The Asian Pacific American Challenge to Race Relations

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Introduction

The "race problem" has followed us into a new millennium. W.E.B. DuBois' argument that the "color line" was society's problem of the Twentieth Century is applicable to the Twenty-first Century. At the same time, much has changed. Blatant and state-sanctioned racism has disappeared, yet racial inequality persists. We still face the enormous challenge of achieving racial justice, but the nature of the issues and cast of actors have been transformed. Further progress requires us to formulate strategies and policies that address current realities, including those linked to Asian Pacific Americans (APAs).

This volume examines how Asian Pacific Americans are redefining racial concepts, race relations and race-related policies. Over the last three decades, the APA population doubled every ten years. According to the Bureau of the Census, there were approximately 10.5 million in 1998, and we project that there will be at least 20 million by the year 2020. With this dramatic growth, APA issues should no longer be ignored in policy debates. APAs have taken the initiative to push these concerns onto the national stage. One question is how should this group be included. Unfortunately, responses are often polemical, based on narrow group interests, with some APA organizations and leaders insisting on participation on the same terms as other minority groups and some non-APA organizations and leaders taking the opposite position. The policy question is frequently postulated as whether APAs constitute a disadvantaged minority or a part of the advantaged segment of society. This is, however, not a productive way to frame the discussion.

Difficulties in resolving inconsistencies suggest that the prevailing black-white paradigm of the "race problem" has seriously flaws. The limitations are mostly felt by APAs struggling with group identity and politics, but the problem is more pervasive. New concerns are confounding the national debate. Beneath the polemics is a conundrum because APAs do not fit widely held assumptions about race relations. One major challenge is whether the core of the black-white framework can be preserved by absorbing new ideas such as multiculturalism and diversity. The alternative is a radical transformation, a new approach to race relations. Regardless of how this question is resolved, it must be done without diminishing the moral obligation to remedy racial inequalities.

An informed discussion requires an understanding of the material conditions of APAs, and an assessment of the political debates and processes in disparate policy arenas. The findings from the original research reported in this book uncover common elements of a new framework encompassing all racial groups and their concerns. The book also includes policy essays identifying effective practices and institutional arrangements that enable APAs and non-APAs to work together productively. The ultimate goal of the participants is to redefining the principles that form a collective vision of what this nation ought to be with respect to race. Their contributions are based on reconceptualizing notions of social groupings and relationships, and reformulating public policies.

THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK

The current framework is predicated on a widely accepted concept of race and the forces generating inequalities, and is modeled after the black experience vis-à-vis whites. Racial grouping is a societal, economic and political construction with enormous ramifications at the individual and collective levels. Racial membership is ascriptive, where group assignment imposes liabilities and confers privileges. This

grouping takes on a collective self-consciousness when racial solidarity becomes instrumental in protecting and enhancing group status, or in fighting oppression. A racial hierarchy is created and maintained by stereotypes and prejudices that overtly and subtly shape individual behavior, by institutionalized racism that systemically limits opportunities, and by a historical legacy of discrimination that disadvantages subsequent generations. The outcomes are both glaring and deplorable—a disproportionate number of minorities are economically marginalized, politically disenfranchised, residentially segregated, and under-served by basic institutions like public schools.

During the latter half of Twentieth Century, public policy has evolved progressively to encompass strategies to eliminate discriminatory practices within the government, to fight overt employment and housing discrimination in the private sector, to correct *de jure* and *de facto* biased institutional practices, and to establish affirmative action programs to remedy past injustices. These efforts have been accompanied by others to improve race relations, with much of the activities occurring at the local level through human rights/relations agencies and grass-root efforts. In implementing policies, membership in a racial minority has become a pragmatic and convenient operating principle. Over time, this nation has developed classes of protected populations that are entitled to participate in government sponsored programs. The use of a simplistic racial criterion for government action, however, creates a potential conflict with some deeply held values, such as individualism and equal protection. This inherent tension in race-based policies has been exploited by its opponents to attack affirmative action.

The present policy framework faces another difficulty because it does not easily encompass all nonwhites. Obviously, African Americans fully fit the paradigm. This match is based on the fact that African Americans have dominated the Civil Rights Movement, the political force behind race-oriented policies. The black-white experience has

defined the popular image of what constitute prejudicial attitudes, discriminatory behavior, biased institutional practices, and racial inequalities. This black-based framework has been stretched to encompass other minorities. This same paradigm fits American Indians, who in many ways are more disadvantaged than African Americans. While Hispanics are not a racial group in a narrow sense of the term, they too have been considered a disadvantaged population covered by race-oriented policies. APAs are more problematic, a group that is disadvantaged in some arenas but not in others. The elasticity of the black-based framework, however, is finite. American Indians, Hispanics and APAs raise issues outside the existing paradigm: sovereignty rights, immigration and nativism, and ethnic rather than racial concerns.

