

**Ghost Busters <3**

**1AC – Topic**

**Vote aff is I win the topic is anti-asian – a] you should reject discussions on the topic if its racist b] endorses valuable education on the way language discourse shapes the way we view the world.**

**1] Asian Exclusion was fundamental to the US labor movement.**

**Freeman 14** [Bradley M. Freeman, Doctor of Philosophy , 2014, " Asian American Radical Literature: Marxism, Revolution, and the Politics of Form ," Ohio State University,<https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws_etd/send_file/send?accession=osu1405525061&disposition=inline> [accessed: 10-24-21] Lydia

Unfortunately, London and Norris were not anomalies within the broader movements that brought together union organizers and left-leaning politicians. Drawing on the work of Alexander Saxton, Lye claims, “[A]n Asian exclusion movement arose alongside the U.S. labor movement and was very likely foundational to it” (19). Initially, major union organizations included Asian exclusion as standard policy. In an effort to create cultural capital that would counter their own exploitation and marginalization, the white working class galvanized around these racist strategies. Lye continues, “The Asian exclusion question magnifies the centrality of nationalist rhetoric to a strategy of legitimation which sought to make ‘unionism’ synonymous with ‘Americanism’” (19). Similarly, Robert G. Lee writes, “Irish immigrants who were in the process of consolidating their own claim to Americanness and a white racial identity led the popular anti-Chinese movement” (9). Ultimately, this rhetoric worked to embed unions and labor organizing within a broader narrative of American nativism. This rhetoric also undercut many efforts to organize pan-ethnic coalitions. Redirecting critiques of class inequality away from white capitalists, then, anti-Asian anxiety only fractured the working-class community and undermined many attempts at cross-racial solidarity. While Lye’s work reveals an Anglo American literary tradition thoroughly entrenched in racism and anti-Asian anxiety, this project shows the way in which Asian American writers began to enact and envision pan-ethnic solidarity despite these nativist tensions. Tsiang, for instance, brings together racialized and immigrant workers in the strikes that punctuate each of his novels and reveals racialization to be part and parcel of their exploitation. Murayama, too, critiques ethnic divisions among the working class in Hawai‘i by evincing the way in which Filipino and Japanese laborers only perpetuate their own exploitation when they “scab” against one another. Deeply critical of the racist, exclusionist sentiments of this white working class, the Asian American writers in question refuse to fall back on exceptionalist narratives. In this regard, these writers differ from many of their Anglo American counterparts. Rather than tie monopoly capitalism to Asia, they reveal the ways in which race, gender, and class suture American empire and oppress Asian immigrants especially. In Bulosan’s America Is in the Heart and Murayama’s All I Asking for Is My Body, these writers foreground the deleterious effects of American empire on Allos’s childhood in the Philippines and Kiyo’s adolescence on the Hawaiian sugar plantations. Allos’s family struggles to “get by” in the rural countryside because of absentee landlords, and Kiyo goes to work on the plantation at a young age because of the family’s overwhelming debt to the plantation. During the Depression, then, this Marxist lens became integral to Asian American literature precisely because these authors foreground the way in which the exploits of American capital depend on racialized and gendered labor. The Depression was especially brutal for immigrant workers who were targeted by the American government and a white working class desperate for cultural capital.

**2] Chinese Restaurant Strikes prove**

**Chow 17** [Kat Chow, 6-16-2017, "How The White Establishment Waged A 'War' On Chinese Restaurants In The U.S. ," NPR.org,<https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/06/16/532697303/how-american-unions-tried-to-wage-a-war-against-chinese-restaurants-in-the-u-s> [accessed 10-24-21] lydia

In most American cities these days, it seems like there's a Chinese restaurant on every other street corner. But in the late 1800s, that ubiquity was exactly what certain white establishment figures feared,according to a [new study](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2948030) co-written by Gabriel "Jack" Chin, a law professor at the University of California, Davis. Chin examined how white union workers and lawmakers waged a nationwide "war" on Chinese restaurants in America from 1890 to 1920. "It shows this tradition of an expectation on the part of some white Americans that public policy should be organized for the benefit of their employment," says Chin, who adds that he sees parallels with anti-immigrant policies being put forth today. In 1882, Congress passed the [Chinese Exclusion Act](http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/05/05/527091890/the-135-year-bridge-between-the-chinese-exclusion-act-and-a-proposed-travel-ban), which barred Chinese immigrants from entering the U.S. for decades. Some white Americans worried that Chinese laborers would steal their jobs and hijack their opportunity. And this xenophobic fear carried over to the restaurant industry. Chinese restaurants — known by some at the time as "chop suey houses" — were understood to be a good value, offering inexpensive meals in an exotic setting. "The economic menace [of Chinese restaurants] was twofold," says Chin. "First, if Chinese people had the opportunity to earn a living, then they might stay. And their communities would continue to exist, and the Chinese presence, which many objected to, would continue." The second thing, says Chin, is that "if Chinese restaurants made Chinese food available at a relatively low price and then American restaurants wouldn't be able to compete, either the wage scales for American restaurants would have to go down or they would close." And then, there was the pervasive idea that Chinese men were lecherous threats to white women. Chinese restaurants were considered "dens of vice," Chin says, where white women were at risk of moral corruption by way of sex, opium and alcohol. I talked with Chin about his research and how anti-immigrant sentiment can manifest itself in even the most "creative" of methods. He told me about six different ways that Chinese restaurants were targeted: **1. Race riots** There were Chinese communities expelled from Western and Mountain States through race riots, Chin says, where Chinese restaurateurs or miners were beaten or quite literally burned from their homes. **2. Boycotts** Unions representing cooks, waiters and bartenders organized largely unsuccessful boycotts against Chinese restaurants in many places, including Massachusetts, Arizona, California, Montana, Minnesota and Ohio. The unions imposed fines on union members who ate at Chinese restaurants, Chin says, but couldn't keep their members from eating there: "Individual members of the public had incentives to cheat because the food was understood to be a good value at the time." And, Chin points out, for the most part, these unions weren't trying to enlist Chinese restaurant workers to join their ranks. Instead, they were vying for Chinese employees to be replaced by white workers. **3. A peculiar law** When boycotts were largely unsuccessful, the unions turned to the legal system. At the American Federation of Labor's 1913 convention, organizers proposed that all states should pass laws that barred white women from working or patronizing Chinese or Japanese restaurants for both moral and economic reasons, Chin says. (A similar law had been enacted in Saskatchewan, Canada, and upheld by Canada's Supreme Court.) States including Montana, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Washington and Oregon saw versions of the bill, which were ultimately unsuccessful. In Massachusetts, for example, the state Supreme Judicial Court struck down the law on the grounds that it was discriminatory. **4. Government agencies and licenses** Chin points to old newspaper reports that show that government agencies refused to issue business or restaurant licenses to Chinese restaurateurs, citing various reasons: Some officials claimed they had already issued enough licenses. Others said they would not issue licenses to people who were not citizens. And since Chinese people couldn't naturalize, this targeted them. **5. Policing** While the proposed white women's labor law was never officially enacted, some police officers began patrolling the restaurants of their own volition, Chin says. "We see newspaper reports," he explains, "where the police in the first decades of the 20th century believed they had the authority, and exercised it, simply to issue orders in the public interest." For example, he adds, "when there were concerns about white women patronizing Chinese restaurants and when the police thought this was prejudicial to the safety of white women, they would simply order white women out." In 1909, the murder of a [prominent white union leader's daughter by a Chinese restaurant worker](https://tenement.org/blog/where-miss-sigel-met-her-slayer/) inflamed tensions. In June of that year, Leon Ling reportedly strangled Elsie Sigel in a jealous rage and stuffed her body into a trunk in his bedroom. Sigel had met Ling when she worked in Manhattan's Chinatown as a missionary, and her death and the subsequent manhunt for her killer sparked a wave of racial profiling across the country. Newspapers hyped the story, with headlines like "Was Strangled By Her Chinese Lover: Granddaughter of General Sigel Slain in the Slums of New York." The case seemed to justify the fears that union workers had of all the misfortunes that would spring from Chinese restaurants. "To be a Chinaman these days," one Connecticut newspaper wrote, "is to be at least a suspect in the murder of Elsie Sigel."

