

## PERSONAL ACCOUNT

## Seeing Race, Seeing Disability

I am an international student who hails from Guyana, a country located on the coast of South America. Although called South American by a few, I am identified by most others as a West Indian (native of the Caribbean) because our culture and way of life is so similar to that of the little islands that comprise the West Indies.

I have experienced culture shock in America, from aspects of food and clothing to language and weather, but my most complex adjustment pertained to the issue of race. It is still less than one year since I have taken up residence in the "Land of the Free," but I have already begun to lose the gift of being colorblind.

America and Guyana have many cultural differences; yet, at the same time, there are many noteworthy similarities. One of these similarities would be the ethnic/racial diversity evident in both societies. Guyana is a blend of six races—Indian, Portuguese, Chinese, Caucasian, Amerindian (the indigenous people), and African. In Guyana, the color of one's skin or the texture of one's hair does not generally serve as a means of dichotomization, as seems to be common in America.

I was given the opportunity to work with a disabled student in a particular course. This young man's disability had been the result of an accident as a child. I had

neither seen nor met him when I decided to peruse his web page, which was conveniently divided into areas that gave helpful information about his experience, hobbies, achievements, disability history, and career goals. It also provided a section with photographs. Without a moment's thought, I opened this photographic collection and later realized that I had done so only to satisfy my curiosity as to his race. In retrospect, I found this frightening because this behavior is foreign to me. I knew that it would have made no difference what race he represented because I would still have been enthusiastic about working with him.

Being as diverse as we are in Guyana, I would not have been immediately interested in his phenotypic identity, but possibly more concerned with (the extent of) his disability because there is a greater stigma attached to disabled persons in the Third World than there is in America. In comparison, diversity in my country is generally looked upon like the colors of a rainbow . . . all different but creating a thing of beauty when combined. In this part of the world, it seems as though diversity has created division.

R. B.

## Popular Culture

## READING 49

## Orientals

Robert G. Lee

## MAKING THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH

In January 1966, the *New York Times Magazine* published an article with the title "Success Story: Japanese-American Style," and in December *U.S. News and World Report* published an article focusing on Chinese Americans, "Success Story

of One Minority in the US."<sup>1</sup> As their titles suggest, both articles told the story of Asians in America as a narrative of triumphant ethnic assimilation.

This new popular representation of Asian Americans as the model of successful "ethnic assimilation" was created in the crisis of racial policy that had surfaced at the highest levels of the federal government the previous year. The policy debate that emerged in 1965 reflected deep ideological division over responses to the demands for racial equality that had developed in the two decades since the end of the Second World War.

The Watts riot in the summer of 1964 and the growing demands of African Americans for economic equity as well as formal political rights,

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along with the gradual dismantling of Jim Crow segregation in the South, plunged racial policy into crisis. The contours of the crisis can be seen in the conflicting responses of the Johnson Administration to black demands for racial equality. In March 1965, Lyndon Johnson's assistant secretary of Labor, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, published a *Report on the Black Family* which laid much of the blame for black poverty on the "tangle of pathology" of the black family. He admonished African Americans to rehabilitate their dysfunctional families in order to achieve economic and social assimilation. In June, at commencement exercises at all-black Howard University in Washington, D.C., the president articulated a vision of racial equality through sweeping social reconstruction in a massive War on Poverty. Both men genuinely claimed to support racial equality and civil rights, but their two documents could not have been further apart in their analysis and proposed solutions. The conflict between Johnson's response and Moynihan's response forms the ideological context in which the Asian Americans emerged as the model minority.

Johnson's speech emphasized the historical reality of race in America as compelling logic for extending civil rights into the economic sphere. Referring to the disadvantaged position of many blacks in the American economic structure, Johnson declared, "You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'You are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair."<sup>2</sup> The president went on to lay the principal responsibility for black poverty on white racism, both historical and present, and he outlined an agenda of government-sponsored social change to ameliorate discrimination and poverty.

