

THE ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT (Greater Los Angeles)

The following chronology and summary of the Asian American Movement is designed to show the critical role that students have played in its development. It is also designed to show the interrelationships between national and international events that affected Asian Americans.

Historically, the development of the "Asian American Consciousness" can be traced to the growth of demands by Third World people for greater equity in America's economic-social system. Even the term "Asian American" was a great advance fostered by students who demanded a redefinition of who and what they were in this society. This demand for redefinition (by America's ethnic minorities) was an outgrowth of a long history of civil rights struggles as well as a result of international events of great magnitude (the destruction of European colonial powers after World War II, the rise of the Third World, the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union, etc.).

Any examination of the chronology of "Asian American" events will show the tremendous impact that students have had in the overall movement. Many events were dictated by student activism. More so, even many of the community organizations were student initiated and led.

A major conclusion from an examination of this chronology of Asian American events in Southern California is that student activism and organizing on campus is important. It was critical to the development of the Asian American movement in the late 1960's and it is critical to the continuation of any such movement in the future.

Any evaluation of the past must take into account certain errors of judgement that hurt the Asian American movement. Such is the case when the movement off campus began in the early 1970's. As the campus organizations began to wane, the long range consequences of this deterioration of the campus base took its toll in the communities as the quantity of student activists dropped dramatically. Although focusing on community needs was and is important, the lesson to be learned is that it is equally important to continue organizing students on campus. Only recently, through the re-emergence of student activism have we begun to see new students appearing in the communities again.

INTERNATIONAL

POST WWII PERIOD



European colonial empires dismantle.. wars of national liberation begun by former colonies..emerging new nations develop as the Third World

cold war competition ..struggle between U.S. and Soviet Union for world power

Korean War..Cold War flares into conflict in Asia

The 1960's / VIETNAM

DOMESTIC

Increasing demand by black servicemen for treatment as first class citizens

civil rights movement .. Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education.."separate but equal" termed unconstitutional in 1954

Alliances begin to develop between white liberals and a wide spectrum of the black population

Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat to a white man on a bus...leading to a bus strike in Montgomery, Alabama

Dr. Martin Luther King emerges as champion of non-violent civil rights movement

Student unrest mirrors conflicts in American society.. Free Speech movement at Berkeley

Student demand for more relevant education..critical examination of values

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INTERNATIONAL

DOMESTIC

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"sit-ins".. "drop-outs"
Hippies affect traditional American society

1964 - Pres. LBJ announces U.S. intervention in Vietnam

Separatist stance adopted by many disaffected minorities..e.g., Elijah Muhammad and Black Muslims

1965 - Black Rebellion.. riots sweep black ghetto areas in response to the fury of the Watts Riot in Los Angeles

"Black Power" advocates gain in influence..e.g., Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown

1966 - Development of the Black Panther Party with Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver and Bobby Seals

1967 - Detroit Riot..unrest continues in ghetto areas.. Harlem, Cincinnati, Tampa

Student opposition to war in full swing..anti-Vietnam War teach-ins, burning of draft cards, etc.

1968 - Student strike cripples San Francisco State College.. Third World Liberation Front spearheads demand for ethnic studies..2000 students join the strike with strong Asian American participation

ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT BEGINS TO GROW ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES...ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS BEGIN TO JOIN IN ON THE CALL FOR AN END TO THE WAR IN VIETNAM... DENOUNCE RACIST CHARACTER OF WAR...DEMANDS GROW FOR ETHNIC STUDIES AS THE "IDENTITY CRISIS" BECOMES A MAJOR ISSUE...THIRD WORLD COALITIONS FORM TO FIGHT FOR DEMANDS

1968 - Students for Oriental Concern ..chapters grow on all major southland college and university campuses with focus of discussion on Asian American identity.