THE CALL FOR A NEW DIRECTION

One indication of the growing complexity of race relations is found in President Clinton's speech that was delivered on June 14, 1997, at commencement at the University of California at San Diego:

> To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans, but the classic American dilemma has now become many dilemmas of race and ethnicity. We see it in the tension between black and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers, in a resurgent anti-Semitism even on some college campuses, in a hostility toward new immigrants from Asia to the Middle East to the former communist countries to Latin America and the Caribbean—even those whose hard work and strong families have brought them success in the American way.

Of course, race relations in America have always been more diverse than black-white relations, but the President's remarks correctly identied a pressing need to move beyond the bipolar framework.

The increasing complexity of race relations comes at a time when current strategies have come under political and judicial scrutiny. For example, recent Supreme Court rulings have restricted the use of remedial programs, requiring the government to demonstrate compelling reasons for public action and to develop programs narrowly tailored to remedy specific problems. The passage of California's Proposition 209 (the "California Civil Rights Initiative" to end affirmative action in admissions to public colleges and universities, in public-sector employment, and in public-sector contracting) represents a growing public concern and uneasiness with race-based policies. At the same time, there is unfinished business. Racial inequality and injustice are still too prevalent, and racial tensions and conflicts are on the rise.

While affirmative action has received much attention, the debate is broader. In a search for a new direction, the President has called for a "great and unprecedented conversation about race." The message is that we should not retreat from a commitment to fighting racial injustices. The task, as framed by the President in the area of affirmative action, is to "mend not end," and this task applies equally to other aspects of race relations. The desire for a new perspective is not just one person's opinion. Polls taken prior to the vote on Proposition 209 show that a majority believe that racial discrimination remains a major problem that must be addressed. The debate was, and continues to be, over how far government should go to ensure fairness, to fight discrimination, and to improve inter-group relations. This question cannot be answered by just repeating the justifications from the 1950s and 1960s. A meaningful national dialogue requires incorporating new and emerging race realities.

THE ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN CHALLENGE

APAs present a major challenge to the existing framework on multiple fronts. Their experience raises questions about the nexus between being a minority group and being disadvantaged. Although a

disproportionate number of APAs live in poverty and some subgroups experience extremely high welfare usage, these phenomena are not rooted in the failure of domestic American institutions. Instead, the problems are linked to the educational limits and political upheavals of the home country of immigrants and in the failures of America's foreign policy. Moreover, this population as a whole is not economically disadvantaged as indicated by median income and earnings, and there is a disproportionately high number of APAs in prestigious and higher paying jobs. While APAs are underrepresented among voters and elected officials, political disenfranchisement is linked to a lack of citizenship, which is being gradually rectified through acculturation and naturalization. While many are under-served by basic institutions like public schools, this problem is due to a lack of appropriate cultural and linguistic facilities than to traditional racism. And while many APAs live in enclaves, residential segregation is lower than for other minorities. For many, the decision to live in a segregated community is driven by a voluntary desire to associate with others of the same ethnicity.

There are also differences regarding how race is played out. APAs are subjected to stereotypes but not just negative ones. In fact, there is a widely held view of this group as a model minority. We can agree that stereotypes, regardless of nature, are undesirable because they reduce all members to a simple caricature, but it is also important to acknowledge that the prejudices against APAs are more benign than those for other minority groups. APAs do suffer from institutionalized practices that limit employment opportunities, but the most widely discussed restriction is a "glass ceiling" to top management position. This is dramatically different than the gross underrepresentation in all desirable jobs experienced by other non-whites. APAs enroll in record numbers at elite universities but are subjected to biased admissions decisions aimed at capping their share. Finally, APAs have suffered from past discrimination—for example, immigration exclusion, restrictions on

naturalization and political participation, and mass incarceration—but the historical legacy is not a personal one for most. Only a minority can directly link their family history to these past wrongs; nonetheless, APA history serves as a powerful reminder of the potential for a nation to do evil with respect to race.

APA realities are changing the nature of race politics by inter-jecting ethnicity. Community activists and advocates have promoted pan-Asianism, but this identity is fragile. Subgroups have insisted on maintaining their national identities. This can be seen in the incorpo-ration of ethnic groups (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, etc.) into the racial categories for the decennial census. APAs are also altering the notion of race as a dichotomous hierarchy. This is most apparent in the uncomfortable role of Korean merchants in the inner-city, in which they are depicted as both exploited and exploiters. In these situations, inter-group conflicts entail interactions between members of minority populations. The notion of race is also being contested by individuals of mixed parentage. Persons who are part-APA comprise a disproportionate share of the multiracial category because APAs have a high rate of out-marriages, and many of these multiracial individuals have been adamant in expressing their combined racial heritage, thus challenging the notion of mutually exclusive racial categories.

