# Oriental Invisibility

#### Framing today’s round on the subaltern is critical to understand and dismantle the nuances of invisibility and how silencing occurs under institutional power - Louai ‘12

El Habib Louai. “Retracing the Concept of the Subaltern from Gramsci to Spivak: Historical Developments and New Applications.” *African Journal of History and Culture*, vol. 4, no. 1, Jan. 2012, [academicjournals.org/journal/AJHC/article-stat/D007F0A40991](http://academicjournals.org/journal/AJHC/article-stat/D007F0A40991), 10.5897/ajhc11.020. Accessed 19 Nov. 2021.

The notion of the subaltern was first referred to by the  Italian Marxist political activist Antonio Gramsci in his  article “Notes on Italian History” which appeared later on  as part of his most widely known book *Prison Notebooks* written between 1929 and 1935. Gramsci‟s standpoint is  fundamentally instrumental to any student who reaches an understanding of the origin of the notion of the  subaltern because it tends to detach itself from the  mechanistic and economistic form that narrowly  characterizes most of the Marxist traditional studies. **The  subaltern classes refer** fundamentally in Gramsci‟s words**to any “low rank” person or group of people in a particular  society suffering under hegemonic domination of a ruling  elite class that denies them the basic rights of  participation in the making of local history and culture as  active individuals of the same nation.** Gramsci‟s  intentions when he first used the concept of the subaltern  are clear enough to be given any other far-fetched  interpretations. The only groups Gramsci had in mind at  that time were the workers and peasants who were  oppressed and discriminated by the leader of the  National Fascist Party, Benito Mussolini and his agents.  Gramsci became interested in the study of the subaltern  classes of consciousness and culture as one possible history of the ruling and dominant classes. In this study,  Gramsci envisages to carry out the legitimized fact given  thus: “**The subaltern classes by definition, are not unified and  cannot unite until they are able to become a "State”: their  history, therefore, is intertwined with that of civil society,  and thereby with the history of States and groups of  States** (Gramsci, 1971).”2

#### The political movement is literally inaccessible to Asian women because of cross-cultural tension. The aff’s logic and worldview is not reachable by Asian women. They’re left behind – Chow ‘87

Chow, Esther Ngan-Ling. “The Development of Feminist Consciousness among Asian American Women.” Gender and Society, vol. 1, no. 3, Sage Publications, Inc., 1987, pp. 284–99, http://www.jstor.org/stable/189565.

Asiatic and U.S. cultures alike tend to relegate women to subordinate status and to work in a gendered division of labor. Although **Asiatic values emphasizing education, achievement, and diligence** no doubt **have accounted for the high aspirations and achievements of some Asian American woman**, certain Asiatic values, **especially when they are in conflict with American ideas, have discouraged Asian women from actively participating in the** feminist movement (Chow 1982, 1985). **Adherence to Asiatic values of obedience, familial interest,** fatalism, **and self-control may foster submissiveness, passivity**, pessimism, timidness, inhibition, **and adaptiveness, rather than rebelliousness or political activism. Acceptance of the American values of independence, individualism, mastery of one's environment through change, and self-expression may generate self-interest, aggressiveness, initiative, and expressive spontaneity that tend to encourage political activism; but these are, to a large extent, incompatible with the upbringing of Asian American women**

#### **Asian Women has been historically seen as docile and weak-willed in the workforce, therefore, when do they speak out of their oppression it is seen as odd -Aggarwal ‘11**

Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite, 2010-2011, "Politics of Invisbility Changing Perceptions of British Asian Women in the Wake of the 1976" McGill University, https://www.mcgill.ca/history/files/history/historicaldiscourses2011\_1.pdf#page=39