Moynihan took a radically different political tack. Quoting his former Harvard colleague, sociologist Nathan Glazer, Moynihan complained that "the demand for economic equality is now

not the demand for equal opportunities for the equally qualified; it is now the demand for equality of economic results. . . . The demand for equality in education . . . has also become a demand for equality of results, of outcomes."<sup>3</sup>

Moynihan left implicit Glazer's ominous threat that American society, despite a commitment toward the former, would be "ruthless" in suppressing the latter. Moynihan went on to describe a black culture of poverty as a "tangle of pathology" born in slavery but "capable of perpetuating itself without assistance from the white world."<sup>4</sup> In particular, Moynihan identified the prevalence of female-headed households as a barrier to economic success. For Moynihan, the key to both racial integration and economic mobility was not in structural changes or social reorganization that might correct past injustice, but in the rehabilitation of "culturally deprived" black families.

The *U.S. News* article was quite explicit about the political context of its report when it asserted, "At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent on uplifting Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese Americans are moving ahead on their own with no help from anyone else." Foreshadowing an obsession that was to shape Richard Nixon's campaign rhetoric a year later, the writer of the *U.S. News* article described America's Chinatowns as "havens for law and order" and made no fewer than six references to low rates of delinquency among Chinese American youth.<sup>5</sup>

#### **SRP LW** Making the Silent Minority

The construction of the model minority was based on the political silence of Asian America. An often cited example of Asian American self-reliance was the underutilization of welfare programs in 1970. Despite the fact that 15 percent of Chinese families in New York city had incomes below the federal poverty level, only 3.4 percent had enrolled to receive public assistance. This statistic has often been used as an example of a cultural trait of self-reliance and

family cohesion. An alternative explanation, grounded in recent Asian American history, would stress apprehension and mistrust of the state's intentions toward them.

[World War II] incarceration had left deep wounds in the Japanese American communities. The removal to fairgrounds and racetracks, the relocation to remote, barbed-wired camps, the uncertainty of loyalty oaths, the separation of family members, all traumatized the Japanese American community. The Japanese American Citizens League's policy of accommodation with the War Relocation Authority and its role in suppressing dissent within the camps had left bitter divisions among many Japanese Americans. Japanese Americans, for the most part, were anxious to rebuild their lives and livelihoods and reluctant to relive their experience. In particular, the American-born Nisei generation remained remarkably silent about its camp experience until the emergence of the Asian American movement in the 1970s and the Redress Movement of the 1980s. Social psychologists have likened the response of Japanese Americans who had been unjustly incarcerated to that of victims of rape or other physical violation. They demonstrated anger, resentment, self-doubt, and guilt, all symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome.<sup>6</sup>

While postwar Japan became America's junior partner, the People's Republic of China became its principal enemy. After the Korean War broke out in 1950, and especially after China entered the war in 1951, the United States made every effort to isolate communist China, economically and diplomatically, and embarked on a military policy of confrontation aimed at "containing" the expansion of Chinese influence throughout Asia and the Third World.

The fear of Red China extended to the Chinese American community. In 1949, Chinese communities in the United States were divided in their attitudes toward the communist revolution. Although the number of communists in Chinese American communities was tiny, many who were not communist or even leftist nonetheless

found some satisfaction in the fact that a genuinely nationalist, reputedly honest, and apparently more democratic government had finally united China after a century of political chaos, weakness, and humiliation. On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang Party had long enjoyed the support of the traditional elites in the larger Chinatowns.<sup>7</sup>

When the Korean War broke out in 1950, Congress passed the Emergency Detention Act, which vested the U.S. Attorney General with the authority to establish concentration camps for any who might be deemed a domestic threat in a national emergency. The mere authorization of such sweeping powers of detention served as a stark warning to Chinese Americans that what had been done to Japanese Americans a decade earlier could also be done to them without effort.

