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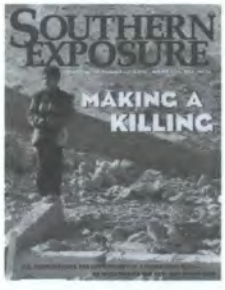

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SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Southern Exposure has been published since 1973 by the Institute for Southern Studies. With its combination of investigative reporting, historical perspective, oral histories, photography, and literature, the magazine has earned a national reputation. The magazine has received a National Magazine Award; two George Polk Awards; the Sidney Hillman Award for courageous reporting on racial injustice; the John Hancock Award for excellence in business journalism; two Alternative Press Awards for best regional publication; and several Project Censored Awards.

The Institute for Southern Studies is a nonprofit center working for progressive change in the region. Since its founding in 1970, the Institute has sponsored research, education, and organizing programs to 1) build the capacity of grassroots organizations and communities with strong local leadership and well-informed strategies; 2) provide the information, ideas, and historical understanding of Southern social struggles necessary for long-term fundamental change; and 3) nourish communication, cooperation, and understanding among diverse groups.

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COVER PHOTO FRONT: MILAN PHAM LEADS A PROTEST AGAINST OUTSPOKEN OPPONENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION WARD CONNERLY IN CHAPEL HILL, N.C. PHOTO: CATHY SEITH/THE DURHAM HERALD-SUN.
BACK: SHIVALI SHAH SPEAKING ABOUT HER WORK ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN NORTH CAROLINA TO A WOMEN'S GROUP IN TURKEY. PHOTO COURTESY OF SHIVALI SHAH.

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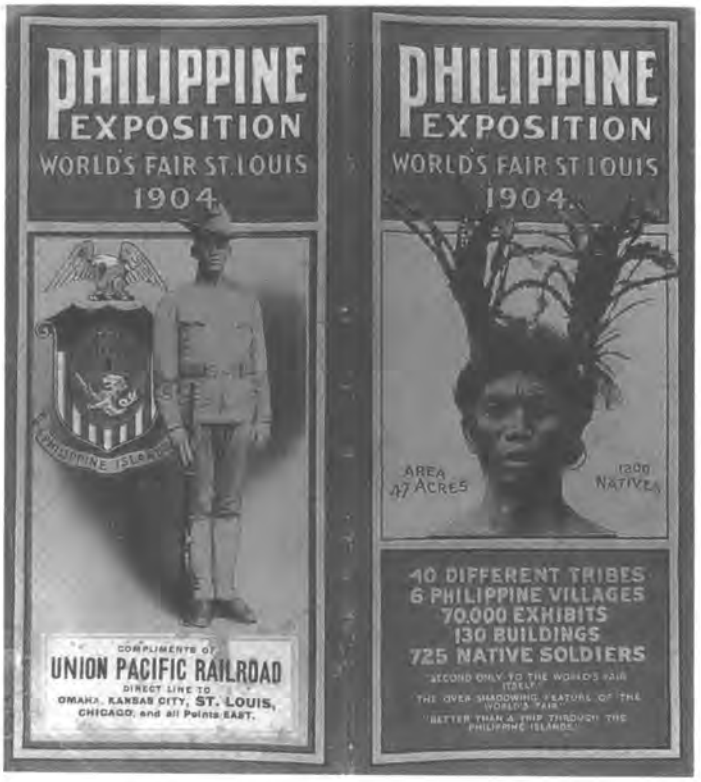

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FRONT PORCH

Our last issue addressed the history and politics of natural disaster in the South. By a terrible coincidence, it was published just a few days after the world suffered one of the worst catastrophes in recorded history when an earthquake-triggered tsunami devastated several countries ringing the Indian Ocean, killing over 170,000 people (with 50,000 still listed as missing as of June).

Among the less inspiring American reactions were Tom DeLay's vague implication that tsunami victims had been punished for not being Christian, as well as the rhetorical exploitation of the tsunami by both sides of a debate about protectionism and the loss of American jobs to overseas competition.

Two of the tsunami-ravaged nations, India and Thailand, had recently been sanctioned by the U.S. Department of Commerce for "dumping" low-priced shrimp on the U.S. market, severely undercutting the domestic shrimp industry and (it is claimed) costing thousands of American jobs. Punitive duties were imposed on six shrimp-exporting countries (India, Thailand, Viet Nam, China, Brazil, and Ecuador).

When the U.S. government indicated it would review its findings against India and Thailand in light of tsunami-related hardships suffered by their economies and shrimp industries, American domestic shrimpers were upset that their hard-won victory might yet be overturned. Eddie Gordon, the president of the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA), publicly called on shrimp importers "to help tsunami-affected countries by paying full, fair value for imported shrimp from those affected countries." Wally Stevens of the pro-importing Shrimp Task Force in turn expressed "shock" at the SSA's challenge, responding that paying higher prices for Thai and Indian shrimp would amount to "illegal price fixing." He suggested that U.S. shrimpers donate to a tsunami relief fund instead of campaigning for higher tariffs on imported shrimp.

Embarrassing and self-centered though this spat may appear, it does demonstrate how quickly and easily events in Asia can be turned into rhetorical footballs in American political debates, as well as the extent to which the fortunes of Asian economies are held hostage by American priorities, fears, and self-righteousness. That relations between the U.S. and Asia are a two-way street—not just a matter of "waves" and "influxes" of Eastern people constantly migrating to this country, but also of American people, institutions, and ideas influenc-

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

ing, and sometimes exploiting, Asia—is one of the central ideas of "East Meets South," the current issue of *Southern Exposure*.

The July/August 1984 *SE* featured a cover story on "The Chinese: 100 Years in the South." Ten years later, a 1994 issue promised to go "Beyond Black and White," profiling eight communities of "Other Southerners" such as Asian Indians in Mississippi, Vietnamese in Georgia, and Chinese in Mississippi (along with Latino and Native American communities). Among other things, the issue explored how a "new wave of settlers" (Asian and Latino) was transforming the South's demographic makeup and promising to turn whites into "one of many minorities."

Now, after another decade, this issue continues the *SE* tradition of charting Asian/Southern encounters. With the help of a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, guest editors Hong-An Truong (a photographer and youth educator) and Christina Chia (a scholar in American Studies and Ethnic Studies) have assembled a diverse collection of pieces including interviews, historical investigations, and photo essays. There's much here about immigrant experiences in the United States, but Chris and Hong-An also take a wider perspective, giving us stories about how Southerners—as soldiers, missionaries, businesspeople—have affected Asian countries and cultures, and about the complex interactions between the two regions in the context of corporate globalization.

Instead of describing only how the future will take us beyond black and white, stories in "East Meets South" also go behind or beneath black and white, as it were, to show how received narratives of Southern racial history already conceal a more complex reality. Consider the singular plight of Japanese-Americans interned in Arkansas during World War II, trying to figure out where they fit in the Jim Crow racial dialectic; or Chinese-Cuban coolies, brought to the South in the 1860s and 70s to replace emancipated slaves as plantation labor. One story in the issue, "Tuscarora Blues" by our intern Jacob Dagger, isn't part of the "East Meets South" package, but echoes its themes, exploring the crucial but virtually unknown influence of Native American music on the blues.

"East Meets South" exposes other unexpected histories, such as the connection between Southern Baptist missionaries in China and the Christian-millenarian Taiping Rebellion of the 1850s and 60s. There's also the case of present-day Vietnamese-American shrimpers and their white colleagues, some of whom allied with the Klan 20 years ago to try to terrorize the Vietnamese out of the South, now united in a "buy American" campaign that depends on not-so-covert appeals to xenophobia against shrimp-exporting countries—including, as it happens, Viet Nam.

Southern Exposure has finally joined the internet revolution; for the past few months we've been running a companion weblog, Facing South, which has established a niche in the ever-expanding and highly competitive political blog scene. We're not quite at the level of Eschaton or Daily Kos yet, but our vision of a progressive South has been getting noticed (in the pages of the *New York Times*, for example). Facing South features daily commentary and original reporting (supported by the Bob Hall Investigative Action Fund); one of the articles in this issue, Sean Reilly's look at wasteful Congressional earmarking, originally appeared at Facing South. In terms of the sheer amount of material we've produced, this is one of the most ambitious projects the Institute has undertaken in our 35-year history.

The internet also gives readers more of a chance than ever to take part in the conversation. So if you haven't already, be sure to stop by, check it out, and give us a piece of your mind.

GARY ASHWILL
Managing Editor
Southern Exposure

WASTE AND MEANS

by Sean Reilly

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO GET A SENATOR'S SUPPORT FOR A PROJECT?

NAME IT AFTER HIM.

To the people who run the University of Alabama's chemistry department in Tuscaloosa, Shelby Hall, named for Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), is worth every penny of the $60 million needed to build it. At more than 200,000 square feet, the recently opened building is "one of the most advanced research facilities in the country," gushes the department's web site, with "modern space for the teaching, research, and administrative functions of the department."

To Brenda Haynie, any reckoning of the costs and benefits ought to include her son's life. In January 2003, Matthew Haynie, a 29-year-old medical student, was driving from the family home in Fort Worth to Wake Forest University in North Carolina when his sport utility vehicle hydroplaned on Interstate-20 east of Birmingham, swooped backward across the median into the path of an 18-wheeler and burst into flames. Dental records were needed to identify his remains.

The dangers of that stretch of highway were so well-known that it bore the nickname "Death Valley." Newspaper articles collected by Brenda Haynie show that local leaders had pleaded for median barriers and other safeguards. But while Shelby, chairman of a key Senate highway spending panel for more than six years, was steadily diverting millions of federal road dollars into construction of his namesake edifice, the perils of Death Valley an hour's drive away went unaddressed.

"Shelby could sit there in good conscience and let people die," Brenda Haynie says. "He didn't give a damn."

