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Political Empowerment in the Asian Pacific American Community

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University of California at Berkeley

States is going to go through a change. The only differences are the timing and the magnitude.

It's encouraging that there are people like the two of you who made the decision to go into the public arena, and go in a different direction from what most Asian students have tried over the last ten years. We lack the critical mass but I think we're getting there. ■

The Power of Collective Voice

Kathy Yep

Kathy Yep recently graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Summa Cum Laude from the Ethnic Studies program at the University of California, Berkeley. Working with Asian Americans for Community Involvement, she coordinated the lobbying efforts of a multiracial coalition for a Santa Clara County Hate Crimes Tracking ordinance. She also has worked with the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission researching and analyzing community responses to hate crimes. Kathy plans to attend law school to study employment and hate crimes law.

Hate crimes are defined by California statutes as acts of violence, harassment, or property damage motivated by prejudice due to a victim's race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.¹ Leaving no community untouched, the prevalence of hate crimes is rapidly rising across the nation. In 1990, anti-Asian violence increased 62% nationwide. In 1991, vandalism aimed at African Americans and Jews increased 30%, and in the major metropolitan areas of the United States, anti-gay and lesbian violence increased 31%.²

Within this context of increasing hate violence directed against all groups of color, gays and lesbians, and Jewish people, Asian Pacific Americans are disproportionately targets of race-motivated crimes for their population size. A report on ethnviolence in Boston found that the

"rate of racial violence was significantly higher in the Asian community than for any other racial group from 1983 to 1987." In New Jersey, the attorney general released a report in 1988 that listed Asians as the victims of 26% of racial-bias crimes, although Asians comprised only 1.5% of the population.³

Since the watershed beating death of Vincent Chin in 1982, anti-Asian violence has been located in the forefront of Asian Pacific American consciousness.⁴ While the Asian Pacific American community may have a heightened sense of awareness to racial violence, the issue of anti-Asian violence has yet to be injected into the lexicon of mainstream public discourse. On April 29, 1992, a tempest of rage and fury rocked the entire nation over the miscarriage of justice in the Rodney King beating. Just a few weeks later, a white Los

Angeles Police Officer was cleared of charges for shooting two Samoan brothers, Pouvi and Italia Tualalelei, twenty times in the back.⁵ While both King and the Tualaleleis faced racial prejudice and concomitant police brutality, the Tualaleleis received no comparable public outpouring of support and recognition.

This differential reaction points to the eclipsed reality of anti-Asian violence and Asian Pacific American issues on the whole by the broader community. Anti-Asian violence is an area ripe for study because it has confronted Asian Pacific Americans since their arrival in the United States and because it is symptomatic of broader economic, social, and political dislocations facing the community.⁶ In addition, Asian Pacific American communities have successfully mobilized around issues of anti-Asian violence on national, state, and local levels.⁷

This paper focuses on anti-Asian violence as a means to investigate questions of Asian Pacific American political participation and empowerment. Using a case-study approach, this paper analyzes the community mobilization efforts around three cases of anti-Asian violence which prompted extensive Asian Pacific American community mobilization but minimal coverage by the mainstream press: the 1989 beating of Frank and

Melvin Toy, the 1991 shooting deaths of Pouvi and Italia Tualalelei, and the 1983 stabbing death of Thong Hy Huynh.⁸

The first section provides an overview of each case describing the incident, background of the community, and the type of community mobilization efforts. The next section analyzes the structure of the organizations, whether pan-ethnic or ethnic-based, and examines the role of identity politics in the selection process. Then, the paper examines the type of mobilization efforts on a continuum of reactive mobilization to proactive mobilization. Lastly, the paper explores how the socio-economic class, educational background, and occupational status influenced the placement of the community organizations along this continuum.

This study explores how the socio-economic status and ideology of different Asian Pacific American community members led to certain types of mobilization over others. Socio-economic status, defined as educational background and occupational status, plays an influential role by providing access to financial and technical resources and by providing access to an ideological structural analysis of anti-Asian violence. However socio-economic status alone does not determine the nature of Asian Pacific American mobilization; ideology and identity poli-

tics of the constituents also shape the definition of the "problem" of anti-Asian violence and subsequent "solutions."⁹

I. THE 1989 RACIAL BEATING OF FRANK AND MELVIN TOY

In Castro Valley, California on November 25, 1989, a group of white male teenagers knocked An Won, a 20-year-old Korean man, to the asphalt with blows to the head. As An Won was repeatedly punched and kicked in the head and the body, the youths shouted, "I'm going to kill you f-cking Chinaman." Some of the teenagers then surround-

Castro Valley Asian Pacific Americans transformed their anger and terror into a source of collective action.

ed 28-year-old Chinese American Melvin Toy, wrestled him to the concrete pavement, and beat and kicked him in the head and body. When 59-year-old Chinese American Frank Toy attempted to pull one of the assailants off of Melvin, three teenagers jumped Frank, threw him against the concrete pavement, and kicked Frank in the head and body. Upon hearing sirens from approaching police cars, the attackers fled although one of them yelled to Melvin, "I'll be back Chinaman. You're dead Chinaman."¹⁰ A few hours after the incident, Frank had visible bruising

on his neck, both shoulders, the front of both knees, and on his legs from the hip to the knees. Melvin's eyes were swollen shut and the blood vessels on his eyeballs were hemorrhaging; he continues to suffer from weekly migraine headaches which feel like "someone jabbed a knife in [his] left eye and keeps twisting it." A few days

after the racially-motivated attack, the Toys found ice cream slathered over the windows and doors of their store, the same place where the beating had occurred; and on the day the Toys filed a civil suit, the family received a death threat on their answering machine which

referred to the beating.¹¹

The Community of Castro Valley

A brief background on the suburb of Castro Valley provides context for the hate crime and for the actions of the Asian Pacific American and general community. Castro Valley is a middle class unincorporated community in southern Alameda County of Northern California. With a population of approximately 48,000 people, Castro Valley is 80% Caucasian. According to the 1990 Census, Castro Valley has 9% Chicanos, 8% Asian Pacific

Islanders, 3% African Americans, and 0.4% Native Americans. The Castro Valley Asian Pacific American community is predominately East Asian and middle class. Many of the new Asian Pacific American residents are immigrants from Taiwan and Hong Kong.¹²

The Toy beatings were not an isolated instance of racial violence in Castro Valley. Over the years, the small population of people of color in Castro Valley have endured a wide variety of hate crimes - African American youths severely beaten by three white men who yelled racial slurs, a Palestinian American family physically and verbally threatened by a white neighbor who yelled racial epithets, and Jewish and Black homes painted with swastikas and obscene graffiti.¹³

