Americans in politics. The media coverage did not hail it as a new day for Asian Americans. Chinese American voters felt that regardless of Wu's election, Asian Americans still lacked political clout and that "whatever we thought, it probably didn't make that much of a difference."⁵⁸ Unlike Villaraigosa, who followed "the rule of a thumb for race politics" by mobilizing "his people" and swinging enough votes among "other people," Wu was elected with "no people" by swinging all of Portland.⁵⁹

David Wu's election demonstrates that "Asian Americans are united more by the label that others put on them than by language, religion or ethnic or national ties."⁶⁰ Unlike the Latino political movement, language does not exist as a tool for coalition. Although Asian Americans experience discrimination, it does not have as great an impact on their socio-economic status.

For example, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 50% of Asian Americans over age twenty-five have at least a bachelor's degree in comparison to the overall average of 27%.⁶¹ Stereotypes of Asian Americans as the model minority are not as debilitating as the stereotypes for Latinos. Race politics are increasingly becoming a moot point due to the relatively minute size of the Asian American population and its economic and social diversity.⁶² As Asian American communities become more diverse, they become increasingly divided on political issues. An especially significant rift has arisen between the "liberal Asian American establishment" and the relatively new Asian American neo-conservative movement.⁶³ Additionally, "[m]any new Asian immigrants [...] are coming to the United States with no sense of Asian American solidarity and little understanding of the Asian American history of oppression."⁶⁴

CONCLUSION

Asian Americans have learned that the key to political success is not in race politics or the promotion of a pan-ethnic political identity, but rather to divorce themselves from their Asian-ness and focus on broader appeal. Even in areas dominated by Asian Americans such as South Pasadena, they have never played race as a political card. As an Asian American city councilor in South Pasadena said, "I never campaign as an Asian. I campaign as a concerned citizen."⁶⁵ As the United States becomes more diverse, lingering reasons for an Asian American political coalition will become outdated. Asian Americans will quietly continue their growth on the political scene, generating issue-based, but not race-based appeal. The continued diversification of the Asian American community signals the death knell of any lingering Asian American political unity. Unless Asian Americans can find a new common ground, the answer will likely remain, "Does Connie Chung count?"

ENDNOTES

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¹ The author decided to use "Latino" with deference to the sensitivity of the issue of using the label "Hispanic" versus "Latino." See Christine Granados, *Hispanic vs Latino*, HISPANIC MAGAZINE, Dec. 2000, <http://www.hispanicmagazine.com/2000/dec/Features/latino.html> (explaining generally, those who call themselves Hispanic are more assimilated, conservative, and young, while those who choose the term Latino tend to be liberal and older. The U.S. government derived the word "Hispanic" from *España*. The word "Latino" traces its roots back to ancient Rome and some say it's more inclusive, encompassing Latin American countries such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and others).

² See *The 25 Most Influential Hispanics in America*, TIME, Aug. 22, 2005, at 42-50 [hereinafter TIME] (describing Chicano Alberto Gonzales as the nation's first Latino Attorney General, Mexican American Antonio Villaraigosa as the mayor of Los Angeles, Cuban American Mel Martinez as a Senator from Florida, Puerto Rican Anthony Romero as the executive director of the ACLU, and Mexican American Bill Richardson as Governor of New Mexico and a former seven-term member of the U.S. House of Representatives).

³ The term "Asian American" includes East Asian Americans, Southeast Asian Americans, and South Asian Americans.

⁴ See Norman Y. Mineta: *Secretary of Transportation*, U.S. Dep't of Transp., <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/mineta.htm> (last visited Jan. 3, 2005) (describing Mineta as the first Asian American Cabinet member, the driving force behind reparations for Japanese internment, and the first Cabinet member to switch directly from a Democratic to Republican administration).

⁵ THE NEW YORK TIMES 2006 ALMANAC (John W. Wright ed., 2006) at 274. It is interesting to note that the U.S. Census Bureau designates "Hispanic" as a category, and race as a separate category, so that a person can be classified both as white and Hispanic or black and Hispanic, but not Hispanic and Latino.

⁶ *Id.* at 328.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Chris K. Iijima, *The Era of We-Construction: Reclaiming the Politics of Asian Pacific American Identity and Reflections on the Critique of the Black/White Paradigm*, 29 COLUM. HUMAN RIGHTS L. REV. 47, 49 (1997).