**K proper**

**Asian Americans subject formation is never complete – there is an ontological gap between the real and symbolic which is characterized by incomplete assimilation. Asian bodies are not our own but rather tools of society as stereotypes, which means only my theory of power explains yours**

**Kim** **1**

(Chang-Hee Kim, The Fantasy of Asian America: Identity, Ideology, and Desire) 2009 klmd recut/tagged Nato

Fantasy of Asian American Identity The question of how Asian Americans are perceived as ‘permanent aliens’ in the U.S. is a common topic in Asian American studies. Frank H. Wu states that “**where are you from**” is a question anyone with an **Asian** face is **continuously asked** in the U.S. In his essay “**Where Are You Really From**,” he mentions that **Asian Americans’** being mistaken for a foreigner has become their routine experience to the extent that they **cannot be a real American**. In everyday life in the United States, such awkward situations happen casually and regularly, and affect Asians and Asian Americans deeply, ***placing*** *them in* ***the status of*** *permanent, yet* ***never complete assimilation*.** Due to the popular circulation of knowledge informed by postcolonial studies in academia, the misrecognition of the Other has become a constant point of reference to support oppositional positions of “minoritized” in opposition to so-called epistemic violence9; our identities are constituted, exchanged, and recognized by the hegemonic social order justifying the legitimacy of existing arbitrary social structures. Given how the cognitive knowledge of ‘who we are’ is predetermined, we are subject to the pre-existing system 8 Who Killed Vincent Chin? is a 1987 documentary film directed by Christine Choy and produced by Renee Tajima-Pena about the death of Vincent Chin. It was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. 9 Gayatri C. Spivak theorizes the notion of “epistemic violence” in her renowned article “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 31 of signs that creates a kind of epistemological gap between our knowledge of ourselves and how we are referred to. The **recognition of** ones’ **identity as Asian**, for instance, **takes place when** the **public** eye **sees something in them that does not** fully **belong to them**. It ascribes to their being a kind of fantasy that makes them “typical” Asians in terms of racial identification. Parts of their **bodily appearances** become **determin[e]**ants of their **racial identity**, functioning as an abstract sign **that automatically refers to** some **concept of “Asian,” and their ontological being** has its meaning only in relation to the conceptualized. Their subjectivity thus **becomes regulated by,** and subject to, **the** pre established **system** of racial identification insofar as it certifies “who they are.” It refers to the way in which any Asian American happens to be recognized as Charlie Chan. “Who they are,” in this sense, indicates, as Louis Althusser might put it, an ideological subject that the contingent and arbitrary rule of social agreements, however biased, constitutes. It is no wonder that Michael Omi and Howard Winant define racial formation as a “sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed” (RFUS 55). It is interesting to see the way in which particular parts of “what they are made of”—hair color, the shape of eyes, facial features—become the universal referent of “who they are.” They not only represent but also substitute for the imagined totality of their ontological being. In other words, their identitarian self has its ontological meaning reduced to the conceptual formality of what it means to be Asian American. The process of racial identification, as a result, occurs beyond their control and will in figuring out their self-identity. It keeps escaping and defying their basic desire to 32 differentiate their individual self from that of others. Essential to an understanding of how racial identification takes place is obviously such an uncontrollability of representations. Asian American identity exists as an abstract sign that makes sense in the context of the conceptual Asian like Charlie Chan—for example, the imagined as well as hegemonic system of Asian stereotypes. Within the discursive formality of the identity are imaginary elements that seem both extraneous and intrinsic to Asian American ontology. This epistemological difference in their self-identity stands for the gap. Fundamentally, the gap emerges when *the hegemonic authority of public gaze defines “who they are” as typical of Asian Americans.* That is, it comes out of the ontological inconsistency and contradiction of the representational system of Asian American identity vis-à-vis the totalitarian authority to recognize them “as such” in accordance with the pre-ontological formality of the conceptual Asian American. Nonetheless, Asian Americans’ bodies superfluously signify something excessive, more than “who they are,” an elusive meaning that is not always clear and definable vis-à-vis their racial identity. The discrepancy between the formalistic meaning of Asian American identity and the self-reflective or self-referential meaning of their subjective self consists in an indefinable dimension, or an ontological gap, within the identity. Metaphorically, it works as Charlie Chan’s apparitional power encompassing Asian Americans’ distinctive individualities within themselves. This apparition keeps haunting them, evoking others’ temptation to recognize the former as symbolic of the conceptual Asian. Given this, that Asian Americans’ distinctive subjectivity negates any given identity in terms of, say, race, can be seen as an antagonistic gesture of political resistance to U.S. culture, i.e., the public eye that 33 produces the stereotype of Asians as a fixed form of truth. Constituted as a cognitive system of knowledge that falls within the realm of common sense, stereotype rather turns Asian Americans into an appendix to the symbolic apparition or uncanny double that reifies their identity in the typical formality of “Asian”—that is, racial fantasy. Asian Americans become a puppet-like agent of Charlie Chan’s apparitional power evoking something in themselves more than themselves, which is projected upon their identity. It creates a division within the system of “commonsensical” representation—the conceptual (fantasy) vs. the original (imagination). The apparitional power of fantasy—invisible but effective to the public eye—is what combines the two for the sake of the communicative exchange of their identity as a cognitive sign. At the same time, the apparitional fantasy remains elusive and unidentifiable, making the gap between “who they are” and “who they are seen as.” Simply put, the former is the real of them whose subjectivity remains neither fully symbolized nor properly interpellated, an unfathomable dimension of Asian American identity that resists their being completely identified as a typical Asian as a whole. On the contrary, the latter refers to the symbolic figure of the Asian American that the public eye recognizes as one of Charlie Chan Asians. Although it is our fate to be social subjects dictated by **the** representational **system that constitutes our identitarian position, *the gap*** *of the subject between real and symbolic* ***never comes to a closure*.** The identitarian system of representation can maintain itself through social agreements for the communication between self and other. At stake in the system is the uncontrollability of representations intrinsic to the nature of the agreements making for the idealistic achievement of universal communication in 34 totality, yet it always remains incomplete. W. J. T. Mitchell observes, “Representation is that by which we make our will known and, simultaneously, that which alienates our will from ourselves in both the aesthetic and political spheres” (21). The system of representation, such as languages and bodily appearances, is a social construct making possible the communicative process of identification and, simultaneously, creating an epistemological void that prevents the communication from being fully accomplished. This gap is where fantasy with a spectral power operates in the process of identification and fills up the gap, and thus secures the discursive certainty of a community in which the ideological transparency of a hegemonic discourse comes true.

Forms of communication acts to publicly shame the Asian Body – we are always in the state as “almost, but not quite”. Education spaces like debate are specifically key to exclude the Asian identity and create a sense of mis belonging.

