

Asian Mode

Official Newsletter of the ASA Asia and Asian America Section

Editor: Kevin Escudero

Associate Editor: Gowoon Jung

FROM THE SECTION CHAIR ANGIE Y. CHUNG



Dear Section Members,

I would like to kick off the summer with a warm welcome to both new and old members of the section for what looks to be an exciting ASA 2019 in New York City! This year, our section events will be held on Monday evening and Tuesday throughout the day with all kinds of events planned so please make sure to make your travel plans accordingly.

In addition to our usual section events, we have a third session on Asian/ Asian American Scholars Navigating the Academic Career/ Hierarchy; the highly popular Mentorship Meet-and-Greet immediately following the panel; and a general Section Reception that will be co-sponsored with the new Asian American Studies Center at Hunter College and the Asian American/ Asian Research Institute. [Please note: Because of liquor restrictions at our reception site, we will not be serving alcohol this year but looking into organizing a tasty boba tea and Chinese buffet spread from Chinatown!]

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Please come and say hello if you are new to the section and/ or want to get more involved as we are always looking to meet new members. If there is any time to get your colleagues, students and friends to join and support our section, this is it!

As I get ready to finish off this busy year, I would like share my deepest gratitude to departing officers, award committee and session volunteers, and other contributors to our section, who have all been very active in building this section. It is also my pleasure to welcome in-coming Chair Xiaoling Shu (ASA 2020, San Francisco) and our newly-elected officers who will begin their terms after the upcoming ASA conference. Please also send your congratulations to the recipients for this year's various section awards.

Over the past year, I have been reading about some of the amazing work that our section members have done in bringing Asia and Asian America to the forefront of public and academic debates and political activism on timely topics ranging from the increasing demographic, political and cultural visibility of Asian/ Asian Americans in the U.S. to the resurgence of xenophobia and anti-immigrant politics at home and around the world. We see how some of the influence and achievements of our members are also being more regularly recognized within the Association through elected positions at all levels, prestigious honors, awards, and grants, and key publications on issues important to our diverse membership.

At the same time, we are faced with numerous tasks and challenges related to our profession during these uncertain times. No matter what you study as a scholar, the major policy changes, shifting social climate, and divisive conflicts that have exploded from the public spaces of social media and politics to the private spaces of our home and workplace seem to have drastically subverted the norms, values and rules we've faithfully followed our entire lives. As a result, we find ourselves juggling growing work and family commitments while sacrificing self-care; fighting for the survival of integral programs and departments amidst shrinking budgets; seeking proper mentorship and demanding institutional reform in an unfavorable and unequal job market; and sustaining a structure for supporting the spread of knowledge, social empathy and community engagement against ignorance and parochialism. During these hard times, I am thankful that we have a space where we can come together to share our interests, struggles and grievances, support the work and achievements of our fellow members, provide badly-needed mentorship, and help build new programs and partnerships.

Even in Sociology, sometimes it is easy to get bogged down by disillusionment, despair and internal disagreement and lose sight of how we can use our knowledge of conflict, inequality and hegemony to find identify the things that bind us, build spaces for cooperation and coalition-building, and create ways to use our individual privilege to advance social justice. Some of us may be fortunate to have individuals who will inspire us, but I am no longer sure if we will ever find that one inspirational leader, who can represent and capture the diverse interests and inequalities that have widened and divided the nation. However, as our newly-elected ASA 2021 President Aldon Morris once reminded us in his seminal book on the Civil Rights Movement, it is not about the leaders, but the people who make the movement. While we cannot move mountains by building one large happy family, let us come together around individual issues of social justice that bind us and teach, mentor, inspire and nurture future leaders one person at a time.