The incongruencies discussed above point to severe weaknesses in the current race framework. We are left with plausible claims for including APAs in race-oriented policies and programs and contradictory reasons to doubt these claims. One could argue that APAs constitute an exception to the rule or that their problems should be recast as immigrant issues. Neither, however, is acceptable politically or intellectually. One cannot ignore that many elements of the APA experience are tied to their status as a racial minority, and APAs themselves are not likely to abandon their claim to a place at the table in the debate over race and race-related policies. So far, the contradictory claims have been worked out piece-

meal, with *ad hoc* solutions based on situation-specific compromises. These tenuous solutions represent an uncomfortable truce that can only temporarily allay an escalating frustration with the prevailing framework.

To assess the APA impact on race relations, this project assembled a multi-disciplinary team of nationally renowned researchers and scholars to examine various issues and topics. Because of a paucity of information in several areas, the project sponsored original research by Pauline Agbayani-Siewert (University of California, Los Angeles), Yen Le Espiritu (University of California, San Diego), Tarry Hum (Queens College and New York University), Taeku Lee (Harvard University), Michael Omi (University of California, Berkeley), Paul M. Ong (University of California, Los Angeles), Edward J.W. Park (University of Southern California and Loyola Marymount University), Leland T. Saito (University of California, San Diego), and Michela Zonta (University of California, Los Angeles). The research has produced empirical studies covering six areas:

- Attitudes on race and race-oriented policies.
- The political construction of racial categories.
- Affirmative action.
- Residential segregation and integration.
- Multiracial collaborations and coalitions.
- APAs and human rights/relations programs.

Each study tackles an important question and offers policy recommendations.

The project also invited five experts to write policy essays. An essay does not require new research, and the contributors used their previous work, experience and knowledge to address major policy questions. The writers were encouraged to take normative stances, arguing what ought to be. Three of the essays examine issues in the

United States, and the other two examine issues in the United Kingdom and Australia. The essayists includes Christine Inglis (University of Sydney), Robert Lee (Brown University), Angela Oh (Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race), Shamit Saggar (University of London), and Karen Umemoto (University of Hawai'i at Manoa).

The book is organized into four parts, mixing both case studies and essays when appropriate. Part one examines the way race is constructed within institutions and perceived by individuals. Part two focuses on racial interactions, including the degree of residential contact, race-bias crimes, and the response by human relations agencies. Part three includes chapters analyzing race-related policies in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. The final part explores "new possibilities" to guide how APAs should constructively transform race relations in this nation.

Summary of Analytical Studies and Policy Essays

PART I: RACIAL IDENTITIES

This part of the book looks at the concepts of race, focusing on the ways racial classifications, concepts and attitudes are defined, negotiated, debated and constructed. The first chapter is by Yen Espiritu and Michael Omi, "Who Are You Calling Asian?: Shifting Identity Claims and Racial Classification, and the Census," which explores racial terms used in the official count of the population. In 1980 and 1990, Asian American legislators, community leaders, and advocacy groups successfully maintained ethnic breakdowns within the Asian/Pacific Islander "racial" categories. Over the years, other political claims have arisen. Some groups have increasingly questioned the appropriateness of their group being counted as part of the APA category, and multiracial APAs have challenged the notion of mutually exclusive racial categories and demanded new ways to categorize racially mixed people. Espiritu and Omi examine the following questions:

- What types of political claims have APA groups made for inclusion (or exclusion)?
- How do different groups want to be defined and represented?
- What is the slippage between individual conceptions of identity, group collectivities, and state definitions?
- What is the significance of a multiracial category or the allowance of
  multiple racial check-offs?
- What is the impact of "moving" certain groups (e.g., Native Hawaiians) out of the APA category?
- What are the differences between federal and state/local classifications of APAs, and what are the policy implications that result from these differences?

To answer the above questions, the authors draw on a range of data sources, including recent census studies and surveys on race and ethnicity questions, selective state and local documents on race/ethnic classifications, and interviews with key APA constituencies (e.g., multiracial Asians, Native Hawaiians, Asian Indians). The analysis starts with a review of how APAs have been an object for racial classification for over a century, with categories changing to accommodate the racism of each decade.

The rest of the chapter takes up four case studies. The first case study is on Asian Indians. The convoluted history of how this group has been classified illustrates how the concept of race is subject to constant revision—driven by shifting demographic trends, changing concepts of race, and claims for political/legal recognition. The second case study focuses on the largely unsuccessful efforts by Filipinos to separate from the APA grouping. A major incentive for requesting the reclassification was possible economic gain derived from affirmative action programs, along with a desire to emphasize the group's unique cultural and racial identity. The third case study examines the successful reclassification of

Native Hawaiians for the upcoming 2000 Census. The creation of a new category was spurred by the claims of Native Hawaiians that the Asian and Pacific Islander category failed to recognize their status as an indigenous population. The final case study documents how multiracial Asians challenged the practice by the Bureau of the Census to assign individuals to a single racial category. The United States has always been a nation of blended racial and ethnic groups, and those of a mixed heritage have demanded the right to be counted as such. As a group with a high rate of interracial marriages, multiracial APAs played a role in changing federal policy to allow individuals to declare more than one race on census forms.

