# 1AC Asian Melancholia

TW: Mention of suicide and deppression

### LINK

#### On Sept. 18 2006, 6 days after her 40th birthday, Anousheh Ansari spent 8 days in space aboard the ISS. Ansari, of Iranian descent, remains the only woman to have ever traveled to space on a self-funded mission. Her accomplishment diffused rapidly through headlines acquiring the recognition that she so desired. Asians have long been subjected to a position where they need to be exceptional in order to be seen; we have been treated as invisible. At the cost of 20 million dollars, Ansari monetarily put her life on the line to be seen, by which outer space was the only frontier for her to do so.

#### As the face of this initiative, Ansari says, “To me, I would have paid with my life. It wasn’t a matter of money. I felt that this was part of the purpose of my living on this earth.”

#### The Ansari X Prize was a catalyst that kick started private space innovation and told the world “it is okay to pay your way into space”. Hidalgo-Whitesides 14:

Hidalgo-Whitesides, Loretta.

Whitesides, Loretta Hidalgo (“Founder Astronaut” for Virgin galactic, BA from Stanford University in Biology, MA from Caltech). “How the Ansari X Prize Altered the Trajectory of Human Spaceflight.” Scientific American Blog Network, Scientific American, 4 Oct. 2014, https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/how-the-ansari-x-prize-altered-the-trajectory-of-human-spaceflight/.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loretta_Hidalgo_Whitesides>

Looking up into the bright Mojave sky in 2004, I strained to keep my eyes on the tiny spaceship 50,000 feet up. “Three, two, one… release, release, release!” came the call over the loudspeakers. I held my breath as I watched the rocket motor ignite and the spaceship ascend on a plume of fire with Mike Melvill at the controls. The contrail started to corkscrew and my heart dropped to my stomach in terror. A few seconds later we got the “all clear” signal that Mike had make it to space and was okay thanks to some cool nerves and some excellent piloting. Mike reminded us that day that there is a reason we call this “rocket science”. Five days later on October 4, 2004, SpaceShipOne flew to space again, this time with Brian Binnie at the controls. With the craft’s successful return to Earth, Scaled Composites, its manufacturer, and its funder, Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, won the $10 million Ansari X Prize. Looking back on that historic moment 10 years ago, it’s clear that the [Ansari X Prize](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/how-the-ansari-x-prize-altered-the-trajectory-of-human-spaceflight/Ansari.xprize.org) was a huge victory for the winners, but it is also the success story of X Prize Foundation chairman Peter Diamandis and the power of his Steve Jobs-like ability to bend reality to his will. People told him, “It’s not possible,” and gave him polite attention while silently thinking that his idea would never work. But sometimes with enough audacity, the extraordinary really is possible. And if anyone has proven that again and again it is Peter. In May 1996 he boldly announced that the [X Prize Foundation](http://www.xprize.org/) would award $10 million to the first team that could build a privately funded spaceship capable of carrying three people on a sub-orbital spaceflight twice within two weeks. When he made the announcement, X Prize did not have enough money to cover the purse. This is not a strategy for the faint of heart to emulate. It took a relentless, protracted experience of pounding the pavement to fully fund the prize. Finally in 2002, [Anousheh Ansari](http://www.anoushehansari.com/), a newly minted tech millionaire who dreamed of going into space since she was a young girl in Iran, and her brother-in-law Amir agreed to put up the funds needed to fully fund the prize, which became known as the Ansari X Prize. Anousheh and Peter were birds of a feather; she had also learned the power of believing in her tech company even when no investors would! Together they would alter the history books and swing the door for commercial human spaceflight wide open. When I asked Anousheh what she was most proud of about the Ansari X Prize she said, “It is my pride and joy and the best investment our family has ever made. The Ansari X Prize has changed the trajectory of human access to space and kick started a whole new industry for private space companies, accelerating the pace at which we explore our universe.”A year after the Ansari X Prize was won, Eric Anderson of [Space Adventures](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/how-the-ansari-x-prize-altered-the-trajectory-of-human-spaceflight/spaceadventures.com) asked Anousheh if she would want to come to Russia for six months to train as a backup for their next customer, Daisuke Enomoto. Feeling one step closer to her childhood dream, she agreed. Enomoto was medically disqualified on August 21, 2006 and Anousheh was suddenly moved up to prime crew with less than a month’s notice for their September 18 Soyuz launch and 10-day space mission, which included a stay on the International Space Station. Even so, she was able to create a website and blog to chronicle her experience that was read by millions around the world, including many young girls in the Middle East. When asked about her flight Anousheh said, “My flight to space has impacted me on a very deep level and has made me look at life in a whole new light. I hope as people now get a chance to experience this for themselves there will be a whole new generation of space explorers who will become the stewards of our world and make a positive impact on how we live our lives on Earth as well as the way we will extend our species into other parts of this vast and beautiful universe.” Part of the Ansari X Prize legacy is also that it inspired [Richard Branson](http://www.virgin.com/richard-branson) to take action on his dreams of spaceflight as well. At the 2004 Ansari X Prize flights he announced a deal to commercialize the new technology and create the world’s first spaceline, [Virgin Galactic](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/how-the-ansari-x-prize-altered-the-trajectory-of-human-spaceflight/virgingalactic.com) (Disclosure: My husband, George T. Whitesides is the CEO and President of Virgin Galactic). Anousheh’s sentiments about her time on orbit are exactly what motivated me and my now husband, George, to buy our Virgin Galactic tickets to space in 2005. In the ensuing years, Scaled Composites and Virgin Galactic took [SpaceShipOne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SpaceShipOne) and [WhiteKnightOne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scaled_Composites_White_Knight) (SS1's mother ship) designs and created [much larger versions](http://www.virgingalactic.com/overview/spaceships/) of them. So large that Virgin Galactic had to build a bigger hangar just to fit them. SpaceShipTwo (aka VSS Enterprise) took her first powered test flight in April 2013 and Virgin is now getting ready for her next few powered test flights this fall. This is an exciting moment in history, the moment just before Virgin Galactic begins commercial service. It is a good time to pause on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of SpaceShipOne’s Ansari X Prize-winning flights and reflect on how far we have come and what an extraordinary endeavor we are embarking on. There is the potential for hundreds of Galactic astronauts to make a real difference as space ambassadors, sharing their experiences in countries around the world, in different languages and with a wide diversity of cultures, religions, professions, orientations and styles, just as Anousheh has. The Apollo astronauts used to say, “We should have sent a poet…” Well, now we are about to. (If you would like to apply to get [Land Rover](https://gotospace.landrover.com/) to fly you and three of your friends on a Virgin Galactic spaceflight, you have till October 31 to upload your 30-second video explaining why.) This summer I had the pleasure of leading a workshop for the Virgin Galactic interns. I opened by asking them to share how they came to be interested in spaceflight. MIT senior Barbara Schloss said that she had been inspired by seeing the Ansari X Prize flights as a kid. “Being in Mojave at 11 years old to watch this historic launch definitely influenced me,” she said. “I was so excited about it that I had SpaceShipOne and WhiteKnightOne painted on my closet doors at home. I knew that it was a smaller company without much space background that had pulled off such an incredible feat, so I figured if they could do it, why not me? I determined that I wanted to be an aerospace engineer and now I am a senior at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology studying Aerospace Engineering.” I really look forward to the impact that we can have on millions of kids around the planet when SpaceShipTwo starts flying to space. I can't wait to inspire them to dream big, to not be daunted by “no’s” and hopefully also to do the work required to never give up, until they too have done the impossible. Hopefully we will inspire the next Peter Diamandis, Anousheh Ansari or Barbara Schloss. If so, I can’t wait to meet them in ten years when they start their first space internship.