In Solidarity,

Angie Y. Chung

Chair of the ASA Section on Asia and Asian America

GET TO KNOW YOUR SECTION OFFICERS

Chair-Elect

Emily Hannum, University of Pennsylvania

Council Member

Van C. Tran, The Graduate Center, CUNY

Ali R. Chaudhary, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Graduate Student Representatives

Fangqi Wen, New York University

Bylaws Amendment

The new amendment accounts for the creation of two new ex-officio positions (Newsletter Editor and the ASA Public Liaison); the resulting restructuring of the Communications Committee; and the increase in the composition and minimum number of awards committee members from 2 to 3 were all approved.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SECTION AWARD WINNERS

Book Award: Asia/Transnational

Winner: Kiyoteru Tsutsui, 2018. *Rights Make Might: Global Human Rights and Minority Social Movements in Japan* [Oxford University Press]

Honorable Mention: Michael Levien, 2018. *Dispossession without Development: Land Grabs in Neoliberal India* [Oxford University Press]

Award Committee: Hyunjoon Park (Chair), Bin Xu, and Jennifer Huynh

Book Award: Asian America

Winner: Helene K. Lee, 2018. *Between Foreign and Family: Return Migration and Identity Construction among Korean Americans and Korean Chinese* [Rutgers University Press]

Honorable Mention: Noriko Matsumoto, 2018. *Beyond the City & Bridge: East Asian Immigration in a New Jersey Suburb* [Rutgers University Press]

Award Committee: Katherine Irwin (Chair), Sangay Mishra, and Valerie Francisco-Menchavez

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SECTION AWARD WINNERS

Research Paper Award

Winner

Yan Long. 2018. "The Contradictory Impact of Transnational AIDS Institutions on State Repression in China, 1989-2013." *American Journal of Sociology*.

Honorable Mention

Kimberly Kay Hoang. 2018. "Risky Investments: How Local and Foreign Investors Finesse Corruption-Rife Emerging Markets." *American Sociological Review*.

Award Committee: Kiyoteru Tsutsui (Chair), Minjeong Kim, and Marco Garrido

Graduate Student Research Paper Award

Winner: Zang, Emma and Cameron Campbell. 2018. "Males' Later-Life Mortality Consequences of Coresidence With Paternal Grandparents: Evidence from Northeast China, 1789–1909." *Demography* 55:435-457.

Honorable Mention: Cho, Esther. "Engaging in Security Work: Selective Disclosure in Friendships of Korean and Mexican Undocumented Young Adults."

Award Committee: Jerry Park (Chair), Victoria Reyes, and Lei Lei

Contribution to the Field Award

Winner: Pyong Gap Min, Queens College of CUNY

Award Committee: David Takeuchi (Co-Chair) and Yanjie Bian (Co-Chair)

**ASIA AND ASIAN AMERICA SECTION PANELS
AT THE 2019 ASA MEETING**

Monday, August 12, 2019

4:30 to 6:10pm

Sheraton New York, Third Floor, Riverside Ballroom

Asian/Asian American Scholars on Navigating the Academic Career/ Hierarchy

Presider

Angie Y. Chung, University at Albany

Panelists

Yingyi Ma, Syracuse University

Rifat A. Salam, CUNY-Borough of Manhattan Community College

Daniela Pila, University at Albany

Bandana Purkayastha, University of Connecticut

Session Organizer

Angie Y. Chung, University at Albany

6:30 to 7:30pm

Sheraton New York, Third Floor, Riverside Ballroom

Section on Asia and Asian America Mentorship Session

[*Only for those who RSVPed]

Tuesday, August 13, 2019

8:30 to 10:10am

Sheraton New York, Lower Level, Sutton Place

Cross-border Coalitions and Movements for Social Justice

Presider

Ali R. Chaudhary, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Individual Presentations

An Evaluation of Government and Stratification: Fairness and Nuclear Problem after the Great East Japan Earthquake – *Yoichi Murase*, Rikkyo University; *W. Lawrence Neuman*, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

“Comfort Women” Mobilized to “Comfort Stations” Voluntarily or through Human Trafficking, and Paid Fees? – *Pyong Gap Min*, City University of New York-Queens College

Frame Diffusion and Audience Framing in the Thai Kathoey Depathologization Movement – *Alyssa Lynne*, Northwestern University

Discussant

Yan Long, UC-Berkeley

Session Organizer

Ali R. Chaudhary, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

**ASIA AND ASIAN AMERICA SECTION PANELS
AT THE 2019 ASA MEETING**

Tuesday, August 13, 2019 (Cont.)