Espiritu and Omi's analysis offers a detailed and nuanced account of current debates regarding the racial/ethnic classification of APAs. The study provides an important window to examine how this group is situated in the broader politics of race in the United States. The ability of APAs to interject ethnicity into the classification scheme disrupts the black/white framing of racial issues. Clearly, racial identity can be reconstructed and negotiated. The authors, however, caution that achieving ethnic recognition is not sufficient. APAs often disappear with respect to official reporting of racial and ethnic statistics, and remain unacknowledged with respect to major policy decisions.

The conceptualization of race and its meaning is not just shaped by official classifications but also by the knowledge, beliefs, and experiences of ordinary individuals. Taeku Lee's chapter, "Racial Attitudes and the Color Line(s) at the Close of the Twentieth Century," examines public attitudes about race relations and APAs within a multiracial context. Because race relations are shaped by notions and values held by individuals, analyzing popular opinion and political preferences is critical to understanding how APAs are situated in American society. The chapter focuses on answering the following questions:

- How commonly do APAs and others experience racial

discrimination?

- What beliefs do different groups hold about discrimination, racial inequality, economic conflict, and the opportunity structure in the United States?
- Do APAs' views on these matters align with whites, do they exhibit a multiracial consciousness, or do APAs occupy a distinct "third space" on racial matters?
- Do negative stereotypes and sentiments about APAs exist?
- Are white, black, and Latino views on public policies affecting APAs determined by antagonistic attitudes?

To answer these questions, Lee analyzes several recent media polls that include significant numbers of APA respondents, including those conducted by the *Washington Post* (with the Kaiser Foundation and Harvard University), *Los Angeles Times*, *Asian Week*, and *San Francisco Chronicle*/KRON/KQED. Additional information comes from several academic surveys: the Los Angeles County Social Survey, the Los Angeles Survey of Urban Inequality, and a University of Massachusetts poll.

The analyses offer three major findings. First, there is a clear but complex hierarchy to racial attitudes. Black and white opinions are at the two ends of the racial order with the relative position of APA opinions (along with Latino opinions) shifting with issues. At times, APAs are closer to whites, and at other times they are closer to other minorities. Second, APAs are distinguished by a high level of personal experience with discrimination and a diversity of attitudes varying by ethnicity, region, and length of residence in the United States. Third, opinions by non-APAs are influenced by knowledge of and interactions with APAs. These opinions in turn influence attitudes over government policies that impact the Asian Pacific American community.

Robert Lee provides a historical and contemporary view of how racial identity is externally imposed. In the essay chapter, "Fu Manchu

Lives! The Asian American as Permanent Alien," he argues that APAs have been made into a race of foreigners, the Orientals. This unique racialization is deeply imbedded in American culture, but like other "irrational" constructs, the images are frequently contradictory and subject to change, depending on particular historical circumstances. Despite being sometimes mutable, this ascriptive identity has stubbornly resisted eradication. At one level, APA racialization is based on "color." This is exemplified by the use of the infamous "Yellowface" in the March 1997 cover of *National Review*. That illustration used racist Asian features (buck-toothed, squinty-eyed, stereotyped clothing, etc.) as caricatures of the Clintons and Vice President Al Gore to depict the political corruption associated with illegal campaign contributions. The singling out of Asians through the characterization is in itself telling, but the cover also reveals that the racist image of APAs is tied to both physical and "exotic" cultural features.

For Lee, the designation of yellow as the "color" of the Oriental is a prime example of the social construction of a racial identity. As a group, APAs occupied a particular position within the economy and society. They were feared as unwanted cheap labor, unassimilable heathens, sexual deviants, and more generally, the "Yellow Peril." Equally important, the racial identity is intertwined with the notion that the Oriental is indelibly alien. Besides being based on exotic cultural misconceptions, APAs as aliens is also a political and legal status. Historically, this group had been denied full membership in American society. They were barred from citizenship, from interracial marriage, from owning land, and from bearing witness in trials. The tragic consequences of being permanent aliens reached an apex when 110,000 Japanese Americans, two-thirds of whom were citizens by birth, were incarcerated because they were considered potentially dangerous foreigners. Overt bigotry and anti-Asian hostility have waned since World War II, but the racialization of APAs still continues. In recent

decades, two competing and contradictory images prevailed, the "model minority" and the "gook." The emergence of a positive stereotype, nevertheless, does not negate the fact that APAs have not escaped from the imposition of an externally defined identity, one that continues to be predicated on the notion of a race of permanent aliens.

PART II: RACIAL INTERACTIONS

The second part of the book focuses on the ways racial groups interact with each other in several arenas, and explores ways people and institutions address interracial issues. Collectively, these studies capture the diversity and intricacies of inter-group relations.