Despite this history of racial violence, the over 80% white community of Castro Valley has minimized the racial overtones of the Toy beatings (i.e. "It was just a fight. Not racist.") and the brutal nature of the beatings (i.e. "I know the family [of the assailant]. He's a good boy, a minister's son").¹⁴

The Beginning of Asian Americans Together (AAT)

Six months after the beating, many members of the Asian Pacific American community were unaware that the racial-

ly-motivated beating had occurred. When friends of the Toys and former customers wrote scathing letters to the local paper about the poor response on the part of the government, County Supervisor Mary King responded by contacting the Asian Law Caucus, a civil rights organization in San Francisco, California. The Asian Law Caucus then contacted Millie Gee Poon, a former staff attorney and current resident of Castro Valley. On July 25, 1990, thirty Asian Pacific American residents of Castro Valley, including Melvin Toy, met in Supervisor King's office "to voice mutual concerns over recent racially related attacks in Castro Valley."¹⁵ The informal group was named Castro Valley Asian Americans Together (AAT) and the first event organized was a community-wide meeting attended by over 150 people on August 16, 1990.¹⁶

Organizational Activities

AAT's activities are broad-based but center mostly on educational and proactive measures rather than structural or service-providing reform (see Table 1).

Castro Valley Asian Pacific Americans transformed their anger and terror into a source of collective action. A significant portion of the group's focus is on educating community members on the prevalence of anti-Asian violence, their rights,

and the resources available to them. These constructive and active efforts serve to empower community members to be aware of their rights and to demand them.¹⁷

Although AAT did not focus its energies on legal redress for the Toys, the Toys initiated and actively pursued justice through the legal system. At the end of the criminal suit, only one of the assailants, Jon Ramsdell, was tried. Ramsdell plea-bargained down from felony charges and received probation. The Toys then filed a civil suit against the

attackers and the attackers' parents. Five families settled out of court and agreed to pay a total of \$190,000. The sixth defendant, Jerry Gibbs Jr., was ordered by Alameda County Superior Court Judge Ronald Sabraw to pay approximately \$337,000 to the Toys for "medical expenses and other damages."¹⁸

II. THE SHOOTING DEATHS OF POUVI AND ITALIA TUALAULELEI

On February 12, 1991, at 11:41 p.m., Compton police officer Alfred Skiles, a 42-year-old white male, was dispatched to

Table 1: Summary of Asian Americans Together's Activities

EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook Evaluation: reviewed state-approved social science textbooks • Faculty Diversity: evaluated "affirmative action" plan; lobbied for specific hiring positions for teachers of color • Educational Outreach: conducted educational workshops for Asian Pacific Americans for general Castro Valley community; published newsletters
HATE CRIMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim Assistance: advocate for victims; organize neighborhood watch groups • Community Reporting Network: track hate crimes through reporting forum • List crimes in Newsletter
ELECTORAL POLITICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse Candidates: Castro Valley School Board candidate • Staff Government Offices: Alameda County Supervisor Mary King • Encourage Asian Pacific American government appointments (i.e.) Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council • Organized Asian American meeting with Assemblyman Johan Klehs
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate Career Seminar with Asian Pacific American professionals • Conduct College Information and Scholarships • Organize Asian Pacific American speakers in the schools • Recognize youth achievements in the newsletter • Sponsor community art contest: "express heritage through art"

Julie Tualualelei's house in response to her report of domestic violence. Shortly after midnight, Julie's husband and brother-in-law, Pouvi and Italia Tualualelei, drove into the driveway. As 34-year-old Pouvi and 22-year-old Italia stepped out of their car, Skiles approached them and the three men exchanged heated words.

The police version stated that a scuffle then ensued when "one or both of the men allegedly made a grab for Skiles' 9mm handgun in its holster and then Skiles shot at both men." The Tualualelei version stated that Skiles told Italia and Pouvi to kneel and as soon as Pouvi dropped to his knees, Skiles shot Italia and Pouvi.

Both sides agree that Skiles then emptied his semiautomatic pistol at the two men, reloaded, and shot a second clip at Pouvi and Italia. The police version stated that Pouvi and Italia charged Skiles after the first clip was emptied. However, the Tualualeleis contended that after Skiles emptied his first clip of 10 bullets into the back and side of Pouvi and Italia, Skiles walked "calmly and unhurriedly" around the car, reloaded his gun with a second clip, yelled to Pouvi and

Italia to "get on their feet," and then came back and shot his second clip at them. The dead bodies of Pouvi and Italia were lying face down not far from one another. The autopsy showed that Pouvi sustained 12 bullet wounds with eight in the back and Italia was shot eight times with five bullets striking him in the back.¹⁹

The Community of Compton

Compton is located in Los Angeles County, California, and consists of a total

population of approximately 130,000 people. Compton's population is 38% African American, 27% Mexican, 7% White, and 1% Pacific Islander, and 0.2% Native American. Predominately working class, the estimated per capita income of Compton in 1987 was \$6,965.²⁰

To the Samoan American community, the 1991 murder of the Tualualeleis by Compton police officer Skiles fits into a long history of hostile relations and police harassment. The 1991 shooting deaths occurred just after the Samoan community was recovering from a 1989 instance of savage police brutality. In February of 1989, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's

The Samoan community has utilized both institutional and mass protest measures through the political and legal system.

Department responded to a noise complaint in relation to a Samoan American bridal shower in a residential home. Dressed in riot gear, over 100 Sheriff's deputies dragged people out of the home and beat them with clubs after having made them lie face down.²⁰ The outrage over the excessive use of violence in the Tualualeleis' murder was fueled further by the earlier 1989 beatings. Many Samoan Americans believed excessive use of force in both cases stemmed from police internalization of racial stereotypes of Samoans as "big, violent, and primitive."²²

The stereotypes of Samoans as "aggressively violent" were used as a key component by the defense attorney in portraying Officer Skiles' shootings as self-defense. For example, Officer Skiles' defense attorney described Pouvi and Italia as "two beefy Samoans" during the trial and at one point asked the jury: "Wouldn't you be scared a little bit? You would be scared to have these two big Samoans coming at you."²³ The defense attorney skillfully pressed the jury to conjure images of "violent" Samoans in order to justify Skiles' shooting a second clip of bullets into the backs of unarmed Pouvi and Italia.

Samoan Community Mobilization

The Samoan American community has

protested the Tualualelei shooting deaths throughout the entire criminal justice proceedings using forms of both institutional and mass protest (see Table 2). Pre-existing ethnic-based organizations were used to mobilize the community. While the community later formed "Justice for the Tualualeleis Committee," the leadership and structure of pre-existing ethnic-based groups remained the same.