⁹ Ian F. Haney López, *The Social Construction of Race*, in CRITICAL RACE THEORY: THE CUTTING EDGE 193 (Richard Delgado ed., 1995).

¹⁰ *See id.* at 195.

¹¹ *See contra* Iijima, *supra* note 8, at 50 (urging Asian Americans to forge a pan-Asian Pacific American political and ideological unity).

¹² FELIX M. PADILLA, LATINO ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS: THE CASE OF MEXICAN AMERICANS AND PUERTO RICANS IN CHICAGO 120 (1985) (citing Jo Freeman, *On the Origins of Social Movements*, in SOCIAL MOVEMENTS OF THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES 9 (Jo Freeman ed., 1983)).

¹³ *Id.* at 61.

¹⁴ NICHOLAS DE GENOVA AND ANA RAMOS-ZAYAS, LATINO CROSSINGS: MEXICANS, PUERTO RICANS, AND THE POLITICS OF RACE AND CITIZENSHIP 57 (2003).

ENDNOTES CONTINUED

- ¹⁵ *Id.* at 59.
- ¹⁶ *Id.* at 75.
- ¹⁷ See Gina M. Pérez, *Puerto Ricans*, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHICAGO, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1027.html> (last visited Jan. 5, 2006); Gabriela F. Arredondo and Derek Vaillant, *Mexicans*, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CHICAGO, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/824.html> (last visited Jan. 5, 2006) (citing the 2000 Census).
- ¹⁸ GENOVA & RAMOS-ZAYAS, *supra* note 14, at 145-46.
- ¹⁹ *Id.* at 145. The differences between Mexican Spanish and Puerto Rican Spanish are too numerous to list here. However, two illustrative examples include: 1) the “eating [of] the r” in Puerto Rican Spanish and 2) the singsong accent of Mexican Spanish.
- ²⁰ PADILLA, *supra* note 12, at 84-85.
- ²¹ *Id.* at 89.
- ²² *Id.* at 118.
- ²³ PADILLA, *supra* note 12, at 163.
- ²⁴ *Id.*
- ²⁵ Peter Dreier, *After his landslide victory, new LA Mayor will have to live up to high expectations*, CITY MAYORS, http://www.citymayors.com/politics/la_villaraigosa.html (last visited Jan. 4, 2006).
- ²⁶ TIME, *supra* note 2, at 46.
- ²⁷ See *Hispanic or Latino Population by City, Los Angeles County*, LOS ANGELES ALMANAC, <http://www.laalmanac.com/population/po18a.htm> (last visited Jan. 5, 2006). It is unknown whether the composition of registered Latinos was the same as the general population. However, in general, 60% of registered Latinos are Mexican which indicates it is likely of a similar proportion; see also *Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation 2004 National Survey of Latinos: Politics and Civic Participation 2*, Pew Hispanic Center, Jul. 22, 2004, <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/33.1.pdf> [hereinafter *Latino Politics Survey*].
- ²⁸ Roberto Suro, *Latino Power? It Will Take Time for the Population Boom to Translate*, WASH. POST, Jun. 26, 2005, at B1.
- ²⁹ PR Newswire, *Recently Registered Latino Voters Favor Villaraigosa Over Hahn by Large Margin*, HISPANIC BUSINESS, May 12, 2005, http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/news_print.asp?id=22970.
- ³⁰ *Latino Politics Survey*, *supra* note 27.
- ³¹ *Id.*
- ³² *Id.*
- ³³ Hispanic PR Wire – Business Wire, *Debating L.A.’s Future: Hawn and Villaraigosa Make Their Views Heard with L.A.’s Voters in Last Debate before May 17 Election*, HISPANIC BUSINESS, Apr. 25, 2005, http://www.hispanicbusiness.com/news/news_print.asp?id=22558.
- ³⁴ *Latino Politics Survey*, *supra* note 27, at 12-13 (citing determinative issues for the 2004 Presidential election); Deborah White, *Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles: The Bumpy Road of a Rising Democratic Superstar*, About.com Guide to Liberal Politics: U.S., Oct. 19, 2005, http://usliberals.about.com/od/peopleinthenews/a/Antonio_p.htm.