Tarry Hum and Michela Zonta's chapter, "Residential Patterns of Asian Pacific Americans," examines one of the most visible aspects of racial interaction, the neighborhoods where APAs live. The dramatic growth of the APA population over the last three decades has transformed many urban and suburban neighborhoods throughout this nation, and this transformation has added to the complexity of the relationship between residential choice and race. Race and ethnicity influence housing patterns but certainly not to the extent that prevailed in the past. After a century of housing discrimination sanctioned by state and local governments, the period following WWII provided opportunities for APAs to choose their residential locations. What emerged was a high degree of residential assimilation that mirrored the acculturation of the predominately U.S.-born Asians of this period. Although ethnic communities such as Chinatown continued to exist, APAs in general were no longer an isolated racial group by the late 1960s. During the 1970s, the majority of APAs lived in predominantly non-Asian neighborhoods where they constituted a small minority. The movement toward integration, however, slowed in subsequent years as immigration played a key role in attenuating residential integration. In the 1990s, APA

settlement patterns were highly complex and varied with both the reemergence of historic enclaves in the central city and new communities in the suburbs, including "satellite" Chinatowns and "ethnoburbs."

Their study addresses the following questions:

- What is the level of APA residential segregation relative to other minority groups, and how does segregation vary by demographic factors?
- How do factors such as the racial composition of neighbor hoods affect residential choice?
- What are the trends and characteristics of old and new ethnic enclaves?

To study the patterns of residential settlement among Asian Pacific Americans, the authors examine the level of housing segregation and integration for the top 30 metropolitan areas with the largest APA populations using 1970, 1980 and 1990 census tract level data. They use the dissimilarity index to measure the spatial distribution of different groups and the degree of contact or interaction between minority and majority group members. They examine how demographic factors across metropolitan areas and over time influence neighborhood-level outcomes. The study uses micro level data (the 1993-1994 Multi-City Survey on Urban Inequality) to provide information on neighborhood preferences, i.e., the reasons why people select their residential locations. The findings provide important insights on APA attitudes and preferences that contribute to locational decisions and patterns of residential integration and segregation. To examine ethnic enclaves, Hum and Zonta examine neighborhoods within the four key metropolitan areas: New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Oakland. This analysis uses both the 1990 Census data and more recent data from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to elaborate on APA immigrant settlement.

Karen Umemoto's chapter, "From Vincent Chin to Joseph Ileto: Asian Pacific Americans and Hate Crime Policy," examines one of the most unfortunate aspects of interracial interactions: racially motivated violence. Her chapter provides an overview of hate-crime policy, presents data describing the nature and magnitude of the problem for APAs, discusses the challenges that hate crimes and related policy discourse pose for race relations and, finally, discusses recommendations for research, policy and organizing. Her analysis relies on both published and unpublished data.

Hate crimes are extreme manifestations of personal antagonism toward a group of people, including vandalism, threats, assaults and murder. While the victims are individuals, hate crimes are also considered acts against groups and society. The federal government and several states have recognized the uniqueness of these actions as special crimes. When it is demonstrated that a crime is motivated by racial bigotry, the law allows for enhanced penalties. Despite the importance in dealing with hate crime, there are several problems, including the lack of local laws in several states, under-reporting, and inconsistent enforcement. Consequently, the recorded crimes, especially the most visible and heinous ones covered by the media, are only the tip of a larger problem.

Like other minority groups, APAs have long been victims of hate crimes. The beating death of Vincent Chin is the most well-known case of a hate crime against an Asian, but there are hundreds of cases. The number of nationally reported crimes averages close to 500 per year, but this is a severe undercount because many, particularly immigrants, are reluctant to report such crimes. A review of the evidence shows that anti-APA violence is caused by several factors: perceived or real economic competition, prejudice and bigotry, and scapegoating APAs for social ills. Umemoto examines 1994-97 data from Los Angeles, California, one of the most diverse places in the world, to gain additional insights into the

nature of hate crimes involving APAs, both as victims and as perpetrators. They were victimized equally by Latinos and whites and less frequently by African Americans. In contrast, the racial group most often victimized by APAs was African American. These findings, however, should be placed in a larger context and complex picture. Members of all races are victims as well as perpetrators, and hate crimes against people of color are perpetrated by whites and people of color. Hate crime is a multiracial phenomenon.

Umemoto concludes with several recommendations: improve reporting, strengthen hate crime legislation, develop law enforcement protocols that are culturally sensitive, support APA and other community organizations addressing hate crimes, build multiracial coalitions and a human relations infrastructure, and conduct research to better understand and address underlying sources of conflict.

How society responds to new racial tensions and conflicts is determined in part by the ability of its institutions to adapt. Pauline Agbayani-Siewert's chapter, "Asian Pacific Americans and Human Rights/Relations Commissions," examines how these agencies respond to the growing presence of APAs. While many of these agencies were initially concerned with systemic problems in housing, schooling and employment, over time, the human rights/relations organizations have taken on a narrowly defined set of activities, including conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity training, leadership training, and providing forums for inter-group discussion. In recent years, HRCs have faced new changes due to declining resources, new developments and understanding of race relations, and new forms of inter-group (especially between minority groups) tension and conflict, many of which involve Asian Pacific Americans. The chapter analyzes the nature and extent of group tensions and conflicts, the responses of human rights/relations organizations, and the effectiveness of conflict-resolution through negotiation and mediation.