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﻿MIMICRY; OR, THE MELANCHOLIC MACHINE *Racial melancholia as psychic splitting and national dis-ease opens on the interconnected terrains of mimicry, ambivalence, and the stereotype*. In his seminal essay “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” Homi Bhabha describes the ways in which a **colonial regime compels the colonized subject to mimic** Western ideals of **whiteness.** At the same time, this mimicry is also condemned to failure. Bhabha writes, “Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, *mimicry must continually reproduce its slippage, its excess, its difference.…* ***Almost the same but not white***.”28 Bhabha locates and labels the social imperative to assimilate as the colonial structure of mimicry. He highlights not only the social performance but also its inevitable, built-in failure. *This doubling of difference that is almost the same but not quite, almost the same but not white, results in ambivalence, which comes to define the failure of mimicry.* Here we elaborate on Bhabha’s observations of mimicry with its intrasubjective internalization into the psychic domain through the logic of racial melancholia. It is important to remember that, as with Bhabha’s analysis of mimicry in the colony, Freud marks ambivalence as one of melancholia’s defining characteristics. In describing the genealogy of ambivalence in melancholia, Freud himself moves from the domain of the social to the realm of the psychic. He notes that the “conflict due to ambivalence, which sometimes arises from real experiences, sometimes more from constitutional factors, must not be overlooked among the preconditions of melancholia.”29 According to Freud, melancholia not only traces an internalized pathological identification with what was once an external but now lost ideal. In this moving from outside to inside, we also get a strong sense of how social injunctions of mimicry configure individual psychic structures as split and dis-eased. The ambivalence that comes to define Freud’s concept of melancholia is one that finds its origins and routes in social history—in colonial and racial structures impelling performative displays of mimicry and man. It is crucial to extend Bhabha’s theories on colonial mimicry to the domestic landscape of race relations in the United States—a postcolonial nation itself—in order to consider how we might usefully explore this concept for Asian Americans. One potential site of investigation is the racial stereotype discussed above—the model minority myth. In an earlier essay titled “The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism,” Bhabha aligns ambivalence and splitting with the stereotype, suggesting that the performance of mimicry and the phenomenon of the stereotype be considered together. The stereotype, Bhabha writes, “is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place,’ already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated … for it is the force of ambivalence that gives the colonial stereotype its currency.”30 If we conceptualize the model minority myth as a privileged stereotype through which Asian Americans appear as subjects in the contemporary social domain, then we gain a better understanding of how mimicry specifically functions as a material practice in racial melancholia. That is, *Asian Americans are forced to mimic the model minority stereotype in order to be recognized by mainstream society—in order to be, in order to be seen at all*. However, to the extent that this mimicry of the model minority stereotype functions only to estrange Asian Americans from mainstream norms and ideals (as well as from their own histories), mimicry can operate only as a melancholic process*. As both a social and a psychic malady, mimicry and the model minority myth distance Asian Americans from the mimetic ideals of the nation. For Asian Americans, mimicry is always a partial success as well as a partial failure to assimilate into regimes of whiteness.* Let us analyze this dynamic from yet another angle. Although Asian Americans are now largely thought of as model minorities exemplifying the “American dream,” this stereotype of material success is partial because it is configured primarily as economic achievement (in spite of extreme poverty in various Asian American communities) rather than social or cultural belonging. The putative success of the model minority subject comes to mask the limits of his political representation and agency. It covers over her inability to gain “full” and “well-rounded” subjectivities—to be politicians, athletes, artists, and activists, for example—to be recognized as a “typical American,” to invoke the exact title of Gish Jen’s novel from 1991. To occupy the model minority position, Asian American subjects must therefore submit to a model of economic rather than political and cultural legitimation. To this day, widespread social and parental pressures often dictate that Asian American students must opt for “safe”professional and upwardly mobile careers— doctor, engineer, lawyer— often at the expense of individual desires and psychic well-being—“doing well versus feeling well.”31They must not contest the dominant order of things; they must not “rock the boat”or draw attention to themselves. It is often difficult for our Asian American patients and students to articulate or to acknowledge their desires, as the model minority stereotype demands not only an enclosed but also a passive self-sufficiency and compliance. Drawing from Jacques Lacan’s idea of the subject as a desiring subject, Antonio Viego has described a similar prioritizing of needs over desires in the context of Latino immigration. He describes this process as the psychic production of a “dead subject,”the creation of a subject dead to his or her desires.32 Insofar as both social and parental pressures emphasize needs over desires— necessity over extravagance in Sau-ling W ong’s elegant formulation— melancholia and the death drive cannot be far behind.33 The model minority stereotype also delineates Asian Americans as academically successful but rarely well-rounded—well-rounded in tacit comparison to a normative white student body. Here is another example of Bhabha’s concept of mimicry as nearly successful imitation. This not quite successful performance attempts to cover over that gap—the failure of well­ roundedness— as well as that unavoidable ambivalence resulting from this tacit comparison in which the Asian American student is seen as lacking and not fully assimilated. This social failure incites a psychic ambivalence that characterizes the racialized subject’s identifications with dominant ideals of whiteness as pathological. This is an ambivalence that opens upon the landscape of melancholia and depression for many Asian American students. Those Asian Americans who do not fit into the model minority stereotype are altogether erased from—are not recognized by—mainstream society. Like Kingston’s grandfather in China Men, they are often rejected by their own families as well. The difficulty of negotiating this unwieldy stereotype is that, unlike most negative stereotypes of African Americans, the model minority myth is considered to be a “positive”representation— a model of social achievement and exceptionalism. In this regard, not only mainstream society but also Asian Americans themselves become attached to, and divided by, its seemingly admirable qualities without sufficiendy recognizing its liabilities—what the political theorist Wendy Brown describes as a “wounded attachment.”34 According to Bhabha, in its doubleness the stereotype, like mimicry, creates a gap embedded in an unrecognized structure of ambivalence. In Jen’s Typical American, for instance, we encounter Ralph Chang, who chases the American dream through his attempts to build a fried-chicken empire, the “Chicken Palace.”Eventually, the franchise fails, and the first “a”falls off the “Chicken Palace”sign which becomes “Chicken P\_lace.”This falling off is the linguistic corollary to the gap in the American dream that Ralph unsuccessfully mimes. Perhaps it is in this gap—in this emptiness—that melancholia emerges and comes to inhabit. It is also where the negotiation between mourning and melancholia is staged. MOURNING/MELANCHOLIA/IMMIGRATION The structure of mimicry gestures to the partial success and partial failure to mourn our identifications with whiteness. Moreover, it also gestures to our partial success and partial failure to mourn our identifications and affiliations with Asian cultures. Thus far, we have been focusing on the loss of whiteness as an ideal structuring the assimilation and racialization processes of second- generation Asian Americans. However, the lost object can be multifaceted. Since the reformation of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, demographically there are more first-generation Asian American immigrants living in the United States today than any other generations of Asian Americans (these patterns are shifting noticeably under globalization today, a topic of further discussion in part II). Examining Asian American experiences of exclusion from the mid-1990s, this chapter focuses on the second-generation offspring of these first-generation immigrants who at that time filled our classrooms and clinics. Hence, it focuses on the psychic dynamics of mourning and melancholia in relation to problems of immigration and intergenerational losses between first- and second-generation Asian Americans. Generationally, racial melancholia delineates a psychic process by which an intersubjective subject-subject relationship between mainstream and minority groups as well as between the first- and the second-generation Asian American parents and children becomes configured as an intrasubjective psychic predicament of loss and exclusion. The experience of immigration itself is based on a structure of mourning. When one leaves one’s country of origin—voluntarily or involuntarily—one must mourn a host of losses both concrete and abstract. These include homeland, family, language, identity, property, status in community—the list goes on. In Freud’s theory of mourning, one works through and finds closure to these losses by investing in new objects— in the American dream, for example. Our attention to the problematics of mimicry, performance, ambivalence, and the stereotype, as well as our earlier analysis of the legal history of exclusion and bars to naturalization and citizenship for Asian Americans, reveals a social structure that prevents the immigrant from fully assimilating into the American melting pot. From another perspective, it denies him or her the capacity to invest in new objects. The inability to invest in new objects, we must remember, is part of Freud’s definition of melancholia. Given the ways in which Asian American immigrants are foreclosed from fully assimilating into mainstream culture, are they consigned to a perpetually melancholic status? If so, how do we begin to address Freud’s notion of melancholia as pathological? Clearly not all Asian Americans are consigned to melancholy or depression. If this is the case, how do first-generation immigrants negotiate and mitigate their losses? How do their second-generation offspring inherit and inhabit these losses? If the losses suffered by first-generation immigrants are not resolved and mourned in the process of assimilation—if libido is not replenished by the investment in new objects, new communities, and new ideals—then the melancholia that ensues can be traumatically passed down to the second generation. At the same time, can the hope of assimilation and pursuit of the American dream also be transferred? If so, we might say that mourning and melancholia are reenacted and lived out by second-generation children in their own attempts to assimilate and to negotiate the American dream. Here, immigration and assimilation characterize a process involving not just mourning or melancholia but the intergenerational negotiation between mourning and melancholia. Configured as such, this notion begins to depathologize melancholia by situating it as the intersubjective unfolding and outcome of the mourning process that underwrites the various psychic investments and losses connected to the immigration experience. CASE HISTORY: ELAINE Let us turn to a clinical example. Elaine, a US-born Korean American female college student, grew up in Texas. Her father is a professor, and her mother is a homemaker. An academic dean referred Elaine to me (Dr. Han) in 1997 because she was at risk of failing her first year in college. In a tearful presentation, Elaine reported, “My parents have sacrificed everything to raise me here. If my parents had stayed in Korea, my mom would be so much happier and not depressed. She would have friends to speak Korean with, my father would be a famous professor, and we would be better off socially and economically. I wouldn’t be so pressured to succeed. They sacrificed everything for me, and now it’s up to me to please them, and to do well in school.”When asked the reasons for her academic probation, she responded, “I didn’t do well because at a certain point, I didn’t care anymore, about myself or anything else.” Elaine’s case is an illustration of an intergenerational transference between immigrant parents and a child that might be usefully described through the logic of racial melancholia. The loss experienced by the parents’failure to achieve the American dream—to achieve a standard of living and a level of social acceptance greater than what they could have putatively achieved in Korea— is a loss transferred onto and incorporated by Elaine for her to work out and to repair. In particular, Elaine reenacts these losses through her relationship with her mother. Elaine’s depression is a result of internalized guilt and residual anger that she not only feels toward but also identifies with in her mother. Through this incorporation, she also functions as the placeholder of her mother’s depression. This mother-daughter predicament has been widely debated in feminist circles.35 Here, the question is how race intersects and reconfigures what is considered a strongly gendered dynamic. This intersection of sexual and racial difference in first- and second- generation intersubjective conflict is a common narrative in Asian American literature as well. Numerous stories portray the first generation (and often the second generation) as being a lost generation—bereft, traumatized, with few material or psychic resources.36Is it, however, only at the moment in which the first generation acknowledges its disappointments and failure to achieve the American dream that this theme of first-generation sacrifice then emerges to be retroactively projected onto the second generation? In other words, are Asian American parents as completely selfless as the theme of sacrifice and ideals of Confucian filial tradition suggest, or is this idea a compensatory gesture that attaches itself to the losses, disappointments, and failures associated with immigration? Could the ambitions of Elaine’s father to become a professor in an American university have motivated the family’s immigration, or was it perhaps his inability to succeed in Korea—especially because of constraints on opportunities connected to various military conflicts during World War II and the ensuing Cold War? Sacrifice, it is important to remember, is built on the assumption of nonequivalence and the melancholic notion that what is forfeited and lost can never be recuperated. In turn, do children of immigrants “repay” this sacrifice only by repeating and perpetuating its melancholic logic—by berating and sacrificing themselves? But could sacrifice also be considered the displaced residue of hope— a hope for the repairing of melancholia, of achieving the American dream? Can hope, too, be transferred from parent to child, or from child to parent? Elaine’s