#### The subjugation of Asians to the notion of the perpetual foreigner and model minority myth facilitates an ontological gap in our identities that generates psychological melancholia, manifesting itself in an eternal battle to be included while social and legal mechanisms confound us.

Eng & Han 4, DAVID L. ENG & SHINHEE HAN [David L. Eng is Richard L. Fisher Professor of English as well as Graduate Chair of the English Department at UPenn. He is also Professor in the Program in Asian American Studies, the Program in Comparative Litera Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America (Duke University Press) as well as the Coeditor (with Alice Y. Hom) of Q&A: Queer in Asian America (Temple University Press, 1998). His current project is a co-edited collection (with David Kazanjian) entitled Loss: Mourning and Melancholia in the Twentieth Century. Shinhee Han, C.S.W., is a psychotherapist at the Counseling & Psychological Services of Columbia University. She is a doctoral candidate in the Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work at New York University and maintains a private practice in New York City.], RACIAL MELANCHOLIA, RACIAL DISSOCIATION: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans, DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, Durham and London, 2019, SG

To the extent that ideals of whiteness for Asian Americans and other people of color remain unattainable, processes of assimilation are sus- pended, conflicted, and unresolved. The irresolution of this process places the concept of assimilation within a melancholic framework. Put otherwise, mourning describes a finite process that might be reason- ably aligned with the popular myth of the American “melting pot” for dominant Western European ethnic groups whose various differences are legally, socially, and psychically forged into an ideal of whiteness.7 In contrast, melancholia describes an unresolved process that might use- fully describe the compromised immigration and assimilation of Asian Americans into the national fabric. The suspended assimilation, the in- ability to blend into the American melting pot, suggests that for Asian Americans ideals of whiteness are perpetually strained—continually estranged. They remain at an unattainable distance, at once a compel- ling fantasy and a lost ideal. In configuring assimilation and melancholia in this particular man- ner, it is important to challenge Freud’s contention that melancholia ensues from a “pathological disposition”—that it emerges from the disturbance of an intrasubjective psychopathology rather than the dis- 36 CHAPTER ONE ruption of an intersubjective relationship. In our analysis, the inability to get over unattainable ideals of whiteness is less an individual than a collective social transaction. Neil Gotanda notes that Asian Ameri- cans are racialized precisely as foreign.8 US mainstream society typi- cally perceives Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners largely based on physiognomy—on skin color and physical markings. Despite the fact that they may be native-born, or however long they may have resided in the country, or whatever their official legal status, Asian Americans are continually viewed as eccentric to the nation. Whether depicted as menacing yellow peril or applauded as model minorities, Asian Ameri- cans are cast as an economic threat and hyperproductive automatons and hence pathological to the US nation-state. In either scenario, main- stream refusal to see Asian Americans as part and parcel of the American melting pot is less an individual failure to blend in with the col- lective than a legally and socially sanctioned interdiction. Even Freud suggests in his essay that melancholia may proceed from “environmental influences” rather than internal conditions that threaten the existence of the object or ideal.9 Freud goes on to delineate the debilitating consequences of melan- cholia. When faced with unresolved grief, the melancholic preserves the lost object or ideal by incorporating it into the ego and establishing an ambivalent identification with it—ambivalent precisely because of the unresolved and conflicted nature of this forfeiture. From a slightly dif- ferent perspective, we might say that ambivalence is precisely the result of the transformation an intersubjective conflict into an intrasubjective loss, as the melancholic makes every conceivable effort to retain the ab- sent object or ideal, to keep it alive in the shelter of the ego. However, the tremendous costs of maintaining this ongoing relationship to the lost object or ideal are psychically damaging. Freud notes that the “dis- tinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful de- jection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feel- ings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment.”10

#### “In my work and everything that I have always done, I have tried to be an example. I hope to inspire everyone—especially young people, women, and young girls all over the world, and in Middle Eastern countries that do not provide women with the same opportunities as men—to not give up their dreams and to pursue them. It may seem impossible to them at times. But I believe they can realize their dreams if they keep it in their hearts, nurture it, and look for opportunities and make those opportunities happen.”