A spokeswoman for the senator responds that the Alabama Department of Transportation ultimately drives decisions on highway priorities. Wherever blame lies, the episode starkly illustrates the degree to which lawmakers nowadays are prone to grab the wheel when it comes to allocating federal dollars--and the complications that can follow.

Since the late 1990s, Shelby has steered nearly $150 million in highway funds to university science and engineering buildings named after him, as lawmakers cumulatively add billions every year for thousands of other politically chosen projects. In a recently released tally, Citizens Against Government Waste, a Washington, D.C. watchdog and advocacy organization, counted $27.3 billion in "pork" for fiscal 2005, a 19 percent jump over the preceding year.

Capitol Hill was supposed to work differently after Republicans took control of Congress a decade ago. Despite once ridiculing Democrats for porcine spending proclivities, however, "we came into office and we made it far worse," Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) lamented at a press conference announcing the new numbers.

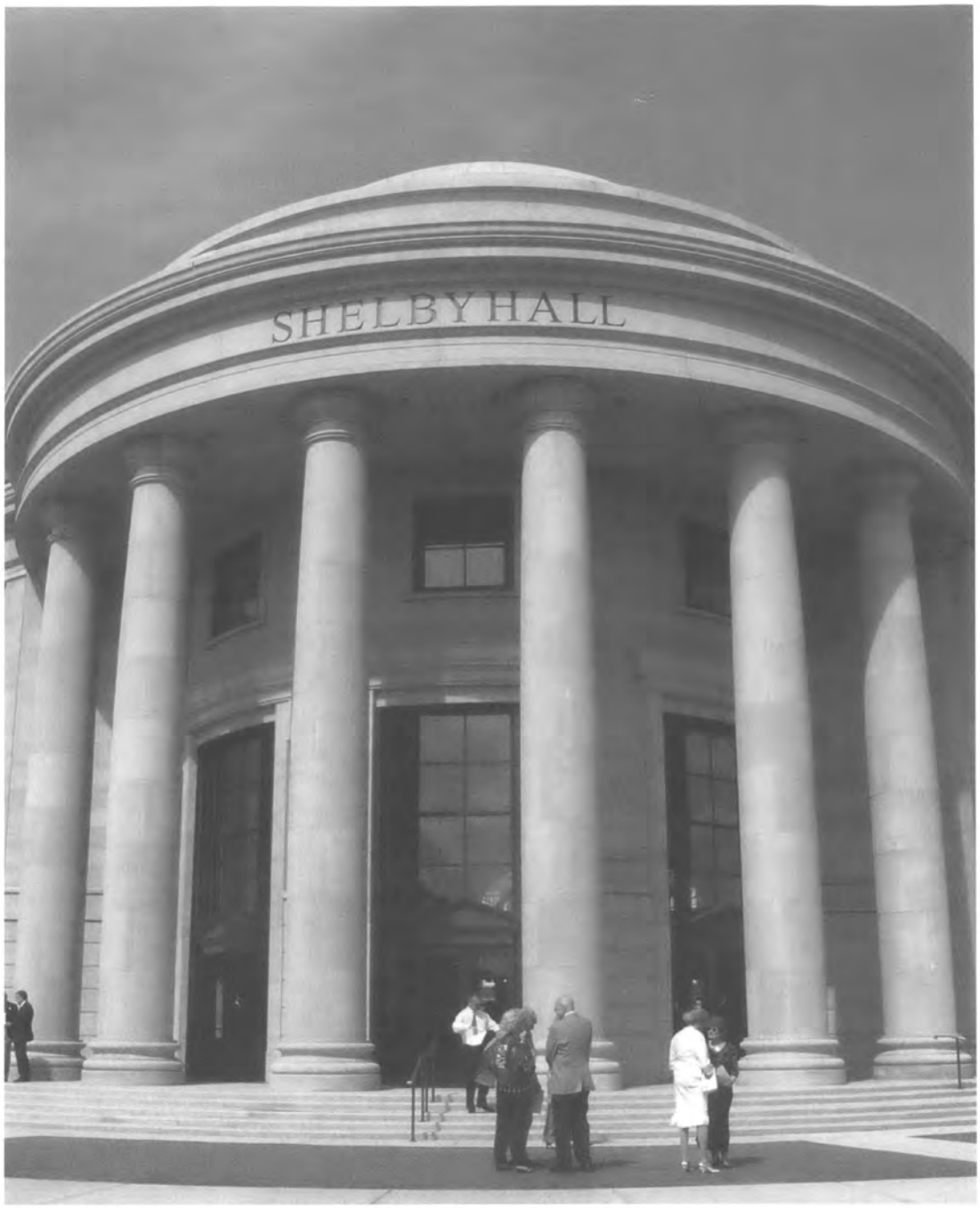
Toting home the proverbial bacon is an especially honored tradition in the South, where the federal treasury has often compensated for the puniness of state and local tax bases. But if pork used to mean big-ticket public works endeavors like the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, no cause or organization now seems too picayune for a handout.

Among the pressing national priorities singled out for taxpayer dollars in this year's budget: the National Wild Turkey Federation in South Carolina, the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in North Carolina, and blackbird control in Louisiana.

Although Southern lawmakers are not unique, they may face more problems in reconciling lip service to government thrift with the practice of throwing federal money at local projects, says Keith Ashdown, vice president for policy at Taxpayers for Common Sense, another watchdog group in Washington.

"They're kind of torn between two worlds: a philosophy of fiscal conservatism and the necessity to bring back as much federal dollars as possible to districts that don't have a huge economic base."

In defense of Shelby Hall, University of Alabama ad-



"Shelby could sit there in good conscience and let people die," Brenda Haynie says. "He didn't give a damn."

ministrators say they had no other means for replacing the decrepit structure that housed the chemistry department. To justify the reliance on federal highway dollars for its construction, the new facility also hosts several transportation research programs.

In the lexicon of Capitol Hill, pork is more blandly known as "earmarking." Broadly speaking, the label refers to an appropriation netted through political pull rather

than merit competition or some other form of bureaucratic review.

Whatever the name, lawmakers stoutly uphold the practice on two grounds. First, that the Constitution gives Congress the power of the purse. Second, that they are better positioned than far-removed government drones to know constituents' needs.

Although the $225,000 appropriation for the National Wild Turkey Federation has drawn national guffaws, for example, the organization's development director, Donna Leggett, makes no apologies. The earmarked money will be spent on outreach to women, children and the disabled, she says, and makes up less than 10 percent of the federation's overall spending on those programs.

They "are vital to preserving (our) outdoor heritage. That's why we went to get more support."

But lawmakers typically receive far more requests for help than they can fill. The process of apportioning the tenderloin is blanketed in near-total secrecy. Behind every earmark, "there's a story," says Ronald Utt, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, a Washington, D.C. think tank, "and most of them are confidential."

Sometimes, the plotline is as simple as following a name. This year's budget contains $1 million for a runway extension at the Trent Lott International Airport in the Republican senator's hometown of Pascagoula, Miss., and $6 million for various projects at the Robert C. Byrd National Technology Transfer Center, a Wheeling, West Virginia facility named for the eight-term Democrat. Louisiana State University is in line for $300,000 to archive the papers of recently retired Sen. John Breaux, also a Democrat.

Then there's the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, which is up for $250,000. As it happens, the organization is also home to the Frist library, named for a foundation funded by the brother of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.).

Nick Smith, a spokesman for the senator, acknowledged that Frist's office was responsible for inserting the money, but said the staffers handling the paperwork knew nothing of the library and that Frist himself was not involved.

Asked why a private non-profit warrants government aid, Smith said the hall of fame "helps promote tourism and that provides growth for the Nashville community."

By definition, however, earmarking is an act of favoritism. As the volume of earmarks skyrockets, securing them has turned into a roaring trade for lobbyists, often former staffers of the same lawmakers they are enlisting to help. To Utt and other critics, the result is the emergence of a de facto "pay to play" system. Directly appealing to your congressman for help is no longer enough. Increasingly, the perception is that a paid emissary is needed.

Since the late 1990s, Shelby has steered nearly $150 million in highway funds to university science and engineering buildings named after him.

Sen. Richard Shelby diverted millions of federal road dollars into the construction of a University of Alabama building named after him, while dangerous Alabama highways went unrepaired. Photos: Chris Otts/ The Crimson White

"We wanted to get in the loop of things," says Rebecca Orr, director of member services for the Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville, N.C., in explaining why the 75-year-old cooperative turned to a Washington lobbying firm for help in getting federal money to upgrade and expand its Folk Art Center.

"We came into office and we made it far worse."

In that case, the experiment didn't end happily. After spending about $45,000 on lobbying, the guild decided recently to simply work through the local congressman, says Thomas Bailey, the guild's managing director.

"I don't know what they do," Bailey says of lobbyists.

Others continue to have faith. In North Carolina alone, about 20 local governments now have Washington representation, according to congressional records.

Among them is the City of Monroe, with a population of about 28,000, that last year spent $80,000 on lobbying for congressional help with airport and road needs.

"It just gave us a presence in Washington that we would not have had without a lobbyist," says City Manager Douglas Spell, adding that he is satisfied with the firm's performance thus far.

Considering that the name of the world's most famous cyclist adorns its letterhead, one might think the Texas-based Lance Armstrong Foundation could make do without the taxpayer's dime. In fact, the foundation is receiving $200,000 in earmarked money this year to expand cancer survivorship research centers in Philadelphia and Cleveland, spokeswoman Michelle Milford said via e-mail. In the first half of last year alone, congressional records show the foundation spent $80,000 on a lobby squad that included at least four former Hill staffers. The team represents the foundation "in a number of ways," Milford said, besides helping to get earmarked funds.