The pro-Chiang Kai-shek Chinatown elite, working with the FBI, launched a systematic attempt to suppress any expression of support for the new communist regime in China. The Trading with the Enemy Act, which prohibited any currency transfers to the Peoples Republic of China, including remittances to family, was used as a tool to attempt to deport suspected communist sympathizers. Although only a few leftists and labor leaders were actually deported, the threat of deportation had a deeply chilling effect, since many hundreds of Chinese had come to the United States as "paper sons" during the long decades of exclusion and were in the United States under false pretenses.

In 1952 Congress passed the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act, which dismantled racial prohibitions on immigration and established an Asian-Pacific Triangle with an immigration quota cap of two thousand visas. Even though McCarran-Walter still strictly limited Asian immigration, the red scare that was its impetus was contagious. In 1955, Everett F. Drumwright, the U.S. consul in Hong Kong, issued a report warning that communist China was making use of "massive" fraud and deception to infiltrate agents into the United States

under cover as immigrants. Drumwright's hysterical and largely unsubstantiated report provided the rationale for massive FBI and INS raids into Chinatowns around the country to search out pro-China subversives. Chinatowns were flooded with public notices and street flyers warning of potential spies and subversives, while "innocent residents" were encouraged to report suspected subversives to the FBI.

In 1957 Congress authorized the Chinese Confession Program. Chinese Americans who had come as paper sons were encouraged to confess their illegal entry. In return for consideration for an appropriate (but not guaranteed) adjustment of their status, the applicant had also to make a full disclosure on every relative and friend. The information gathered in the Chinese Confession Program was used to try to deport those who were identified by the FBI's informants as supporters of China or as domestic troublemakers. Membership in leftist support organizations, in labor unions, in "pro-China" organizations melted away in the face of the sustained harassment and attack from the conservative elite within Chinatowns, and the FBI and INS from without.<sup>8</sup> . . .

#### **THE MODEL MINORITY AND THE NEOCONSERVATIVE RACIAL PROJECT**

. . . Moynihan's early characterization of the matriarchal black family as "a tangle of pathology" able to reproduce itself "without help from white racism" suggested that the "culture of poverty" could be understood without reference to poverty itself. Increasingly the discussion of poverty focused on the multigenerational and self-reproducing. The metaphor of black pathology displaced analysis of social crisis, the effects of massive unemployment, poverty, and the collapse of family life. Since it was the dysfunctionality of the black family, and not genetics, that determined black behavior (not, of course poverty or discrimination), race could be en-

coded as cultural difference into public debates over social policy.

In the 1980s, African Americans were constantly identified with social chaos and violence: witness Ronald Reagan's invocation of the infamous unnamed "welfare queen," George Bush's use of black rapist Willie Horton in ads during his first presidential campaign, tales of "wilding" black teenagers, even the sexual harassment charges against Clarence Thomas, President Bush's black conservative nominee to the Supreme Court. Although race was made to disappear as a category of analysis, dressed up as cultural difference it became ubiquitous as a coded trope in the discussion of social policy; it is nowhere and yet everywhere. Although the appeal to culture appears to be non-biological, hence non-racist, in fact it has become a mode of perpetuating race as a category of immutable cultural difference.

The model minority representation of Asian Americans that had originated in the Cold War and gained visibility in the mid-1960s has been expanded and transformed to fit the current crisis. Asian cultural difference is held to be a source of social capital. A mythic Asian American family, the imagined product of an ahistorical and reified Asian "traditional" culture, is a central image, expanded to fit a wider target. Increasingly, the imagined Asian American family has been upheld as a model not only to blacks and Latinos but to working-class and middle-class whites as well. In the updated model minority story fitted to ideological demands . . . not only social conservatism but also productivity is emphasized. Recent articles in the national press on Asian Americans emphasize their persistence in overcoming language barriers, their superior disciplinary and motivational roles as parents, and their "intact" families' success at savings.<sup>9</sup>