#### Asian successes have been used as the proof in the pudding. In debate, Asian debaters are expected to read 400 wpm, debate about existential risk, and read theory against anyone who does otherwise. In the “real world,” economic efficiency and grand displays of wealth are used as examples of beating all obstacles and rising as a role model. The Ansari X Prize is the colorblind American dream – throwing millions of dollars at a lassaiz-faire space race. The debate space is a microcosm of the American dream where we are pushed passed our limits to merely be successful and seen. The puppeteering of Asian identity is used to strengthen the influence of neoliberalism and globalization, further degrading different groups.

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From another perspective we might observe that, **under the tenets of neoliberal multiculturalism, everyone must become an Asian Ameri- can model minority. Everyone must work incessantly, buy into the sys- tem, not rock the boat, embody economic efficiency, display technocratic expertise, and enroll in a major that will immediately translate instrumental knowledge into economic capital and power**. Today, **we are bombarded by discourses of multiculturalism and diversity, by facts and figures relating to race and racial violence, but we have few critical resources to explore what they mean in a colorblind world**—their his- tory, how we got here, and what we can do about it. Instead, **we have be- come entrenched in** the polarized **positions that a winner-take-all world demands of us**. **We have an abundance of racial grievance but no critical resources to process racial grief and loss.**28 In this race for time, as these case histories underscore, there is no time for race or, for that matter, sex. That is what all the panic is about. Perhaps **Freud was ahead of himself when he described the transfor- mation and translation of the unconscious into a seemingly organized and contradiction-free consciousness in the specific terms of race and the problem of miscegenation**: For us, as for Freud, **psychoanalysis provides a critical vocabulary, one important framework to evaluate and account for a qualitative whiteness that is not one.** Together with these case histories on parachute children, **a renewed psychoanalytic theory helps us to rethink legacies of whiteness as property in a global frame. Under the shadows of neoliberalism and globalization, they teach us that race as relation, sex as relation, are increasingly impossible in a multicultural and colorblind age. They are lost, they are dissociated, there is no relation. That is the problem**.

### IMPACT

#### The desire behind the Ansari X Prize is what opened gateways to the pursuit of space appropriation that reinforces existing patterns of exclusion like melancholia and several more harmful impacts

**Slobodian 15**

Rayna Elizabeth Slobodian works at York University, Department of Anthropology. “Selling space colonization and immortality: A psychosocial, anthropological critique of the rush to colonize Mars” Acta Astronautica Issue 113 (2015). Pgs. 93–94.

