

Chicano and Black studies departments, throwing all ethnic studies into one weaker department. Now, using the legal excuse of Proposition 13 and the Bakke Decision, there are more plans on the way to cut out more classes in this area. It is clear that the students and community must work to support the existence of ethnic studies and Asian/Pacific education. We must work together to defend Asian American Studies against all cutbacks, and to strengthen the program.

There are many ways you can help out. If you are a student, you might want to take one of the AAS classes, or participate in the AAS Support committee of the Asian Student Union. Community groups, and individuals can write letters of support, circulate petitions, or set up presentations to organizations.

The Asian Student Union has worked very closely with AAS to improve and expand the classes, and is presently working with students in AAS and other campus groups to resist any cutbacks on ethnic studies and other programs for minorities and women. We hope to work towards establishing an Asian/Pacific Islander studies resource center at ELAC. This is all a part of the campaign being taken up by several other Asian/Pacific student organizations on the West Coast, members of the Asian/Pacific Student Union. Asian and Pacific Islander students all across the country, from the East coast to Hawaii are all involved in the common goal of Asian/Pacific Islander Education. We see ourselves as a part of this movement, committed to carrying on our people's past experiences, so that we may better determine our future.

*Inquiries and letters of support should be sent to : Asian Student Union/AAS
c/o Associated Students East LA College
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or call Steve at 383-2496

by the Asian Student Union, East Los Angeles College spring 1979

illustrations by Tomie Arai, taken from 'The portrayal of Asian Americans in Children's Books'

ASIAN AMERICAN / PACIFIC ISLANDER EDUCATION and ETHNIC STUDIES

Do you have an interest in learning about the experiences of Asian and Pacific Islander peoples, their history and culture in America? Ever wonder why Black, Raza, and Asian/Pacific people are never mentioned in history books (except to distort or stereotype us)?

Would you like to see classes that deal with relevant issues of Asian/Pacific peoples and other minorities?

If so, then ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES HAS SOMETHING FOR YOU!



WHY IS ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES UNIQUE?

Unlike any other class or program, Asian American studies (AAS), and ethnic studies was started by the active demands of minority students, and community people. This was because only ten years ago, our history as Asian/Pacific Islander, Chicano, Native American, and Black peoples was virtually ignored or distorted in class textbooks-- and through tracking systems, poor quality education in minority communities, and culturally biased tests, most minorities were not given the chance to higher education. However, through the determination of students, and the support of Third World (minority) communities, Ethnic Studies programs were started at colleges all across the country. At East LA College, with a large Chicano and Asian enrollment, an ethnic studies program was started in 1969.

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These new classes and other services like *Upward Bound*, *Educational Opportunities Program (EOP)*, and *Special Admissions/Financial Aids* were started out of the class walk-outs, petitioning and persistent struggle of Third World students. Thus, Asian American Studies and ethnic studies was started by *the students themselves* with the intentions to learn their *true* history as oppressed nationalities in this country, and what things their people were presently facing.



WHY IS ASIAN/PACIFIC EDUCATION IMPORTANT TO ASIAN/PACIFIC STUDENTS?

Asian American/Pacific Islander education is important to Asian and Pacific Islander students because it helps us to learn more about ourselves, our identity, as a minority in this country. When we look at the experience of our grandparents and parents from immigration, the Concentration camps in World War II, how the Chinese organized a massive railroad strike, how Pilipinos helped the forming of the United Farmworkers Union, and the contributions of Korean, Samoan, and Native Hawaiians, we can relate these experiences to the present situation that Asian/Pacific people face today.

We in the Asian Student Union feel that is an important part of the education we are getting, and like the few other existing programs for Asian/Pacific Islanders, Black, Chicano, and Native Americans should be recognized and supported.



Here at ELAC, there are three Asian American Studies classes being offered. The classes create an awareness about Asian/Pacific culture, history, and also gives one the chance to meet other students and share different experiences. In these classes, we have discussions on a broad range of topics such as our background, identity, interracial dating, and contemporary issues facing Asian and Pacific Islander people in America. There are educational field trips to our communities, and cultural potlucks. Also the Asian American Studies classes has worked on some joint programs with the Asian Student Union, such as a program on the U.S. concentration camps during World War II, and *Asian/Pacific Unity Day*, the annual cultural day on campus.

Many Asian/Pacific students have benefitted from these programs and activities, for it has helped them to become closer to their communities, to understand themselves better, and gain more of an awareness about what conditions our people face today, along with *how we ourselves* can help to change these conditions.

GET INVOLVED TO SUPPORT ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER EDUCATION

Since it's beginning in the late 1960's, Asian American studies has never enjoyed a stable status in the schools, but *instead has faced constant attack by the administrators*. Out of all the Asian American Studies programs started then, *only 10% exist today*. Just as the school administrators were instrumental in preventing minority students into the colleges, they have consistently worked to undermine ethnic studies and all other programs for minorities. Only two years ago, the ELAC administration was attempting to dissolve the independent