Trade unions also expressed ambivalence about issues of race in the workplace, in keeping with what Sheila Patterson calls “the attempt to reconcile the principles of universal working-class brotherhood and non-discrimination with the fears and antipathies of rank-and-file members.”21 As Pratibha Parmar points out, “in contrast to West Indian women, the majority of Asian women came to Britain as the dependants of male workers… [and] were never drawn into the metropolis as wage labourers.”22 **This legal categorization of Asian women as dependents** had **encouraged the emergence of** persistent **stereotypes that classified them as docile and weak-willed**, and scholar Avtar Brah shows that **although Asian women had been organizing in the workplace for almost ten years prior to Grunwick, stereotypes of Asian women as passive beings lingered in the minds of employers at the time of the strike**. This stereotype had been embedded in the attitudes of factory employers for many years and became increasingly prevalent in the early 1970s. During this time, a large number of Asian women began to work in factories across Britain, following a decline in the immigration of Asian men.23 Many scholars of Asian women’s employment in this period argue that **factory owners deliberately hired Asians based on assumptions that they were quiet, efficient workers who would not demand special privileges from their employers.**24 These beliefs were drawn from additional suppositions about the women’s educational backgrounds and cultural values, for Parmar observed that the specific literature on Asian women conceptualizes them as non-working wives and mothers, whose problems are that they do not speak English, hardly ever leave the house, and find British norms and values ever more threatening as their children become more ‘integrated’ into the new surroundings.25 Parmar’s findings are echoed in the words of many Asian immigrants to Britain, and especially the words of women involved in mid-century labour struggles. In Finding a Voice, her seminal work on Asian women in Britain, Amrit Wilson interviews a number of Asian migrant women employed in factories across the country. In many of these interviews, the women reported discrimination and poor conditions in their workplaces. Wilson interviews a laundry worker named Prabhaben, who declared that “the trouble is that in Britain our women are expected to behave like servants, and we are not used to behaving like servants and we can’t. But if we behave normally like saying a few words to each other, the supervisors start shouting and harassing us.”26 Another interviewee, a women named Surinder, said: For a long time I never realized how badly paid and overworked I was, but what made me feel bad in those days was the rudeness and lack of respect with which I and other Asian women were treated by the supervisors. Now I have begun to understand, bad pay, rotten conditions and this insufferable contempt shown to us, it is part of the same picture.27 Corroborating workers’ testimony about management attitudes, Wilson reports that **a mill manager** in Bradford, England **referred to his Asian employees as “so well behaved. They have no complaints… but lately these ladies** in the Spinning department, they **seem to be rather odd. They can be rude.** It concerns me because it is unusual for an Asian lady to be rude, to answer back, to be a chatter-box.”

#### Asian Women are silenced when do they try to strike and this furthers their invisibility -Aggarwal ‘11

Manisha Aggarwal-Schifellite, 2010-2011, "Politics of Invisbility Changing Perceptions of British Asian Women in the Wake of the 1976" McGill University, https://www.mcgill.ca/history/files/history/historicaldiscourses2011\_1.pdf#page=39

In a pair of articles published on June 22, 1977, a reporter writes: “the dispute originally involved just **over a hundred people of Asian descent** (the number has since diminished) who were not unionized when they **went on strike**… The pickets’ banners held aloft every day carry allegations of low pay, exploitation, bad conditions, intransigent management and anti-unionism.”62 While the reporter acknowledges the role of Asian workers as instigators of the strike, he neglects to incorporate any of their perspectives into his text. Instead, in the companion article, “Owner of Grunwick says he will never give in,” the reporter includes an extensive interview with George Ward. Among other examples, these articles signify how Grunwick managers were given a prominent venue to express their opinions on the dispute, often in the place of worker perspectives.63 The Times also reports a great deal on Conservative reactions to the strike in Parliament and in public, despite the fact that the Labour government, under Prime Minister James Callaghan, was in power for the duration of the strike.64 For example, on June 28, 1977, the political editor of The Times quotes a Conservative spokesperson calling Grunwick a “constitutional crisis” and goes on to illuminate the arguments presented by the government on the strike and its merits.65 In another feature on the same page of the newspaper, reporters use a photograph of an Asian striker alongside the article “Pickets jeer Mr. Rees on visit to factory.” **However, the article fails to include any input from the striking women** on the arrival of Rees, the British Home Secretary. **Instead, the reporters use a quote from Jack Dromey** to illuminate the other side of the debate.66 The Times presents **Dromey as one of the key spokespeople for the strikers during this period,** and touts him as a “father figure” in a June 1977 article profiling his participation in the Grunwick dispute.67 **Although Dromey was a union representative and not a Grunwick employee, he emerged as the representative voice of the workers in mainstream press coverage of the strike. By placing him in this position, media actors endowed him with the legitimacy and power to speak for the workers and by extension muted the voices of the Asian women who had begun the strike action a year earlier**. In an article published on August 19, 1977, an unnamed “representative” of the striking workers remarks on fears that extremist groups such as the right-wing National Front could wage violent attacks on Grunwick pickets, but no name for the speaker is given.68 Based on the The Times’ precedent of naming its union and management interviewees and representatives in the coverage of this dispute, it is possible that the “representative” in the article was an Asian woman who had requested her name be withheld, or who had not been identified by the reporter.69 At the end of the strike, when four remaining pickets staged a two-day hunger strike, they were referred to in The Times’ short write-up not by name, but as “woman strikers.”70 Much like The Times, **the Sun appears to virtually ignore the women strikers in its coverage of the Grunwick dispute**, and often focuses mainly on the actions of the factory’s management and the police as described above. While **these practices effectively rendered Asian women invisible**, it is difficult to determine whether it was the intent of institutional representatives to undermine the contribution of these women to the struggle at Grunwick. It may have been common to employ male representatives for both sides of labour disputes such as Grunwick during this time, and as such it would have been considered standard to have leaders such as Jack Dromey represent the interests of the Asian women involved in the dispute. The omission of names and other identifying markers of the women in question may also have been done at their own request in order to protect their safety while on the picket line. In an interview with Wilson, Jayaben Desai argues that Our Gujerati women are often weak, weakened by the acceptance that their life must revolve round dressing up, housework, wearing jewellery and other things like that. Often it does not occur to them that they can speak up, raise their voices in front of people. Personally, I don’t think it is traditions which are weighing them down but the fact that they have no support at home.71