10:30am to 12:10pm

**Sheraton New York, Lower Level, Sutton Place
Section on Asia and Asian America Business Meeting**

12:30 to 2:10pm

**Sheraton New York, Third Floor, Riverside Ballroom
Section on Asia and Asian America Roundtables**

Session Organizer

Xiaoling Shu, University of California-Davis

2:30 to 4:10pm

**Sheraton New York, Lower Level, Sutton Place
Racialized Bodies, Citizenship, and Representations**

Presider

Lisa Sun-Hee Park, University of California-Santa Barbara

Individual Presentations

Centering the Voices of Asian American Students in a Diverse University Context in Southern California – *Min Yoo*, University of California, Riverside

Contrasting Different Models of Asian American Voter Registration and Non-Electoral Political Participation – *Jessica Kang*

Driving While Black, Flying While Muslim: Hyphenization, the Intersection of Race and a Racialized Muslim Identity – *Iman Ahmad-Sadiqe*, Northwestern University

How Muslim and Sikh Americans Perceive Discrimination and Negotiate Race in a Climate of Islamophobia – *Sharan Kaur Mehta*, Rice University

Racial Formation of South and Southeast Asian Migrants in South Korea – *Seonok Lee*, University of British Columbia

Session Organizer

Lisa Sun-Hee Park, University of California-Santa Barbara

6:00 to 8:00pm

Section on Asia and Asian America Reception

Offsite: Asian American Studies Center at Hunter College

[**Please note: Because of site restrictions, there will be no liquor served at the reception. However, please come and enjoy our boba tea and Chinese buffet!]

Please RSVP at: <http://evite.me/jsC6Hc2eRc>

FEATURE ARTICLE

“Incidental Racialization in Law School”

Yung-Yi Diana Pan,
Brooklyn College-City University of New York

Most of us rarely, if ever, think about lawyers or their socialization. We may even assume that Asian American lawyers encounter few obstacles within this elite profession. Through interviews with Asian American law students, I found that race is heightened in law school, and it shapes how these students understand their conjoined personal and professional identities. My analysis reveals that there are two “stages” where racialization takes place for Asian American law students: front and back. And the performances and interactions on these stages reify a panethnic affiliation that they may not have embraced before attending law school. Further, the identity negotiations underscore that while Asian Americans are not heterogeneous, their legal education frames them in ostensibly monolithic ways.

For instance, Bryn Singh, the eldest of four children, grew up in a working class home, with parents who worked several jobs to make ends meet. Bryn was the designated caregiver to her younger siblings, learning at a young age to navigate her own school work while overseeing her siblings’ homework instruction, dinnertime, and bedtime. She reflects during an interview that the injustices she witnessed in her impoverished neighborhood guided her toward law school. As one of the few Asian American students in her law classes, Bryn often questioned her place in law school. She shared: “In some ways, it’s almost like a double whammy. Like I’m Asian American, so they expect me to be a model minority, and to be polite and acquiescent and quiet. And be a hard worker who doesn’t stir up trouble. I stir up trouble, and it freaks them out because it doesn’t fit [with] what they think an Asian American is.”

Bryn’s story captures Asian Americans nuanced identity negotiations. What Bryn shared was not uncommon among Asian American law students more generally—professors, fellow students, and clients activate stereotypes when associating with them. Bryn relayed that she did not embody the common stereotype of Asian Americans as passive model minorities. This image of Asian Americans is consequential to perceptions of work ability, product, and hours. Like Bryn, Asian American law students recognize that they are perceived as hard workers, or “work horses” who realize their achievements through dedicated ability to sustain work expectations.

This clichéd image can also result in Asian Americans being branded as unfit for roles that require assertive leadership abilities. The concept of a “work horse” implies someone who blindly follows orders without creativity. That Asian Americans are characterized as passive further corroborates that they are willing, and able to work grueling hours without protest. These identities—both asserted by Asian American individuals, and ascribed to them by mainstream society—lead to identity negotiations while still undergoing professional education.