At times, lawmakers may be helping themselves as well. Consider the cryptically named Simulated Prison Environment Crisis Aversion Tools, a high-tech training and modeling program for prison systems in North Carolina, Alabama, and Pennsylvania that has received almost $12 million since 2002 Although nowhere mentioned in the spending legislation, the lead contractor has been a Pennsylvania firm, Concurrent Technologies Corp., whose executives made $30,000 in campaign contributions in the last election cycle, mainly to members of the House and Senate appropriations committees, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. At least lately, Concurrent Technologies has also been using subcontractors in Alabama and Virginia; employees in those companies wrote checks for another $38,450. Last year, Justice Department auditors rapped federal managers for allowing Concurrent to hire the subcontractors without bids.

Overall, earmarks comprise a relatively small part of a federal budget that this year rings up to more than $2 trillion. But at a time of record federal deficits and a war-burdened military, some critics argue that any pork is too much, particularly when there is little accountability for how the money is actually allocated and spent.

"The subterranean aspects of the process reveal it to be a pretty foul process," says Winslow Wheeler, a former congressional aide who charges lawmakers with squeezing defense training and readiness needs in favor of home-state pork.

Brenda Haynie bitterly concurs with that description. Too late for her son—although spurred perhaps by the publicity surrounding his death—concrete median barriers have since been added to Death Valley.

Still, though, she is waiting for an explanation from Shelby as to why he didn't act.

Toting home the proverbial bacon is an especially honored tradition in the South, where the federal treasury has often compensated for the puniness of state and local tax bases.

So far, the only response has been a two-paragraph form letter, in which the senator thanked her for writing and said he was referring her inquiry to the state transportation department.

"Please do not hesitate to contact me," he concluded, "about this or other matters in the future."

Sean Reilly is the Washington correspondent for the Mobile Register. *An earlier version of this piece appeared on the Facing South blog under the title "Swine Still Doing Fine" (http://southernstudies.org/facingsouth/2005/04/special-report-swine-still-doing-fine.asp).*

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- "Banking on Misery," an expose by Michael Hudson into financial institutions that prey on the poor and economically vulnerable. The report has been used by activists from Alabama to New York to challenge predatory banking practices.
- "Occupation, Inc.," sent reporters Pratap Chatterjee and Herbert Docena to Iraq to investigate charges of fraud and abuse by military contractors like Halliburton and Bechtel and helped ignite a firestorm of outrage over war profiteering.
- "Tort Reform, Lone Star Style," by award-winning reporter Stephanie Mencimer looked into what the corporate-drive "tort reform" movement did in Texas under then-governor Bush.
- The investigative series "The Right to Vote" analyzed voter data and revealed widespread voter disenfranchisement in the 2004 elections – and complicity at the highest levels of government.
- "Swine Still Doing Fine" – a report this spring by Washington journalist Sean Reilly that brought light to the growth of pork barrel spending despite the reign of "fiscal conservatives" in Congress and the White House.

These investigations have been recognized with top awards, including the George Polk Award for Magazine Reporting and honors from the National Press Club, Society of Professional Journalists, and White House Correspondents' Association. They've also had impact, getting covered by major TV, radio and newspaper outlets, and prompting deeper scrutiny by concerned activists, lawmakers, and the media.

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TUSCARORA BLUES

A QUINTESSENTIALLY SOUTHERN ART FORM MAY HAVE MORE DIVERSE ROOTS THAN ANYONE REALIZED.

Pura Fé Crescioni is out to change the way we understand the blues. Photo courtesy of Music Maker Relief Foundation.

Tribal elders told her of the ways that Indians were involved in the slave trade. Some were shipped off to the Caribbean as slaves themselves, they told her. Others were lumped together with blacks and enslaved in this country. Still others lived more or less undisturbed as "free persons of color," though many of those individuals played important roles on the Underground Railroad, working to free the enslaved.

Pura Fé Crescioni steps onstage for her second set, still clad in a red dress and cowboy boots, with thick, dark hair flowing over her shoulders. She sits in the same chair, and with the same laid back temperament adjusts the microphone. But appearances aside, this set will not merely be a continuation of the first.

The first was a journey into the past, a musical review of the hymns sung by her Tuscarora Indian ancestors in Sampson County, North Carolina. Accompanied by Deer Clan Singers Mark Deese and David Locklear, Pura Fé intoned the wailing harmonies of her people, laying down the beat using traditional Indian rattles.

The second set will be rooted firmly in the present, with Pura Fé presenting a repertoire of original contemporary blues numbers. She will trade in her rattle for a slide guitar, which she plays in her lap, and shift effortlessly from the traditional vocals to a powerful blues voice that has drawn comparisons to that of Bonnie Raitt.

But while the two sets represent very distinct styles of music, they are not entirely unrelated. The rhythms are strikingly similar, and the harmonies that characterize the Tuscarora hymns reappear often in the blues.

To Pura Fé, they represent a natural progression. What was, and what has come to be.

Pura Fé is out to change the way we understand the blues.

Though her grandparents moved the family to New York City long before she was born, Pura Fé always had an interest in her family's Indian heritage, and felt tied to their roots in the Southeast.

"I was the reminder," she says. "I asked a lot of questions [about] where we are, who we are, where we come from."

Classically trained as a musician, and performing from a very young age, she started off in rock bands before graduating to folk, jazz and blues. She sang with the Mercer Ellington Orchestra, just as her mother sang with the original Duke Ellington Orchestra. But as time wore on, she found herself drawn increasingly to Indian culture, and formed an a cappella trio, Ulali, that performed traditional music.

With Ulali, she traveled the world, appearing on bills alongside the likes of Raitt, Jackson Browne, Sting and Ben Harper, and recording with Robbie Robertson and the Indigo Girls.

In the years to come she would have the chance to ask deeper questions than she had as a child. During the early 1990s, a cousin invited her to accompany him on a trip to North Carolina to explore the family's roots. "We did a lot of homework and knocked on a lot of doors," she explains. "We got to meet distant relatives, to get a grasp of what was not talked about."

They talked a lot, and listened a lot. They rediscovered symbolic landmarks that had long been a part of family lore.

In 1996 Pura Fé moved to Robeson County, North Carolina, known for its high concentration of Indians. She stayed on for seven years, teaching traditional music and dance to Indian children as a volunteer. She came across stories and facts not widely discussed in standard history books. Tribal elders told her of the ways that Indians were involved in the slave trade. Some were shipped off to the Caribbean as slaves themselves, they told her. Others were lumped together with blacks and enslaved in this country. Still others lived more or less undisturbed as "free persons of color," though many of those individuals played important roles on the Underground Railroad, working to free the enslaved.

Perhaps the most important lesson she took from those discussions, she says, was the idea that when looking back at history, the experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, and whites cannot be separated and understood in isolation from one another. History books talk about slavery and the Indian experience as if they took part in completely different time periods. They make it sound as if all the Indians were run off the land by settlers long before slavery even became an issue. But in the reality of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century South, those people all coexisted.

"People like to look back and talk about all the different stories," Pure Fé is fond of saying, "It's not separate stories. It's one story. We were all there together."

Occasionally you will hear women's-rigs activists invoking "herstory," as opposed to history. What Pura Fé embraces is really a notion of "ourstory."

She points out that blacks, whites, and Native Americans didn't just lead parallel lives, their lives intersected. There was intermarriage – more than history books might suggest – but more importantly, there was also a sharing of cultural traditions. Pura Fé, whose father is Puerto Rican, is herself a product of this type of mixture, which she terms "the melt."

In telling the story of the blues, historians and ethnomusicologists of the past century have focused largely on the African-American experience. Historical documentaries blend the jangle of the blues guitar and the harmony of gospel voices with black and white images of slaves hard at work in the fields, while a narrator explains how the rhythms are drawn from a distant tribal past, across the Atlantic in Africa. Today's blues icons come largely from the African-American community, and while the genre is performed and appreciated by all races, it is inextricably linked by popular culture to black history.

But to Pura Fé, the blues always did sound very familiar.

She believes that blues music, rather than being purely African in nature, actually derives from a cultural melt, combining the tribal music of enslaved Africans with the tribal music of the Indians of the Southeast.

"What's real obvious is the rhythm," she says. "The shuffle, the stomp dance – that's traditional music. You can hear it also in the scale. The scale in blues is the same scale in all Indian music of the Southeast."

History books talk about slavery and the Indian experience as if they took part in completely different time periods. They make it sound as if all the Indians were run off the land by settlers long before slavery even became an issue.

Tim Duffy, who as director of the Hillsborough, N.C.-based Music Maker Relief Foundation recorded and produced Pura Fé's latest album, titled Follow Your Heart's Desire, this spring, agrees. "This is eastern North Carolina, the incredible harmony music," he says, gesturing towards a stereo playing Pura Fé's disc. "It's found now in the churches down east. That is what is preserved of the Indians down east, the incredible harmony."

Reviewers often comment that her brand of blues

is influenced by her native roots, but in a way, they are only telling a half truth. Because Pura Fé's point is that all blues, not just her own, draw on American Indian traditions.

And in fact, many of the prominent black blues musicians over the years have been quick to acknowledge their own Indian heritage – Etta Baker, Charlie Patton, Scrapper Blackwell, Duke Ellington. While discussing Pura Fé's struggle, Duffy can hardly go two minutes without mentioning a musician he either grew up listening to or has since worked with and reflexively following up with, "He's part-Indian too." Music styles are not genetic, but they do get passed along generation to generation.

Culture is a curious thing. You have to protect and preserve it. You can share it, but at some point you can lose hold and it's gone.

And that appears to be what happened. As time wore on, racial segregation and legislation continued, and Indians were frequently lumped in with other non-whites. On the first U.S. census, they were included with free blacks in the "all other free persons" category – as distinguished from slaves and free whites. The census did not separate American Indians out until 1860, and that enumeration did not extend nationwide until 1890. Tribal affiliations were not asked until much later. At times, Native Americans were disenfranchised by state laws, and many chose to hide their true identity to avoid negative consequences. As in the black community, racial "passing" was not uncommon.