4. Utopia “What's the payoff to go? Even if it's sometime soon or in the next decade or so…just to say you've been there? … **Sometimes I wonder what else is at play**…” [75]. Another discourse that contributes to the romanticization of space is the idea that many problems will disappear once we colonize and in turn, everyone will feel united. SchulzeMakuch and Davies suggest, “…establishing a permanent multicultural and multinational human presence on another world would have major beneficial political and social implications for Earth, and serve as a strong unifying and uplifting theme for all humanity” [98:3621]. **Where is the evidence for this**? Would there truly be a sudden collapse of racist attitudes around the world due to a multi-national presence on Mars? Mars One [70] also feeds into this utopian ideal by stating on their website, “[e]xploring the solar system as a united humanity will bring us all closer together.” **How so**? And in what ways? If we look at the historical evidence of colonization on Earth, there is no reason to believe the colonization of Mars will unify humanity. In an academic conception of a future society, human nature is a huge, confounding variable. Sociologist B.J. Bluth suggests that when people moved to the New World “[a]ttitudes, values, and ways of living underwent significant alteration, and societies evolved with many members who could not be happy or comfortable in their old homes” [13]. **In truth, a small few British colonizers went back to England after settling in Jamestown because their lives were not as they imagined**, with many of their fellow colonizers dying from disease [106]. Despite this, space advocates hold onto that colonial story for reference, asserting that the New World was better. According to Journalist, Jeff Clowers [105], Mars One has currently whittled down the Canadian applicants to just 54 (from 8243 and over 200,000 including other nations) that are on standby for the mission. The youngest short-listed candidate for Mars One, at 19-year-old, is Paige Hunter. She justifies taking the trip to Mars by asserting, “if you think about it, when people moved from Europe to the Americas, they didn't know if they were going to be able to come back. They just were exploring. That's what we're doing” [21]. There was an element of exploration, but Christopher Columbus was also trying to find a more direct route to China and India in order to gain wealth of the East [42]. As for the colonists, some left England in order to practice their religions freely. Time Team Host, Tony Robinson, explains another important motivation for the European colonizers, “…in Jamestown, the colonists were to build a settlement, find gold and precious metals and send it back for sale. **These guys were there to make money**” [106]. As Mars One Founder, Bas Lansdorp, fully admits, “I started Mars One when I found out the revenue numbers for the Olympic games. In just three weeks of broadcasting…the International Olympic Committee has revenues of around 4 billion U.S. dollars…” [83]. Despite Mars One listing itself as a non-profit organization, money is a clear motivator behind this venture. Moreover, “Columbus opened up a whole continent to Spanish expansion, founded on the drive for gold and the Catholic dream of converting the world to the Christian faith” [42:283]. What of Ferdinand Magellan? “Europeans wanted silks, gems and spices from the East” [81]. These explorers were not expanding their empires solely for the sake of exploration. SchulzeMakuch and Davies suggest: “[t]here are many reasons why a human colony on Mars is a desirable goal…to attain it would require not only major international cooperation, but a return to the exploration spirit and risk-taking ethos of the great period of Earth exploration, from Columbus to Amundsen, but which has nowadays been replace with a culture of safety and political correctness” [98:3619]. The “great period of Earth exploration” was not great. Any history book can tell you that this time period involved war, genocide, rape, murder, pillaging, mass disease transfer and slavery. The explorers themselves encountered turmoil. An example is the La Condamine expedition of 1735, which “produced continual sickness, damaged instruments, lost specimens…” [88:17]. Despite this ideal of a utopian society, humans still carry with them their egos, drive for power and their possible aggressive tendencies for wealth and resources. The Red Colony Website says, “[w]hen we become united in a goal, not just as Americans or as Russians but as mankind, all of humanity puts aside its differences” [93]. The idea that if people have a common goal to colonize Mars, humanity will put aside their differences is highly questionable. As Anthropologist, Ben Finney, suggests, “[s]ettling the Moon, Mars or even farther into space represents an extension of our terrestrial behaviour, not a departure from it” [37:189]. Perhaps space advocates can find new narratives to inspire space travel, not ones that are based on tragic histories and false information. The concept of inclusivity is also a romanticized ideal carried over to the narrative of space colonization. In the marketing world, there is an issue with a lack of diversity in advertising. Angus Tucker was quoted in Strategy magazine as saying: “[t]here are tons of white men [in the advertising industry] Yeah, I'd say that is a problem. It can be a fairly narrow socio-economic vision through which you evaluate work. In any kind of country, that would be problematic, but I think in a multicultural society like ours, the risk is you end up speaking with a voice that is ultimately relevant to a much narrower group of people” (2013:22). Knowing that the marketing industry is not inclusive, how can space marketers claim to be inclusive to humanity when the majority of decision makers are white men? Alice Gorman asserts that, “[t]he interests of largely white, male Americans are assumed to be universal human goals” [40:164]. The consequence of this can lead to an incredibly limited perspective, not to mention when the rhetoric includes that colonization is best for humanity. However, **not all of humanity is represented**, only a very small demographic of limited genders and races. Jenny Reardon and Kim Tallbear suggest, “it is commonplace to believe that if one is doing “scientific” work, then it will benefit all humans. It is not the norm to suggest that practices must be responsive to the possibility of causing social harms” [92:S241]. There may be practices that ideologically seem to help others, but in reality, could be detrimental. To create a more balanced perspective, perhaps listening to the points of view of those who are not in power might be more effective in creating an inclusive atmosphere. Bluth writes that, “…developing countries often have different desires and respond to different goals, all of which are an intrinsic part of their emotional make up” [13]. Where are the non-space faring nations in these decisions? How about the under-privileged and those who are marginalized? **Where is their voice in this “inclusive” narrative?** During the 1700s “[c]ommercial prospects placed science arguably within the general public interest, though in fact the benefits of mercantile expansion and imperialism accrued overwhelmingly to small elites” [88:34]. Those who are in power (whether government organizations or corporations) that make claims that humanity can be united are they themselves far from being diverse or inclusive. When Philosopher, Stephen Cave, talks about the pursuit of immortality he says, “…**a time when millions do not even have clean drinking water, can seem like just another expression of the selfish ideology of exploitation that teaches that the whole world exists only to shore up the survival of a few privileged individuals**” [19:77]. Therefore, claiming that the pursuit of colonizing Mars is for the benefit of all humanity is a falsehood.

#### Melancholia is a direct result that generates physical and psychological violence that KILLS. Lack of education and discourse surrounding Asians and their deliberate exclusion from educational spaces amplifies the violence. We are misrecognized and treated as monolithic beings, denying our multiplicity and individualism, forcing us to LITERALLY BE OUT OF THIS WORLD to be recognized.

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In identifying with the lost object, the melancholic is able to preserve it but only as a type of haunted, ghostly identification. That is, the mel- ancholic assumes the emptiness of the lost object or ideal, identifies with RACIAL MELANCHOLIA 37 this emptiness, and thus participates in his or her own self-denigration and ruination of self-esteem. Freud summarizes the distinction between mourning and melancholia in this oft-quoted remark: “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself.”11 He contends that melancholia is one of the most difficult of psychic conditions to confront and to cure as it is largely an unconscious process, one in which the significance of the lost object remains uncon- scious and opaque. To reprise our citation from the opening pages of our introduction, Freud observes, “In yet other cases, one feels justified in maintaining the belief that a loss of this [melancholic] kind occurred, but one cannot see clearly what it is that has been lost, and it is all the more reasonable to suppose that the patient cannot consciously perceive what he has lost either. This, indeed, might be so even if the patient is aware of the loss which has given rise to his melancholia, but only in the sense that he knows whom he has lost but not what he has lost in him.”12 Freud tells us that the depression often accompanying melancholia is extremely dangerous, characterized by the tendency to suicide. Here, we might add, suicide may not merely be physical; as in Caucasia, it may also manifest in the psychical erasure of one’s identity—a self-imposed exile and exclusion. The effacing of a particular racial, sexual, or gender identity marks the emergence of a precarious social and psychic life.

### ALT

#### The advocacy is radical Asianfail—to openly protest and refuse successes that define the model minority and subject ourselves to an embrace of failure—the stupid, naïve, and nonsensical failure. Streamas 19

Streamas, John. “Asia Pessimism: Modeling a Revolution in Failure.” The University of North Carolina Press, vol. 43, Oct. 2019, pp. 112–124.