The study relies on an organizational analysis of agencies in large and moderate-size urban areas (Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, Austin and New York) and a detailed review of conflicts involving APAs. Published materials and news accounts are utilized to determine each agency's structure (e.g., public institution, private institution, public-private collaboration), staff size and composition, membership on its governing body, history and stated mission, mechanisms utilized to carry out its mandates, and sources and funding. Most of the detailed insights come from interviews with key individuals involved with the agencies.

One of the positive findings is that most human relations agencies and APA community members shared a common vision of going beyond ethnic/minorities as separate groups with separate issues and concerns. Achieving this vision will require meaningful APA participation in both the agencies and city government.

PART III: NATIONAL RACE POLICIES

Nowhere is the national debate over race-based policies more heated than over affirmative action. Paul M. Ong's chapter, "The Affirmative-Action Divide," examines the APA position in this divisive ideological battle. Over time, affirmative action has emerged as the contested boundary defining how aggressive government ought to be in correcting racial inequality. The battle has been waged within governmental agencies, in the courts, and more recently on ballots. APAs are materially and ideologically on both sides of the political divide, with some adamantly supporting and others vehemently opposing the policy. To understand how APAs are aligned, the chapter focuses on the following questions:

- What is the status of APAs relative to whites and other minorities in education, employment, and business?
- How does socioeconomic standing affect APA participation in

affirmative action programs?
- What is the political position of APAs on affirmative action in particular, and race-based policies in general?

The analysis relies on Current Population Survey data, EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) data and reports, and annual reports on minority-business programs. The chapter also relies on opinion polls, secondary material, and unpublished sources.

The statistical evidence reveals a mixed picture of high achievement in education, partial parity in employment, and sub-performance in business. The diversity in outcomes points to a multi-faceted racial structure rather than a simple dichotomous racial hierarchy. Variations in socioeconomic status translate into differences in APA participation in affirmative action programs. They bear some of the cost of affirmative action in education, make some selective gains through employment programs for targeted occupations, and are fully incorporated into contract set-aside programs for minorities. Because of this spread, APAs have taken competing political positions in pursuit of both self-interest and broader principles. Some have argued that "preferential treatment" for other minorities hurt APAs, but others have defended the policy as necessary for increasing APA presence in public-sector employment and contracting. Despite this heterogeneity, a majority of APAs believe that some type of race-oriented policy is needed to address racial inequality.

The next two chapters offer different views on how Asians have influenced national discussions on policies related to race in the United Kingdom (U.K.) and Australia. The term Asians is used because the two nations do not have an official term equivalent to the Asian/Pacific Islander (A/PI) category used in the United States. This is not surprising since the A/PI category is a socially constructed concept anchored to circumstances in the United States. Interestingly, all three nations have a large white majority, a dominant culture with a common

English root, and an APA/Asian population that constitutes an estimated 4 to 5 percent of total population. Despite these similarities, there are significant differences, such as in the size of the black population, the ethnic composition of the Asian population, and the way race is discussed within the policy arena.

Shamit Saggar provides a British perspective. His chapter "Asians and Race Relations in Britain," starts with a review of the historic context of post-war immigration and recent statistics on the components of multiracial Britain. The next section focuses on Asian participation in employment, education and mainstream politics. The final section explores the Asian public policy agenda. The study relies on both published census data, voting information, and opinion surveys.

Saggar notes that immigration has been the driving force behind the emergence of a multiracial and multicultural society. The inflow started during the 1950s with the recruitment of migrants to fill labor shortages, followed by chain migration through family reunification starting in the 1970s, and finally by the in-migration of politically displaced refugees. Most immigrants came from the former British colonial empire, that is, from areas with nonwhite populations. Asians comprise the single largest racial group among all immigrants, with South Asians being the majority of Asian immigrants. As a consequence of this movement, the relative number of nonwhites has increased dramatically. By the early 1990s, Asians and blacks comprised 5 percent of the total population. Asians account for approximately two-thirds of the nonwhites, making them the largest racial group. The initial growth of the minority population interjected race into policy discussions. The first wave of immigrants led to a racialization of the "immigration question," but that divisive debate eventually waned. During the 1960s, Britain pursued an integration policy to address discrimination and promote cross-cultural awareness. This approach appears to have had some success because compared with the situation in other European

countries, ethnic minorities in the U.K. are better integrated. This is not to say that race has disappeared from the policy arena, but race does not have the same potency as in the United States. One indicator of the difference is the fact that there are few supporters of race-based policies in the U.K., even among its minority population.