Later, when the government sought to right the wrongs of the past, it went about legally recognizing tribes so they could be granted aid for things like education and healthcare. But many of the tribes, including the Tuscaroras of North Carolina, have never been fully recognized. Dr. Stanley Knick, director of the Native American Resource Center at UNC Pembroke, estimates that there are 150 tribes nationwide, mainly in the South and Southeast, for which full federal recognition has not been granted.

To complicate matters, Tuscaroras come from the same ancestry as Lumbees, the North Carolina tribe that famously accepted a compromise with the government in 1965 that officially termed them "Indians" but denied them many of the benefits available to fully-recognized tribes. Even today, Robeson County's Lumbee Indian population is often referred to as "the tribe that intermarried with former slaves," which in the eyes of many somehow makes them less authentic Indians.

This complicated history, Pura Fé says, has led to an erosion of the Tuscaroras' and other tribes' unique identities, not to mention the various African tribes enslaved and lumped forever more as "African Americans."

Pura Fé's goal in all of this is clear: to restore pride to her people, to rekindle an appreciation for their culture. That is what she spent seven years in Robeson County doing – David Locklear, 23, who now sings lead harmony for the Deer Clan Singers, was one of the children Pura Fé worked with early on – and that is what she continues to do as she travels and performs.

"These kids don't know who they are," she says. "They don't know their language, their history, or their landmarks. It's awful and they should. That's where we are as a people, struggling to figure out how to get it all back."

Part of that is ensuring that their story is told. She is obsessed with documentaries that she believes paint an incomplete picture of the past. She punctuates interesting stories by asking why they have not been captured on television. "Archibald Monk, from the Isle of Skye [in Scotland], was a slave-owner in Sampson County who employed mainly Tuscaroran women as slaves. He taught them to speak Gaelic out of the Bible. Gaelic! Why isn't that on television?"

Her songs, written over the course of many years – from her time in Robeson County and before – tell of her journey and the journey of her people. Titles include "Goin' Home" and "Rise Up Tuscarora Nation." When she performs "Della Blackman/Pick and Choose," she explains to the audience that it was written for her grandmother's aunt, who was killed by the Ku Klux Klan.

Over the course of her career, she has served as a cultural ambassador for her people to United Nations conferences and local elementary school classrooms alike. She has shared her findings with international blues festival audiences, offering them a taste of tradi-

Pura Fé believes that blues music, rather than being purely African in nature, actually derives from a cultural melt, combining the tribal music of enslaved Africans with the tribal music of the Indians of the Southeast.

tional music to go with the blues and letting them draw their own conclusions.

Bill Ferris, for one, is ready to listen. Ferris is a professor of history and associate director of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Center for the Study of the American South.

"It's not widely accepted," Ferris says of Pura Fé's story, "because most people have never even considered it. Historically, we've focused on the blues as part of the black experience." Those in the history and ethnomusicology fields, he adds, have largely left the study of American Indians to anthropologists, but people like Pura Fé are finally making scholars reexamine the truths they once understood.

"We are beginning to take a second look at who we are as Americans and what the blues is all about," Ferris says. "Through voices like Pura Fé's, we will deepen our understanding of the blues through its connections to Indian music."

"Archibald Monk, from the Isle of Skye, was a slave-owner in Sampson County who employed mainly Tuscaroran women as slaves. He taught them to speak Gaelic out of the Bible. Gaelic. Why isn't that on television?"

A deeper understanding is much needed, according to Duffy, who says the traditional "blues myth" has marginalized the contributions of not just Indians, but many others as well.

The story of the blues, as portrayed by numerous documentaries, including PBS's epic seven-part series "The Blues," produced by Martin Scorsese, typically begins in the Mississippi Delta, the crossroads, home to blues legends B.B. King and Robert Johnson. From there it travels up the river to Chicago, then on to London. After influencing British icons like Eric Clapton and the Rolling Stones, it returns to the United States in the form of rock and roll.

This story makes for great drama, but, says Duffy, it virtually ignores the contributions of musicians from all over the South, or worse, pegs them as merely derivative.

"When you tell people that the blues didn't come from Mississippi, they look at you like you're crazy."

"It was such a powerful myth," says Duffy, "that when you tell people that the blues didn't come from Mississippi, they look at you like you're crazy." But the blues didn't just originate in the Delta, he explains. It sprouted simultaneously all over the South. Every region had its own characteristic sound. The blues in Virginia sounded different than the blues in Georgia. The piano blues took root in Dallas. As time passed, these styles were fused in different combinations by new artists drawing bits and pieces from their favorite musicians.

Duffy should know. He has studied the greats, and even played with a few of them. He has spent much of his professional life traveling the South in search of hidden talent. And he has been successful. The foundation counts among its flock nearly 100 artists.

To find Pura Fé, he didn't have to go far. In fact, the two were introduced by Ferris, whose fall seminar on Southern music the singer had attended for two years running. Ferris thought Music Maker would be a good match for Pura Fé, and so far he has been correct. The foundation has given Pura Fé the opportunity to finally record the songs she had been working on for so long, and in return, has received a quality artist who will aid its never-ending quest to preserve and promote the blues.

Duffy smiles, remembering how it took Pura Fé a short two months to learn the slide guitar and adapt all of her songs, which were written mainly for voice and piano.

"You think you finally understand what the blues is," Duffy says, "but it's like air: you can't touch it. People put out books: the story of the blues. They know the beginning, the middle and the end. But you can't. You can't know, because the story is constantly unfolding."

Jacob Dagger is an editorial intern at Southern Exposure.

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THEIR FRIENDS

If you were to take some time to drive around the South, stopping in small towns, chatting with folks, you never know who you might meet. If you made sure to always keep your ears open, you'd likely hear some music, more than likely some blues.

The problem is, most of us don't have time to go driving around like that. We have obligations – school or work. We pride ourselves in our musical taste, but when it comes down to it, we listen to whatever the radio feeds us. Blues is what we hear when we pay a ten-dollar cover to sit in a smoky bar that serves Cajun food and has autographed pictures of B.B. King on the wall.

But Tim Duffy was never afraid to take that drive. For eleven years, Duffy's Music Maker Relief Foundation has been helping to preserve not just blues music, but also the musicians who create it.

The foundation identifies and supports blues musicians in need – providing financial assistance to those over 55 who earn less than $18,000 annually. Currently, the foundation aids almost 100 musicians, many in their 70s or older. In addition to footing the bill for prescription medicine and groceries, the foundation is also there for camaraderie. When a musician is sick, the foundation will often post on its website an address where supporters can mail get-well cards.

For those still able to perform, the foundation provides perhaps an even more important service – the opportunity to record and perform professionally. Duffy arranges concerts for many Music Maker artists in venues as far away as Paris and Australia and often accompanies them on guitar.

The foundation's headquarters, now located in a converted woodshed behind Duffy's Hillsborough, N.C., home, serve alternately as office, warehouse, and recording studio. Over the years, the foundation has become known for field recordings – in adherence with the blues and roots tradition – but most of the serious recording, including Pura Fé's latest album, now takes place on the woodshed's ground floor, which has the aura of a log cabin.

In one corner sits a computer where Duffy actually burns many of the new CDs. Seated at his desk, Duffy flips through a box of demo CDs. "We've been finding all these one-man bands of late," he says.

A deal he cut with a production company in Oregon last fall has albums out in large chain bookstores nationwide – an arrangement Duffy says is good for marketing,

though not especially profitable – but he still often saves a case of CDs for the artists to sell at shows for pure profit.

Having earned an undergraduate degree in ethnomusicology from Friends World College while studying in Kenya and a master's in folklore from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duffy spent the early 1990s playing guitar on the juke circuit, traveling up and down the east coast with legends such as Winston-Salem's Guitar Gabriel.

"Guitar Gabe was famous from the all-black tent shows of the '50s and '60s," Duffy explains. "He was famous like Muddy Waters even though he didn't have any records. We'd be up in a juke joint in New Haven, Connecticut, and everyone would say, 'Gabe, we haven't seen you in awhile," and just like that we'd be whisked away to some back alley New Haven club. The same thing would happen in Sanford, Florida.

"I entered into a world that wasn't in the books," he explains. "I met great players who had never been heard before outside of those clubs. If no one knows about you, then you're no good, right?"

During his travels, Duffy was astonished by the volume of quality blues music being played that was not reaching the world outside the clubs. He met many blues players who were down on their luck. But these weren't your typical young, starving artists, waiting tables and hoping for the big gig to come through. Many were old, retired laborers for whom music had mainly been a hobby, a way to rest after a hard day's work. As they grew older, their needs increased, but the blues lifestyle didn't provide sufficient resources.

Duffy returned to Winston-Salem, where he began rounding up aging, local musicians, helping them to cover their daily expenses, giving them rides to doctors' appointments or the supermarket. He soon founded the Music Maker Relief Foundation.

In the early days, he spent time driving all over the south in his van, looking for musicians with interesting styles who had not had commercial success. The Music Maker stable began to grow. Duffy would record their music like the folklorists of old, but he would also pay attention to how the artists were living, make sure they had the food and medicine they needed.

"Musicologists and folklorists of the '60s said that after Son House died, that was the end of the blues," Duffy says. "But since that time, we've found 100 musicians that nobody'd heard of. Back then all we knew of was maybe four artists. Now I can list a dozen that have gone on to successful careers in music."

"What Tim is doing primarily is reaching out to help the artists," says Bill Ferris, professor of history and associate director of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Center for the Study of the American South, "reaching out to get support to help them buy a home, pay for medical insurance. Essentially, to help them survive in a world that has not been very kind to the blues."

These days, much of Duffy's time is dedicated to fundraising, an essential task for a foundation run almost entirely on private and corporate donations, but one Duffy says he does not exactly relish. Even during events such as last summer's first annual Congressional Blues Festival, co-hosted by Music Maker in an attempt to win over lawmakers to the cause, Duffy takes time off from schmoozing to hop in for a set on guitar.