A summary of Samoan community activism around the Tualualelei case shows an emphasis on monitoring the criminal proceedings and organizing. The Samoan community has utilized both institutional and mass protest measures through the political and legal systems. For example, the Samoan Council of Chiefs met with various officials, including the Compton City Council and County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn. The Samoan community also has monitored the criminal proceedings, pressed for both state and federal civil rights suits, and filed for a \$100 million law suit.²⁴

While the Samoan community has been able to use existing structures to voice their concerns over the Tualualelei case, they have also been able to utilize the power of grass-roots, mass community protest. Throughout the entire criminal proceedings, the Samoan community organized mass demonstrations in different

Table 2: Chronological Summary of Events and Samoan Community Mobilization

DATE	EVENT
February 11, 1991	• Pouvi and Italia Tualaualei shot 20 times and killed by Officer Alfred Skiles.
February 19, 1991	• Samoan community in Compton organizes protest demonstrations at El Camino College and Compton City Hall with about 500 people participating.
March 8, 1991	• Autopsy shows that Pouvi and Italia were shot 20 times with most of the bullets hitting them in back.
March 11, 1991	• Samoan students organize a protest demonstration at El Camino College.
March 12, 1991	• Samoan Council of Chiefs organize a demonstration in front of Compton City Hall to demand better communication between police and Samoans, over 500 people participated.
April 10, 1991	• The Tualaualei family files a \$100 million lawsuit against the police.
October 16, 1991	• Officer Skiles is charged with two counts of voluntary manslaughter and released on \$30,000 bail.
October, 1991	• Tua'au Pele Faletogo, chairperson of the Samoan Council of Chiefs expresses outrage over manslaughter charges to the press.
April 27, 1992	• Trial against Officer Skiles begins.
April 28 - May 1, 1992	• Trial interrupted because of uprisings over acquittal of Los Angeles Police officers who beat Rodney King.
May 13, 1992	• Jury deadlocks 9-3 in favor of acquittal. Judge Reid declares a mistrial.
May 18 - 18, 1992	• Samoan community holds meetings to encourage non-violent response to the mistrial.
May 19, 1992	• Los Angeles County Samoan community meeting of 150 people denounces the hung jury.
May 21, 1992	• Over 250 protesters march for two hours outside the Compton Courthouse. Police officers posted at corners and helicopters flying overhead.
May 29, 1992	• A second protest demonstration is held outside of Compton courthouse to protest the mistrial.
June 3, 1992	• Los Angeles Superior Court Judge John Reid refused to allow prosecutors to retry Skiles on two manslaughter charges since "no jury would convict Skiles with the same evidence."
June 3, 1992	• Samoan American community activists hold a news conference to urge the U.S. Department of Justice to open an investigation into civil rights violations.
Summer, 1992	• Fulavallili Ala'ilima, Riyad Koya, and other Samoan activists issue a press release to solicit support for a letter-writing campaign to the District Attorney's office to file hate crimes violations.

areas of the community -- schools, churches, etc. These mass protests have served to raise awareness about the Tualaualei case in both the Samoan community and the community-at-large.

Some efforts have been made to link the Tualaualei case with the broader problem of anti-Samoan violence perpetrated by the police. For example, the Samoan Council of Chiefs asked for the reopening of past cases of possible police misconduct against Samoans by the District Attorney's Office, hiring of more Samoan police officers, offering classes in Samoan culture for officers on the force, and creating an autonomous office to investigate police brutality complaints. However, unlike AAT and DARE, these broader issues are seen as peripheral to obtaining justice in the Tualaualei case. At this time, the main purpose of the organizing efforts is to raise the consciousness of the Tualaualei case and to demand proper legal recourse. However, the Samoan community may broaden its scope of organizing after the legal proceedings have concluded, as the Asian Pacific American community did in the Vincent Chin case.²⁵

III. THE STABBING DEATH OF THONG HY HUYNH

After weeks of racial tension and verbal altercations, on May 4, 1983, at about

10:30 a.m., Russell "Rusty" Clark and James "Jay" Pierman, two white students, confronted 17-year-old Thong Hy Huynh, Bon Chau, and two other Vietnamese students. After using racially derogatory remarks, Clark struck Bon Chau in the face at least two times. Pierman warned the other Vietnamese students not to interfere with Clark and then visibly waved a military-like knife around. When Chau hit the side of Clark's head with a backpack full of books, one Vietnamese student jumped on Pierman's back. As Huynh approached Pierman's right side, he was stabbed twice below the rib cage. Huynh died two hours later while receiving emergency surgery.²⁶

The morning of Huynh's funeral, leaflets and stickers carrying the banner of the "White Student Union" were distributed around the Davis High School campus. The leaflets decried the influx of non-whites to California and accused immigrants of taking jobs away from white people. Several months after Huynh was killed, a memorial planter box for Huynh was spray-painted with swastikas and the epithet, "Death to Gooks." In the summer of 1985, the Huynh memorial was defaced with the words "free James Pierman" and swastikas.²⁷

The Community of Davis

Davis is an affluent college town locat-

ed in Yolo County in Northern California, a short distance away from the state's capital, Sacramento. With a total population of approximately 47,000 people, Davis is 80% white. According to the 1990 Census, Asian Pacific Islanders are the second largest racial group at 13%, followed by Chicanos, African Americans, and Native Americans in descending order of population size.²⁸ The Davis Asian Pacific American community is a blend of old and recent immigrants -- East Asians involved in agriculture for generations, working class Southeast Asian refugees entering the agricultural labor market, and middle class Hong Kong and Taiwanese immigrants.