Twenty years after Asian Americans were first heralded as a potential model for the upward mobility of nonwhites in American society, David Bell theorized Asian American success in a 1985 essay in the *New Republic*, "The Triumph

of Asian Americans." Bell summarized Asian American virtues as "self-sufficiency" and proclaimed this the secret to Asian American success. At the center of such self-sufficiency he placed the traditional Asian American family, an "intact" family, significant in three ways: It provides a secure environment for children; it pushes those children to work harder; and it fosters savings.<sup>10</sup>

The *New Republic* did not hesitate to make an invidious comparison between Asian and African Americans. Bell's article characterizing Asian Americans as a self-sufficient racial minority that made no demands for institutional change followed an article in the same issue titled "Brown's Blacks." This article excoriated black students at Brown University for protesting a recent spate of assaults on minority students on campus and demanding greater representation among the faculty and in the curriculum. While the student protesters at Brown had been a broad coalition of Asian, Latino, and black students and had gained substantial support among white students at the liberal campus, the *New Republic* article ignored the multiracial aspect of the protest and chose to characterize the movement as solely a black protest, the black students as malcontents, and the troubles on campus as yet another negative result of misguided affirmative action. When read back to back, the comparison between the "good," self-disciplined and submissive Asian Americans and the ungrateful and complaining blacks could not have been made more clear.

In 1988, a news report that ten of the twelve winners of the prestigious Westinghouse Prizes for achievement in science among high school students were Asian American prompted Stephen Graubard, a history professor at Brown University and the editor of *Daedalus*, the prestigious journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, to publish an essay in the *New York Times* titled "Why Do Asian Pupils Win Those Prizes?" In a series of paradigmatic questions, Graubard laid out the implications of the tradi-

tional Asian American family model for all other Americans.

Is the "stability" [of a dual parent family and a single family home] almost a prerequisite for school accomplishment? . . .

If so, what is to be done for those hundreds of thousands of other New York children, many of illegitimate birth, who live with one parent often in public housing, knowing little outside their dilapidated housing and decaying neighborhoods?

Graubard does not answer his own questions, but the family to which his questions lead us is unmistakable. It is the traditional Asian American family, presumed to be intact and self-sufficient, and certain to be disciplinary and motivational.

Do [non-Asian students] have teachers prepared to tell them that personal appearance matters, that a price is paid for spiked hair and blue lipstick? . . .

Who, for the impoverished black or Puerto Rican student, advises something other than the conventional educational path?

In Graubard's view it is not only African American and Latino families who will do well to learn from Asian Americans. In a peculiar formulation of racial and ethnic difference, Graubard asks, "What would it take for Puerto Rican, black and *white children of certain ethnic origins* to become serious competitors for such honors, and what would such an academic 'revolution' mean?" [Emphasis added.]

In Graubard's view, it is not only racial and ethnic minorities (including those mysterious "white children of certain ethnic origins") who should learn from the disciplined and motivated traditional Asian American family; America's middle class can also improve its performance by taking a lesson from Asian America. After all, the glittering prizes now captured by Asian American students had once been the patrimony of middle-class white students. Graubard asks what has happened to those students: "What about the others [of the middle class]? . . . Are the children of such families reaching out and securing the great prizes? . . . The children of the middle

class, who are much more privileged but appear both indolent and incompetent . . ."<sup>11</sup>

For both Bell and Graubard, Asian American "success" is a product of an unspecified and decontextualized traditional Asian culture. Tradition is reduced to the values of obedience, discipline, and motivation enacted by the family, those traditions most valued in the late capitalist economy. In contrast, at the heart of the economic and academic difficulties of black, Hispanic, working-class, and even middle-class America is the cultural pathology of family structures that tolerate spiked hair and blue lipstick.

What distinguishes the model minority myth as a hegemonic mode of racial representation is not primarily its distance from reality but rather its power to dominate or displace other social facts. Ideological hegemony operates through its power to absorb, co-opt, or displace oppositional views, to tie a diverse and sometimes contradictory set of images and representations into an explanatory whole. It is the location of specific images and representations within the hegemonic paradigm that endows those images with ideological power.