Back in the office, Duffy is thinking about Pura Fé's album again. (Incidentally, Pura Fé is not the typical Music Maker musician. Duffy invited her to record with Music Maker because of the depth she could bring to the blues perspective). It's wonderful, he says, "but how do you launch something like this? Where does it fit on the radio. It needs to be bought." And that is one of the things he struggles with every day. Blues is universally recognized as the root of many of today's popular genres, but contemporary blues is followed only by a relatively select audience.

Despite an abundance of talent, many of the Music Maker musicians have little chance of ever being recognized by society at large.

But thanks to Duffy, that isn't stopping them from trying.

-JACOB DAGGER

EAST MEETS SOUTH

From the Mississippi Delta in the late 19th century to the Research Triangle today, the history of Asians in the American South reveal unexpected twists in many familiar themes of Southern history: race, labor, religion, and war.

Two tales of East Meets South:
Circa 1990: A young Chinese-American woman, born and raised in Massachusetts, moves to the Triangle area of North Carolina for graduate school. She isn't too surprised by the "where are you from" questions that she often gets around town. They're irritating and exhausting, especially when people refuse to accept "Massachusetts" or "America" as an answer and persist in wanting to know where she's "really from." But she's caught off guard when, one time, a white person asks, "Are you from Fayetteville?" Why Fayetteville? Is there a big population of Asians in Southeastern North Carolina that she hasn't heard about? It doesn't make sense. Eventually she figures it out. Fayetteville is home to Fort Bragg: people are asking if she's from there because they think she might be married to an American soldier from the base. In their eyes, an Asian woman in the South can only be a "war bride."

Circa 1985: A teenage immigrant moves with her family from Hong Kong to California. Among the various keepsakes she brings with her across the Pacific is a hymn book from the school she had gone to all her life. She isn't Christian, but her school had been: it was founded by Baptist missionaries in the 19th century. Many childhood memories are wrapped up in the songs from that hymn book, like the cheery jingle that the teachers always made the kids sing on Field Day, with lyrics (in Chinese, of course) that spoke brightly of the healthy benefits of sports. Fast forward a couple of years: our teenager, now an American high schooler, catches a few bars of that old Field Day song on TV. The show is, of all things, a Civil War documentary. That little jingle she liked so much back in Hong Kong, she learns, has different, English words, and an American name: "Dixie."

In 1984, *Southern Exposure* published a special issue on the history of the Chinese in the South. Focusing on Chinese-American communities in Louisiana and Mississippi, articles in the issue chronicled the post-Civil War migration of so-called "coolie" laborers to the Deep South—brought there initially as replacement for newly emancipated African Americans—and explored the complex three-part racial system that developed in places where these migrants settled. The editor's introduction to the issue explained why it's important to remember this history: "While it is clear that the racist practices spawned during the plantation era are still active in the continued political and economic subordination of African Americans, their impact on other people of color in the South is less visible. Yet a true picture of race relations, and more importantly, a blueprint for progressive change cannot be developed without expanding our understanding of the roots of racial oppression and the impact of racism on all people." Twenty-one years later, these words still ring true—all the more so because the racial landscape of the South has been reshaped so dramatically in the last two decades. The increase in Latino immigration has received a good deal of attention, both here in the pages of SE and in the media at large. In this special issue, then, we turn to a less talked-about aspect of the "New New South": the growth of Asian American communities and its implications for Southern culture and politics.

In 1965, the federal government lifted long-standing prohibitions against Asian immigration and naturalization that dated back to the Chinese Exclusion laws of the late 19th century. Since then, the population of Asians/Pacific Islanders (APIs) has increased rapidly nationwide—and nowhere as rapidly as in the South. While the West Coast remains the population center for Asians in the U.S., the South has now edged out the Northeast as the region with the second highest number of Asian residents. According to a 2002 U.S. Census Bureau report, our region is home to an estimated 2.36 million APIs (roughly one-fifth of all Asians in the U.S.), with the greatest concentrations in Houston and the greater Washington, D.C., area.

The legacies of 20th-century wars and the vicissitudes of 21st-century global economics have led to the creation of Asian-American communities markedly different from the South's late 19th-century Chinese settlements. The Asian-American population of the South today traces its roots not only to China, but also to Bangladesh, Cambodia, Japan, Korea, India, the Philippines, Viet

BY CHRISTINA CHIA AND HONG-AN TRUONG

To understand how East has met South, then, we have to look not only at demographic shifts within the American South, but at Southern "footprints" in Asia as well.

Photo by Alaina Browne.

Nam, to name only a few points of origin. Socio-economically, Asian Americans in the South run the gamut from children of middle-class immigrants with bankable advanced degrees to newly-arrived refugees struggling to restart their lives from scratch. They come for reasons that are "obvious" (e.g. economic opportunities) as well as ones that don't fit traditional models of immigration. The very characteristics that make some people think of the South as an unlikely destination for Asian immigrants—the influence of military culture, the dominance of Protestant Christianity—are sometimes responsible for bringing or attracting Asians to the region. Such is the case with foreign spouses (especially wives) of U.S. servicepeople, or refugee families sponsored by local church groups for resettlement.

The articles in this issue give us insight into a wide range of Asian-American communities in the South, many right here in North Carolina. One important theme that emerges from these stories is that many Asians are in America today because of the long-standing and ongoing military, economic, and cultural presence of Americans in Asia. To understand how East has met South, then, we have to look not only at demographic shifts within the American South, but also at Southern "footprints" in Asia. We have to confront both the new realities and forgotten histories of the South.

Despite this steady growth of Asian populations in our region, they have remained largely invisible in discourses of Southern history, society, and politics. As the civil rights attorney Milan Pham observes in her interview with us, getting governmental institutions, the media, and the citizenry at large to recognize Asian Americans as a marginalized minority can be a big challenge. The persistence of the black-white binary, combined with widespread stereotypes of Asian success, mean that Asians are often left out of discussions of social injustice. Asian-American activists who raise demands of structural change are often met with the bewildered reply, "But you're not supposed to have any problems..."

Kiran, a South Asian anti-domestic violence advocacy group based in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area, is part of a new crop of Asian-American community organizations that have emerged across the South to fill the gaps in existing social services. These gaps, as Kiran co-founder Shivali Shah suggests, reflect a general lack of understanding about the social and economic ramifications of being an immigrant. Many women that Shah works with come to the U.S. on spousal visas that forbid them to work or even in some cases open their own bank accounts. It's easy to see how such restrictions can affect the financial and emotional power balance within a marriage, especially in situations of abuse. Too often, however, social service providers who attempt to work with South Asian domestic violence victims are fixated on simplistic notions of cultural and religious differences (for example, the idea that Muslim families are hopelessly patriarchal) that prevent them from seeing the complex social worlds that their clients actually inhabit.

The narrative of Asian success thus masks important stratifications within the Asian-American population—stratifications that have to do with gender (as Shah shows) as well as class, ethnic/national origin, and English-speaking ability. It's also worth noting that the "model minority" stereotype is a relatively new media invention that gained currency during the Civil Rights era, as part of an ideological backlash against black protest and resistance. The script goes: "If the Chinese and the Japanese can succeed on the basis of hard work alone, why can't blacks and Mexicans?" It is a classic divide-and-conquer strategy that draws attention away from key moments in history when Asian peoples have been subjected to forms of oppression we typically associate only with African Americans—and when Asians and blacks have come together in trans-racial solidarity. Sam Lowe's piece, "They Were Fighters," shows how white planters in the Deep South, like their counterparts in Cuba and other Caribbean islands, regarded the Chinese as a heathen race and exploited them as a substitute workforce for recently-freed slaves. By calling attention to the neglected history of the Chinese coolie trade, particularly the story of Chinese participation in anti-colonial struggles in Cuba, Lowe shows that Asians and blacks have played similar roles in the great pan-American drama of race, labor, and resistance.

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This is not to say that Asians and blacks always experience racism in the same way, now or in the past. In fact, as the articles in the 1984 *SE* issues show, within a couple generations of settling in the Delta, the Chinese were able to carve out a niche as economic and social "middlemen" between whites and blacks, even gaining access to some white-only institutions. Johanna Miller Lewis's article, "Looking like the Enemy," provides a more complex example of this racial triangle. While the internment of Japanese Americans in World War II – and the racist impulse that ignited its proliferation – is often associated with the American West, Lewis reveals that southern Arkansas was also keeper of two internment camps. Examining the little-known history of the Rohwer and Jerome camps in Jim Crow Arkansas, Lewis explores the ambiguous racial position of the Japanese internees. Because they were not black, white camp administrators and other local whites exempted them from certain rules of segregation. Yet their non-blackness had little meaning when it came to the Federal government's decision to uproot and imprison them in the name of "national security."

In this time of war, Lewis's cautionary tale also reminds us that U.S. military entanglements overseas can have a profound impact on race relations stateside, and that communities of color are as vulnerable as ever to being targeted as "enemy aliens." It bears remembering, too, that most of the major wars that the U.S. has fought in the 20th and 21st centuries have been against Asian antagonists, be they Filipino insurgents, Korean and Vietnamese communists, or Afghan "terrorists." It's impossible to overlook the towering presence of the military in the political, cultural, and economic landscape of the South. In order to grasp the complexities of East-South intersections, then, we must understand not only demographics and immigration patterns, but also the history of war and empire.

Although the United States did not directly intervene in the colonial wars and civil conflicts that devastated China in the mid-19th century, Lowe's article traces the attempt of one group of white Southerners, missionaries from the Southern Baptist Convention, to capitalize on the social chaos unleashed by those wars in order to advance their own aggressive evangelical agenda. In "Scenes from a Forgotten War," Christina Chia explores a now-obscure episode of Southern encounter with Asia through century-old photographs taken by soldiers and civilians during the early days of the American occupation of the Philippines. It is startling to see some of these photographs today, both for the global dimensions of Southern history that they reveal, and for their resemblance to images that have emerged from the occupation of Iraq.