INTERNATIONAL

DOMESTIC

Rioting envelopes Democratic National Convention in Chicago as Police attack demonstrators

Brown Berets form in Chicano communities, the Red Guard in San Francisco's Asian American community

1969 - Chicano Moratorium against the Vietnam War in East Los Angeles (August 29) 30,000 participate

F.B.I. begins two year program to actively discredit community activists...Black Panther Party members arrested...some killed ...Harassment occurs on a nationwide level

Asian American Studies Conference - first statewide conference held at Berkeley, CA

Asian Americans for Action - Anti-Vietnam War committee develops in New York City's Asian community.

Asian American Political Alliance groups develop in the East Coast campuses at Columbia and Yale.

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Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) forms as a political discussion group focusing on anti-war and community needs.

Pioneer Project - community service group with heavy student participation..working primarily to give help to the Japanese speaking elderly.

IN 1969, THE GROWTH OF ACTIVITIES BY ASIAN AMERICANS, BOTH ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUSES AND IN THE COMMUNITIES WAS DRAMATIC. STUDENT PARTICIPATION WAS PARTICULARLY HEAVY IN ALL AREAS.

1969 - Yellow Brotherhood. Asian American street gangs from the Eastside and Westside call a halt to warfare and unit - effectively stopping gang activity in the Asian American community.

GIDRA - Asian American newspaper starts with wide circulation on campuses and Asian American communities. The paper had moved off campus after administrators wanted to have censorship privileges.

Asian Radical Movement (ARM) - confrontation with campus establishment at UCLA leads to arrests of members

Asian American Student Alliance, Asian American Student Association (AASA) - groups proliferate on the various campuses..e.g., Los Angeles City College, USC, Cal State, Long Beach, UCLA, Cal State, Los Angeles (Asian American Study Group)

Organization of Southland Asian American Organizations (OSAAO) - otherwise known as the "Umbrella" acting as a central committee for the various Asian American organizations in Southern California.

Asian American Hard Core - drug abuse program created by ex-users and volunteers from the community

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CINCIP (Picnic spelled backwards) - First "Asian American" celebration at Griffith Park in Los Angeles.

Asian Americans for Peace - anti-Vietnam War group composed of a wide cross section of the Asian American community in Southern California.

Asian American Tutorial Project - tutorial program started for the younger generation in L.A.'s Chinatown. Student staffed primarily from UCLA and other campuses.

Thomas Noguchi case - battle over appointment of L.A. coroner galvanizes the Asian American community. Noguchi becomes a symbol of pent up frustrations from the communities.

Hi-Potential Program established at UCLA

Yellow Journalism - Asian American student paper started at Cal State, Long Beach.

First Long Beach People's Potluck (AASA) held at local community center with a band called "Hiroshima" performing. The People's Potluck becomes an ongoing annual event.

First high school Asian American conference held at Centenary United Methodist Church

THE 1970-73 PERIOD WAS THE GROWTH OF "TO SERVE THE PEOPLE" PROGRAMS IN THE SOUTHLAND. ACTIVISTS LEFT THE CAMPUSES AND BEGAN FOCUSING ALL THEIR ATTENTION TOWARD THEIR COMMUNITIES. ALTHOUGH A CAMPUS BASE REMAINED, MOST OF THE ENERGY WAS DIRECTED TOWARD COMMUNITY WORK.

JACS-Asian Involvement office in Little Tokyo, promoting "to serve the people" programs.

Community Workers Collective (CWC) established in

1970 - U.S. invades Cambodia, triggering international condemnation for expanding the war.

1970 - Nationwide anti-war demonstrations..National Guard soldiers kill students at Kent and Jackson State Universities

Black Panther Party leader, Huey Newton, jailed.

INTERNATIONAL

DOMESTIC

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(cont.) L.A.'s Boyle Heights...comprised primarily of JACS-Asian Involvement workers.

Asian American Studies Conference - second state-wide meeting, held at U.S.C.

Pioneer Projects develop in outlying communities of Gardena and Long Beach. "Involved Together Asians" (ITA) forms in West Los Angeles.