It would be too simplistic to attribute the current moderate view on race-based policy to the effectiveness of the integration policy. After all, the United States pursued a similar policy during the 1960s but without the same results. The difference may be due to a lack of a domestic legacy of slavery and an absence of a black dominance of minority politics in Britain. Instead, Asians have a substantial influence on race relations, and that influence is shaped by the group's material status. This group is overrepresented at the bottom end of the occupational distribution, but is also roughly at parity with whites at the top end of the spectrum. There are, however, ethnic differences in this class structure, with Indians faring considerably better than other South Asians. Despite this ethnic difference, youths from all Asian groups have high access to education, with enrollment rates well above that for whites (and blacks). A common thread among Asians, then, is a heavy reliance on education for inter-generational mobility. Asians also have an impressively high level of participation in electoral politics (above that for other groups), and while the number of elected Asians is below parity, there is an upward trajectory. Within politics, there is another common thread among Asians, a strong preference for the Labour Party, which tends to have a progressive policy agenda.

Despite the commonalities, Saggar concludes that there is an "absence of convincing evidence to demonstrate high and enduring levels of ethnic-based political consciousness among this group." Their high level of economic, social and political incorporation mitigates against the formation of a reactive racial identity based on opposition against being marginalized. Moreover, internal ethnic and class divisions are barriers

against pan-ethnic politics. The consequence is a moderation of the use of race by Asians. At the same time, there is still a unique "Asian dimension" to a number of policy questions, which is shifting away from immigrant concerns as the number of British-born Asians increases.

Christine Inglis provides another perspective from halfway around the world in the chapter "Asians and Race Relations in Australia." The chapter starts with a review of the history of Asian immigration, which parallels the history in this country. Inglis then turns her attention to the impacts of the most recent wave of immigration, which commenced in the 1970s. She uses census and other data to examine both the composition of immigrant population and its implications. Finally, she explores the policies and politics affecting Asians.

Asian immigration to Australia dates back to the 1850s when Chinese migrated in search of economic opportunities in Victoria's gold fields. They were soon met by racially-motivated hostility and violence, and by anti-Asian laws. The antipathy took on moral overtones with the popular press depicting the Chinese as opium-smoking degenerates and destroyers of white women. Anti-Asian racism slowed but did not entirely stop immigration from Asia. The Chinese were later joined by smaller numbers of other Asians, particularly from India and Japan. By the end of century, even that small flow came under attack. The campaign to erect the "Great White Walls" culminated in the Immigration Restriction Act at the beginning of the 20th century, which put into place the White Australia Policy. Despite some limited exemptions for Asian immigration, the policy led to a gradual decline of the Asian population. A reversal started in the post-World War II period, when the country gradually relaxed its restrictions. The major break with the White Australia Policy came in 1973, when Australia enacted a non-discriminatory immigration policy.

The renewal of substantial Asian immigration has had a major demographic impact. Asians comprised less than one percent of the total

population after World War II but over two percent of the population by 1986. A decade later, Asians (immigrants and their children) made up over 5 percent of the Australian population. The Asian population is ethnically diverse, with South East Asians comprising over a half of all Asians, Far East Asians comprising another third, and South Asians comprising the final sixth. The economic character of the Asian population has been shaped by the 1973 immigration policy. Although many entered through family reunions and as refugees, a substantial number took advantage of the openings for highly skilled professionals and wealthy business entrepreneurs. Asians with advanced degrees from Australia and other English-speaking countries have been incorporated into the middle-class. On the other hand, those with an education from non-English-speaking countries have had difficulties translating their credentials into comparable employment. There is also a significant number of marginalized refugees with very limited education and marketable skills.

Australia does not have an explicit race-based policy, at least not in the same way as in the United States. Instead, Australia has pursed a policy of multiculturalism, which was institutionalized in the late 1970s. Since the late 1980s, the policy has emphasized the promotion of diversity and the reduction of social disadvantage. According to Inglis, this strategy "has been remarkably successful in ensuring the incorporation of diverse groups into a previously very homogenous society in an equitable and surprisingly non-contentious manner." All is not perfect, however. Many Asians still experience discrimination, a sizable minority of whites has negative feeling about Asians, and racist politics erupts periodically. However, as Inglis points out, the current hostility is not a replay of the anti-Asian movement of the 19th century. Considerable gains and rights have been won, and additional progress can come by strengthening multiculturalism.

The comparison of the three countries reveals that the role of race

in national politics and policy is contingent on historical and contemporary factors. All three nations have a history of racism and anti-Asian hostilities, and have attempted to eliminate institutional forms of racism in the post-World War II era. Each nation, however, has taken a different path. Race remains central to politics and policy in the United States but not in the United Kingdom and Australia. A part of this is due to the size and composition of the minority population. In the United States, where African Americans constitute the largest minority group, black activism and white resistance have shaped race relations. The growing presence of APAs (and Latinos) is transforming this situation, but the transformation has been difficult and so far incomplete. In the United Kingdom, Asians have emerged as the majority among nonwhites, which effectively precludes a simple black-white framework to race. Asian concerns have moved the political discourse away from a purely race-oriented one, although race cannot be totally ignored. Australia appears to have gone the furthest in dismantling the centrality of race, replacing it with a policy of multiculturalism. Australia is also the country where Asians are the overwhelming majority of the nonwhite population.