The hegemonic power of culture as the new defining category of difference can be seen in an August 1987 cover story of *Time* Magazine, "The New Whiz Kids." This article attempts to provide a more balanced and informed picture of the educational achievements of young Asian Americans. It showcases their scholastic triumphs but also discusses both the institutional barriers that still stand in the way of Asian American students and the cost in stress that many pay for such success.

The article quotes extensively from a variety of experts on education, including scholars who study Asian American communities. Nevertheless, both the structure of the inquiry and the outcome of the article's conclusions are built around the reified concept of the "traditional" Asian family. The *Time* writers cite Professor William Liu of the University of Illinois at Chicago who

asserts that Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese students perform better because "the Confucian ethic drives people to work, excel and repay the debt they owe their parents." The article contrasts this information to the observation of Professor Ruben G. Rumbaut, a sociologist at San Diego State University, that "Laotians and Cambodians, who do somewhat less well, have a gentler Buddhist approach to life."<sup>12</sup>

Assigning the differences in achievement and social mobility of various Asian American ethnic groups to assumed differences between a disciplined Confucian tradition (supposedly shared by Japanese, Koreans, Chinese, and Vietnamese) and a "gentler" Buddhist tradition (shared by Laotians and Cambodians) is, at best, astoundingly simplistic. Whatever impact a millennium of Buddhism may have had on China, Japan, or Vietnam is gently ignored. The high proportion of ethnic Chinese among the Cambodian and Laotian immigrant communities is also ignored. The high proportion of second-, third-, and fourth-generation American-born and middle-class Japanese Americans is ignored. Perhaps the most important ignored factor is the higher educational and occupational skill levels, and greater capital, that Chinese, Korean, and first-wave Vietnamese brought with them to the United States. Indeed, the entire history of Asia, a region in which social and cultural change has been nothing less than revolutionary in the twentieth century, is ignored in this rush to reify traditional culture as the key to Asian American success.

In their rush to judgment on the cultural superiority of Asian Americans, these commentators almost completely ignore recent Asian American history. Indeed, although these articles draw heavily on the images of recent Asian immigrants, all but the most self-evident facts about the revolutionary changes in the demography of Asian America since 1965 are elided by the hegemonic status of culture as the determining variable of social mobility. Bell, Graubard, and *Time* Magazine fail to ask even the most basic questions about the American economy and the

place of Asians, blacks, Latinos, or “whites of certain ethnic origins” within it.

Recent Asian American history offers a different interpretative paradigm for understanding patterns of Asian American economic success and hardship. Since 1970, the Asian/Pacific Islander population (to use the Census Bureau’s designation) has been the fastest growing non-white minority in America. Between 1970 and 1994, the Asian American population grew from 1.4 million to 8.8 million people.<sup>13</sup> The huge growth through immigration of the Asian American population has not been evenly distributed across ethnic groups, class, or sex. While there has been considerable economic success among Asian Americans, they also experience undeniable poverty. Both phenomena can be explained more accurately by the realities of Asian immigration patterns than by the secrets of traditional Asian family values.<sup>14</sup>

The explosion of the Asian/Pacific Islander population was due primarily to massive immigration from Asia after the passage of Immigration Reform Act of 1965. In addition to dismantling the national quota system that had been designed to exclude Asian immigration, the Immigration Reform Act of 1965 contained two provisions that encouraged immigration from Asia. The new policy favored the entry of scientific, technical, and professional personnel, and it gave preference to family members of immigrants already resident in the United States.