Asian-American activists who raise demands of structural change are often met with the bewildered reply, "But you're not supposed to have any problems..."

If America's military history has left its marks on Southerners, it also continues to touch the lives of Asians in the region. A complicated tale of love and a shifting notion of homeland, Dwayne Dixon's story, "Mixing Blood," provides a glimpse into a tight-knit community of Japanese women, all married to U.S. servicemen and living in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Estranged from their families in Japan as well as from the established Japanese professional community in North Carolina, these women's identities and experiences have been uniquely shaped by Southern military culture.

The largest retailer of Chinese-made products in America is the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart.

It remains to be seen whether and how that culture will affect the Puih family, who are profiled in Hong-An Truong's photo-essay, and other members of the small Montagnard community in Raleigh. Because they were allied with the Americans against the North Vietnamese during the U.S.-Vietnam conflict (and persecuted for it after the war), Montagnard refugees have a singular historical connection to the North Carolina military community, particularly veterans of the Special Forces. What part will that history of alliance play in their new lives as minorities in the U.S.?

Along with war, capitalism has been a motive force in bringing Asians to the South, and Southerners to Asia. The stories of 19th-century Chinese farm workers in the Mississippi Delta and contemporary Indian high tech guestworkers in the Research Triangle, while obviously different, are both chapters in the Western world's tangled history with Asian labor. That history has taken a new turn in this age of globalization, as U.S. manufacturing jobs are steadily "outsourced" to Asia. This new development in East-South encounters are painfully evident here in North Carolina, where every month brings news of more textile factories closing, laying off local workers, and relocating to China. The largest retailer of Chinese-made products in America is the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart. By and large, mainstream media stories about globalization and labor have focused on the plight of American, usually white, workers. Operating with a neo-Cold War U.S.-versus-them logic, these stories pit sympathetic American laborers against a shadowy, faceless Asian (or Latin American) workforce. Thao Ha's article, "Troubled Waters," brings much-needed attention to the effects of "free trade" on working people of color in the U.S. who are already marginalized within their trades. Focusing on Vietnamese-American shrimpers along the Texas Gulf Coast, Ha shines a light on the economic hardship and personal anguish of a community buffeted by industry racism and neo-liberal trade policies that have put them in competition with shrimp farmers from the developing world, including their former home country, Viet Nam.

In one way or another, the stories we have gathered here are about the struggles and journeys of ordinary people caught up in the impersonal forces of history. We end the issue with perhaps the most personal piece—a deceptively simple story about friendship and cultural identity, told by a young Cambodian-American woman in an interview with Barbara Lau. Ran Kong's story, while showing what we can learn just by engaging in conversation, also demonstrates that even among the younger generations of whites, blacks, Latinos, and Asians growing up together in a legally unsegregated South, we still have a long way to go.

Christina Chia lived in Hong Kong and California before moving to Durham in 1994. She received her Ph.D. in English from Duke University, where she has taught a range of courses on racial politics in U.S. literature and culture. Her research focuses on the intersections between different communities of color within the context of American racism and imperialism. She is currently Program Coordinator at the Duke Center for Multicultural Affairs.

Hong-An Truong is a photographer, visual artist, and writer working on issues that involve youth, education, and racism. As Documentary Arts Educator at Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies (CDS), she coordinated youth education projects on community issues, and media activism. She has also taught undergraduate and continuing education courses on documentary photography and racial politics. Her photographs have been included in exhibits throughout the United States, and her writing appears in Under Her Skin, an anthology on race, gender, and childhood (Seal Press 2004).

North Carolina Humanities Council

Weaving Cultures and Communities

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Cover of Los chinos en las luchas por la liberacion cubana (The Chinese in the Struggles for Cuban Liberation), *by Juan Jimenez Pastrana (Havana, 1963).*

THEY WERE FIGHTERS

By Samuel Chi-Yuen Lowe

When Southern Baptists sent missionaries to nineteenth-century China, they couldn't have predicted that the gospel they brought would be radically transformed by some of their new converts. Nor could they have known that reverberations would be felt all the way back home in the South.

In her 1984 study, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without a History*, the anthropologist Lucy M. Cohen cited a 1976 interview with Ora Hongo Mixon, the great-granddaughter of Dr. Eli Hongo, one in the first group of Chinese to settle in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, in 1867. "I used to hear grandmother," Mixon recalled, "...talk all the time about young Chinese who had come over [to Louisiana] from the war; they were fighters; she said they were tired of fighting."[1] The war they fled was the failed Taiping Rebellion of 1851-1864. Veterans of this peasant revolt came to Cuba as coolie laborers, and many of these were likely among the Cuban Chinese brought to Louisiana to work on sugar plantations beginning in the late 1860s. This story of immigrant Chinese who arrived, "tired of fighting," in the Reconstruction-era American South is not often told. But it is in many ways a quintessentially Southern story, involving staples of Southern history: slavery, racism, conflicting visions of Baptist religion, and rebellion.

REBELS AT HEART

The Chinese "fighters" who arrived in Natchitoches Parish in the late 1860s came by way of Cuba.[2] In the 1840s, the great planters and slaveholders of Cuba—the hacendados—were in a bind and forced to turn to the importation of Chinese indentured plantation workers. British enforcement of the abolition of the slave trade had created a labor shortage on the island, but also, there was the specter of nearby Haiti and its successful slave revolt from earlier in the century. In other words, the hacendados faced a shortage of docile and compliant plantation workers, and thought of the Chinese. In 1847, three years after a slave uprising, the first group of 206 Chinese indentured workers from Fujian province landed on Cuban soil.[3]

A lot could be said about the nineteenth century saga of Chinese "immigrating" to Cuba. Before the British and then the Americans abolished the transatlantic slave trade in 1807 and 1808 respectively, the major promoters of what came to be known as the Chinese coolie trade had transported slaves from Africa. At its height, the Chinese coolie trade was carried very lucratively by fortune-amassing Liverpool, Boston and New York shipping companies.[4] It is not surprising, therefore, that in several respects, the Chinese coolie trade mirrored the slave trade.

In the case of the Chinese coolie trade, armed men did not go out raiding and capturing victims as with the slave trade. However, brokers of Sino-Portuguese descent working on commission "would entice their [Chinese] victims into a teahouse, promise that they would be taken to ... 'Great Spain' to make their fortune, pay them 8 silver dollars to sign an eight-year indenture agreement, and then decoy them to depositories or barracoons, which the Chinese called *zhuzi guan*, or 'pig pens.'" Trapped in these enclosures fit for pigs but not for humans, many of the Chinese died because of disease. At this point the immigrants became coolies; they "were stripped of clothing, disciplined with salted cat-o'-nine tails, and penned to await the next clipper ship sailing for the sugar plantations of Cuba ..." Historians have compared the sea voyage of the Chinese netted by the coolie traders to the slave trade's "middle voyage" from Africa to the Americas. On ship, the Chinese were "shut up in bamboo cages, or chained to iron posts, and a few were indiscriminately selected and flogged as a means of intimidating all others ..." Deaths at sea from "sickness, blows, hunger, thirst, or from suicide by leaping

into the sea" were not uncommon. From 1848 to 1874, more than 16,000 of approximately 141,000 Chinese shipped to Cuba died at sea.[5]

Once ashore in Cuba, the Chinese were sold in the "men-market." They were stripped naked and prodded and poked at by buyers. A laborer testified that once in the fields, "We are fed worse than dogs, and we are called to perform labor for which an ox or a horse would not possess sufficient strength. Everywhere cells exist, and whips and rods are in constant use, and maimed and lacerated limbs are daily to be seen." Conditions were so miserable that suicide became a viable alternative for the Chinese in Cuba. "Suicide by hanging on trees, by drowning, by swallowing opium, and by leaping into the sugar caldrons are the results of wrongs and sufferings which cannot be described." Historians have calculated that indentured Chinese laborers in Cuba committed suicide at a rate one hundred times more than whites and fourteen times more than slaves, leaving Cuba after the importation of the Chinese with the highest suicide rate in the world.[6]

In several respects, the Chinese coolie trade mirrored the slave trade.

All of this was undertaken to preserve the system of slavery in Cuba. The irony was that exactly the opposite occurred. Why? Because just like the slaves throughout the Americas before the arrival of the Chinese—whether in Haiti, Cuba or Southampton County, Virginia—the Chinese indentured laborers also resisted and fought back, utilizing similar means as the slaves before them, including mass escapes, mutinies aboard ship, and armed uprisings. A historian reading the record of their resistance in Cuba noted how it contradicted his previously-held, racist "image of the Chinese as passive victims, meek as lambs to slaughter."[7]

But the coup de grace, the death knell of both slavery and the coolie trade in Cuba, arrived in the 1860s. In this decade, many of the Chinese who landed in Cuba were exiled veteran soldiers of the crushed Taiping rebellion in China, either fugitives fleeing reprisals by the Qing government or prisoners sold into the coolie trade. Rebels at heart, many of these later made common cause with the slaves during the 1868 to 1878 popular insurrection that led finally to the abolition of slavery in Cuba.[8] According to the Cuban historian Juan Jimenez Pastrana, those Chinese who were "fugitives of justice," or who felt that returning to China was a hopeless proposition, realized that they had to make their stand in Cuba.[9] It is likely that among these Taiping rebels to land in Cuba in the 1860s were the "fighting" ancestors of Ora Hongo Mixon.

"WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST"

It may be said that the war the ancestors of Ora Hongo Mixon had tired of fighting in the 1860s was a single struggle for human liberation, which, over decades, stretched from China to Cuba, and ended, finally, in Louisiana. However, it is also possible to say that this struggle actually originated where it concluded—in the United States and in the South.

A mighty wind in politics and culture today is the Southern Baptist Convention, perhaps the largest Protestant denomination in the United States.[10] It is not openly discussed enough, but the Southern Baptist denomination owes it formation to an argument about slavery. Before there was a Southern Baptist Convention, there was a single national Baptist organization in the United States—the Triennial Convention—which was specifically called into being in 1814 to promote and facilitate overseas missions.