Some scholars argue that Asian American professionals must experience little inequalities because they have “made it” or are “making it” in the American mainstream. Asserting the “whiteness” of Asian Americans, however, diminishes the inequalities that persist in this community. My book, *Incidental Racialization: Performative Assimilation in Law School*, explores how professional socialization and racialization happen simultaneously during legal education. Although I compare the experiences of Asian American and Latino law students in the book, in this article I focus specifically on Asian American students. Put another way, my conversations with law students demonstrate how being Asian American is heightened in law school. Using the theater as an allegory, I find that there are two ways for racialization to

The Law School Front Stage: Omissions, Interactions, and Assumptions

Racialization takes place in the midst of a legal profession and culture that remain stubbornly white and male. The process of racialization is dynamic, but first let's explore what I mean by "front stage racialization." Picture a theater. The stage is the law school itself, and the stagehands are the professors and white law students. Asian American law students are cast as actors. Front stage racialization is veiled and nuanced. Through interviews, I found that Asian American law students took part in three lessons of racialization: colorblind omissions, classroom interactions, and assumptions about admissions.

In law school, Asian American students recounted immediately recognizing that they were not white. This is not a flippant remark about Asian American identities. But, when repeatedly told that they were becoming "white," that Asian Americans outperform whites, or that they share similar ethos as whites, some students might feel comfortable as a part of American society, so much so that they do not actively consider the role of their race. Law school, the students told me, disrupted that experience. Asian American law students also encounter their first racial lesson: racial awareness through colorblind omission. The law classroom plays a significant role in the life of a law student: they learn there, interact with peers and professors there, and internalize lessons that help them become good attorneys. These techniques reflect a traditional white, male, upper-middle class approach to learning, and law students who do not hail from this "modal" position feel a sense of exclusion.

The omission of race in the classroom draws awareness to the inadequacies of a fact-reporting exercise. Race is injected, but simultaneously denied, in the classroom through the insistence on a colorblind agenda. Asian American students reported that they did not expect race to play a central role in case law, but they nevertheless found it problematic that classes on Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, and others lacked any kind of racialized discourse. To these law students, personal backgrounds are intrinsic to understanding how the law affects particular communities, especially those from which they hail or with which they are familiar. The omission of such considerations was conveniently couched as "emotional neutrality" and "colorblindness" within formal legal education. This approach to classroom instruction thus delivers a clear lesson for Asian American students—namely, that their race and any emotions they might have attached to it, are unwelcome and inappropriate considerations in the legal profession.

Classroom interactions also serve to heighten racial awareness by brushing aside critical racial analyses, and verbal and nonverbal exchanges with other students and with instructors. While professors may not intentionally avoid racial analyses of particular cases, Asian American law students mentioned seeing the omission as problematic. Yet, if and when Asian American students mustered the courage to bring attention to this oversight, they often felt that their peers were annoyed, while their professors were dismissive. These instances not only demonstrate the marginalization of Asian American perspectives in the classroom, they also point to the heightened assumptions of foreignness and these students' status as outsiders in law school and, eventually, the profession.

Nevertheless, race is injected into the law classroom through a lack of focus on racial analysis, but also through comments that Asian American students receive from their peers and professors. One way this happened was through discussions and/or offhand comments regarding law school admissions. Race and speculations about "affirmative action admits" may preoccupy some white and nonwhite law students' minds, but they rarely engage in conversation with each other about it face-to-face. When such discussions do happen in person, however, the experience is often a highly unsettling one for nonwhite students, in particular Asian American students. Asian American law students reported incidents where white students pointedly surmised that affirmative action helped their law school admissions.

The three lessons described above reveal the prominent, yet problematic place of race in law school. These lessons characterize law school as a "white space" and culture where Asian American law students often feel

marginalized. Overall, Asian Americans see fewer students of color at law school, compared with their high school and college experiences. They come to feel as if they deviate from the norm in their classrooms and while they don't necessarily characterize this as negative, they do emphasize that they feel strange in the overwhelmingly white environment.