The most significant factor in accounting for Asian American economic prosperity—and that undermines the notion of Asian American cultural superiority—is the fact that a large proportion of this new Asian immigration was already middle-class on arrival in the United States. The 1965 immigration act favoring technical and scientific personnel and those who met specific occupational needs (particularly medical personnel) not only encouraged immigration from Asia, where economic development policies had created a pool of well-educated technical personnel eager to emigrate, but it also made likely the

successful economic integration of Asian immigrants in the 1970s. Between 1965 and the mid-1970s, the majority of immigrants from Asia were middle-class professionals.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to their immediate integration into the professional, technical, and managerial sectors of the work force, the large proportion of middle-class immigrants among Asian Americans resulted in a second generation of children who were academically advantaged. Thus the “brain drain” from Asia in the 1970s resulted in an Asian American population that was already highly educated. According to the Census Bureau’s 1994 statistics, slightly more Asian Americans than non-Hispanic whites over the age of twenty-five had completed four years of high school, and almost twice as many had completed college.<sup>16</sup>

In some respects Asian immigration has matched the demand for capital and labor at both ends of the . . . economy. Since the late 1970s, the demand for semiskilled, unskilled, and entrepreneurial labor in the new low-wage manufacturing and service sectors of the . . . economy has been met in large part by Asian and Latin American immigrants. Although the absolute number of professionals among Asian immigrants has remained high, since the mid-1970s they no longer make up the majority of immigrants from Asia. Working-class immigrants and refugees now make up the majority of Asian immigrants. In particular, women now outnumber men among immigrants from Asian countries. Some come independently as workers; others come as spouses to American citizens and as permanent resident aliens. Many have had work experience in Asia—in the needle trades, electronic assembly work, institutional custodial or housekeeping work, or food service. Some come with semiprofessional skills, particularly in the health industry, as nurses and technicians.<sup>17</sup> In sum, Asian Americans, particularly immigrant Asian workers, have a highly visible position in both ends of the . . . economy, in what urban sociologist Saskia Sassen has called “global cities”—the

command centers for serving the financial needs of the new transnational economy.

The suggestion of parity between Asian Americans and non-Hispanic white Americans is, therefore, deceptive. The figure cited most often to illustrate the Asian American success story is the median income of Asian American families (\$42,250 in the 1980s and 90s), slightly higher than the median income for white families. When controlled for geography and the number of wage earners per family, however, the income of Asian Americans falls short of that for non-Hispanic white Americans.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the fact that a large number of Asian Americans are successful, a disproportionate number of Asian Americans are poor. In 1990, while 8 percent of non-Hispanic white families had incomes below the Federal poverty guidelines, 11 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander families had incomes below the poverty guidelines. In 1994, despite their higher educational attainment and similar family income, the poverty rate for Asian/Pacific Islander families was almost double that of non-Hispanic white families. Among families with high school educated householders, the poverty rate was almost twice that of non-Hispanic white families; among college-educated householders, the poverty rate of Asian/Pacific Islander families was almost three times that of non-Hispanic white families. The poverty rate for Asian/Pacific Islander married couples was more than twice that of white married couples.<sup>19</sup>

#### **The Asian American as Gook**

The model minority concept as theorized by Bell, Graubard and *Time Magazine* singles out for praise those values most closely identified with the Protestant work ethic. Obedience, self-control, individualism, and loyalty to the needs of the nuclear family, as opposed to either anarchic libertarianism (spiked hair and blue lipstick) or social consciousness (black radicalisms), are mobilized in an imagined Asian American tra-

dition that is deployed in the attempt to restore American hegemony in the global marketplace.

The model minority has two faces. The myth presents Asian Americans as silent and disciplined; this is their secret to success. At the same time, this silence and discipline is used in constructing the Asian American as a new yellow peril. In contemporary dystopian narratives of . . . urban America, the Asian American is both identified with the enemy that defeated the United States in Vietnam and figured as the agent of the current collapse of the American empire. The Vietnam War story, told as the tragedy of America's lost innocence, works as a master narrative of national collapse while defining the . . . crisis as a product of invasion and betrayal.

The constant refrain in Vietnam War narratives is that the Americans are unable to see and know, and thereby to conquer, the Viet Cong—reason enough for My Lai, free fire zones, tiger cages, and, ultimately, defeat. The supposed invisibility of the Viet Cong led to the racialization of the Vietnam War. "Gook" became the most common racial epithet used by Americans to describe Vietnamese, enemy and ally alike. Indeed, the supposed invisibility of the communist enemy led American soldiers, who measured the war in body counts, to invoke the "mere gook rule," whereby any dead Vietnamese could be counted as a dead enemy.