Halberstam’s argument in The Queer Art of Failure rests on three theses, the first two of which pertain particularly well to Asian America. The first—the need to re-sist mastery—seems to concern only academic professionalization, as it originates in a rejection of disciplinarity’s inherent conservatism: “We may, ultimately, want more undisciplined knowledge, more questions and fewer answers” (Halberstam 10). Halberstam argues that disciplinarity suppresses minoritized and indigenous knowledges—the examples of indigenous peoples’ long-standing disputes with Western anthropology are pertinent here—and the pursuit of those knowledges necessarily moves inquiry outside the comforts of academia. This is almost, but not quite, an argument for a kind of reverse ethnography—inquiry of colonizers from within colonized communities—that scholars are not trained to practice. The second thesis—the need to privilege whatever is stupid, naïve, nonsensical (Halberstam 12)—seems almost to invite failure, if not to defend strident anti-intellectualism. Here Halberstam might usefully address contemporary American conservatives’ distrust of higher education, expressed during the writing of The Queer Art of Failure in the rise of the Tea Party and more recently in a 2017 Pew Re-search Center survey finding that 58 percent of “Republicans and right-leaning in-dependents think higher education has a negative effect on the country” (Turnage). But for Halberstam and other critics, the constrictions of disciplinarity and uni-versities’ investments in neoliberal economic principles1 make these institutions the allies of those very conservatives. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the so-called Paradise Papers disclosure, published in 2017 in The Guardian, that many “US universities and colleges have interests offshore where they pay little or no tax and seek to grow their already phenomenal riches away from public scrutiny” (Pilkington). This desire for secrecy hides agendas that subvert schools’ public image. For example, “some of the offshore funds are invested in carbon-polluting industries, despite US universities playing a key role in the fight against climate change” (Pilkington). According to The Guardian, Northeastern University pub-licly boasts of a commitment to sustainable energy practices in its facilities and its scholars’ well-funded research, yet it is heavily invested in a hedge fund described as the nation’s leading benefactor of “oil and shale gas exploration and produc-tion . . . an aggressive financial backer of carbon-emitting industries” (Pilkington).2 Conservatives who distrust higher education may know nothing about these in-vestments and may thus be unwitting allies of universities, but even if they know, their distrust is aimed at faculty and the curriculum, not at administrators. Uni-versity leaders make their investments quietly, almost secretly, while the very pur-pose of research is to make knowledge public. Leaders may therefore be betraying a public trust, but their investments partake anyway of a neoliberalism that aims to privatize everything in the name of freedom. Whether conservatives know of these investments is irrelevant. Success—more financial than educational, more private than public—is the goal regardless. And success is as likely to be fiercely anti-intellectual as deeply intellectual and disciplinary. Here Ty needs to bolster Halberstam’s argument for failure, especially if Asian Americans, the perceived model minority, are to embrace it. For even if rejecting mastery and adopting the naïve and stupid only seem to be the default position of anti-intellectual conservatives, this is certainly a position inimical to an assimilated racial model. Why would Asian Americans reject mastery? Even when an anomalous Asian American success emerges—Jeremy Lin, for example, in his brief time as a basketball star—racists jeer partly because of a grudging recognition of that suc- cess. Asian American students who joke about getting only a B+ on a physics test—which is the example given by Urban Dictionary of “Asian fail”—are not embracing failure as much as they are struggling with parents’ expectations. This is especially true of children of the hyperassimilated “tiger mother,” who pressures her children toward perfection.3 These students and children want not to fail but to succeed on their own terms—and not on their mothers’ terms. In this way, then, “Asian fail” as Urban Dictionary defines it is not real failure in mainstream culture but is merely a diminished success. And this is not the “Asianfail” Eleanor Ty advocates .After discussing social media jokes on Asian failures, Ty offers the obligatory debunking of the “model minority” stereotype, arguing that “model minority dis-course assumes that individuals can transcend specific historical and material con-ditions in order to achieve happiness” (3). She also invokes Rey Chow’s argument for an “ethnicization of labor,” by which perceived **Asian American success is pro-grammed into the racial agenda of neoliberal whiteness** (Ty 7). Then, drawing on the work of Susan Koshy, she charges that the success model of the “tiger mother” type assumes private solutions to public problems (Ty 9). She ends her preliminary remarks on failure by observing that recent Asian American works of film and literature challenge success narratives by “chronicling the unhappy or failed life”: Ty argues too vehemently for the currentness of such cultural productions, for after all, Marxist and labor-centered Asian American writers such as Carlos Bu-losan, H. T. Tsiang, and Ronyoung Kim exposed the lies of success narratives in their work several decades ago.4 Also, Ty overlooks the fact that many protago-nists in contemporary Asian American books and films, regardless of their per-sonal struggles, take for granted their middle-class comforts, and that these com-forts were probably an outcome—or a reward?—of their immigrant parents’ more public struggles.5 Still, just as Halberstam’s argument for failure knows that prac-titioners must occupy a position in which they are considered successes before they may choose failure as a strategy of resistance, so too does Ty’s argument know that Asian Americans positioned as model minorities may choose failure, and that, making this choice, they not only fight stereotypes but also, more important, aim to dismantle an economic order that alone defines success and failure. Of course the project of social justice depends partly on choices to resist made by those who have privilege on behalf of those who lack it—that is, to the extent that the privi-leged may claim such a right.Ty reads social **media “Asianfail” self-disclosures “as ambivalent articulations of contemporary Asian North American youthful subjectivity—not of a sense of a mortifying failure to belong, but of a vacillation between embarrassment and pride in not conforming to or belonging to anything imagined as ‘Asian’ ” (23). Trou-bling**ly, though, while Ty claims these young Asian Americans reject “tiger mother” professionalism, she also observes “their failure to comply with normative expecta-tions of being Asian” (23)—but a “failure to comply” is not the same as a refusal to comply. Before “Asianfailure” can work, it must originate in refusal, in protest. And for many Asian Americans, that refusal is imbricated into their Asian identities.The other manifestation of “Asianfailure” that bears notice is not strategic but is rather a mark of a difference between real whiteness and “yellow whiteness,” a dif-ference that makes Asian Americans targets of a subtle and near-invisible racism borne of the “model minority” stereotype. People of color generally suffer their depressions silently—among the many memoirs of depression topping best-seller lists, almost none are by writers of color—but Asian Americans have been par-ticularly quiet in mental health discourse. Here Ty’s argument is most valuable for its observation of recent cultural works that construct failure as emotional trauma and suicidal depression.Of course no “model” citizen would confess to feeling depressed. A recent study by the organization Mental Health America found that “Asian Americans are least likely to have a history of diagnosis [of mental illness] even though 57% of those who completed a mental health screen scored moderately to severely depressed. Asian Americans are also three times less likely to seek mental health services” (Cheang). One source of such reluctance should be obvious: “The ‘Model Minority’ myth is a constant stressor. When your community embraces the idea that you are destined to succeed due to your racial background, failure comes as a devas-tating hit to your mental health” (Cheang). This is true for Asian Americans vic-timized by a stereotype in which they believe, or at least the rewards of which they dream of attaining. For those others who may embrace Halberstam-like failure, however, rewards may be elusive. When editors of The Asian American Literary Review published their DSM: Asian American Edition, they spotlighted the rage in an essay by Kai Cheng Thom, a family therapist who survived multiple suicide at-tempts: “Mental health is the language of power—the power to exist within, and sometimes define, the conventions of sanity, normalcy, the status quo, capitalism, white heteropatriarchy” (11). Thom realizes that mental illness is real, that it has a biological component, and that it causes great suffering, but she insists that cure This content downloaded from 207.235.150.93 on Fri, 14 Jan 2022 22:03:20 UTC All use subject to https://about.jstor.org/terms 116the comParatist 43 : 2019comes not from institutional solutions but from a political engagement with its sources and its meanings (11). Like Halberstam and Ty, Thom urges resistance, but as an artist invested in individuation she finds it in madness, myth, and magic: “Witches, weirdoes, crazies, all: take up your spells. We are going to war”