The APA/Asian experience in all three countries points to two common phenomena. First, class plays a key role structuring the APA/Asian influence. A significant proportion of the APA/Asian population is comprised of the highly-educated who are incorporated into the middle-class. Their class interests moderate minority politics. Second, the APA/Asian experience reveal the importance of immigration and foreign affairs. In the new global order, even domestic race-related politics has become intertwined with international politics. Again, how that nexus is played out varies from one country to another. The diversity, however, can be a blessing. The United Kingdom and Australia can offer alternative models of what is possible.

Part IV: New Possibilities

The chapters in the previous sections of this book examine the issues and problems associated with the APA impact on race relations. This final section examines what ought to be done to improve race relations. Responding to new racial realities requires not only transforming existing institutions such as human relations agencies, but it also requires developing new ones. Leland Saito and Edward Park's chapter, "Multiracial Collaborations and Coalitions," examines multiracial coalitions in cities across the United States. The efforts are part and parcel of the "New Urban Race Relations," which is embedded in a globalization of the economy and a demographic transition created by an influx of Asian and Latino immigrants. As Saito and Parks note, recent immigrants bring new multiracial complexities that are not easily absorbed into the existing political process and structure. This eventually moves racial politics gradually from "the simplicity of white over black discrimination to the more nuanced and complex dynamics of 'post-Civil Rights' politics."

To understand the new urban politics, Saito and Park focus on grassroots efforts that provide "lessons" on what may or may not facilitate cooperation among diverse racial groups. The analysis includes four case studies of multiracial relations: the mayoral campaign of African-American Lee Brown in Houston; redistricting in New York City involving Chinatown; high school violence in the San Gabriel Valley of Los Angeles County; and the campaign to support union jobs in Los Angeles. These case studies cover a range of ethnic and racial groups, class positions, and issues, situated in different regional and political contexts. The major research questions are:

- How, and under what circumstances, do such formations emerge?
- Can the participants successfully articulate a common agenda, and if so, how?

- How do they address potentially divisive questions?
- What are the limitations of such efforts?

The study utilizes in-depth interviews, which provide information about the history, issues, goals, participants, methods of collaboration, and community context. The interviews are supplemented by archival research and other historical data.

Their analysis produces four major findings. First, racial coalitions emerge when groups are able to set aside short-term objectives to address more fundamental issues such as making public institutions more accountable and fighting for a living wage. Second, successful coalition building resists narrow race-based politics, while clearly recognizing the importance of race in society. APAs must be willing to transcend their own interests when addressing the broader problem of racial inequality, and other groups must be willing to make room for APAs. Third, building alliances requires establishing and sustaining relations among individuals and organizations. A track record of working together, constructing networks, and engendering trust lays the foundation as new concerns emerge. Fourth, ethnic-specific organizations are not necessarily a source of divisiveness but are potential vehicles for community mobilization, leadership training, and resource building. They can promote communication and negotiation among various community groups.

To respond effectively to the new race relations, grassroots strategies must be complemented by national strategies. Angela Oh, who served on President Clinton's Advisory Board to the President's Initiative on Race, offers some constructive suggestions in the book's concluding chapter, "Reaching Toward Our Highest Aspirations: The President's Initiative on Race." The Initiative, launched in June 1997, was designed to rekindle America's desire to solve this nation's race problem. The process started with an effort to promote a constructive dialogue on race relations, and the Advisory Committee, along with a professional staff for

the President's Initiative on Race (PIR), played a key role in conducting town-hall meetings throughout the country. One of the most difficult tasks was moving beyond a black-white discourse. Some argued that the spotlight should remain on African Americans because slavery and its legacy have determined so much of this nation's history and continue to shape inter-group relations. This resistance to change, however, varies by regions, with the West and Southwest being much more open to including APA and Latino experiences. This inclusion adds an ethnic flavor to the dialogue and interjects immigrant issues into the discussions. Acknowledging the new racial complexity, however, is not tantamount to ignoring the uniqueness or importance of the black experience. Despite the reluctance by some to expand the race-relations framework, many of the activities of the PIR proved to be inclusive.

One would be naive to assume that the Initiative can solve the race problem, and it is more realistic to see the effort as a start. Angela Oh argues that the dialogue and related activities should be integral to "the inter-generational work that requires all of us to take a step into the future." This will require courageous leadership that supports open and frank discussions, and an educational system that teaches the next generation to fully understand and appreciate America's racial history, the current problems of racial injustice, and the potential for a better society. Progressive social change to promote racial justice will require a "politics of possibility," and constructive innovations to solve racial conflicts are most likely to emerge in areas undergoing the most rapid change in race relations. APAs can and must play a major role in generating new possibilities.