#### Asian American Women are in a double bind which renders them as invisible to society -Lee ‘14

Lee, Emily S. “The Ambiguous Practices of the Inauthentic Asian American Woman.” Hypatia, vol. 29, no. 1, 2014, pp. 146–163, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/hypatia/article/abs/ambiguous-practices-of-the-inauthentic-asian-american-woman/4404F724545260C0B097455FCFC31FCC, 10.1111/hypa.12070. Accessed 18 Nov. 2021.

‌First, the identification of the Asian American community as the model minority applauds their ability to climb the economic ladder and to harness the opportunities of capitalism. Such ascendance in class requires cultural assimilation. Minority populations regard assimilation with suspicion because assimilation does not simply mean djusting well to the culture of the United States, but covertly entails neglecting, if not abandoning, the practices of one’s cultures of origin and conforming to the practices of the majority culture. In the United States, this is the culture of whites. As such, Sarah Ahmed writes, “you can move up only by approximating the habitus of the white bourgeois body” (Ahmed 2007, 138). Climbing the economic ladder constitutes the definition of success in the United States. Hence the depiction of Asian Americans as successful immigrants for economically advancing—for assimilating— implies applauding them for giving up their ethnic cultural practices in order to survive if not thrive in this new country. Essentially, Asian Americans sell out. The assimilation demanded for economic upward mobility results in the invisibility of Asian Americans. Arisaka writes, “[i]f they are assimilated, they are invisible as a group in the dominant culture as well as to the oppositional, ‘racial minority’ cultures” (Arisaka 2000, 214).11 Scholars of Asian American studies have written extensively on invisibility as a regularly occurring phenomenon specifically of the Asian American community as a minority community in the United States (Yamada 1983). The possibility of achieving a sense of authenticity appears dim among these model minority but cultural “sellouts” in this condition of invisibility. Alternatively, the Asian American community is identified with persisting strong ties to their cultures of origin, so much so that they face accusations of insular, isolationist practices. Under this identification, because of their isolationist practices, Asian Americans lag behind in political participation in the United States. The insularity of the Asian American community has been pointed to as ultimately one of the reasons, if not the main reason, for inter-minority conflict, particularly in the analyses of the Los Angeles riots of 1992. So, in contrast to the invisibility of the assimilationist Asian Americans, the isolationist Asian Americans facilitate their own exoticism and their own hyper-visibility. Who are these isolationist Asian Americans? If the assimilated Asian Americans are economically upwardly mobile, then the isolationist Asian Americans must be the less economically mobile—those likely to live in poverty. For after all, within these circumstances, if economic mobility requires assimilation, those who do not assimilate cannot participate in upward mobility. Here I want to point out that **because women** (especially women with hyphenated identities or from immigrant communities) **are perceived as responsible for keeping alive their culture and so are more often burdened with continuing the practices of their cultures of origin, these isolationist poor Asian Americans are likely to comprise a specific gender—wome**n.12 In failing as a model minority, these isolationist, poor Asian American women, also face dim prospects of achieving a sense of authenticity. **These two close identifications and over-determinations of the Asian American community lead to a dichotomous framework—a false dichotomy. Asian Americans who do not assimilate and who live in poverty closely align with authenticity through their group identity in the sense of culture, but the isolated and poor Asian American affiliates less with authenticity in the class criterion as a model minority. The assimilated Asian American, however, more authentically follows the group identity as a model minority, but less closely coheres with the cultural practices associated with the group.** The false dichotomy invites ambivalent responses to the Asian American identity. **The Asian American woman whose group identity is** dichotomously over-determined—as **either assimilating and successfully** **climbing up the economic ladder or persisting in practicing her culture of origin with the consequences of isolation and poverty—faces a scenario in which all the available choices trouble her relation to her group identity, and to her ultimately developing a sense of personal authenticity.** Is the poor Asian American woman’s sense of self structured through the understanding of the temporariness of her condition of poverty such that she will eventually conform to the majority culture’s practices? Or, in realizing, through recognizing the dismal statistics on class mobility, that poverty is not temporary, does her sense of self become significantly damaged in facing the likelihood of failing as a model minority? Without poor Asian Americans, will the cultural significance of the Asian American identity disappear as an identifying feature of the group? What is the sense of self for the economically successful Asian American woman who conforms to the majority culture and lets go of her original cultural practices? Women carry the primary burden of culture, and women earn less than men; so are Asian American women more likely to be poor, tradition-bound, and isolated? If both practicing one’s culture of origin and economically climbing is impossible, considering that succeeding as a model minority promotes the invisibility of one’s identity, must one choose poverty and hyper-visibility to strengthen one’s group identity? For the Asian American woman endeavoring toward an authentic sense of self in both its class and cultural ascriptions, **neither option allows for developing a coherent identification with one’s group identity**. If the social empowerment of the group identity relies upon individuals identifying and participating in the formation of their group identity, the series of compromised choices within the group identity’s class and cultural over-determinations clearly have disenfranchising political implications.Recall that the condition of minority identities is that their individual identities are undistinguished if not reductively collapsed to their group identities. With such intimate associations, the solution to escaping the false dichotomy of the group identity cannot only consist of distancing oneself from one’s group identity. Instead, for the minority individual, for the Asian American woman to develop a sense of self true to herself—a sense of authenticity—she must work with and on the group identity to encourage and to develop understanding of the group identity.