The "Storefront" - a "serve the people" program - opens office on the Westside of Los Angeles.

Asian American communities unite against the "short-changing" policies of United Way towards Asians. Demands for change grow as United Way ignores Asian American community requests for funding of various programs.

Students took over Campbell Hall at UCLA (primarily an anti-war protest). 250 police from the L.A.P.D. were brought on campus, and a violent confrontation ensued. 6,000 students were involved.

1971 - Amerasia Conference held at UCLA (third statewide Asian American Studies conference).

Students and staff together form Visual Communications through the also newly formed Asian American Studies Central.

South Bay Asian Involvement (S.B.A.I.) forms in the Gardena area in response to "serve the people" call for activism. Long Beach State students play an active role in its formation and development.

Asians Come Together (A.C.T.) - high school organization formed by support of JACS-Asian Involvement.

Young Pilipino People's Far West Convention held,

INTERNATIONAL

1972 - President Marcos declares martial law in the Philippines.

1973 - U.S. begins to pull out of Vietnam.

DOMESTIC

National Committee for the Restoration of Civil Liberties in the Philippines (NCRCLP) formed with large participation by Pilipino Americans.

1973 - Anti-war movement begins to wane as the phase out of American armed forces continues.

The "hippie"/"flower children" influence begins to die, replaced by the more traditional motives of self-interest.

American Indian Movement (AIM) occupies land on South Dakota reservation - Wounded Knee

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(cont.) bringing together Pilipino activists. The convention later becomes an annual event.

Asian Movement for Military Outreach (AMMO) - medical supply drive at campuses made in response to the bombing of a hospital in North Vietnam.

Nisei Week Parade - anti-Vietnamese war demonstration by the Van Troi Youth Brigade..Japanese "military" flag burned.

Pilipino American Coalition (PAC) forms and allies with AASA at CSULB.

Union of Vietnamese Students forms - comprised of Vietnamese students against the war.

Development of political study groups..Many community activists join study groups to further their understanding of our political and economic system here in the U.S.

Asian Students Involved in Academic Needs and Services (A.S.I.A.N.S.) forms at Cal State, Dominguez Hills.

First Long Beach State Asian American Week.

Asian American students on various campuses help mobilize support for the Wounded Knee struggle.

The Scooper is published jointly by UCLA and Cal State Long Beach students.

Asian American Studies Conference held at San Jose State University.

Asian Women's Center opens in Los Angeles, with student participation in staffing.

Little Tokyo Anti-Eviction Task Force forms over Nixon's freeze on senior citizen housing. Opposition to rede-

INTERNATIONAL

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The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raises oil prices

1974 - The "energy crisis" begins to affect the American economy. Wartime produced inflation and higher oil prices attack an economy already in a state of recession.

1975 - Downfall of South Vietnam / Thieu government.

First wave of refugees from Vietnam arrives. American reception and reaction is mixed.

(cont.) velopment forms. The Task Force has a large compliment of campus activists.

Agency programs develop, with professional "careerism" emerging in the Asian American community. Funding of programs become the major concern of many.

THE 1974-76 PERIOD CAN BE DESCRIBED AS A "LULL" PERIOD ON MANY (BUT NOT ALL) CAMPUSES. THE LONG RANGE EFFECTS OF STUDENT ACTIVISTS MOVING OFF CAMPUS BEGINS TO BE FELT CONSIDERABLY. ORGANIZING ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE MAINLY IN THE LOCAL ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES. ON CAMPUS, STUDENT ACTIVISM SEEMS TO WANE AS STUDENTS BEGIN TO RESPOND MORE TO THE TRADITIONAL MOTIVES OF INDIVIDUAL "SELF-INTEREST." AS THE CAMPUS BASE BEGINS TO DETERIORATE, THE LACK OF NEW STUDENT VOLUNTEERS BEGIN TO AFFECT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

GIDRA folds...One of many Asian American community-focused organizations that close down during this period.