These lessons are conveyed through the omission of race in the classroom; interactions among faculty and assumptions made about foreignness and immigrant status; and peers' assumptions that nonwhite law students, including Asian Americans, benefited from affirmative action policies. Taken together, these lessons haunt Asian Americans in all avenues of law school—in the classroom, during casual conversations, or even in the form of pointed accusations. These forms of front stage colorblind racialization do not necessarily engage race, but are implicitly loaded with racist undertones. However, colorblind racialization is not the sole culprit for this line of thinking. I also examine the role of panethnic, or race-based affinity associations as a part of professional socialization.

The Law School Back Stage: Affinity Groups and Asian American Identity

Membership in Asian American affinity groups permits students to speak openly about what they perceive to be “deviant” cultural practices. And when they do, they find their peers nodding in agreement. But, why *do* Asian American law students choose to join panethnic student organizations? Unequivocally, they expressed a desire to associate with those of their own racial and/or cultural background, a search for a sense of familiarity and comfort. One respondent compared law school to war—a context wherein one wants a “war buddy, someone who understands you. We're in the fox hole together, so you want to have a trustworthy war buddy.” Belonging to Asian American organizations does not guarantee successful law school completion, but it does provide a safe place within a context that often feels unfamiliar or even hostile for students of color. Aside from support and services, Asian American law students also rely on these organizations for mentorship and assistance navigating law school since most of them lack attorney role models. Students often speak of mentors from whom they learned how to initially traverse the unfamiliar terrains of law school. Many Asian American law students also consider members in Asian American organizations as their second families. And like a familial support system, members recounted turning to one another for help and guidance when confronting adversity. When these students feel marginalized by interactions with other law students or law professors or in course discussions, they seek out their friends to “vent” and “blow off steam.”

The “law school family” (i.e. Asian American Law Student Organization) is an important space for Asian American students to connect with others of Asian heritage. The organization also incidentally leads students to align with a panethnic identity versus solely ethnic ones. By the third year of law school, most students were no longer *actively* involved in Asian American law student organizations, but they still remained on the group's listservs and the majority served as mentors for incoming first-year students, in addition to attending special meetings or events. Involvement in Asian American organizations instilled and reinforced a racialized professional identity on the back stage. What began in law school as seeking a refuge from a colorblind agenda, unknown terrains of law, legalese, and white, upper-middle class legal culture shifts over time to become an important aspect of a racialized professional identity.

As a way of summary, incidental racialization is a part of professional socialization for Asian American law students. On the front stage, they are socialized by professors and peers through interactions to become emotionally neutral attorneys; at the same time, they find themselves continually reminded of their deviance from the modal legal culture. Asian American students often find classrooms to be hostile spaces, and find refuge by turning to their peers in law school affinity groups. Consequently, Asian American law students' social networks elevate the value and significance of their racialized identity. In this way, the holistic experience of attending law school unintentionally cultivates a *racialized* professional identity for Asian American law students.