#### Thus: the alt is active education and solidarity among Asian Americans to promote a sense of individuality and awareness which allows them to come together to create change. - Osajima ’07.

Osajima, Keith. “Replenishing the Ranks: Raising Critical Consciousness among Asian Americans.” Journal of Asian American Studies, vol. 10, no. 1, 2007, pp. 59–83, muse.jhu.edu/article/213033/summary, 10.1353/jaas.2007.0006. Accessed 18 Nov. 2021.

For the vast majority of respondents, developing an Asian American critical consciousness involved a process that was transformative, where knowledge of and commitment to Asian American concerns represented a significant change from earlier views they had held in their lives. Most had paid little attention of being Asian or to racism against Asians while growing up. With the exception of two respondents, all were “first-generation” Asian American activists, in that they were the first in their family to develop a critical awareness of issues. David Chan,17 for example, had grown up in a predominantly white neighborhood in Southern California. He had thought of himself as an “ultra-American” while growing up. In high school, he had clowned around, done drugs, dropped out, and dove heavily into the graffiti art scene. After a less than illustrious academic start, David had found his way to a community college, then to a university, and had ended up getting a master’s degree in Asian American Studies. Margaret Eu also had grown up in Southern California, in a traditional middle-class household where her Korean immigrant father worked in various entrepreneurial enterprises while her mother stayed home to raise the children. Through the seventh grade, the most significant influence in Margaret’s life had been the Christian church. Later, she had been a “super-active high school student,” involved in activities like cheerleading, student government, mock trial, and drama. She had gone to college with little awareness of Asian American issues. She now has a master’s degree in student development and is working in Asian American student affairs. Pearl Cruz, raised in affluent Marin County, California, described herself as “mega-apolitical” and “very, very, very apathetic” while growing up. She had been “very into my own little Marin lifestyle.” She had gone to a private elementary school and later to a private high school. Pearl had attended an Ivy League university for two years, where she got involved in feminist student activities, and then had transferred to the University of California where she majored in Asian American Studies. Raj Kapur was born and raised in the Washington D.C. area. Growing up, Raj described himself as shy and quiet. In high school, he had felt that he “had a real low self-esteem problem at the time, so that kind of caused some degree of low achievement.” He was not active in extra-curricular activities and pretty much stayed to himself. In college, Raj had become actively involved in Asian American student organizations and was one of the most articulate and outspoken members of the community. The fact that these young Asian Americans, from widely varying class, geographic, political, and ethnic backgrounds, could find their way to Asian American activism speaks to the real possibility that young people can become critically conscious and politically active. Their active involvement is especially noteworthy given the post-Civil Rights climate that surrounds them, where the political momentum has shifted to the right and hopes for student activism are often drowned in a sea of apathy or hopelessness. These **Asian Americans had gone against the grain and had become politically involved.** They had realized what Cornell West calls the “politics of conversion,” where the tendency toward nihilism is countered by “a chance for people to believe that there is hope for the future and a meaning to struggle.”18 So, what had happened to change and shape their views? What had contributed to the development of their critical consciousness? Analysis of the interviews reveals common patterns of factors and conditions that contribute to the development of an Asian American critical consciousness. **The Importance of a “Meaningful Education” In talking about how they had become interested in Asian American issues**, respondents invariably pointed to moments when **new information and perspectives** profoundly **affected their thinking by helping them to see how their lives**, as Asian Americans**, were shaped by larger historical and social forces.** In this way, the information had carried significant meaning and relevance, helping them to understand their lives in new ways. For Brian Kim, for example, conscientization had begun in an Asian American history course. It “really changed my view on how this society works and where we fit in.” He said, “I just never thought of what our history is here or what my, say our ancestors came here for, the first generation. I just never knew.” That first class had inspired Brian to switch out of his pre-med studies and declare a major in Asian American Studies. Echoing Cornell West’s notion of conversion, Brian says, “So that’s where I am now. So you see I’m a converted Asian.” An Asian American psychology class had exerted a transformative impact on Margaret Eu’s thinking. Information about the Asian American experience was meaningful because it had helped her to make sense of experiences in her life and family. It had offered language and concepts that explained why and how racism and sexism operated: That was the first time that academically I was reading something that was so relevant to my experience and my identity. . . .[E]verything made so much sense. It was like somebody was explaining my life history, my life pattern on paper, and in theory and in literature.19 David Tan echoes Margaret’s comments. Like many of his peers, David Tan had not been interested in political activism when he graduated from high school. He was “all about having fun.” When he had entered college, he said, “I was paying attention more to the women than to the professors.” But, information in an Asian American Studies class had resonated deeply with David; his professor had offered insights that not only helped him to understand his life experiences, but also inspired him to learn more: He went into the issues of family relations, generational conflicts, the model minority, anti-Asian violence. Just everything that happened in my life, he explained it. That’s when I realized, this is what I want to do. I need to learn more.20 While formal Asian American courses had played pivotal roles in conscientization, the classroom was not the only place where respondents had been exposed to life-altering perspectives and information. David Tan’s critical consciousness had deepened through his participation in a student group. The group had showed the movie, “Who Killed Vincent Chin,” about the 1982 slaying of a Chinese American man by two unemployed, white auto workers. It had struck a deep nerve. As David had watched Vincent Chin’s mother fight to win justice for her