case evokes Rea Tajiri’s moving documentary film History and Memory (1991).37 History and Memory is about a young Japanese American girl whose parents endure internment during World War II. Whereas the girl’s mother has repressed all memories of the internment experience, the daughter has nightmares that she cannot explain—recurring images of a young woman at a watering well. The daughter is depressed, and the parents argue over the etiology of her depression. Eventually, the daughter discovers that these nightmares are reenactments of the mother’s histories in camp. Ironically, the mother has history but no memory, while the daughter has memory but no history. For both mother and daughter, history and memory do not come together until the daughter visits the former site of the internment camp, Poston. There she realizes that it is her mother’s history that she remembers. Tajiri’s film is an eloquent disquisition on racial melancholia. It is a compelling example of the ways in which historical traumas of loss, grief, and forgetting are passed down from one generation to another unconsciously— how, as Freud remarks in his essay “The Unconscious”(1915), “the unconscious of one human being can react upon that of another, without passing through the conscious.”38The daughter’s psychic predicament illustrates Freud’s observation that the most difficult losses suffered in melancholia are unconscious ones, psychic forfeitures that cannot be properly grieved and for which Freud could offer no simple solution or remedy. Yet, at the same time, it also diverges from Freud’s conception of the disease insofar as it posits a theory of melancholia that is not individual but that is intergenerationally shared among members of a social group, Japanese American internees. It also departs from Freud’s definition of melancholia as pathology and permanence. Here, the hope for psychic health is stitched into the fabric of melancholia but only as an optative gesture that must be redeemed by subsequent generations. In contrast to Freud’s contention that melancholia is a classic intrasubjective psychic condition, Tajiri’s version of melancholia approaches this condition from a different perspective. It refines our theory of racial melancholia as a psychic state focused on bonds of displaced love and hate among a collective—an intersubjective collective— that might be addressed and resolved across generations. Indeed, in History and Memory the daughter’s return to Poston initiates an incipient healing process in her mother. In melancholia, the subject’s turning from outside (intersubjective) to inside (intrapsychic) threatens to render social history invisible. What is striking in both these examples, of Elaine and of History and Memory, is the manner in which the daughters’bodies and voices become substitutes for those of the mothers— not just the mothers’bodies and voices but also something that is unconsciously lost in them. To return to Freud, the melancholic “knows whom [s]he has lost but not what [s]he has lost in [her].”39Elaine’s narrative and the Japanese American daughter’s nightmares are not their own histories. These daughters have absorbed and been saturated by their mothers’losses. The mothers’voices haunt the daughters. These losses and voices are melancholically displaced from the external world of the social into the internal world of the psyche. The anger that these daughters feel toward the loved object is internalized as depression and anger toward the self. Freud’s essay reminds us that the reproaches against the self are, in fact, displaced reproaches against the loved object that have been shifted onto the individual’s own ego.40 In this respect, racial melancholia highlights a particular subject-object confusion, as it traces a trajectory from love to hate of the lost object, indeed orienting the production of racial hatred over love. In the course of moving from the outside world into the domain of the psyche, this hate is brought into the shelter of the ego, identified with the self, and subsequently transformed into self-hate. As such, the internal monologue that the daughters direct toward themselves should rightly be an external dialogue between daughter and mother —indeed, toward the larger social world around them. If racial melancholia traces the social exclusions of immigration, assimilation, and racialization as form of self-hate, how might we address the problem as a subject-subject relation, a subject-subject (com)plaint? In the Psychic Life of Power, Judith Butler writes, “The melancholic would have saidsomething, if he or she could, but did not, and now believes in the sustaining power of the voice. Vainly, the melancholic now says what he or she would have said, addressed only to himself, as one who is already split off from himself, but whose power of self-address depends upon this self-forfeiture. The melancholic thus burrows in a direction opposite to that in which he might find a fresher trace of the lost other, attempting to resolve the loss through psychic substitutions and compounding the loss as he goes.”41This turning from outside to inside threatens to erase the political bases of melancholia, and to obscure the history of the melancholic (racial) subject in relation to the subject of (racial) history, precisely as it configures hate as a displaced residue of love. To approach this dynamic from another angle, when Asian American students seek therapy, their mental health issues are overwhelmingly perceived as intergenerational familial conflicts. That is, they are often diagnosed as being exclusively symptomatic of cultural rather than social or political conflicts. By configuring Asian values and Confucian filial tradition as the exclusive source of all intergenerational dis-ease, a pathologized Asian culture comes to serve as an alibi for a panoply of mental health issues and symptoms.42 These predicaments may in fact trace their etiology not to questions of Asian cultural difference but rather to historical forms of institutionalized racism and economic exploitation—to the subject of (racial) history. The segregation of Asian American mental health issues into the domain of cultural difference covers over structural questions of institutional violence and inequality, as well as histories of whiteness as property, as they circulate both inside and outside the therapeutic space of the clinic. For instance, not to account for a history of Japanese internment and indefinite detention when analyzing Tajiri’s mother- daughter family conflict serves not only to repress and to deny this history but also to redouble and to intensify the source of the daughter’s melancholia and depression. Lowe writes in Immigrant Acts, “Interpreting Asian American culture exclusively in terms of the master narratives of generational conflict and filial relation essentializes Asian American culture, obscuring the particularities and incommensurabilities of class, gender, and national diversities among Asians. The reduction of the cultural politics of racialized ethnic groups, like Asian Americans, to first-generation/second-generation struggles displaces social differences into a privatized familial opposition. Such reductions contribute to the aestheticizing commodification of Asian American cultural differences, while denying the immigrant histories of material exclusion and differentiation.”43 A therapeutic process that solely attributes Asian cultural differences to intergenerational conflict may result in the failure to cure; even more, it may also serve to endanger further the mental health of the patient. CASE HISTORY: NELSON This discussion on intergenerational dilemmas of immigration and assimilation brings us to the related issue of mourning, melancholia, and language. Nelson, a first-generation Japanese American student who emigrated from Osaka to New Jersey when he was five, sought therapy with me (Dr. Han) in 1996, presenting chronic struggles with depression associated with racial conflict. Nelson is the eldest child and has two siblings, a brother and a sister, both of whom were born in the United States. Before Nelson entered school, his mother spoke only Japanese to the children. When Nelson started kindergarten, his teacher admonished his mother to replace Japanese with English at home if she wanted her children to assimilate and to become successful students. Despite the mother’s broken English, she followed the teacher’s instructions assiduously, speaking only English to her children. **Nelson** recounts a story that took place later in grade school. During a reading lesson, he **mispronounced “crooked” as “crookd**”(one syllable). **His teacher shamed him publicly for his failed** speech act—his failed act of **mimicry** —and demanded to know where he learned to mispronounce such a simple word. Nelson reluctantly replied that he learned this pronunciation from his mother. Nelson remembers, in particular, feelings of social embarrassment and shame from the ridicule of his teacher and classmates. What we learn about Nelson’s case history is that, although his original connection to the primary object (the mother) was through the Japanese language, this connection was interrupted by a foreign property, English. The mother’s poor mimicry of English severed and revised the earliest mother-child attachment, one brokered in Japanese. As such, Nelson could no longer mirror himself from his mother, in Japanese or in English. This estrangement from language, both native and foreign, is a double loss. Although acquiring a new language (English) should be perceived as a positive cognitive development, what is often not acknowledged sufficiently is the concomitant psychic trauma triggered by the loss of what had once been a safe, nurturing, and familiar language to the young child (Japanese). The loss of Japanese as a safe and nurturing object reveals another way to think about racial melancholia in relation to processes of immigration and assimilation. In Nelson’s case history, melancholia results not only from a thwarted identification with a dominant ideal of unattainable whiteness but also a vexed relationship to a compromised Japaneseness. Nelson’s situation reveals how on two fronts ideals of whiteness and ideals of Japaneseness are lost and unresolved. Here the problem of accent marks an impossible social compliance. In both instances, **language is the privileged vehicle**— the privileged property— **by which** standards of successful **assimilation** and failed integration **are measured**. In this sense, ***language i****tself might be thought of as* ***a*** *kind of* ***property right*** *and stereotype,* ***demanding a flawless mimicry*** *on the part of the young Nelson, whose failed performance leads him to shame and self-abasement at a crucial moment of social and psychic development.* Nelson’s transition from Japanese to English is another example of the negotiation between mourning and melancholia in the immigration and assimilation process. That is, although he suffers a loss and revaluation of his mother tongue, his transition into the adopted ideal of the English language is anything but smooth. *We need to emphasize that* ***the shaming ritual*** *to which the grade-school teacher subjected Nelson—one* ***all too common in the*** *Darwinian space of the* ***classroom—*** *is one that not merely makes his transition into English difficult but also demonizes and repudiates the mother* (and the mother tongue and accent) at the same time. What was once a loved and safe object is retroactively transformed into an object of shame and insecurity. To the extent that the figure of the mother originally represents safe notions of “home,” Nelson’s estrangement from his mother, and from his mother tongue, renders her unheimlich— unhomely, unfamiliar, uncanny— a topic that critical race scholar Mari Matsuda has explored in her legal analyses of accent discrimination.44 *The relationship between language, pedagogy, and assimilation into a mainstream national citizenry is examined also in a short story by Monique T. D. Truong*. “Kelly”(1991) is about a young Vietnamese refugee, Thuy-Mai, who finds herself in the improbable space of a North Carolina classroom of 1975. Truong’s narrator composes a distressing epistolary monologue to her one and only (and now absent) friend from that dark period of her life, Kelly. In doing so, she reenacts the melancholic logic discussed above. That is, an intersubjective external dialogue meant for two parties is melancholically internalized and transformed into an intrasubjective monologue of one remarkable for its anger and solipsism. What is an epistolary, after all, other than an impassioned (but not necessarily answered) plea to the other? Truong’s narrator recalls their grade-school teacher: Kelly, remember how Mrs. Hammerick talked about Veteran’s Day? How about the Day of Infamy when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor? Mrs. Hammerick, you know, the mayor’s wife always had a sweet something surrounding her like she had spent too much time pulling taffy.... Kelly, you only knew that she liked the Beths and the Susans cause they wore pink and never bulged and buckled out of their shirt plackets. I was scared of her like no dark corners could ever scare me. You have to know that all the while she was teaching us history she was telling, with her language for the deaf, blind, and dumb; she was telling all the boys in our class that I was Pearl and my last name was Harbor. They understood her like she was speaking French and their names were all Claude and Pierre.45 Truong’s story expands our discussion of language and its performative effects on the constitution of good and bad national subjects. Here, Mrs. Hammerick’s common language for the “deaf, blind, and dumb”—a language from which Thuy-Mai is emphatically excluded—is used to create and then separate good students from bad students within the institutionalized space of the classroom. The Susans and the Beths, the Claudes and the Pierres, are all, as Louis Althusser would put it, “interpellated”by the mayor’s wife as good citizen- subjects of the classroom and nation-state.46 *Truong emphasizes how* ***education is a primary site through which narratives of national identity*** *and belonging* ***are established*** *and reinforced through pedagogical compliance.* At the same time, the Vietnamese refugee, Thuy-Mai, is pathologized as Asian enemy, dismissively labeled “Pearl Harbor,”erroneously conflated with the Japanese, and implicitly rendered a menace to the coherence and integrity of the US nation-state. Mrs. Hammerick is, of course, not literally speaking French (though Vietnam was of course colonized earlier by France), but *Truong’s attention to language underscores the ways in which an unconscious discourse of colonialism and race, of national inclusion and exclusion, is circulated in the classroom.* Furthermore, as Lowe points out, Mrs. Hammerick’s nationalizing tract is simultaneously a gendered discourse: “The narrator’s observations that the teacher’s history lesson addresses ‘all the boys’further instantiates how the American nationalist narrative recognizes, recruits, and incorporates male subjects, while ‘feminizing’and silencing the students who do not conform to that notion of patriotic subjectivity.”47 Racialized subjects, such as Nelson and Thuy-Mai, become “good”citizens when they identify with the paternal state and accept, as Lowe summarizes, “the terms of this identification by subordinating [their] racial difference and denying [their] ties with the feminized and racialized ‘motherland.’”48 In the following section, we turn to Melanie Klein’s theories of good and bad objects, of good and bad mothers and motherlands, to explore the politics of aggression and destructiveness, of guilt and reparation, as they configure the psychic limits of racial melancholia and expand on Freud’s account of loss and interminable mourning.