NEW ARTICLES

- Chao, L. Luke and Fenggang Yang.** 2018. "Measuring Religiosity in a Religiously Diverse Society: The China Case." *Social Science Research*, 74:187-195. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2018.04.001>.
- Chung, Angie, Carolyn Areum Choi, and Johng Ho Song.** (Forthcoming) "Navigating Ethnic Hierarchies in Community-Academic Partnerships: A Case Study on Koreatown Community Politics." *AAPI Nexus Journal*.
- Devgan, Shruti.** 2018. "A Haunted Generation Remembers." *Contexts* 17 (4):36-41.
- DeVerteuil, Geoff, Ohsoon Yun and Carolyn Areum Choi.** 2019. "Between the Cosmopolitan and the Parochial: The Immigrant Gentrifier in Koreatown, Los Angeles" *Social and Cultural Geography* 20(1): 64-85.
- Jung, Gowoon.** 2018. "'Cross-National Public Opinion about Homosexuality: Examining Attitudes across the Globe by Amy Adamczyk. 2017. University of California Press: Oakland, CA. 304 pages. \$39.95, paper. ISBN: 978-0520288768.'" *Sociological Inquiry* 88(4): 752-754." *Sociological Inquiry* 88(4): 752-754.
- Jung, Gowoon.** 2019. "Reviews: Tradition and Innovation." *International Sociology Review* 34(2): 197-202
- Lee, Se Hwa.** 2019. "'I Am Still Close to My Child': Middle-Class Korean Wild Geese Fathers' Responsible and Intimate Fatherhood in a Transnational Context." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1573662>
- Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar, Rachel Silvey, Maria Cecilia Hwang, and Carolyn Areum Choi.** 2019. "Serial Labor Migration: Precarity and Itinerancy among Filipino and Indonesian Domestic Workers," *International Migration Review* (First published online: <https://doi-org.libproxy2.usc.edu/10.1177/0197918318804769>)
- Wu, Tommy.** 2019. "The resentful foreigner: racializing Chinese workers in Asian fusion restaurants." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 20(1): 59-78
- Yan Long.** 2018. "The Contradictory Impact of Transnational AIDS Institutions on State Repression in China, 1989-2013." *American Journal of Sociology* 124(2): 309-366.
- Yang, Fenggang.** 2018. "Religion in the Global East: Challenges and Opportunities for the Social Scientific Study of Religion." *Religions* 9:305. <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/9/10/305>.
- Yi, Joseph and Joe Phillips.** 2019. "Religions and Politics of Asian Pacific Americans." *Society* 56(1). <https://rdcu.be/bgbF4>
- Yi, Joseph and Gowoon Jung.** 2019. "Korean Media Discourse on International Education." *Globalisation, Societies, and Education* (<https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2019.1575188>).

NEW BOOKS

Johnson, Chelsea, LaToya Council, and Carolyn Choi (equal authorship). 2019. *Intersectionallies: We Make Room for All, with a foreword by Kimberlé Crenshaw*. New York: Dottir Press.

Yang, Fenggang. 2018. *Atlas of Religion in China: Social and Geographical Contexts*. Leiden, Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill Academic Publishers.

NEW BOOK CHAPTERS

Yan Z. Ciupak. 2018. "Architecture of Capitals: A Rigorous Qualitative Inquiry Framework and Its Application in China". In *Higher Education and Social Justice: U.S. and Chinese Perspectives*, edited by Wang Chen, Xu Li, and Edward St. John. New York: Routledge.

NEW MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

Yi, Joseph and Lee Wondong. 2019 (Jan 24). How Populism drives Seoul's ties with Tokyo. Japan Times. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2019/01/24/commentary/japan-commentary/populism-drives-seouls-ties-tokyo>

AWARDS, GRANTS AND PROMOTIONS

Angie Y. Chung presented her paper, "Beyond the Myth of the Matriarch and the Flagbearer" at a Conference on Gender and Intergenerational Issues of Transbordering 'Koreans', which is co-organized by The Institute of Social Sciences, Kangwon National University, Institute for Gender Research at the Seoul National University (SNU) and Korean Association of Women's Studies (KAWS) in Seoul, South Korea. She also presented her paper, "National Pathways to International Education: A Study on Korean and Chinese Student Adaptation in New York", at a Conference on Study Abroad and Transnational Mobility: Policy and Practice at Daegu University in Daegu, South Korea.

Carolyn Choi received Fulbright Research Award from South Korea.

Gwoon Jung is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea, starting from March 2019.

Manashi Ray received fellowship at the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Study, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in the Spring 2019.

Van Tran will be Associate Professor of Sociology at The Graduate Center, CUNY and Deputy Director of the Center for Urban Research in July 2019.

Tommy Wu will be Assistant Professor of Labor Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, starting from August 2019.

Joseph Yi received International Collaboration grant from Global Religion Research Initiative (GRR) for 2019-20.

Yan Z. Ciupak is selected as a part of Diversity Scholars Network, National Center for Institutional Diversity.

ASA 2019 in NEW YORK CITY!



See You in New York!

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