son, David had thought of his grandmother and the struggles she faced as an immigrant, non-English-speaker woman. Here, the content of the movie and articles had intersected with David’s life and led him to make new connections: That’s an example of that sort of connection, of seeing things and knowing how race played a part and seeing how those kinds of elements played itself out in my life and my family’s life, especially for my grandmother.21 Pearl Cruz had begun to change when a friend invited her to attend a meeting to organize a campus protest. Watching and listening to powerful and articulate women of color speak out about racism and sexism had inspired Pearl: I went home that summer and devoured every piece of feminist literature I could get my hands on. So I’m just sitting there reading like a maniac all summer long, just digesting what had happened that year. . . . It was really something, it hit me all at once.22 Ryan Suzuki’s interest in issues of oppression had first been piqued in diversity training workshops he took as a resident advisor. Later, in graduate school, a key mentor, Ricardo Munoz, had helped Ryan to develop his conceptual and analytic understanding. Munoz had pushed Ryan to do more reading about the systematic nature of oppression in the United States. Ryan describes Munoz’s influence as follows: He really put a much more intellectual analysis to things. . . . It was more about the systematic things that were going on, about changing structures, about resources, those kinds of things, rather than just that a person needs to be sensitized.23 In these cases, we begin to see more precisely what it means to have a “relevant” and “meaningful” education. For Joe, Ryan, and David**, conscientization meant being able to see themselves in larger social structural** **contexts**, not simply as individuals but as people whose lives intersect with and are shaped by race and racism. For Brian, **information about the history of** **Asian Americans had prompted critical reflections** on two levels. First, because he had never known about the history of Asian Americans, the class had given him new information that had helped him to understand his family history. Second, it had led him to critically reflect upon his previous education. He questioned why he hadn’t learned any of this before? Why was his experience absent from U.S. history courses? This process had led him to think more critically about the racism embedded in his educational experiences. Margaret had experienced a similar reaction. She had realized that her education had only taught her about European American history, prompting her to ask, “how many students were out there who never would take this class. . . and would never really know more than one version of history?” Her Asian American courses had provided the analytic tools and language needed to see the reason and logic of racism, sexism, and heterosexism. **Conscientization for these respondents meant being able to “name their world.”** That is, a meaningful **education had helped them to recognize and understand the impact that societal conditions and forces of** **oppression have on their lives and the lives of others**. As Freire writes, the process of conscientization, or education for critical consciousness, **“involves a** **constant clarification of what remains hidden within us while we move about in the world**,” and it provokes “recognition of the world, not as a ‘given’ world, but as a world dynamically ‘in the making.”**24 Such recognition often inspires people to work against that oppression, thus beginning their active efforts to transform the world**.25 **Naming the world was an important step toward actively changing it.**Conscientization as Social Process - Breaking Isolation While the respondents identified “relevant” information as a key to their development, exposure to information on racism and Asian Americans is not the only element of an education for critical consciousness. The interviews reveal that conscientization is a social process, where connections, support and encouragement from others play a critical facilitative role. For many respondents, the development of their critical consciousness had not happened in isolation, working or studying on their own. Instead, relationships with other people had contributed to their growth in a variety of ways. First, **contact and conversation with others had helped respondents to break a sense of isolation in their lives.** The chance to talk to other Asians about their lives and experiences with discrimination had helped respondents to see that their individual experiences were not unique. As they had seen similarities and patterns, it was easier for them to see how broader forces, like racism, shaped their individual lives. Their descriptions of this process were quite consistent and similar. Joe Yamamoto, a third-generation Japanese American, had grown up in central California. In high school, Joe had liked to party and had come close to not graduating. After working a series of jobs, he had decided to head back into school, first at a community college and then at a University of California campus, to pursue his interest in math. Joe had not identified as a Japanese American. He had been aware that things happened to him, perhaps because he was Japanese, but did not make any connections to racial discrimination. At the University of California, Joe had enrolled in an Asian American Studies course, mainly because it fulfilled a general education requirement. During the class, interactions with fellow Asian students, along with information on racism against Asians in the United States, had led Joe to realize, for the first time, that he was treated differently because of his race. Describing an in-class interactive activity where students were put in pairs and asked to interview each other about their lives, Joe articulated this process of self-discovery: We found a lot of similarities between ourselves. . . . That was the first time I got a chance to hear other people say the exact same things that I had gone through. . . it’s because I’m Asian, because I’m Japanese that I run into different kinds of experiences than my Caucasian friends do. And it’s because of my race. It’s not because I wear blue jeans or anything else, it’s because of how I look.26 Pearl Cruz’s understanding of Asian American women’s issues had been formed largely in conversation with other women in an Asian American Studies class: It was like therapy, group therapy to sit around and swap stories about when I was growing up. So that was great, sharing things that everybody had experienced and thought they were the only ones who had experienced.27 Soon Park had developed a stronger understanding of racism through her interactions with others in an Asian American student organization. I asked her what it was about being in the student group or being in classes that had helped her to develop a commitment to working in the Asian American community, Soon offered the following response: I think more understanding how other Asians have the same experiences as I do, and I’m not the only one. I remember going to one of my first meetings and there’s maybe 10 people, and it was more like a rap session. I remember people talking about their experiences about racism, what happened to them and thinking that’s really awful. I can’t believe that’s happened to that person and thinking all these things happened to me. We’re all in the situation where we all share this common kind of pain and experience.28 In the context of American society, it is understandable how **breaking through the sense of isolation can facilitate the development of critical consciousness.