Northern and southern Baptists got along famously until about the 1830s, when two significant events occurred. First, in August 1831, the Nat Turner slave rebellion erupted in Southampton County, Virginia. It was followed shortly thereafter—in fact just weeks after Nat Turner's execution by hanging in Virginia—by another slave rebellion on the island of Jamaica.[11] Were the two events connected? The rebellion on Jamaica, which commenced two days after Christmas in 1831 and ended effectively on August 1, 1834—Emancipation Day in Jamaica—was called "The Baptist War." Both the leadership and the rank and file of the rebellion were predominantly Baptists, slaves who had received their first Bibles from black American and white British Baptist missionaries.[12] In Virginia, Nat Turner too had aspirations of becoming a Baptist preacher, but he had been frustrated in this by the local white Baptists of Southampton County who had refused his request to be baptized in the church.[13]

The Jamaican slaves' radical interpretation of the Baptist faith and message had a profound effect on the British missionaries, who then appealed to their American counterparts to end slavery and end it quickly. Because of what happened in Jamaica and Virginia, an abolition movement gathered momentum

A Chinese fort outside Beijing after an attack by British and French troops during the Second Opium War. Felix Beato, 1860.

among Baptists in the United States.[14] In 1845, when the Triennial Convention finally decided it could no longer in good conscience appoint slaveholders as missionaries, the white Baptist churches of the South decided to break from the national organization and form their own—the Southern Baptist Convention—where slaveholders could apply and were welcomed.[15]

In the summer of 1845, the board of the new denomination met in Augusta, Georgia. As one of its first actions, it voted "that, with as little delays as possible, we will proceed to establish missions in the seaports of China, or such of them as may be selected for the purpose."[16] The first missionaries to be appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention were missionaries to China.

Of all places, why China? In the 1830s, British and American shippers desired to expand the export of opium from India to China. It was a very lucrative trade. In 1839, however, Chinese officials attempted to ban opium because of the drug's debilitating effects on the population. This action provoked Britain to attack China in 1840, launching the First Opium War. The result of British military victory and Chinese defeat was a treaty forcing China both to legalize opium and to open its ports more extensively to foreign commerce—a circumstance the Southern Baptists were quick to exploit. As the Southern Baptist Convention explained in a report issued a year later in Richmond, Virginia: "Regular steamers from Great Britain and America will soon enter all her ports, and an opportunity will soon be furnished of sounding in the ears of her teeming millions, the gospel's joyful sound. This field, 'white already to harvest,' the Board have determined to occupy with all the force they can command."[17]

Nat Turner's rebellion was followed within weeks by another slave rebellion in Jamaica. Were the two events connected?

Of course, the opening of Chinese ports profited missionaries, opium traders, and other merchants, but at the expense of the Chinese people.[18] In southern China, the outcome of the First Opium War was catastrophic. One historian wrote that "hundreds of thousands of boatmen and porters" alone—not to mention others—"in central and southern China were thrown out of work," creating an "army of unemployed."[19] In 1847, almost a year to the day after the Southern Baptists issued their report on missionizing in China, the first Chinese indentured laborers stepped on to ships bound for the killing fields of Cuba.

A HEAVENLY ARMY

In this respect, it is significant to note the case of one of the first Baptist missionaries to China from the South, J. Lewis Shuck, of Alexandria, Virginia. He had first arrived in the Portuguese colony of Macau in the fall of 1836 under the auspices of the Triennial Convention, but was not able to organize the first Baptist church in China (in Hong Kong) until 1842, after the First Opium War.[20] It appears that in five years of residence in Macau, Shuck was able to convert, at most, three Chinese: one his house servant, and the other two, perhaps, orphans he had taken into his household.[21] Before the war, Shuck did not seem willing to travel into China to undertake the most common missionary activity—to preach or to distribute Christian literature printed in Chinese. Proselytizing in China was then legally proscribed by the Chinese authorities; traveling in China required donning Chinese garb, adopting Chinese mannerisms and learning local dialects well enough to escape detection.[22] There is no evidence that Shuck was willing to do this either before or immediately after the war.[23]

There was, however, ample evidence of what Shuck was willing to do: before the war, quite openly, publicly, and militantly, he encouraged Britain to attack China and conquer it. Conveniently forgetting about the scourge of opium affecting the Chinese people, he passionately believed and advanced the notion that China's defeat in war would open the country to Christianity. In February 1841, commenting in his journal about the terrible slaughter of Chinese soldiers by the Royal Navy and Marines, Shuck wrote very dispassionately: "I regard such scenes . . . . as the direct instruments of the Lord in clearing away the rubbish which impedes the advancement of Divine Truth."[24] Fifteen months later and under the British flag in Hong Kong, Shuck was finally able to establish the first Baptist church in China.[25]

It was evident that both the brokers of the coolie trade and the Southern Baptist missionaries were seeking to advantageously share the same brew. British military victory allowed unfettered Christian proselytizing in Hong Kong and the five Chinese treaty ports. After the war, access to and the increasing pauperization of the southern Chinese population helped the

missionaries make converts. Perhaps not uncharacteristically, in 1842, the first Chinese to be baptized on Hong Kong Island by a Baptist missionary from the South was a beggar named Chan.[26] Later on, the Southern Baptists may have had another motivation for being in a setting where British warships had made people so desperate: if they could collect a multitude of converts and outdo their northern competitors in the mission field, they could prove that God had blessed their position on the question of slavery.

So headlong, the Southern Baptists pushed into China, especially southern China. But like the Cuban *hacendados*, the Southern Baptists could not foresee what they were about to step into. The *hacendados* had projected on to the Chinese what they wanted to see: a docile, submissive, easily exploited, compliant, cooperative pool of laborers who would help them solve the problems they were having with their rebellious and demanding slaves. They didn't know enough about the Chinese to think otherwise, and were sorely disappointed in the end. Likewise, when the leadership of the Southern Baptists planned their missionary strat-

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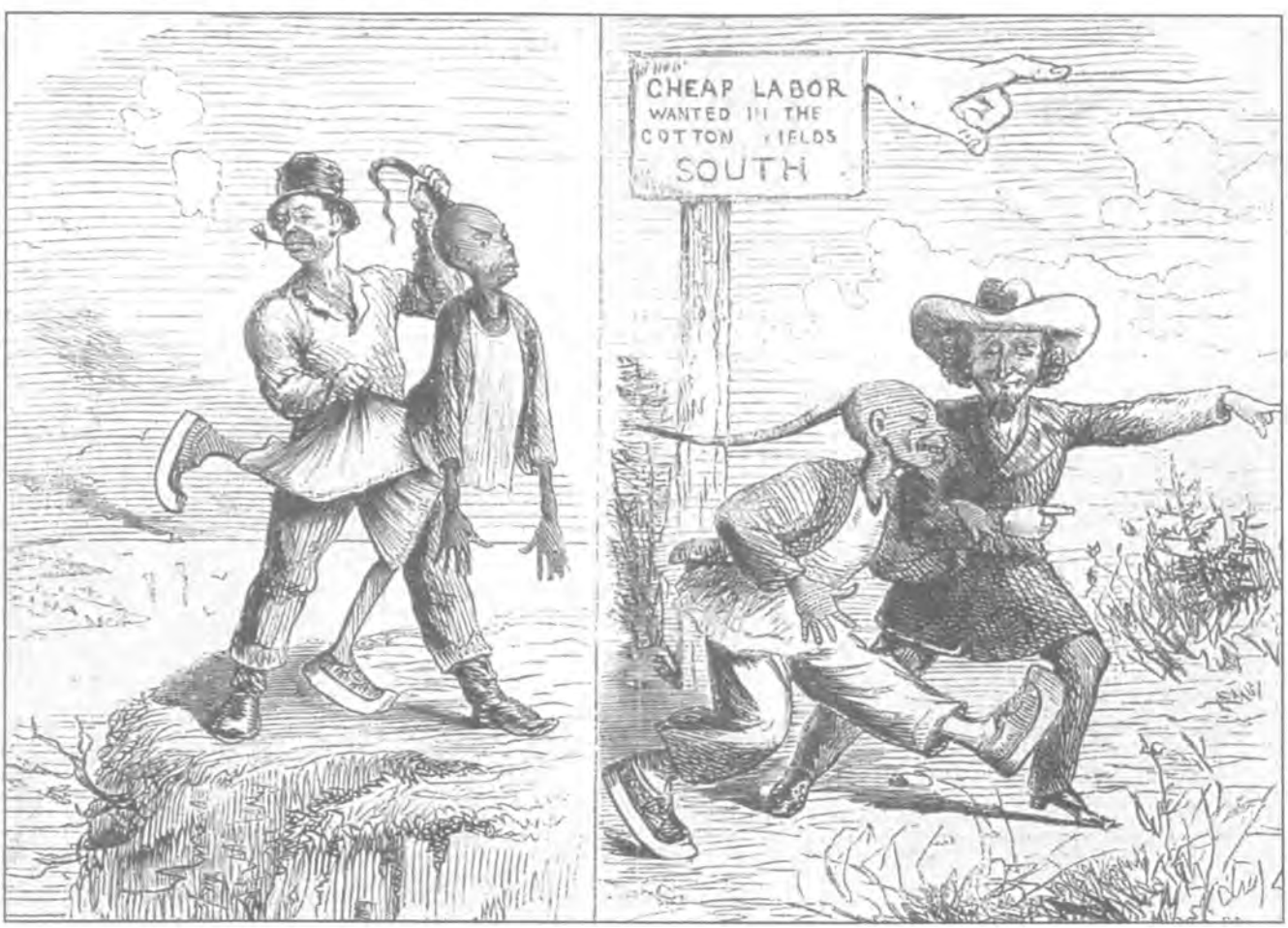

"What Shall We Do with John Chinaman?" Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, *1869.*

egy for China, they had no idea what direction Chinese history was about to take, or what role Christian teachings would play in it.