**Debate is a site of Coercive mimeticism which stipulates the Asian American body and tricks one into thinking it is the identity. Compliance from within the debate space only acts to further maintain the space since it concedes the mimeticism given by the society.**

Chambers-Letson 13 (Joshua Chambers-Letson, Joshua Chambers-Letson conducts research and teaches courses in performance theory, critical race theory, contemporary art and performance, political theory, and queer of color critique, “A Race So Different – Performance and Law in Asian America”, New York University Press, 2013)//recut Mini M

But what is it that compels the subject to perform submission to the hail of the law? In Lidless, the law’s misrecognition of Bashir as an “enemy combatant” because of his racial and religious dillerence tautologically results in a situation in which Alice (and, by extension, US law) treats him as if he were an enemy combatant. Fifteen years after leaving Guanta- namo, the only way for him to become recognizable to Alice is by playing the role of the enemy combatant-that is, the torture victim. And, as he admits, this is a role that he has come to love in order to keep “from going crazy.” Bashir’s case exemplifies the ways in which legal interpellation can be perversely seductive. As Judith Butler remarks, in her assessment of the Althusserian scene, “This turning toward the voice of the law is a sign of a certain desire to be beheld by and perhaps also to behold the face of authority. . . . [It is] a mirror stage . . .that permits the misrecognition without which the sociality of the subject cannot be achieved.”‘“‘ In Bashir and Alice’s twisted exchange, the Lidless audience is privy to Cowhig’s restaging of this “theoretical scene.” We watch as **Bashir is made a subject** for the law **after his** dominated **body is seduced into performing the** very subject **position for which he was misrecognized in the first place.** Bashir describes the simultaneously seductive and coercive process of his interpellation as an “enemy combatant” by Alice thus: “When you were hard-when you screamed, ordered boards and chains-that was simple. I could go somewhere else. But when you were soft-when you touched my ears. my neck-my body had a will of its own. My own flesh, my own muscle, betrayed me.”“° Unwilling to hear more, Alice begs him, “Stop. No more. Please.” Demonstrating the way in which the language of domination often finds its way into the mouth of the dominated, Bashir repeats her phrase but echoes it back to her with the urgency of a Guantanamo detainee during the act of torture: “Stop. No more. Please. I swear I’m an innocent man. I don’t know Osama or Saddam or Khalid. I was studying at a mosque. I just wanted to be a good Muslim. Please, I beg you. Believe me.”"' He throws a bag onto the floor before asking once more, “Please." There is a long silence and then, as if something triggers a switch inside of her, she grabs him and wrenches his arms behind his back. She orders him, “Drop to your hands and knees. Now crawl. Go! There’s a plastic bag by your feet. Pull the bag over your head and bend forward at the waist.”M Bashir knows the choreography and positions his body into a stress position, waiting expectantly for the next order. Alice only recognizes Bashir after he returns to the role scripted for him in the Bush administration memo. In other words, Bashir becomes a subject by performing a role for which he was cast by way of misrecognition. **His subjectivity is brought into being through a** performance of **coercive mimeticism**, a practice that Rey Chow describes by way of a revision to Althusser’s scene théorelique: It is to say, “Yes, that’s me” to a call and a vocation-“Hey, Asian!” “Hey, Indian!” “Hey, gay man!”-as if it were a crime with which one has been charged; it is to admit and submit to the allegations (of otherness) that society at large has made against one. Such acts of confession may now be further described as a socially endorsed, **coercive mimeticism, which stipulates that the thing to imitate**, resemble, and **become** is none other than **the** ethnic or sexual **minority** herself.“ In acts of coercive mimeticism, **the minoritarian subject believes that by responding to** the hail of **minority status through self-referential performances, she is “liberating” herself from subordination.** But while she may achieve some modicum of recognition and relief, **she is inadvertently** **contributing to the maintenance of the dominant structures of ideology**, interpellation, and racialization. This is particularly dangerous when the law is involved because, as Antonio Viego observes, “If misrecognition is a serious harm, then we must be concerned that legal recognition may go wrong, misrecognizing already subordinated groups and codifying that misrecognition with the force of law and the intractability of stare decisis, . . . [whereby] the price of protection is incarceration.”"" If Bashir demands recognition from Alice for his time in Guantanamo, the price extracted in the preceding scene is his figurative return to the interrogation chamber. In other words, when we perform as properly situated subjects in order to be recognizable as such by the law, we run the risk of transforming our bodies into prisons.