- ³⁵ *Id.*
- ³⁶ *Id.*
- ³⁷ Suro, *supra* note 28.
- ³⁸ TIME, *supra* note 2.
- ³⁹ HELEN ZIA, *ASIAN AMERICAN DREAMS: THE EMERGENCE OF AN AMERICAN PEOPLE* 58-61 (2000); FRANK H. WU, *YELLOW: RACE IN AMERICAN BEYOND BLACK AND WHITE* 70 (2002).
- ⁴⁰ *Id.* at 71.
- ⁴¹ ZIA, *supra* note 39, at 67.
- ⁴² *Id.* at 40.
- ⁴³ *Id.* at 184.
- ⁴⁴ *Id.*
- ⁴⁵ *Remembering Vincent Chin, Fifteen years later, a murder in Detroit remains a turning point in the APA movement*, ASIAN WEEK, Jun. 5, 1997, <http://www.asianweek.com/061397/feature.html>.
- ⁴⁶ The ACJ went on to promote Asian American awareness and help a few other Asian American victims fight civil rights violations, but its legacy lives on as the coalition for Chin. See *id.*
- ⁴⁷ ZIA, *supra* note 39, at 62.
- ⁴⁸ See Maude Toussaint-Comeau, Thomas Smith, and Ludovic Comeau, Jr., *Occupational Attainment and Mobility of Hispanics in a Changing Economy: A Report to the Pew Hispanic Center*, Pew Hispanic Center, Dec. 15, 2005, <http://pewhispanic.org/files/reports/59.1.pdf> (illustrating that 41.7% of Asians are in professional occupations compared to 16% of Latinos and 34.2% of non-Latino whites). It is also important to note that there is a divide within the Asian American community, especially among recent immigrants. There is also a notable divide between Southeast Asian communities, East Asian communities, and South Asian communities.
- ⁴⁹ Kurt Metzger, *The Demographic Tapestry of Metropolitan Detroit*, Presentation for Wayne State University, Mar. 24, 2004, at 12 (analyzing demographic trends of the Detroit metropolitan area).
- ⁵⁰ ZIA, *supra* note 39, at 77.
- ⁵¹ *Id.* at 74.
- ⁵² *U.S. Census Bureau Facts for Features: Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month May 2005*, April 29, 2005, <http://www.uscensus.gov>; *Minority Members of Congress, Ethnic Majority*, <http://www.ethnicmajority.com/congress.htm> (last visited Jan. 5, 2006) (identifying Daniel Akaka and Daniel Inouye, both from Hawaii).
- ⁵³ *Id.* (identifying Eni Faleomavaega from Alaska, Michael Honda from California, Doris Matsui from California, Bobby Scott from Virginia, and David Wu from Oregon, in contrast to the twenty-two Latinos in the House of Representatives).
- ⁵⁴ ZIA, *supra* note 39, at 308.
- ⁵⁵ *Id.*
- ⁵⁶ Election 2000: *David Wu Wins*, ASIAN WEEK, Nov. 10, 2000, http://www.asianweek.com/2000_11_10/feature4_davidwu.html [hereinafter *Wu Wins*].
- ⁵⁷ See *David Wu: Experienced, Independent Leadership in Congress*, <http://www.wuforcongress.com/about04.php> (last visited Jan. 6, 2006).
- ⁵⁸ *Wu Wins*, *supra* note 56 (quoting from interviews with Asian Americans regarding Wu’s election).
- ⁵⁹ Bruce Gilley, *Race Politics a Nonstarter for Asian-Americans*, S.F. CHRON., May 25, 1999, at A21, <http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/1999/05/25/ED59121.DTL>.
- ⁶⁰ Harvey Gee, *Beyond Black and White: Selected Writings by Asian Americans Within the Critical Race Theory Movement*, 30 ST. MARY’S L. J. 759, 763 (1999).
- ⁶¹ *U.S. Census Bureau Facts for Features*, *supra* note 52).
- ⁶² Gilley, *supra* note 59.
- ⁶³ Perry S. Chen and Kenly Kiya Kato, *Book Review: The State of Asian America – Activism and Resistance in the 1990s*, 30 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 279, 282-83 (1995).
- ⁶⁴ *Id.* at 289.
- ⁶⁵ Gilley, *supra* note 59.