#### The affirmative is consistent with the alternative in several ways:

1. The 1ACs incorporation and analysis of Anousheh Ansari is turning debate into a critical space for psychoanalytical and Asian discourse. The 1AC is a story about Asian exceptionalism that has been used as the fuel for Neoliberalism and Space Appropriation. This analysis is the first step in recognizing the necessity of Asianfail
2. The inclusion of narratives in the 1AC is an act of nonproductivity, moving away from typical models of debate and towards unproductive instances of debate is consistent with Asianfail
3. Based on our analysis, we MUST conclude NO when it comes to private space appropriation. Instances that prioritize the model minority and Asian Melancholia must be rejected and agents of anti-asianness

### FRAMING

#### Thus, the ROB is to reject every instance of anti-asianness in the classroom – anything else normalizes stereotypes of passivity and fosters this violence for future generations

Eng & Han 4, DAVID L. ENG & SHINHEE HAN [David L. Eng is Richard L. Fisher Professor of English as well as Graduate Chair of the English Department at UPenn. He is also Professor in the Program in Asian American Studies, the Program in Comparative Litera Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America (Duke University Press) as well as the Coeditor (with Alice Y. Hom) of Q&A: Queer in Asian America (Temple University Press, 1998). His current project is a co-edited collection (with David Kazanjian) entitled Loss: Mourning and Melancholia in the Twentieth Century. Shinhee Han, C.S.W., is a psychotherapist at the Counseling & Psychological Services of Columbia University. She is a doctoral candidate in the Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work at New York University and maintains a private practice in New York City.], RACIAL MELANCHOLIA, RACIAL DISSOCIATION: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans, DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, Durham and London, 2019, ghs//BZ Recut/Tagged Nato