As a predominately white, middle class, college community, Davis appears to be politically "progressive." However, before and since Huynh's stabbing death, Davis community members have been subjected to a wide range of racist incidents. For example in 1984, white male high school students circulated a petition urging Mexican American students to return to Mexico, and in October 1991, a bomb threat and racial slurs were left on the answering machine of the Asian American Studies Department at UC Davis.²⁹

The Beginning of Davis Asians for Racial Equality (DARE)

A year after Huynh's stabbing death, two murders provided the impetus for the formal organizing of Asian Pacific Americans in Davis. In February of 1984, Nai-Yan Li, a Chinese visiting scholar, was struck by an automobile and in April 29 of 1984 Tzieh-Tsai "Frank" Luo, a Taiwanese visiting scholar, was stabbed to death outside of apartment by an assailant. While racial motivation was never clearly established in these two murders, the coincidence of the racial background of the victims less than a year after Huynh's murder heightened the Asian Pacific American community's sense of anxiety and fear. To address these concerns, on the evening of March 16, 1984, approximately 100 people participated in a candle-light march from the UC Davis campus to Davis City Hall.³⁰ After the march, the Davis Police Department contacted march organizers and "requested that they assist the police in being more responsive to Asian American concerns." Asian Pacific American community members who gathered to discuss these goals eventually formed Davis Asians for Racial Equality (DARE).³¹

Covering a broad range of areas, DARE has battled racial violence in many arenas (see Table 3). These activities include both proactive projects such as educational outreach in primary and sec-

Table 3: Summary of Davis Asians for Racial Equality's activities

CATEGORY	ACTIVITY
Huynh Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commemoration - donated money for memorial, lobbied for inscription.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Dissemination - published quarterly newsletter since Summer of 1985 - conducted recruitment and outreach at Davis community events
Primary and Secondary Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Dissemination- participates in quarterly "Friendship Days" at Davis High School which encourage cross-cultural friendships and exchange -donated 200 books related to Asian Pacific Americans to the public schools - lobbied for and assisted "Fifth grade immersion project on discrimination"
Media Portrayal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored workshop on Asian stereotypes in film, television, and ads • Participates in KQVR Channel 13 Television Asian Advisory Task Force to provide input and programming ideas to the station
Civil Rights Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in national redress movement for Japanese American internment - Sponsored ads in 3 local newspapers about "Day of Remembrance" ceremonies - Distributed info. on how to file for redress and reparations • Lobbied against government removal of Mrs. Iwasaki, a 83-year old widow and Tule Lake internee, from her land • Investigated "Asian Romance," a mail-order bride company based in Davis
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruited Asians and other people of color for employment in School District
Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-sponsored 1985 School Board Candidates' Forum • Participates on Davis High School and on city Human Relations Commissions • Published analysis of Davis boards and commissions
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local: lobbied for tracking ordinance • State: lobbied against 1986 Proposition 83 - English Only, 1986 Proposition 84 - adverse impact on AIDS, and 1986 Proposition D - undo civil rights legislation • Federal: lobbied against 1986 executive order to ban affirmative action
Hate Crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized around issues such as light sentence of white murderer of an Asian man • Conducts reports of hate crimes • Coordinates workshops about responding to racism and legal resources • Co-sponsored report analyzing hate crimes in Davis from 1983 to 1991
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiled a resource list of translators to volunteer for 24-hour dispatch center • Conducted Police training on interpersonal skills and human relations • Recognize people of color in the police force

ondary schools, and reactive projects such as incident reporting and victim assistance.

This wide range of projects shows how DARE conceptualizes anti-Asian violence in a broad sense and along different axes. For example, when DARE investigated an Asian Mail Order Bride company, it illustrated that anti-Asian violence must be analyzed along both racial and gender lines. When DARE spoke out against the broadcast of a white supremacist movie, it was targeting cultural violence.³²

DARE was not involved in the legal proceedings against Huynh's murderers. DARE member Dick Nishi observed that the Davis Asian Pacific American community was "too green" at the time. However, Nishi notes that the Asian Pacific American community learned from the experience and now have organized a formal structure to monitor incidents and subsequent legal proceedings.³³

IV. DISCUSSION

In this section, the two main areas of inquiry will explore how these three respective communities structured their organizations, along pan-ethnic or ethnic lines, and how they selected their types of mobilization, reactive or proactive.

Structure of Organizations

Perpetrators of anti-Asian violence

often blur the distinction among the Asian ethnicities when directing their hate. Since all Asian Pacific American community members are subject to anti-Asian violence, it seems that most Asian Pacific Americans would form pan-ethnic organizations. However, this is not necessarily the case. The Compton Samoan community decided to form an ethnic-based advocacy organization whereas the communities in Davis and Castro Valley formed organizations around the pan-ethnic umbrella of "Asian American." The case studies show that the ethnic-based form of organizing is more beneficial for some communities and the pan-Asian organizing for others. Ideology and population size interacted dynamically to guide one community towards ethnic-based and the others towards pan-Asian organizations.

Population Size

In all three cities, the Asian Pacific American community comprised a small portion of the total population (12% in Davis, 8% in Castro Valley, and 0.3% in Compton).³⁴ The Asian Pacific American communities in Davis and Castro Valley responded to their small population size by forming a new organization and casting the widest net possible for membership and recruitment.

The Samoan community in Compton

bypassed the limitations of their small population size by utilizing pre-existing ethnic-based organizations which encompassed Samoans in all of Los Angeles County. Although the Compton Samoan community is relatively small in numbers, they see themselves in connection with other Samoan communities in Los Angeles County. As a result, they plugged in their relatively small community of 1,295 in Compton into a community of over 12,000 spanning Los Angeles County.

When the Samoan community responded to the killing of the Tualaleleis and the subsequent criminal proceedings, it used existing internal structures such as the churches and the Samoan Council of Chiefs which represents 36 area chiefs in Los Angeles County. To illustrate, in preparation for the Skiles verdict, the Samoan Council of Chiefs organized a

the Samoan community of Compton does not necessarily perceive "Asian Pacific America" as inclusive of their experiences

community outreach effort in which leaders spoke at churches, schools, and community centers to urge a peaceful response.

Population size plays a role in selecting the structure of the organization, but is not a sufficient explanation on its own.

For example, the Davis Vietnamese community could have addressed its small population size by linking with the Sacramento Asian Pacific American community instead of forming a pan-Asian organization in Davis. The limits of population size as an explanatory factor lead to the discussion of the role of ideology and identity politics.

Ethnicity, Age Group, and Asian America

The ideology and identity politics of the constituents greatly influence the decision to organize a pan-ethnic or ethnic-based shield. To understand the use of pan-ethnic organization, it is critical to understand the origins of the pan-Asian rubric as a political tool. Professor Michael Omi describes the context from which the concept of "Asian Pacific American" evolved:

"The term 'Asian American' was a political label that emerged in the 1960s. It was meant to convey the similarities in the historical experiences of primarily Chinese,

Japanese, and Pilipinos, and their respective treatment at the hands of various white institutions."³⁵

As Omi points out, only certain sectors of the Asian Pacific American community employ the pan-ethnic nomenclature. Mostly participants in the 1960's civil rights movements and college students enrolled in Asian American Studies courses embrace the concept of an "Asian American" identity and organize based on a pan-ethnic principle. Both the 1960's participants and the college students have been exposed to and accept the framework of "Asian Americans." Similarly both have been exposed to and accept the use of the political construct as a paradigm for analyzing institutional, cultural, and individual racism against Asian Pacific Americans.