Melancholia destroys the Asian subject, not physical by rather psychological which preserves the haunting. We erase our identities, our cultures, and our way of life. We are empty.

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Freud goes on to delineate the debilitating consequences of melancholia. 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 different 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 absent 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 “*distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment.”*10 *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 melancholic* ***assumes the emptiness*** *of the lost object or ideal, identifies with 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 unconscious 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.

**Thus, my advocacy is to depathologize and dwell within melancholia – re-appropriating melancholia as a militant preservation of the lost object and refusal to attain whitened ideals opens up acts of revolt. You vote aff to endorse the destruction of debate.**

Eng & Han 3 [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 Mini M

DEPATHOLOGIZING MELANCHOLIA The process of assimilation is a negotiation between mourning and melancholia**. The Asian American subject** exemplified by Elaine and Nelson **does not inhabit** one or the other—**mourning or melancholia**—but mourning and melancholia **coexist at once in processes of assimilation and** the negotiation of **social and psychic borders**. This continuum between *mourning and* ***melancholia allows us to* *approach*** racial melancholia ***as conflict rather than damage*.** Indeed, we must investigate further the condition of racial melancholia as the intrasubjective displacement of a necessarily intersubjective dynamic of conflict and trauma in all its various social manifestations. We have described racial melancholia among Asian Americans in Generation X as *tracing a trajectory from love to hate* of the lost object, a hate that is subsequently transformed into self-hate in the course of moving from the external social world into the internal domain of the psyche. If racial melancholia traces the history of social exclusions relating to immigration, assimilation, and racialization for the Asian American subject and configuring that exclusion as an intrasubjective psychic form of self-hate, then how might we reverse this trajectory and address this condition as an intersubjective subject-subject relation? *The attention to racial melancholia as conflict rather than damage not only renders it a productive category but also* ***removes Asian Americans from*** *the position of* ***solipsistic “victims”*** *singularly responsible for their own psychic maladies. We are dissatisfied with racial discourses and clinical assessments that pathologize people of color as permanently damaged—forever injured and incapable of being “whole.”* In contrast, our exploration of intersubjective conflict—between mainstream and minority cultures as well as on the intergenerational level— draws attention to race as relation by expanding K lein’s notion of reparation and reinstatement to a communal level. Our discussion of immigration, assimilation, and racialization pursued here develops them as issues involving the fluid negotiation between mourning and melancholia. In this manner, *melancholia is neither pathological nor permanent but, to return to Williams, “a structure of feeling,”a structure of everyday life*. In Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics (1999), Jose Esteban Munoz observes that, for queers as well as for people of color, melancholia is not a pathology but an integral part of daily existence and survival. Munoz provides, as we do, a corrective to Freud’s vision of melancholia as a destructive force and states that it is instead part of the “process of dealing with all the catastrophes that occur in the lives of people of color, lesbians, and gay men. I have proposed a different understanding of melancholia that does not see it as a pathology or as a self-absorbed mood that inhibits activism. Rather, *it is a mechanism that helps us (re)construct identity and take our dead with us to the various battles we must wage in their names— and in our names.”*55 ***Within*** *the continuum of mourning and* ***melancholia*** *is a productive gap* ***inhabited by the various issues*** *under discussion here—****immigration, assimilation, and racialization****; mimicry, ambivalence, and the stereotype; sacrifice, loss, and reparation*. The social and psychic negotiations of these various issues are the internal conflicts with which Asian Americans have struggled on an everyday basis. ***This struggle*** does not necessarily result in damage but **is** in ***the final analysis*** *a necessary process* ***of political engagement*** *and action*. It is the work of renarrating loss and rebuilding communities. “Suffering,”Klein offers, contains productive capacities: It seems that every advance in the process of mourning results in a deepening in the individual’s relation to his inner objects, in the happiness of regaining them after they were felt to be lost (“Paradise Lost and Regained”), in an increased trust in them and love for them because they proved to be good and helpful after all. This is similar to the way in which the young child step by step builds up his relation to external objects, for he gains trust not only from pleasant experiences but also from the ways in which he overcomes frustrations and unpleasant experiences, nevertheless retaining his good objects (externally and internally).56 We would like to think about the numerous difficulties of Asian American immigration, assimilation, and racialization processes in terms of “Paradise Lost and Regained.” The reinstatement of lost and loved objects in a racist world that would not have them encompasses the productive capacities of racial melancholia. *It also indexes the possibilities of hope and the will of the racial subject— its abiding fidelity to the beautiful picture.* In the work of racial melancholia lies an important ethical and political project. In “Mourning and Melancholia,”Freud describes the melancholic’s inability to get over loss in negative terms. *We instead focus on the melancholic’s absolute refusal to relinquish the racial other— to forfeit alterity— at any costs.* As Hannah Arendt suggests, and as the case history of Nelson eloquently underscores, an accent is the refusal to give up the mother or mother tongue.57 Put otherwise, the development of pride in one’s culture, as Beverly Greene points out, can be an important if complex source of psychic resilience, alternately a site of psychic vibrancy or shame.58 Freud lays out in his essay the provocative idea that in melancholia “the shadow of the object fell upon the ego.”59This idea is notable for, throughout the Freudian oeuvre, it is the ego that holds sway; the narcissism of “His Majesty the Ego”reigns supreme.60Equally so, Lacan emphasizes this narcissism of the ego, reversing Freud’s formulation in “Mourning and Melancholia”by insisting that it is always the shadow of the ego that falls on the object.61In our present discussion, however, we have the loved object rather than the ego holding sway. *Racial melancholia thus delineates one psychic process in which the loved object is so overwhelmingly important to and beloved by the ego that the ego is willing to preserve it even at the cost of its own self.* In the transferential aspects of melancholic identifications, Freud suggests, “is the expression of there being something in common which may signify love.”62 *This community of love*—as W. R. D. Fairbairn, Jessica Benjamin, Christopher Bollas, and others have noted—*is possible only through the aggressive and militant preservation of the loved and lost object*.63Hence, *the melancholic process is* one way in which *racially disparaged objects and others live on in the psychic realm*. *This behavior, Freud remarks, proceeds from an attitude of “revolt” on the part of the ego*.64 *It displays the ego’s melancholic yet militant refusal to allow certain objects to disappear into social oblivion.* In this way, Freud tells us, “love escapes extinction.”65 This preservation of the threatened racial object might be seen, then, as a type of ethical hold on the part of the melancholic ego. The mourner, in contrast, has no such ethics. *The mourner is* perfectly *content to kill off the lost object*, to declare it to be dead yet again within the domain of the psyche. *We might describe this dynamic as a historical politics of love and hate in racial melancholia—indeed, a psychic pedagogy of surviving hating and being hated in a long history of race and whiteness as property*.66 While the ambivalence, anger, and rage that characterize this preservation of the lost object threaten the ego’s well-being, we do not imagine that this threat is the result of some existential tendency on the part of the melancholic; it is as we have been arguing throughout this chapter a decidedly social threat. *Ambivalence, rage, and anger are* the *internalized refractions of* an institutionalized system of *whiteness* as property *bent on* the *exclusion and obliteration* of the racial object. *If the loved object is not going to live out there, the melancholic emphatically avers, then it is going to live here inside of me.* Along with Freud, “we only wonder why a man has to be ill before he can be accessible to a truth of this kind.”67 It is the melancholic who brings us face to face with this social truth. It is the melancholic who teaches us that “in the last resort we must begin to love in order not to fall ill. ”68 Both Butler and Douglas Crimp isolate the call of melancholia in the age of aids— the historical period of this chapter’s case histories— as one in which the loss of a public language to mourn a seemingly endless series of young male deaths triggers the absolute need to think about melancholia and political activism. Munoz highlights the communal nature of this activist project—the community-oriented aspect of collective rather than individual losses, of collective rather than individual identifications, and of collective rather than individual revolt: “Communal mourning, by its very nature, is an immensely complicated text to read, for we do not mourn just one lost object or other, but we also mourn as a ‘whole’— or, put another way, as a contingent and temporary collection of fragments that is experiencing a loss of its parts.”69A series of unresolved fragments, we come together as a contingent whole. We gain social recognition as a racial collective in the face of this communal loss. *There is a militant refusal on the part of the ego— better yet, a series of egos —to let go, and this militant refusal is at the heart of melancholia’s productive political potentials. Paradoxically, in this instance,* ***the ego’s death drive may be the*** *very* ***precondition for survival****, the beginning of a strategy for living and for living on.* Butler asks of melancholia, “Is the psychic violence of conscience not a refracted indictment of the social forms that have made certain kinds of losses ungrievable?”70And Crimp ends his essay “Mourning and Militancy”with this simple and moving call: “Militancy, of course, then, but mourning too: mourning and militancy.”71 We pause here to insert yet another *permutation of this political project* in relation to the Asian American immigration, assimilation, and racialization processes we have been discussing throughout this essay: mourning and melancholia.