NATIONAL MELANCHOLIA For Asian Americans and other people of color, suspended assimilation into mainstream culture may involve not only debilitating personal consequences; ultimately, it also constitutes the foundation for a type of national melancholia, a collective national haunting, with destructive effects. In Caucasia, the ambivalence characterizing the narrator’s passing into whiteness leaves her with the constant and eerie feeling of “contamination.”13 Writing about the nature of collective identifications, Freud notes in “Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego” (1921), “In a group every sentiment and act is contagious, and contagious to such a degree that an individual readily sacrifices his personal interest to the collective interest. This is an aptitude very contrary to his nature, and of which a man is scarcely capable, except when he makes part of a group.”14 Our analysis insists on a consideration of what happens when the demand to sacrifice the personal to collective interest is accompanied not by inclusion in—but rather exclusion from—the larger group. **It reorients psychic problems of racial melancholia toward social problems concerning legal histories of whiteness as property and, in particular, exclusion laws and bars to naturalization and citizenship for Asian Americans as a type of property right.** As we know, the formation of the US nation-state entailed—and continues to entail—a history of institutionalized exclusions, legal and otherwise. Part of our introduction focused on the transatlantic slave trade and indigenous dispossession. Here, it is vital to consider the long history of legalized exclusion of Asian American immigrants and citizens alike—from Japanese internment and indefinite detention during World War II to earlier exclusion acts legislated by Congress, brokered by the executive, and upheld by the judiciary against every Asian immigrant group.15 For example, from 1882 to 1943, Chinese immigrants experienced the longest legalized history of exclusion and bars to naturalization and citizenship—the first raced-based exclusions in US history. To cite but one specific instance, in 1888 the US Congress retroactively terminated the legal right of some twenty thousand Chinese residents to reenter the United States after visiting China. Those excluded from reentry were also barred from recovering their personal property remaining in the country, underscoring the ways in which race, citizenship, and property were simultaneously managed by the state to control and restrict flows of both Asian labor and capital. This law was followed by a series of further exclusion laws, as well as accompanied by legislative acts against miscegenation and the ownership of private property, culminating in the National Origins Act (1924) and the Tydings-McDuffie Act (1934), which effectively halted all immigration from Asia for an indefinite period. As Teemu Ruskola notes, at the very historical moment when “the United States was pleased to refer to its China policy as Open Door … it hardly escaped the Chinese that the door swung one way only.”16 Yet, in our multicultural and colorblind age, few people remember this history of racially motivated discrimination against Asian Americans that laid the legal foundation for the emergence of the figure of the “illegal immigrant” and of “alien citizenship” preoccupying so much of political debate concerning immigration today. This history of exclusion is barely taught in US universities or high schools—indeed, colorblindness and the model minority myth demand a forgetting of these events of group discrimination in the name of abstract equality and individual meritocracy. A return to this history thus expands our prior analyses of race as relation and whiteness as property to consider how **the legal mechanisms of citizenship have broadly functioned as a kind of restricted property right. For Asian immigrants, these mechanisms have mediated a long history of social exclusion and inclusion in US law and society. Racial melancholia can be seen as one profound psychic effect marking these histories of legal exclusion from the nation-state and prohibitions from national belonging. Today, discourses of American exceptionalism and democratic myths of abstract equality and individualism demand a forgetting of these formative losses and exclusions, an enforced psychic amnesia that can return only as a type of repetitive national haunting—a type of negative or absent presence**.17 The contemporary model minority stereotype that defines Asian Americans is both a product of—and productive of—this negative or absent presence.18 Asian American model minority discourse emerged in the postwar period after the lifting of legalized exclusion—in the wake of Cold War conflict, the US civil rights movements, and the reformation of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Hart-Celler Act) of 1965. The Hart-Celler Act abolished the earlier immigration quotas based on national origins at the heart of US immigration policy for nearly half a century, replacing it with a system of preferences focused on the technical skills of immigrants and on family reunification**. It dramatically shifted immigration patterns to the United States and spurred a “brain drain” of settlers from Asia (and Latin America). At the same time, Hart-Celler also created a vast and largely unacknowledged force of low-income and undocumented migrants from South Asia, new areas of China, particularly Fujian province, and Southeast Asia. This “yellowing” of the US nation-state reversed a long history of anti-Asian exclusion precisely under the banner of model minority citizenship and the collective forgetting of this history of exclusion and its unauthorized subjects. The model minority myth identifies the academic success of second-generation Asian American immigrant children as dispositive of the United States as a land of equal opportunity free of racial discrimination or distress. Thereby, it functions as a national tool that manages and erases a long history of institutionalized exclusion by characterizing Asian American success precisely as the result—rather than something that occurred despite the lack—of equal opportunity in the United States. In turn, the deployment of the model minority myth configures the unequal status of African Americans in US culture and society as a self**-inflicted injury. Resisting the invidious political juxtaposition of Asian American “success” with African American “failure,” comparative race scholars have sought to reformulate this regulatory dialectic. Over a hundred years ago, W. E. B. Du Bois asked African Americans in The Souls of Black Folk (1903), “How does it feel to be a problem?”19 Today, comparative race scholars have revised Du Bois’s earlier inquiry, asking Asian Americans, “How does it feel to be a solution?”20 (We return to this dynamic in detail is chapter 3 on parachute children and psychic nowhere.) Put in terms of comparative race relations, Ellen Wu observes that during the prewar era of exclusion and yellow peril, Asians were defined as definitely not white. However, following the postwar era of inclusion, citizenship, and the emergence of model minority stereotype, Asians were defined as definitely not black.21 Understanding this triangulation is key to apprehending the ways in which racial binaries of black and white mask complex social relations of race while preventing political coalitions and alliances. Effacing unequal histories of racial discrimination, this divide and conquer strategy emerges most forcefully today in contemporary debates about affirmative action that seek to pit the interests of African Americans and Asian Americans against one another. The model minority stereotype is a myth because it homogenizes widely disparate Asian American and Asian immigrant groups by generalizing them all as academically and economically successful, with no social problems to speak of. In this manner, the stereotype works to deny, in Lisa Lowe’s words, the “heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity” of various Asian American individuals and groups who do not fit its ideals of model citizenry.22 The pervasiveness of the model minority stereotype in our contemporary national imagination thus works as one important melancholic mechanism facilitating the erasure and loss of repressed Asian American identities as well as histories of discrimination and exclusion. These identities and histories can return only as a type of ghostly presence. In this sense, the Asian American model minority subject also endures in the US historical imaginary as a melancholic national object—as a haunting specter to democratic ideals of inclusion that cannot quite get over these legislated histories of loss. The psychic consequences that this model of national melancholia has exacted on the Asian American psyche are extensively explored and interrogated in Asian American cultural productions. One compelling example comes from Maxine Hong Kingston’s China Men (1980). In Kingston’s historical novel, an imaginary chronicle of several successive generations of male ancestors in the United States, the narrator speculates about the disappearance of the “Grandfather of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.” After he helps to complete the transcontinental railroad, the greatest technological feat of ﻿the nineteenth century, Ah Goong vanishes. Kingston writes, “Maybe he hadn’t died in San Francisco, it was just his papers that burned; it was just that his existence was outlawed by Chinese Exclusion Acts. The family called him Fleaman. They did not understand his accomplishments as an American ancestor, a holding, homing ancestor of this place.”23 Kingston understands that the law’s refusal to recognize Chinese immigrants as citizens “outlaws” their existence, subjecting them to legal erasure as well as institutional violence: “It was dangerous to stay,” she observes in the context of the “Golden Spike” ceremony commemorating the railroad’s completion. “The Driving Out had begun. Ah Goong does not appear in railroad photographs.”24 At the same time, Kingston also underscores how this historical repudiation of the Asian laborer gains its psychic efficacy through a simultaneous internalization of its interdictions on the part of those excluded themselves. That is, the grandfather’s own family members refuse to recognize him as “an American ancestor, a holding, homing ancestor of this place.” They cannot perceive the “Fleaman’s” accomplishments building the transcontinental railroad as legitimizing his membership in the American nation. How, in turn, can it be possible to see themselves as legitimate members of this society? In this regard, racial melancholia can be described as splitting the Asian American psyche. This cleaving of the psyche can be productively thought about in terms of an altered, racialized model of classic Freudian fetishism.25 That is, assimilation into the national fabric demands a psychic splitting on the part of the Asian American subject who knows and does not know, at once, that she or he is part of the larger social body. In the same breath, fetishism also describes mainstream society’s disavowal and projection of otherness onto a disparaged group that is then homogenized and reduced to a stereotype. In this manner, racial fetishism delineates a psychic process by which difference is assumed and projected and then negated and denied, returning us to social dynamics of Myrdal’s “American dilemma.”