** Isolation is closely tied to the powerful ideological emphasis on individualism in the United States. Andrew Barlow notes that Americans “are told that their well-being is up to them, that people must fend for themselves as far as their personal welfare is concerned.”29 A consequence of growing up with this view is implicit in the interviews. Respondents had interpreted their experiences, good and bad, through individual lenses, as events that happened, in isolation, only to them. **Through interactions with other Asian Americans, they had realized they were not alone**, that others had similar family and cultural experiences, and experiences with racial discrimination**. This discovery had led them to question their individualistic interpretations and had opened the possibility that their lives could be understood as part of an Asian American experience**. Given the profound change that conscientization had effected in the lives of respondents, it is not surprising that many of them wanted to be in positions where they could help to create for others the educational experiences that were so meaningful to them. **They took leadership positions in student organizations;** they helped to organize and put on educational programs; they worked in community organizations; they pursued graduate studies; and they took positions in student affairs to work closely with new cohorts of Asian American students. Pamela Kim, who wanted to become a professor of Asian American studies, best expresses their desire: One of the reasons why I want to be a professor of Asian American Studies is because I want to help these kids who are going through the same things that I did. I want to help them figure things out, to help educate them about these issues because I had no idea about them while I was growing up. I could see what these kids are all going through in college, and it helps to be where you can pop those bubbles that they have around themselves.37 As they go about the task of trying to replenish the ranks by raising critical consciousness amongst new groups of Asians, a number of lessons learned from their collective experiences may provide helpful guides. From the interviews, we can identify critical elements that contribute to conscientization. While these elements do not guarantee that conscientization will follow, incorporating them into one’s practice may enhance the possibility that efforts will be successful. First, respondents described the importance of obtaining information and conceptual tools that helped them to cognitively understand how their lives and the lives of others are shaped by larger historical and social- structural forces. An Asian American Studies course on a college campus was the most common source of relevant information, but as we have seen exposure can take place in many venues. People can learn from reading on their own, from student groups, and from multimedia sources. Second, breaking through isolation and interrupting the tendency to explain their life experiences solely in individual terms reflects a social dimension to conscientization. Contact and conversation with other Asian Americans was often the most effective way to help respondents make connections between their lives, the experiences of others, and information on the Asian American experience. Connections to key mentors and peers provided a safe environment in which to think and question further. Third, respondents described important affective aspects of conscientization. When respondents talked about important moments in their education or key social support that made a difference, invariably they referred to how they felt about these experiences. They were angered by the realization that their schooling had not taught them about racism or the Asian American experience. They felt inspired by the experiences of other Asian Americans who struggled to overcome harsh conditions. They were excited to learn more. Fourth, **respondents’ commitment** to Asian American issues **was deepened when they transformed understanding into action. Involvement in protests, organizing,** programming, teaching, **and research gave respondents a chance to extend their knowledge and learn from efforts to make change.** Finally, the study indicates that **conscientization occurs when the discrete elements work in combination.** No respondent described his or her conscientization in terms of a single element. It was not a purely intellectual or cognitive experience in a classroom, absent of social or affective elements. Nor was it a purely social or affective experience without information and conceptual tools. Instead, respondents described multifaceted and interrelated experiences that reinforced each other, inspiring further thinking and commitment to action. For activists seeking to raise the critical consciousness of Asian Americans, the study’s findings carry implications for practice. For some, combining elements in a single venue, like an introductory course or a training program, will be the main focus. In these cases, the study suggests that the course or program should offer substantive content and concepts to lay the cognitive foundation needed for people to see themselves in relation to the world. It also should include social activities to break isolation and opportunities for people to share stories with each other in a non-judgmental, safe environment. On a broader level, the study suggests that there is a value in and need to offer a range of experiences across campus and community to increase the likelihood that students will combine, on their own, elements that contribute to conscientization. Pressure to have one person, course, or program that single-handedly transforms students’ lives subsides when we recognize that the interrelated process of conscientization benefits from contributions across diverse segments of the community. The importance of combining influences also casts new light on how different parts of the campus and community can work collaboratively to raise critical consciousness. Breaking from binary constructions that often pit academic programs against student life activities, or divide academe from community, the study shows how conscientization arises when people are exposed to and combine lessons learned from a variety of sources. This process implies that increased appreciation for the work done across campus and community, along with greater coordination of influences, is an important dimension of conscientization.]