**Learning spaces are built to exclude Asian Bodies. Collective forgetting of the space acts to deconstruct the psychological impacts. This is not a request, we demand that Asian violence and exclusion be recognized. Thus the ROB is to reject every instance of anti-asianness in the classroom – anything else normalizes violence**

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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 andcitizens 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.”

**Progress to make an identity restructures the social that destroys it, making it a paradox. Prefer our instinct toward nothingness, liberation necessitates us to break the system.**

**Kim 2** (Chang-Hee Kim, The Fantasy of Asian America: Identity, Ideology, and Desire) klmd recut/tagged Nato

Rather than pretend to remain objective and distanced in treating the other, the Hegelian subject strives to secure its identitarian position in light of the life-death struggle between master and slave. The eventual way to obtain freedom from its own ontological limitation that the subject cannot be in-and for itself as a whole is paradoxically negating its positive being dependent on that of the other. This illustrates **the subject’s** death **instinct towards “nothingness,” which makes our knowledge** on the subject inexorably **entangled in** inconsistencies and **contradictions.** In Hegel, the subject’s death instinct, an ontological abyss that remains unfathomable in its ideological edifice, is the only way to realize its “pure existence-for-self” (Hegel 55). Identity is apparitional in nature, for as discussed earlier, we all can become a/the “real Asian American” but never will be, and the resulting gap between our being and becoming is where the subject endlessly strives to secure its identitarian position in light of the life-death struggle against the other in-and-for itself. The realization of identity is its purist objectification in that, in neoliberal capitalism, identity is equivalent to a commodity imbued with a cultural capital of dual meanings: an owned property of the subject feeling happy (with no more work) and an alienated property of the subject feeling miserable (with endless work) as Karl Marx teaches us.16 In Race and Resistance, Viet T. Nguyen describes **Asian American identity as** the cultural capital of **both accommodation and resistance in** U.S. **society**, and it well explains the point I am making here (143-44): on the one hand, Asian Americans make a good relationship with the society that praises them as a **model minority**, as a civil subject fully assimilable to the mainstream; on the other hand, they make a bad relationship with the society that stereotypes their identity as a **yellow peril,** viciously alienating them from the mainstream**. Asian American identity has** its **multiple meanings [that]** with an apparitional effect that **changes the ontological meaning of its referent** and at the same time, reduces them back to their archetype: Charlie Chan or the gook. While the identity acts as a 16 In Economic & Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Karl Marx saw the relationship between the worker and his labor as antagonistic: the more the latter exerts himself in his work the more his labor alienates him; further, the worker feels happy and at home when his labor alienates him. Hence, Marx says, “His labor is, therefore, not voluntary but forced, it is forced labor” (74). On the one hand, his labor is what brings him into being as worker. On the other, his engagement in the capitalist activity of production is to invest his labor into nature and thus to obtain his ‘property’ to establish, in Hegelian terms, “the condition of possibility of human self-possession—of one’s body, interiority, and life direction” (“Intimacies” 200). 46 conduit that connects Asian Americans with the society for their mutual understanding, this communicative sign always signifies itself as inconsistent, contradictory, and, as Nguyen puts it, “hypocritical” in representing Asian Americans as a whole. It is no wonder Nguyen observes that Asian Americans are facing the “crisis of representation over ideological diversity” in identity politics (9). Identity works as a vanishing mediator that connects the hegemonic system of ideological reality with the identitarian subject as the constituent of the former. Such a vanishing mediator as **identity,** through its apparitional as well as self-effacing effect, **plays a role in maintaining the systematic order of** the **reality by transforming** the pre ontological chaotic multitude, namely, **individuals** with identities, in**to**, as Slavoj Žižek puts it, “the semblance of a positive **objective order** of reality” (Ticklish 158). The Hegelian dialectic shows that the subject comes to have its identity rendered apparitional and thus precarious.

**AND, the perm is key – movements are stronger when coalitions are formed and there’s the net benefit of using solidarity to defy the divisiveness of the model minority.**

**Ty 17 [Asian]** [Eleanor Ty, Professor in the Department of English and Film Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University. She holds a PhD and MA in English from McMaster University, and a BA Hons from the University of Toronto., University Of Illinois Press, "Asian Fail Narratives Of Disenchantment And the Model Minority ", 2017]//lydiaw

In their own ways, the works I have studied in this book contribute to the growing awareness of the need to re-examine the “good life”—its high cost not only to youths but also to older members of the community, and its viability in the twenty-first century. Through inventive narrative and representational strategies that reveal precarious conditions, these works illuminate the critical social, cultural, historical, and political issues that most concern Asian North Americans in the twenty-first century. These issues, ranging from environmental degradation, the loss of stability from the financial crisis of 2007–8 and following, the suspicion and paranoia after 9/11, postwar trauma and memory, racialization and typecasting, and real and imagined cultural and familial expectations, mark the experiences of these artists I have studied. Between 2000 and 2015 the economic conditions in the United States and Canada have worsened due to the increasing neoliberal policies under the governments of Presidents Bill Clinton (1993–2001) and George W. Bush (2001–8) and of Prime Ministers Paul Martin (2003–6) and Stephen Harper (2006–15). **American-model neoliberalism has been criticized because it results in “substantial levels of social exclusion, including high levels of income inequality,**