SBAI folds. A high school-oriented group (Flower of the Dragon) forms with participation by Long Beach State students.

Student support committee forms to stop deportation of Vietnamese students who oppose the war.

Political perspective among veteran activists begin to sharpen..many of the political study groups begin to develop into political collectives.

Omai Faatasi - emergence of "serve the people" program in the Samoan community.

1975 - Student Support Committee for Ethnic Studies (SSCES) formed at UCLA (a multi-national student group). All four ethnic centers were going through a 5 year review process. Administration makes threats of cutbacks and re-organization. Through the struggle, some AAS classes receive permanent

INTERNATIONAL

1979 - Second "energy crisis" impacts countries throughout the world following increases in oil prices by OPEC nations

Students in Iran hold U.S. hostages, demanding the return of the Shah, confession of U.S. crimes, and return of assets.

DOMESTIC

Korean, Pilipino, Chinese, and Indochinese communities undergo tremendous growth.

1977 - Alan Bakke case impacts on minorities / Third World students on campuses. Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC) and the National Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision form in response.

"Anti-Nuke" movement begins to grow and take shape.

1978 - Proposition 13 wins in California. Cutbacks in social service programs grow.

Japanese Am. Citizens League (JACL) proposes plans for legislation on redress.

"Energy crisis" hits U.S. with shortage/mismanagement of gasoline. Inflation reaches an all time high.

Visibility and activity of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and U.S. Nazi Party rises sharply. KKK makes front pages with assassinations in Greensboro, N.C.

Hostage situation impacts on Iranians in the U.S. Patriotic fervor rises.

President Carter commences with military registration and possible draft.

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(cont.) status. Several campuses are threatened with cutbacks to ethnic studies and E.O.P. during this period.

FROM 1977 TO THE PRESENT...NEW STUDENT ACTIVISM BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE AMONG ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN STUDENTS.

Asian American students begin to take active part in anti-Bakke decision demonstrations, helping to organize on a statewide and national basis.

First West Coast Asian/Pacific Student Union (APSU) meeting.

1978 - Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition National Conference held in Los Angeles.

First West Coast APSU Conference held - a network of forty campuses is established and developed.

Chol Soo Lee defense committees form in response to an article written by K.W. Lee in the Sacramento Union.

Asian American staff and students rally against Sen. Hayakawa at UCLA. Over 400 organizations, students, staff, & faculty pay for a full page ad and open letter of denouncement on his stands against minority and working class people.

Los Angeles Community Coalition on Redress/Reparations (LACCRR) forms to organize the grassroots communities.

Second West Coast APSU Conference held. Participants take up the Chol Soo Lee case as the major campaign issue.

Asian/Pacific students unite with other groups against registration and the draft.

INTERNATIONAL

President Park Chung Hee of South Korea is assassinated.

May, 1980 - Tens of thousands of students demonstrate in Kwanju protesting political and social repression in South Korea.

DOMESTIC

Proposition 9 ("Jarvis II") proposing a 50% reduction in state income taxes (but resulting in severe cutbacks to social services & education) receives attention, and is defeated.

National Coalition for Redress/Reparations formed with several organizations nationwide.

"Commission on Wartime Relocation" bill passes congress and is approved by President Carter.

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1980 - Concerned Asian/Pacific Students for Action forms and mobilized opposition against registration & the draft. CAPSA becomes a member of the Asian Coalition at UCLA.

Students and staff respond to rumored liquidation of the Academic Advancement Program at UCLA, forming AWARE (Alliance Working Against Repression in Education).

Asian American Studies directors and other educators from colleges and universities in California held a conference to mobilize against Prop. 9.

Korean Student Associations in Southern California rally and demonstrate in protest of repression in South Korea. Blood drives are held with the intent of helping student demonstrators hurt in Kwanju.

First Tongan American Unity Conference held in Los Angeles.