AAT and DARE both organized as pan-Asian organizations, and many of the members fit the profile of individuals who would use the pan-Asian identity. Many members of AAT and DARE were in college during the civil rights movement and/or actively participated in the civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam war movement, and the 1969 Third World Strike at San Francisco State and University of California at Berkeley. For

example, Millie Gee Poon, co-founder of AAT, participated in the creation of the UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies program as an undergraduate during the Third World Strike. In her interview, Poon spontaneously linked this background with her organizing efforts around anti-Asian violence in Castro Valley. Given their personal history in the civil rights movement, individuals transferred a consciousness of "Asian American" to their organizing against anti-Asian violence. The use of the pan-Asian rubric in Castro Valley and Davis was a natural progression for the AAT and DARE members.

Similarly, the ethnic-based organization in the Tualualele case is a logical extension of the identity politics of the Compton Samoan community. While the construct of "Asian America" may be empowering and utilized as a basis of mobilization by certain sections of the Asian Pacific American community, not all Asian ethnic groups identify themselves as part of "Asian America." Professor Omi describes how the increasing diversity in the Asian Pacific American community changes the context for identifying with a collective "Asian American" community:

"The new immigrants, encompassing a diverse range of class origins and ethnic identi-

ties, make it increasingly difficult to speak of a "shared" [Asian American] experience. [For example] the life of a third-generation Japanese American . . . is very different from that of a recently arrived Hmong refugee."³⁶

Unlike the predominantly East Asian communities of Castro Valley and Davis, the Samoan community of Compton does not necessarily perceive "Asian Pacific America" as inclusive of their experiences, and therefore did not join or create a pan-Asian organization.

The supposedly "shared" Asian Pacific American experience was not viewed as inclusive of the specificity of Samoan and Samoan American context. Community organizer Riyad Koya delineates the distinctions between Samoan and Asian Pacific American concerns:

"Asian Pacific American concerns are primarily demographically and culturally based with East Asian and Pilipino concerns. Samoans and other Pacific Islanders are demographically, culturally, and [often] socio-economical-ly distinct [from these ethnic

groups]. The Samoan community has stronger cultural and political links with other indigenous and colonized communities such as Hawaii, American Samoa, Native Americans, Micronesia, Guam, Belau, Puerto Rico."³⁷

Because of this unique and specific context, many members of the Compton Samoan community felt the need for ethnic-based advocacy groups. When working within a pan-Asian organization, there is too great a risk for the specific needs of the Samoan community to be subsumed.

For the small Asian Pacific American communities in Castro Valley and Davis, the predominately East Asian community members embraced the pan-ethnic rubric to bring together the different parts of the small Asian community. For the small Samoan population in Compton, members of the Samoan community identified and organized as Samoan Americans and not as Asian Pacific Americans. With this ethnic-based strategy, the Samoan community had immediate access to pre-existent advocacy structures, as well as avoiding the possibility of a predominately East Asian pan-Asian organization not addressing their specific needs. Thus, all three communities selected an organizational

structure which maximized the conditions in their community and also reflected their political ideology about racial identity.

Type of Mobilization

The three case studies show the various forms of community mobilization efforts (i.e. mass protest, educational outreach, legislation) in a variety of institutional settings including schools, the courts, media. The three communities'

mobilization efforts can be classified along a continuum from the narrow scope of "reactive mobilization" to the very broad scope of "proactive mobilization."

"Reactive mobilization" is advocacy that responds to a problem, for example legal suits, hate crimes tracking, reporting, and victim assistance. This type of organizing addresses the needs and concerns of

the community after an incident of anti-Asian violence has occurred and is geared towards handling the symptoms and aftermath. An example of this type of mobilization is lobbying the U.S. Department of Justice to file federal civil rights violations

in the Tualaualelei cases. Law suits can address immediate needs and provide tangible results, and they have the potential to impact other hate crimes by setting a precedent. The legal route attempts to remedy the situation in the aftermath of the hate crime.

Reactive mobilization provides critical support for immediate needs in the crisis situation, but the tools of social change within this category are limited. For

example, by working with the legal system, the problem of anti-Asian violence is limited to pre-existing legal definitions. If a violent racial act does not "fit" the legal criteria, then by implication this humiliating act is not a "hate crime." The community can organize only within the restricted time frame and structure dictated by the criminal justice system. In this way, the players in the legal sys-

tem which include the law enforcement officers, the district attorney, the judge, the jury etc. hold discretionary power over the community in defining the hate crime. As a result, the community is placed in a position of responding to these actors and are

Although a community may be limited to the legal definitions of a hate crime, focusing efforts on legal justice addresses immediate concerns and provides a potentially high yield of results for relatively small input.

shunted out of "defining" the problem and the solutions.

"Proactive mobilization," which lies on the opposite end of the mobilization continuum, serves to create alternatives. Transcending the narrow legal definition of "hate crimes," proactive mobilization organizes around a more broad definition of "hate violence." This broader definition highlights the structural nature of racial violence and embraces the wide spectrum of verbal and physical violence, as well as institutional and individual violence.

Proactive projects attempt to address the structural causes of hate violence and focus upon institutions which replicate and perpetuate hate violence - school, media, legislature, workplace. For example, in the area of education, the dearth of information about Asian Pacific Americans in the curriculum is connected to anti-Asian violence. Accordingly, DARE donated over 200 books related to the history and culture of the Asian Pacific American experience to the Davis public schools.³⁸ DARE donated materials which would "encourage and compliment school district's efforts to improve cultural awareness and acceptance."³⁹ This donation of books recognizes the context of anti-Asian violence as symptomatic of ignorance of racism and the history and culture of different racial groups. Changes

in the curriculum combat the perpetuation of stereotypes and anti-Asian revisionist history and also provide materials for Asian Pacific American students to learn about themselves as subjects and not objects. Consequently, the development of racist attitudes and perceptions can be quelled.

This example of proactive mobilization in the area of education illustrates how the Asian Pacific American communities situated hate crimes against the broader context of anti-Asian violence. Anti-Asian violence was conceptualized as symptomatic of broader economic, social, and political dislocations on institutional, cultural, and individual levels. Proactive mobilization involves appropriating the power of definition and rearticulating the problem and thus reasserting the community's own subjectivity.

Although addressing the causes of anti-Asian violence is crucial, these projects work on a long-term framework and do not address the immediate needs of survivors of hate crimes and their community. Proactive mobilization does not necessarily cover the basic necessities of the crisis situation.