**high relative and absolute poverty rates, poor and unequal educational outcomes, poor health outcomes, and high rates of crime incarceration” (Schmitt and Zipperer 15). For example, popular stances of both the U.S. and Canadian governments have been that we should be “tough on crime” and wage a “war on drugs.” These notions resulted in an unprecedented rise of blacks and other minorities in U.S. prisons and of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian prisons**. As Bruce Western notes, “Incarceration would be used less for rehabilitation than for incapacitation, deterrence, and punishment. … Tough new sentences were attached to narcotics offenses as the federal government waged first a war on crime, then a war on drugs. Locked facilities proliferated around the country to cope with the burgeoning penal population. Prison construction became an instrument for regional development as small towns lobbied for correctional facilities and resisted prison closure” (2–3). Although these details do not directly relate to Asian North Americans, I argue that the movement from an ethic of care to the politics of the punitive, from rehabilitation to penal discipline, creates an atmosphere of fear, anxiety, and distrust in contemporary society. Only one of the texts in this study features incarceration of an Asian immigrant, but what is important is the institutional change, “shifts in the structure of society and politics” that have “large consequences for the quality of American democracy” (Western 2). If in the 1960s **and early 1970s** Asian **American** movements were formed in solidarity with **and as a response to** the Black Panther and Women’s Liberation **movements**, then in the twenty-first century the criminalization of **large numbers of young** African Americans **and First Nations Canadians** has considerable effects on **American and Canadian racial and** social inequality, on the collective **affective** experiences of p**eople** o**f** c**olor** and minorities. In the works I examined, we see the affect of fear in Vietnamese refugees who do not understand enough English to follow rules in The Gangster We Are All Looking For, or the dire consequences of the misrecognition of a Filipino immigrant in Gilvarry’s From the Memoirs of a Non-Enemy Combatant. The fear of the racial Other in the last decade has been exacerbated by the decline of manufacturing and industry and the dismantling of welfare state. It is not surprising that one of the most popular TV series in the last five or six years has been the American horror show The Walking Dead (2010– ), where the fearful flesh-eating zombie Others turn out to be our own family members and neighbors rather than invaders from an external nation. People now fear contagion from those who are within rather than from strangers from a distant shore. **For this reason,** it is heartening to see Asian **American**s **and Asian Canadians** expressing solidarity with other disenfranchised groups **and working for global environmental causes. The affiliations work** to defy **and counter** the **racially** divisive idealization of **Asian North Americans perpetuated by** the model minority **myth**. For example, #Asians4Blacklives **is a “diverse group of Asian voices coming from the Philippines, Vietnam, India, China, Pakistan, Korea, Burma, Japan, and other nations, based in the Bay Area,” who “**have come together **in response to a call from Black Lives Matter Bay Area”** to show solidarity **with black people. The group recognizes that Asians, like blacks, are subjected to racism, misrecognition, and negative stereotyping**. In her most recent book, Undercurrent, Asian Canadian poet Rita Wong vows to “honour what the flow of water teaches us” (“Declaration of Intent”), to be led by the “healing walkers” of the “Cree and Dene elders and everyday people” and to “reassert human responsibilities to land, water, life” (“Fresh Ancient Ground”). **Wong stresses** the need to form alliances with feminists and First Nations communities, **recognizing that they will protect water and resist corporations that want to use the earth’s resources as commodities. Similarly, the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC is making a concerted effort to discover links between Chinese Canadians and First Nations people, producing videos called “Cedar and Bamboo” that highlight stories of marginalization by mixed-race Chinese/First Nations Canadians**. The project goes beyond the history of Chinese immigrants in relationship to the gold rush, the building of the railroad, and Chinatowns to the historical and continuing relationships between the Chinese population and First Nations in British Columbia. Started by Chinese Canadian history professor Henry Yu, the online “Chinese Canadian Stories” feature information about key historical events in Chinese Canadian history as well as short videos made by university students about their

background and issues that concern them. The project highlights the multiplicity of identities and ways of expressing these identities in the twenty-first century. One funny video that is a fine example of Asianfail is Jennifer Yip’s “Hybrid Husband.” The short video humorously depicts the pressure Yip feels at twenty-two to find a fiancé. Embarking on her twenty-seventh blind date to find the perfect Chinese/Canadian boyfriend, she meets a young man who seems to pass all the requirements set out by her family and herself. He speaks Cantonese and English, snowboards, skis, is learning to fly a plane, and understands her complicated hybrid culture. But by the end of the video, Yip is shocked and confounded by the discovery from his Facebook page that he already has a girlfriend. The video uses irony, humor, and exaggeration to cut through the tensions between a third-generation Asian Canadian and Old World cultural beliefs. **These instances I have been discussing here** illustrate the increasing diversity of Asian **North American** subjects, and their responses to failure **of various sorts**. The works I have discussed show how Asian Americans and Asian Canadians are negotiating and reconfiguring their desires and aspirations. Although the works document different types of failure and depression, they also present alternatives to the current definitions of success, which center on professional and economic achievement. These novels, films, graphic narratives, and memoirs explore the consequences and rewards of not following or not being able to follow society’s prescribed roads to success. As we have seen, the depicted reasons for failure include mental breakdown, shame, lingering memories of trauma and pain, the refusal to subscribe to capitalism’s notion of success, and the rejection of the heteronormative romance script. Further failures are caused by bullying, misidentification and misrecognition, or the internalization of others’ false assumptions and expectations. It is only through the telling of their stories that we understand the dystopic space in which many of these Asian North American people exist. They illuminate the precarity in the lives of some members of a group that has been perceived to be in a privileged space. An inadvertent positive result of some members’ failure to conform has been the production of an incredible assortment of works that question, in sometimes humorous, witty, ironic, and entertaining ways, our apprehension of our modern world, including our perception of the passing of time, of beauty, happiness, aging, gender, family life, and love. Sometimes, the failure to follow traditional routes leads to a new and unexpected way of finding peace and contentment, or an unexplored career path. In keeping with the motif of finding pleasures in the unpredictable, I deliberately sought to examine works that play with the conventions and forms of genre: the use of poetic prose, postmodern reiterations of Buddhist beliefs, stage performance with an inanimate character, a fake memoir, and a graphic narrative not contained by frames and sequences. This book is one of many efforts to participate in the ongoing and much-needed dialogue about priorities and values for our society, global environment, and political identities in the twenty-first century.

**Neoliberalism is inevitable – but perfcons are good to create a buffer zone between the ruling ideology and the subject of exclusion.**

**Kim 09** (Chang-Hee Kim, The Fantasy of Asian America: Identity, Ideology, and Desire) 2009 //Nato + lydia

On a theoretical level, Mei-Li’s double identity, which cheats the American spectator, is concerned with the politically salient use of a so-called “performative contradiction.” Žižek explains that the ruling ideology can possibly claim its universality only when grounded upon the continuing exclusion of its own particulars that contradict its dominant discourse and challenge its power. The hegemonic system of the ruling ideology makes this process of exclusion a consistent routine in a persistent manner of questioning, renegotiating, and displacing the oppositional particulars—i.e., of “assuming the gap between its own form and content, by conceiving itself as unaccomplished in its very notion.” Žižek likens to cheating the paradoxical formation of the universal hegemony of a ruing ideology, which in fact has recourse to its insubordinate particulars. He continues: [I]f the ruling ideology performatively ‘cheats’ by undermining…its own officially asserted universality, progressive politics should precisely openly practice performative contradiction, asserting on behalf of the given universality the very content this universality (in its hegemonic form) excludes. (“Class Struggle” 102) The self-imposed cheating of a particular subject refers to the ideological practice of performative contradiction that the ruling ideology carries out to maintain its own universal 100 hegemony via the paradoxical denial of its own totality; moreover, the universal edifice of the ruling ideology fundamentally depends on the exclusion of its particular subjects inassimilable to it. On the other hand, such a paradoxical, which Žižek translates as cheating, identity of the inassimilable subjects also creates a performative locus of inconsistency, exclusion, and exception in the hegemonic space of the ruling ideology as a kind of buffer zone between the universal (the ruling ideology) and the particular (the subject of exclusion). This buffer zone, or ideological gap, works as a sort of structural short circuit between them, for the act of cheating is what they both want from each other for their own sake. In light of progressive politics, the particular subject, the inconsistent site of exclusion, can appropriate the self-contradictory performance of cheating for its own exclusive inclusion as the perverse site of exception. The performative contradiction of the U.S. neoliberal expansionism enables Mei-Li to become the inconsistent subject of exception—a female Oriental illegal-immigrant who marries for love and can be naturalized as a lawful citizen subject. Nonetheless, it is not so much obvious as problematic to assume that her desire to be American citizen is spontaneously transparent and self-oriented. On the one hand, the hegemonic ideology of Cold War neoliberalism wants the particular Oriental to be exceptionally included in its ideological edifice and thus to function as its ideological utility. Ethnic minorities, on the other hand, look for American citizenship in pursuit of their full inclusion as legitimate members of U.S. society and want to be blessed with what the liberal tropes of freedom and consumer culture promise to them. But the promise of making free choices in the liberal society of U.S. consumer culture is not made as purely sincere but pretended. In Transnational America, Inderpal Grewal premises that the dissemination of American neoliberalism played a crucial role in upholding the hegemonic authority of the U.S. as neoliberal Empire. She posits that this role “could not be limited to the institutions of the state but circulated within what came to be called a ‘global civil society’” (1-2). The universalizing force of global civil society leaves no choice for people in its consumer culture 101 but to be participants in “the civilizing work of post industrial society, in which serious labor is put into producing the conditions of consciousness in which buying can occur” (30). Asians’ desire for American citizenship should be considered not so much a transparently self-serving choice as a constituted one, for no other choices can possibly be made to remain un-civilized in U.S. neoliberal capitalism. In this framework, Mei-Li’s double identity bears upon her politically-salient use of “performative contradiction,” by which she becomes a member of American civil society with a free but pretended choice—namely, a choice only to become American and thus civilized.

***Underview***:

All changes by the round, dm me for previous ones