#### Thus the ROB Should be to endorse the team that gives Asian American Women a means to recognize themselves as individuals in society. Without, the self-recognition of Asian women, they will always be seen as invisible in society. Therefore, the unconditional right to strike cannot even apply to them, if they aren’t seen as workers.

## CASE

1. **Government policymaking in debate categorizes the white policy debater as the detached norm while alternative politics are uncivilized – that detachment is in the form of an imperialist persona that perpetuates colonialism**

**Reid-Brinkley 08**

Reid-Brinkley 08 (Dr. Shanara Reid-Brinkley, University of Pittsburgh Department of Communications, “THE HARSH REALITIES OF “ACTING BLACK”: HOW AFRICAN-AMERICAN POLICY DEBATERS NEGOTIATE REPRESENTATION THROUGH RACIAL PERFORMANCE AND STYLE” 2008)

So, within public discourse, how race is coded rhetorically in public deliberation is of critical import.

Mitchell observes that the stance of the policymaker in debate comes with a “sense of detachment associated with the spectator posture.”115 In other words, its participants are able to engage in debates where they are able to distance themselves from the events that are the subjects of debates. Debaters can throw around terms like torture, terrorism, genocide and nuclear war without blinking. Debate simulations can only serve to distance the debaters from real world participation in the political contexts they debate about. As William Shanahan remarks: …the topic established a relationship through interpellation that inhered irrespective of what the particular political affinities of the debaters were. The relationship was both political and ethical, and needed to be debated as such. When we blithely call for United States Federal Government policymaking, we are not immune to the colonialist legacy that establishes our place on this continent. We cannot wish away the horrific atrocities perpetrated everyday in our name simply by refusing to acknowledge these implications” (emphasis in original).116 118 The “objective” stance of the policymaker is an impersonal or imperialist persona. The policymaker relies upon “acceptable” forms of evidence, engaging in logical discussion, producing rational thoughts. As Shanahan, and the Louisville debaters’ note, such a stance is integrally linked to the normative, historical and contemporary practices of power that produce and maintain varying networks of oppression. In other words, the discursive practices of policy-oriented debate are developed within, through and from systems of power and privilege. Thus, these practices are critically implicated in the maintenance of hegemony. So, rather than seeing themselves as government or state actors, Jones and Green choose to perform themselves in debate, violating the more “objective” stance of the “policymaker” and require their opponents to do the same.

#### Strikes inhibit the ability to create contracts, create power imbalances, and violate individual contracts.

Levine 1, Peter. "The Libertarian Critique of Labor Unions." Philosophy and Public Policy Quarterly 21.4 (2001): 17-24. (Peter Levine is the Associate Dean for Research and Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship & Public Affairs in Tufts University’s Jonathan Tisch College of Civic Life. He has secondary appointments in the Tufts Philosophy Department and the Tufts Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute. He was the founding deputy director (2001-6) and then the second director (2006-15) of Tisch College’s CIRCLE, The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, which he continues to oversee as an associate dean.) JG