Although the distinction between reactive and proactive may be blurry in some instances, this framework serves as a means to classify, compare, and interpret

the different forms of community organizing. This comparison of reactive and proactive mobilization is not meant to suggest one is more effective than the other or that they are mutually exclusive. As the organizing efforts in Davis and Castro Valley demonstrate, reactive and proactive mobilization can co-exist and overlap.

Selecting a Type of Mobilization

Given the range of mobilization efforts along this continuum, what leads community groups towards one end of the spectrum over the other? This section examines how ideology and socio-economic resources influenced the interpretative leap from the "fact" of anti-Asian violence to the different kinds of policy formation.

The socio-economic characteristics of the different Asian Pacific American community members shaped the definition of the problem of anti-Asian violence and the development of certain types of mobilization over others. In a middle class community like Castro Valley, the Asian Pacific American community organized proactively and reactively. In a working class community like Compton, the Asian Pacific American community organized reactively. In a socio-economically diverse community like Davis, middle class, college-educated, professional Asian Pacific Americans took the leadership role and

guided the organization towards both proactive and reactive forms of organizing. Two possible factors involved in these patterns of mobilization are exposure to ideology and access to resources.

Exposure to Ideology

A college education provided exposure to ideologies and analytical frameworks correlated with structural proactive mobilization. For example, many of the college-educated members of DARE studied Asian American Studies in college and participated in student of color movements. The Asian American Studies courses provided the space to dissect and analyze paradigms on race, class, and gender hierarchies such as internal colonialism and the revolutionary writings of scholars like Albert Memmi, Antonio Gramsci, and Franz Fanon. As a result, they were made aware of and employed the structural analysis of racism to DARE's agenda. In addition, the fact that DARE's projects target both the causes and symptoms of anti-Asian violence can also be correlated with DARE's strong organizational ties to the Asian American Studies program at the University of California at Davis. The educational background provides exposure to causal and structural analysis of anti-Asian violence and generates the resources to implement the projects.

Access to and Utility of Existing Resources

Availability of resources from educational background, occupational status, and socio-economic background can either increase or limit immediate access to avenues of addressing anti-Asian violence. Community organizations framed the problem of anti-Asian violence in a way which utilized the existing resources of their members. For example, the occupational status of "professional" provided access to many resources and areas of reform. Teacher's aides provided an entree for AAT into the primary and secondary school system. Professors and students provided access for DARE to the resources of the University of California at Davis Asian American Studies program. Lawyers and law students of AAT and DARE provided knowledge of civil rights statutes and the inner-workings of the legal system. Finally, the middle class status of AAT and DARE members provided the financial resources and the time to maintain a non-profit organization.

Similarly, the amount of socio-economic resources shaped the availability and viability of options for the Samoan community in Compton. As a working class community, the Samoan community received the greatest utility of resources through the legal system, since it requires

the least amount of economic and political power. Theoretically, individuals regardless of race and socio-economic background are subject to the same protection and punishment under the law.⁴⁰ Historically, disenfranchised groups with limited resources turned to the legal system for justice over other avenues of social change. June Jordan describes the role of legal social change for the African American community; many parallels to the Compton Samoan community exist in terms of the limited available options for social change:

"Redemption from this North American purgatory of institutionalized and hallowed racism could not come to Black people through money - we did not have any of that; or through numbers - we were the few among many who despised us; or through political power - we possessed no legal access to political power. Our route to redemption was the law."⁴¹

As Jordan suggests, the limited access to other options of social change pushes the legal system to the forefront as the most viable option for social justice. Although a

community may be limited to the legal definitions of a hate crime, focusing efforts on legal justice addresses immediate concerns and provides a potentially high yield of results for relatively small input.

Both working class and middle class communities selected reactive mobilization avenues. However, because middle class organizers had greater exposure to ideological structural frameworks and/or greater access to resources, middle class Asian Pacific American communities also included proactive mobilization efforts.

V. SUMMARY

Thong Hy Huynh, Pouvi Tualualelei, Italia Tualualelei, Melvin Toy, and Frank Toy were violently killed or brutally beaten because of their race. Members of the different Asian Pacific American communities channeled their rage, despair, and fear from the violence into a powerful source of collective mobilization.

The Asian Pacific American communities in Castro Valley, Compton, and Davis provide blueprints for organizing against anti-Asian violence in both predominately white suburbs and predominately people of color neighborhoods, working class

and middle class communities, as well as pan-ethnic organizations or ethnic-based organizations. The three communities studied employed a wide spectrum of organizing strategies ranging from reactive to proactive measures -- educational outreach, mass protest, legal redress, electoral political participation, research analysis, etc. While both ends of this spectrum

are effective and needed, proactive mobilization allows the community to move from objects of the hate crime to subjects who define the causes and symptoms of hate violence; the Asian Pacific American community is injected as the principal actor rather than being

shunted as an external observer of the decision-making process.

The selection of strategies is shaped by the socio-economic status of the constituents. Resources such as socio-economic background, occupational status, and educational background influenced the availability of time, access to institutions, and exposure to frameworks. For example, exposure to analytical and political frameworks in college led to more structural and long-term analysis and a middle class background provided access to the

The selection of strategies is shaped by the socio-economic status of the constituents.

resources to pursue long-term projects. Similarly, limited resources led to reactive projects such as a law suit which would yield greater results from relatively minimal input. In a predominately middle class community or in a socio-economically diverse community, the Asian Pacific American communities organized both reactively and proactively. In predominately working class communities, the Asian Pacific American community so far has organized only reactively. The case studies demonstrate a correlation between the type of mobilization and the availability of resources.

This paper examined how the Asian Pacific American community defined the problem of anti-Asian violence and crafted solutions around these definitions. More specifically, the paper discussed what types of organizing the Asian Pacific Americans selected and explored the relationship between ideology and socio-economic class in influencing why certain avenues were selected over others. Future research should move to a different level by exploring why certain types of anti-Asian violence are "defined" as anti-Asian violence and used to mobilize the Asian Pacific American community. For example, what is the relationship between organizing efforts against domestic violence and rape with the Asian Pacific American

movement against "anti-Asian violence?" These lines of inquiry focus on questions of what and why certain forms of anti-Asian violence garner mass mobilization over other forms of anti-Asian violence.

The analysis of what communities did and why they selected certain avenues of reform over others also leads to other questions about the nature of mobilization efforts in the Asian Pacific American community. In California, Asian Pacific Americans are the fastest growing minority group. Nationwide the Asian Pacific American population is expected to triple in the next three decades.⁴² From 1980 to 1990, Asian Pacific Americans increased their population by 193% nationwide and 127% in California.⁴³ How will these striking demographic changes interact with the nature of political mobilization if the resources of constituents shape the venue for organizing? Will socio-economic status, educational background, and occupational status of immigrants influence the kind of mobilization? Will the typology of mobilization follow ethnic- and class-based patterns?