The term "gook" has a long history in the American vocabulary of race and in the American imperial career in Asia and the Pacific. A bastardization of the Korean *hankuk* (Korean), or *mikuk* (American), it was used by Americans in the Korean War to refer to North and South Koreans and Chinese alike. The term also has links to "goo-goo," used by American soldiers to describe Filipino insurgents at the turn of the century.

Such broad ethnic inclusiveness makes this racial epithet emblematic in describing Asian Americans as the ubiquitous and invisible enemy. Asian Americans, figured as gooks, the flip



side of the model minority, become the scapegoats onto which anxiety over economic decline and the psychic trauma of the Vietnam War can be transferred. They appear silently, like the Viet Cong, as an alien threat in these narratives of multicultural dystopia and besieged nationhood, at once ubiquitous and invisible, ersatz and inauthentic.

The myth that America lost the war in southeast Asia because it had been betrayed by the liberal elite mobilizes a populist working-class rejection of liberal economic and social policy and lays the foundation for an attempt to restore American hegemony by revitalizing an undivided American people. The theme of betrayal as the cause of America's fall from grace attributes the defeat of the United States in southeast Asia to the sapping of American strength as a result of radical divisiveness and liberal tolerance. This breakdown of American unity is reflected in the breakdown of the traditional American nuclear family. The embattled nuclear family becomes a trope for national unity beset by the divisiveness of feminism, multiculturalism, and class conflict. In this dystopian vision of post-Vietnam America, the Asian American model minority becomes the enemy within, economically productive but culturally inauthentic, and thus unsuitable as model for national restoration.

#### NOTES

1. William Peterson, "Success Story: Japanese-American Style." *New York Times Magazine* (January 9, 1966), 38; "Success Story of One Minority in the U.S.," *U.S. News and World Report* (December 26, 1966), 73.
2. Lee Rainwater and William Yancey, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1967), 79.
3. *Ibid.*, 124.
4. *Ibid.*, 49. The likelihood that Moynihan also drafted Johnson's speech does not negate the point that the speech and the report reflect two quite different ideological tendencies.
5. "Success Story of One Minority in the U.S.," 73-78.
6. Yasuko I. Takezawa, *Breaking the Silence: Redress and Japanese American Ethnicity* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).
7. See H. Mark Lai, "The Chinese Marxist Left in America to the 1960s," in *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (San Francisco: Chinese Historical Association of America, 1992), 3-82.
8. See Bill Ong Hing, *Making and Remaking of Asian America through Immigration Policy, 1850-1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993); Robert G. Lee, "The Hidden World of Asian Immigrant Radicalism," in *The Immigrant Left in the United States*, ed. Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1996), 256-288.
9. See David A. Bell, "The Triumph of Asian Americans," *The New Republic*, July 15-22, 1985, 24-31.
10. *Ibid.*, 30.
11. Stephen G. Graubard, "Why Do Asian Pupils Win Those Prizes?" *New York Times*, January 29, 1988, A35.
12. "The New Whiz Kids," *Time Magazine*, August 31, 1987, 47.
13. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that by the turn of the century, twelve million Asian Americans will make up 4 percent of the national population, and by the middle of the next century Asian Americans will account for 10 percent of the U.S. population.
14. See Bill Hing, *Making and Remaking of Asian America*; Yen Espiritu, *Asian-American Pan-Ethnicity: Bridging Institutions and Identities* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992); and Paul Ong, Edna Bonacich, and Lucie Cheng, eds., *The New Asian Immigration in Los Angeles and Global Restructuring* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 14.
15. See Hing, *Making and Remaking of Asian America*.
16. U.S. Census Bureau Report, 1994.
17. See Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).
18. 1994 U.S. Census Reports.
19. *Ibid.*