Libertarians strongly defend freedom of choice and association. Thus, when workers choose to act collectively, negotiate together, or voluntarily walk off the job, libertarians have no reasonable complaint--even if other people are harmed--because they support the right to make and exit voluntary partnerships. But unions gain strength **by overriding private rights.** They routinely block anyone from working **under a non-union contract**, and they prevent employers from making offers--even advantageous ones--to individual workers unless the union is informed and consents. Unions declare strikes and establish picket lines to prevent **customers and workers** from **entering company property**; they may **fine employees who cross these lines.** They also extract fees from all workers who are covered by their contracts. Although covered workers may avoid paying for certain union functions (such as lobbying) that are not germane to contract issues, they must pay for strikes and other activities that some of them oppose. The great libertarian theorist Friedrich Hayek concluded that unions “are the one institution where government has signally failed in its first task, that of preventing coercion of men by other men--and by coercion I do not mean primarily the coercion of employers but the coercion of workers by their fellow workers.” Hayek may have been thinking mainly of corrupt and unaccountable union leaders. But even a completely democratic union sometimes supplants private rights. As libertarians like Morgan O. Reynolds point out, majorities within a union are able to ignore minorities’ preferences.

#### Strikes fail and spark backlash – leads to fragmentation.

Grant and Wallace 91 [Don Sherman Grant; Ohio State University; Michael Wallace; Indiana University; “Why Do Strikes Turn Violent?” University of Chicago Press; March 1991; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2781338.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Aca3144a9ae9e4ac65e285f2c67451ffb>]//SJWen

\*\*RM = Resource-Mobilization, or Strikes

3. Violent tactics.-Violent tactics are viewed by RM theorists exclu- sively as purposeful strategies by challengers for inciting social change with little recognition of how countermobilization strategies of elites also create violence. The role of elite counterstrategies has been virtually ig- nored in research on collective violence. Of course, history is replete with examples of elites' inflicting violence on challenging groups with the full sanction of the state. Typically, elite-sponsored violence occurs when the power resources and legal apparatus are so one-sidedly in the elites' favor that the outcome is never in doubt. In conflicts with weak insiders, elites may not act so openly unless weak insiders flaunt the law. Typically, elite strategies do not overtly promote violence but rather provoke violence by the other side in hopes of eliciting public condemnation or more vigorous state repression of challenger initiatives. This is a critical dynamic in struggles involving weak insiders such as unions. In these cases, worker violence, even when it appears justified, erodes public support for the workers' cause and damages the union's insider status.

4. Homogeneity and similarity.-Many RM theorists incorrectly as- sume that members of aggrieved groups are homogeneous in their inter- ests and share similar positions in the social structure. This (assumed) homogeneity of interests is rare for members of outsider groups and even more suspect for members of weak-insider groups. Indeed, groups are rarely uniform and often include relatively advantaged persons who have other, more peaceful channels in which to pursue their goals. Internal stratification processes mean that different persons have varying invest- ments in current structural arrangements, in addition to their collective interest in affecting social change. Again, these forces are especially prev- alent for weak insiders: even the group's lowest-status members are likely to have a marginal stake in the system; high-status members are likely to have a larger stake and, therefore, less commitment to dramatic change in the status quo.

Internal differences may lead to fragmentation of interests and lack of consensus about tactics, especially tactics suggesting violent confronta- tion. While group members share common grievances, individual mem- bers may be differentially aggrieved by the current state of affairs or differentially exposed to elite repression. White's (1989) research on the violent tactics of the Irish Republican Army shows that working-class members and student activists, when compared with middle-class partici- pants, are more vulnerable to state-sponsored repression, more likely to be available for protest activities, and reap more benefits from political violence. When we apply them to our study of strike violence, we find that differences in skill levels are known to coincide with major intraclass 1120 Strikes divisions in material interests (Form 1985) and are likely to coincide with the tendency for violent action. For instance, skilled-craft workers, who are more socially and politically conservative than unskilled workers, are less likely to view relations with employers as inherently antagonistic and are prone to separate themselves from unskilled workers, factors that should decrease their participation in violence.

## A2 CAP

#### Turn:

#### Apocalyptic predictions about the ills of capitalism will not motivate activism—practical reforms are the only hope for the left.

**Wilson, 2000** – Editor and Publisher of Illinois Academe – 2000 (John K. Wilson, “How the Left can Win Arguments and Influence People” p. 14- 15)

Leftists also need to abandon their tendency to make apocalyptic predictions. It's always tempting to predict that environmental destruction is imminent or the stock market is ready to crash in the coming second Great Depression. Arguments that the U.S. economy is in terrible shape fly in the face of reality. It's hard to claim that a middle-class American family with two cars, a big-screen TV, and a computer is oppressed. While the poor in America fell behind during the Reagan/Gingrich/Clinton era and the middle class did not receive its share of the wealth produced during this time, the economy itself is in excellent shape. Instead, the problem is the redistribution of wealth to the very rich under the resurgence of "free market" capitalism. Instead of warning that the economy will collapse without progressive policies, the left should emphasize that the progressive aspects of American capitalism have created the current success of the American economy after decades of heavy government investment in human capital. But the cutbacks in investment for education and the growing disparity between the haves and the have-notes are threatening the economy’s future success.