In terms of the type of mobilization, the case studies demonstrate that middle class, college educated, professional Asian Pacific Americans organized in both proactive and reactive forms whereas working class communities utilized limit-

ed resources with reactive mobilization. If this framework were to be applied to recent immigrants, then a working class Laotian immigrant would be likely to organize reactively if in a predominately working class Asian Pacific American community and organize both proactively and reactively in a diverse socio-economic Asian Pacific American community.

However, socio-economic status is an insufficient determinant by itself. Ideology and identity politics also play a critical role in shaping the nature of mobilization, as discussed in the structure of organizations section regarding pan-ethnicity. The cases demonstrated that exposure to ideology and structural paradigms were connected to proactive mobilization. In other words, even though an Asian Pacific American community may have access to many resources, without the ideological structural analysis, they may not necessarily organize in proactive areas. For example, a recent, affluent Taiwanese immigrant may have the resources to organize in reactive and proactive areas, but he/she may not have been exposed to, accept, or employ ideological structural analysis of racism which would lend towards proactive forms of organizing. In sum, there are at least two crucial factors to observe as the Asian Pacific American community rapidly expands -- how the

economic resources and ideological exposure to structural analysis interact in relation to the placement on the mobilization continuum.

These questions are of critical importance to the Asian Pacific American community due to dramatic demographic changes. As the largest group of legal immigrants in the United States, the Asian Pacific American community faces an urgent challenge to effectively mobilize and stake out its place in a rocky political, social and economic terrain. The development of this political muscle is an evolutionary process. These case studies on anti-Asian violence provide a window into a phase of this evolution. ■

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Appendix 1-A:

Vincent Chin and Contemporary Campaigns Against anti-Asian Violence

Current community mobilization efforts around anti-Asian violence are shaped and influenced by previous contemporary Asian Pacific American mobilization campaigns. To adequately understand the case studies, it is critical to understand the legacy of the organizing campaign around the Vincent Chin murder.

On June 19, 1982 in Detroit, Michigan, Vincent Chin, a twenty-seven-year-old Chinese American, was fatally bludgeoned in the head by two white male unemployed autoworkers, Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz. Ebens and Nitz, mistaking Chin for Japanese, had yelled, "Its because of you mother f-cking Japs that we're out of work." Ebens and Nitz were sentenced to three years probation and fined \$3000.

Outraged by the outcome of the criminal proceedings, the Detroit Asian Pacific American community formed American Citizens for Justice (ACJ) to pursue justice in the Chin case.

Eventually, a federal jury convicted Ebens of civil rights violations and acquitted Nitz. However, the Ebens conviction was overturned on a technicality and at

the retrial, Ebens was acquitted. At the conclusion of the legal proceedings, Ebens and Nitz never had to spend a day in jail for beating Vincent Chin to death (Espiritu, p.143).

ACJ organized on many fronts: a national letter-writing campaign with over 15,000 letters sent to government officials and the press, a fund-raising campaign with speaking tours by Chin's mother and ACJ representatives, mass demonstrations, and a publicity campaign with coverage by both national and local networks. Asian Pacific American communities also mobilized around the Chin case (i.e. San Francisco Asian Americans for Justice and Southern California Justice for Vincent Chin Committee). Eventually, ACJ formed the Asian American Center for Justice to monitor anti-Asian incidents and provide other social services for Asian Pacific Americans (Espiritu, pp. 140 - 151).

Despite the disappointing results in the legal arena, the Vincent Chin case was a watershed in several ways. One, Chin's beating death and subsequent miscarriage of justice were wake-up calls to Asian Pacific Americans across the country that they were not part of the "American" fabric and that any Asian ethnic group was a potential target for anti-Asian violence (Espiritu, p. 145).

Two, the advocacy around the Vincent

Chin case constructed the framework for Asian Pacific Americans to be "more willing to speak out on the issues of anti-Asian violence" (Espiritu, p. 153). The Vincent Chin campaign was the first national Asian Pacific American campaign organized specifically around anti-Asian violence as the lead issue. This marked the beginning of a proliferation of Asian Pacific American organizations geared primarily towards addressing anti-Asian violence (i.e. Break the Silence Coalition in San Francisco, Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence in New York City) and the creation of racial violence projects within existing civil rights organizations (i.e. Boston-based Asian American Resource Workshop, San Francisco-based Asian Law Caucus, Philadelphia-based Asian Americans United and Los Angeles-based Asian Pacific American Legal Center).

Three, the Asian Pacific American community learned from the Chin murder how to monitor the legal system prior to the conviction and how to lobby regarding anti-Asian violence. During the legal proceedings in the Vincent Chin case, organizers learned how to actively monitor and lobby the proceedings. In later anti-Asian violence cases such as the 1989 beating death of Jim Ming Hai Loo in North Carolina, the 1989 shooting deaths of five Southeast Asian schoolchildren in

California, and the 1992 beating death of Luyen Phan Nguyen in Florida, the Asian Pacific American community mobilized prior to the legal proceedings by utilizing techniques and networks developed from the Chin case.

Four, the community formed a pan-ethnic organization over an ethnic-based organization to address the Chin case and anti-Asian violence. Although the organizers in the Chin case were largely Chinese American, the group decided to organize under a pan-ethnic umbrella.

Five, the Chin campaign provided an example of Asian Pacific American organizing with tools of social change previously unavailable to the community due to discriminatory policies (i.e. *Ozawa v. United States (1922)* which forbade Asian immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens). Political scientist Don Nakanishi notes that "these discriminatory policies delayed Asian Pacific American political participation until the second and subsequent generations during the post-World War II period" (Nakanishi). With these changes and greater access to political, legal, and educational systems, it is critical to examine how the Asian Pacific American community could utilize these avenues of advocacy.

Appendix 1-B:

I. BACKGROUND ON ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE:

The three cases are a part of an evolutionary movement of Asian Pacific American political participation in general and specifically around anti-Asian violence. The three hate crimes were the product of over 100 years of anti-Asian institutional, cultural, and individual violence. In *Asian Americans: An Interpretative History*, Professor Sucheng Chan classifies the history of anti-Asian violence into seven main categories: prejudice (i.e. "model minority myth" and "welfare dependents"); economic discrimination (i.e. California 1913 Alien Land Laws and 1850 Foreign Miners Tax); political disenfranchisement (i.e. 1790 Naturalization Law and 1922 Ozawa case); physical violence (i.e. 1908 Live Oak, California, expulsion of Asian Indian farm laborers); immigration exclusion (i.e. 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and 1934 Tydings-McDuffie Act); social segregation (i.e. 1850, article XIX of the California State Constitution and 1933 California anti-miscegenation laws); and incarceration (i.e. World War II incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans) (Chan, pp. 45 - 58). As each Asian ethnic group immigrated to and settled in the United States, they were con-

fronted with varying forms of anti-Asian violence. The recent increases in anti-Asian violence continues a pattern of over 100 years of institutional, cultural, and individual hate violence.