#### The debate space has the unique opportunity for being a ‘good-enough’ center of psychoanalytical and Asian discourse through an investigation of historical exclusion and melancholia, it’s an independent reason to vote aff.

Eng & Han 4, DAVID L. ENG & SHINHEE HAN [David L. Eng is Richard L. Fisher Professor of English as well as Graduate Chair of the English Department at UPenn. He is also Professor in the Program in Asian American Studies, the Program in Comparative Litera Racial Castration: Managing Masculinity in Asian America (Duke University Press) as well as the Coeditor (with Alice Y. Hom) of Q&A: Queer in Asian America (Temple University Press, 1998). His current project is a co-edited collection (with David Kazanjian) entitled Loss: Mourning and Melancholia in the Twentieth Century. Shinhee Han, C.S.W., is a psychotherapist at the Counseling & Psychological Services of Columbia University. She is a doctoral candidate in the Shirley M. Ehrenkranz School of Social Work at New York University and maintains a private practice in New York City.], RACIAL MELANCHOLIA, RACIAL DISSOCIATION: On the Social and Psychic Lives of Asian Americans, DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, Durham and London, 2019, SG

Furthermore, with the rapid accumulation of capital in East and EPILOGUE 177 **South Asia** under globalization, **university administrations** today **are** especially **eager to recruit** international **students from Asia as an impor- tant source of revenue** to balance stretched school budgets. **Yet the same administrators are unwilling to recognize any obligation to** attend to **the particular social and psychic needs of these** transnational and **diasporic student populations**, as we discussed in part II of this book. **Psychic nowhere and racial dissociation are the symptoms of such institutional disregard. The mainstream vision of Asian Americans** as model minorities **hav- ing the best of both worlds—two cultures, two languages—is a multi- cultural fantasy in the neoliberal age of diversity management**. Our in- vestigation of immigration, assimilation, and racialization as conflicted and unresolved processes of mourning and racial melancholia for first- generation students in Generation X, as well as our exploration of col- orblindness and racial dissociation organizing the transnational world of first-generation Asian parachute children in Generation Y, reveal the links between East and West as less than fluid. For these Asian and Asian American students, the addressing and redressing of racial mel- ancholia and racial dissociation requires a public language. It requires a public space in which these conflicts can be acknowledged, analyzed, and negotiated. **Ideally, Asian American and ethnic studies programs provide the social and psychic space to bring together various fragmented parts** (social, psychic, intellectual, affective, political, economic, religious, and cultural) to compose, borrowing from D. W. Winnicott, a “holding environment,” a “whole” environment for critical analysis and think- ing.6 Ideally, these programs are public spaces **in which the history of race as relation and whiteness as property can be interrogated**—a proj- ect of critical race studies that is important for *all* students to explore in our insistently colorblind age. Ultimately, **these programs ought to facilitate the collective creation of new representations and narratives for communities entangled with histories of exclusion and loss**. **These emergent formations not only contest the conventional ways in which Asians and Asian Americans have been apprehended in mainstream culture across generations but also, we hope, maintain an open space for new ideas and for new racial politics and coalitions to take hold**. **In this sense, Asian American and ethnic studies programs can function 178 EPILOGUE as “good-enough” spaces for the discussion and development of psy- choanalysis and critical race studies in tandem—for the investigation of the shifting history of the racial subject in relation to the changing subject of racial history**. A good-enough analysis of race entails an understanding that any ad- equate response to racism emerges, as Long suggests, from an ability to tolerate paradoxes—**an ability to listen, to play, and to (be)hold multiple narratives not only for their similarities but also their contradictions. Any new understandings of race must emerge from the overlapping spaces of the classroom and the clinic,** as well as from community-based organizations and social groups, which collectively provide a holding environment for the critical examination of race and racial difference**. As we emphasize, it is the naming of loss and the narrating of exclu- sion that transforms difference into identity and, in this way, identity emerges from politics rather than politics from identity**. **We would like to believe that such ideal (not idealized) spaces are within reach—that we might begin to address and ameliorate the so- cial and psychic pain of our students and patients more adequately and with greater responsibility and care. However, we must also ac- knowledge that a cure is yet to come. As long as the history of the racial subject continues to be configured by the evolving histories of race as relation and whiteness as property, cure remains a verb rather than a noun, in process, in constant movement and flux.** By investigating both Generation X and Generation Y, second-generation and first-generation (im)migrants, as well as racial melancholia and racial dissociation, we hope to have offered a deeper understanding of the social possibilities and psychic limits of the lives of our students and patients across differ- ent historical spaces and times. **Their social and psychic pain has lent us a particular insight int**o US **society** and an important critique of legacies of race and racism. In the final analysis, this project has also been an exercise for us to mourn the various passings of Asian American students who no longer felt tied to our world, such as it is. As long as social and racial injustice persists, there invariably will be new and shifting accounts of loss to be analyzed, new strategies of social and psychic survival to be exam- ined. This book should not be taken as a summary moment. Instead, it should be understood as an initial assessment of the continuing EPILOGUE 179 transformations of mourning and racial melancholia, the continuing translations of colorblindness and racial dissociation, for the purpose of building new communities. We offer these evolving paradigms with the hope that others will continue to explore their possibilities and lim- its with us.