II. CAUSES OF ANTI-ASIAN VIOLENCE: INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LINKS

The nature of the United States' relationship with Asian nations impacts Asians in America. The United States has an extensive history of military conflicts against Asian countries: the 1898 Philippine War, the 1942 World War II and postwar involvement with Japan, the 1954 Korean War, the "cold war" with Communist China, the Vietnam war beginning in 1962 and military involvement in Southeast Asia until the mid-70's, and most recently, the 1991 Persian Gulf War. With the many wars against Asian countries, the role of the "enemy" is easily displaced onto Asian Pacific Americans. The hostility is transferred to Asian Pacific Americans who become the perpetual "foreign-enemy-other" (California Attorney General, pp. 25-26).

Correlations between military conflicts with Asian countries and domestic anti-Asian violence are demonstrated by the unconstitutional imprisonment of 120,000 people of Japanese Ancestry after the U.S.

entered World War II, the 1989 beating death of Chinese American Jim Ming Hai Loo by white men who blamed Loo for their brothers' deaths in Vietnam, and the anti-Arab graffiti and vandalism targeting many Arab Americans during the 1991 Persian Gulf War (U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, *Issues Facing Asian Americans*, p. 26).

Economic Downturn

Historically, economic downturn often leads to the scapegoating of Asian Pacific Americans and other people of color. Professor Sucheng Chan cites examples of anti-Asian violence during periods of economic crisis: "The string of arson in California [targeting Chinese] in 1877 took place at a time when the effects of the depression of 1873 finally reached California and the 1930 Watsonville riot [targeting Pilipinos] occurred during the depths of the Great Depression" (Chan, p. 53).

With the end of the "Cold War," the United States faces deficit spending, high unemployment, and the absence of an "evil empire" to justify its military spending. As a result, the new "evil empire," or scapegoat, is Japan, with its alleged "unfair trading practices" and "buying of America." Newscasts in the early 1980's showed disturbing images of "autowork-

ers and others in Detroit slamming at Japanese-made cars with sledgehammers" (Espiritu, p. 142). In 1982, Chinese American Vincent Chin was beaten to death by two white male unemployed auto workers who yelled, "it's because of you motherf-cking Japs that we're out of work" (California Attorney General, p. 43).

Media Portrayal

Stereotypes, ethnic slurs, and caricatures abound in varying forms of media which serve to perpetuate and perpetrate anti-Asian violence. For example, recent movies such as "Mr. Baseball" and "Rising Sun" perpetuate the the myth of Japanese economic invasion even though most foreign-owned real estate is owned by British and Dutch investors (California Attorney General, p. 26). The myth of "Japanese buying America" is just one end of the continuum of hate violence which ends with physical violence.

The veiled racialized meaning of "buy American" and the potential for physical violence is clear. When a Southern California elementary school teacher asked her sixth grade class to draw what they thought "Buy American" meant, children drew pictures of bombs dropping and of people kicking a man with slanted eyes. The artwork of the 10- and 11-year-olds demonstrates the internalization of the

racial implications of "Buy American" and the powerful influence of the media in perpetuating violence against Asian Pacific Americans (Hayashi).

Asian Pacific American Population Changes

Currently, Asian Pacific Americans are the fastest growing minority group in the United States. The total Asian Pacific American population in the United States has grown five times in the past three decades, jumping from 500,000 in 1960 to 7.3 million in 1990. Studies estimate that by the year 2050 the total Asian Pacific American population will leap to 38.8 million (Hatamiya, p. 6).

Increasing population size translates into greater visibility. The historical record shows that increases in Asian Pacific American immigration have led to immigration restrictions and exclusion. Immigrants are often perceived as depriving white Americans from jobs or as burdening the economy by freeloading of the welfare system (Asian Resource Workshop, p. 6). In April of 1991, for example, California Governor Pete Wilson publicly blamed the influx of Southeast Asian refugees and other immigrants for exacerbating the estimated \$12.6 billion budget deficit by relying on educational, health, and welfare services (Chen, p.

A18). With this current economic context of high unemployment and dramatic Asian Pacific American population increases, the rapid expansion of the Asian Pacific American community promises to be a factor in shaping the future of race relations and anti-Asian violence.

Appendix 1-C:

Methodology:

Data was gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included key informant interviews and organizational documents. Key informant interviews were conducted with a cross section of people involved in some capacity with the case studies: Asian Pacific American organizers, Asian Pacific American community members, hate crimes litigators, etc. Organizational documents include newsletters, press releases, brochures, and reports. Key informants were identified through the snowball method of referral. Secondary sources included periodical articles, government reports, journal articles, and books. Periodical articles ranged from mainstream (i.e. *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Examiner*) to vernacular sources (i.e. *Asian Week*, *Pacific Citizen*). Government reports ranged from federal (i.e. U.S. Civil Rights Commission) and state (i.e. California Attorney General), to local (i.e. City Council).

Case Study Selection

After a general review of anti-Asian violence cases from 1980 until 1992, the three case studies were selected because they highlighted different aspects of the

same criteria -- ethnicity of victims, socioeconomic class of Asian Pacific American community and general community, type of mobilization, and ethnic structure of organizing. Although generalizing from only three case studies does have constraints, the in-depth analysis of three cases will hopefully counterbalance these limits.

Terminology

Throughout the paper, "Asian Pacific American" is used as a general pan-ethnic term to refer to all Asian ethnic groups.

The terms "hate crimes" and "hate violence" are not used interchangeably. "Hate violence" refers to violence perpetrated at the institutional level (i.e. World War II incarceration of 120,000 people of Japanese Ancestry), cultural level (i.e. movie portrayals), and individual level (i.e. verbal racial epithets yelled by one person to another). In addition, "hate violence" encompasses both verbal and physical violence and is perceived as a product of political, economic, and social dislocations.

"Hate crimes" is considered a subset of hate violence and refers to a narrow legal definition. According to California statutes, hate crimes are defined as "acts of violence, harassment or property damage motivated by prejudice due to the victim's race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation" (State Bar of California).