In the late 1840s, while coolie trade brokers were enticing Chinese into human pig pens and then on to the floating prisons moored in southern China's coastal port cities, and while Baptist missionaries were trying to convert the poor and desperate, in the mountains of southwest China, an army was starting to gather. By 1850, this army numbered in the thousands. Its rank and file consisted of landless peasants, coolies, miners, charcoal burners, women warriors who had refused footbinding, and discharged soldiers. Some of its leadership was drawn from among the hundreds of thousands of boatmen and porters made redundant in the aftermath of the First Opium War.[27] Soon after, the army began to advance. When detachments entered a village, it was recalled that, "Each time they entered into a rich house, or into that of a great family, they would dig three feet into the ground [to find buried treasure]. But not only did they not plunder the peasants, on the contrary, wherever they passed they distributed clothes and other things they had taken to the poor, and announced a remission of taxes for three years, thus winning the gratitude of the villagers." For actions like these, others called them rebels, but they called themselves the army of "The Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace," or the Taiping Heavenly Army.[28]

Later, when the rebels captured the city of Nanjing and established a capital from which to govern territories under their control, they decreed:

> *All lands under Heaven shall be farmed jointly by the people under Heaven. If the production of food is too small in one place, then move to another where it is more abundant. All lands under Heaven shall be accessible in time of abundance or famine. If there is a famine in one area move the surplus from an area where there is abundance to that area. . . . Land shall be farmed by all; rice, eaten by all, clothes, worn by all; money, spent by all. There shall be no inequality, and no person shall be without food or fuel. No matter whether man or woman, everyone over sixteen years of age shall receive land.* [29]

The font of these radical ideas—which millions in southern and central China eventually embraced between 1850 and 1864—was a man named Hong Xiuquan. A primary source and inspiration for his ideas was the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, which Hong had studied under the super-

A MIXED NATION

The Chinese introduced from Cuba to Natchitoches brought no spouses. There were no Chinese women in in Natchitoches, and the first generation of men married or established households with white, black, Creole, and Indian women. The granddaughter of one of these Chinese said in a confidential interview: "They settled down and some of them had children and some of them didn't. They married all kinds of people, Creoles, blacks, whites. Some of them married; others just 'took up' with their wives. They were a very mixed nation."

These patterns of marriage between Chinese men and women of diverse cultural backgrounds emphasize the necessity of understanding the social organization of Chinese settlements in local communities. Most of the Chinese newcomers settled within established and distinctive non-Chinese cultural enclaves and intermarried with members of these groups, thus dropping from public attention. Like some of their counterparts in Cuba, became "a people without history."

The children of these Chinese men and non-Chinese women were variously classified as white, black, Chinese, and mulatto, depending on the year the census was taken. These changes in color classification reflected shifts in the public perception of the Chinese and influenced the cultural identity of descendents. Some "passed" into white society, others merged into the black communities, and a few took advantage of "Mexican/Indian" categories to be considered white in some situations or black in others. Nevertheless, all retained a vague sense of Chinese ancestry even though branches of the same family had

vision of a man named Issachar J. Roberts, a native of Shelbyville, Tennessee, and one of the first missionaries to be appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention.[30] Roberts was the same missionary who had baptized the beggar Chan, who afterwards, served Roberts.[31] But Hong Xiuquan, though often penniless, was no beggar and no one's servant. In a context reminiscent of Nat Turner's in Southampton County, Virginia, it may be said that Hong also possessed "uncommon intelligence" with "too much sense [to] be of any service to any one as a slave."[32] Like the white Baptists of Southampton County who refused to baptize Nat Turner, Roberts also denied the serious but impudent Hong the baptismal rite. In both cases, the ultimate outcome was organized rebellion, all in the name of Christ Jesus.[33]

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It is one of those strange twists and ironies of history: the Southern Baptist Convention, formed to resist the abolition of slavery, sent missionaries across the ocean to a place where it hoped to justify its reason for being, only to propagate a gospel that inspired oppressed men and women to rise up, and witness some of those so inspired arrive in the Americas to ultimately fight and help win the struggle for the abolition of slavery on a island just a hundred miles offshore from its southern homeland. There is a lesson in this story somewhere, inspiring to some and cautionary, perhaps, to others. But Ora Hongo Mixon's grandmother was right about their ancestors, some of the earliest Chinese to settle in the South: they were fighters.

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adopted separate values and identities and had grown apart. Those who "passed" do not acknowledge their Creole, black, or Chinese background.

As the Chinese heritage has become submerged through time and in view of the values and norms that shape race relations in Natchitoches, it is understable, perhaps, that the public appears to have forgotten the Chinese who entered the area over a century ago. In private discussions and during periods of conflict, however, the descendents of the Chinese have kept alive the face of their Chinese ancestry. Past heritage comes to the fore where conflicts, normally hidden from public, take places as in an incident described by the granddaughter of a Chinese settler who had intermarried. One branch of this settler's descendents passed for white, and denial of kinship with her family has precipitated conflicts between them. "Years ago, my boy became involved in a fight with a 'white' boy. The white playmate suddenly yelled 'nigger' at my boy. That made me angry, and I told him: 'My daddy and your daddy are first cousins, you half-white b-----. Our grandparents were Chinese and Creole.'" The woman remarked that the boy never returned to her home. **LUCY M. COHEN**

From "Early Arrivals," Southern Exposure *12: 4 (July/August 1984), pp. 24-30.* Excerpted from Chinese in the Post-Civil War South *(LSU Press, 1984).*

NOTES

[1] Lucy M. Cohen, *Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People Without a History* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 168-169.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] See Frederic Wakeman, Jr., "Voyages," (Presidential Address delivered at the American Historical Association annual meeting in Washington, D.C., December 1992), *American Historical Review* 98:1 (February 1993): 4. See also Lisa Yun, "Chinese Coolies and African Slaves in Cuba," *Journal of Asian American Studies 4:2 (June 2001): 99-122.*

[4] Wakeman, "Voyages," 4-5. On this point, Wakeman cited Juan Pérez de la Riva, *El barracón: Esclavitud y capitalismo en Cuba* (Barecelona: Crítica, 1978), 89-92, 101.

[5] Wakeman, "Voyages," 5-6. On the "pig pens," Wakeman cited Juan Jiménez Pastrana, *Los chinos en la historia de Cuba*, 1847-1930 (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1983), 31-32. Regarding death from disease in the enclosures, Wakeman cited the deposition of Ye Fujun in *Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba* (Taipei, 1970), 9. According to Wakeman, the treatment of the Chinese before boarding ship is discussed in Basil Lubbock, *Coolie Ships and Oil Sailers* (Glasgow, 1981), 32-35 and in Robert L. Irick, *Ch'ing Policy toward the Coolie Trade 1847-1878* (Taipei, 1982), 27. Lubbock in *Coolie Ships*, 11, compared the transport of the Chinese coolies to the "middle voyage" of the slave trade. Also, reference to the treatment of the Chinese on ship is from the deposition of Li Zhoachun in *Report of the Commission Sent by China*, 12. According to Wakeman, statistics of Chinese deaths at sea are derived from Cuban census figures.

[6] Wakeman, "Voyages," 6. The description of the "men-market" is from the deposition of Li Zhaochun in *Report of the Commission Sent by China*, 18. The description of how Chinese laborers were treated in the fields is from the petition of Xian Zuobang in *Report of the Commission Sent by China*, 19. The reference to methods of suicide is from the petition of Yang Yun in *Report of the Commission Sent by China*, 20. Pérez de la Riva calculated the rate of suicide in *El barracón*, 67.

[7] *Ibid.*, 4, 8.

[8] *Ibid.*, 6-8. On the participation of Taiping rebels in the 1868-1869 insurrection, Wakeman cited Juan Jiménez Pastrana, *Los chinos en las luchas por la liberación cubana*, 1847-1930 (Havana, 1963) 71-79, and Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1960-1899* (Princeton, N.J., 1985), 57-58. See also Duvon Clough Corbitt, *A Study of the Chinese in Cuba*, 1847-1947 (Wilmore, KY: Asbury College, 1971), 22.

[9] Juan Jiménez Pastrana, *Los chinos en la historia de Cuba:* 1847-1930 (Havana, 1983) 66-79.

[10] See Eileen W. Lindman, ed., *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches 2004* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 11-13.

[11] William R. Estep, *Whole Gospel—Whole World: The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention:* 1845-1995 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 49-76. Also, see Cohen, 11-16.

[12] Mary Turner, *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave Society*, 1787-1834 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 1-37.

[13] *The Confession, Trial and Execution of Nat Turner, The Negro Insurgent* (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1975), 11.

[14] Estep, 51.

[15] *Ibid.*, 51-61

[16] *Ibid.*, 62.

[17] *Ibid.*, 68.

[18] See John King Fairbank, *The United States and China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 142-147. See also Jean Chesneaux, *Peasant Revolts in China*, 1840-1949, tras. C.A. Curwen (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 23-24.

[19] Chesneaux, 24.

[20] Estep, 69. See also Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Élites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 2-3.

[21] Estep, 70-71; Smith, 3. According to Estep, when Queen's Road Baptist Church was constituted in Hong Kong in May 1842, it had only five members, including, one assumes, Shuck and his wife Henrietta Shuck. According to Smith, in April 1843, the church had twelve in number, but "nine European and three Chinese members."

[22] On how Western missionaries sought converts and had to operate in China before the Treaty of Nanking, see Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996) 14-22.

[23] Western missionaries to China divided over how much to try to be or act Chinese. See Spence, 20, 62, and Jessie G. Lutz and R. Ray Lutz, "Karl Gützlaff's Approach to Indigenization: The Chinese Union," in *Christianity in China: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, ed. Daniel H. Bays (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 269-291. Shuck's relationship with his fellow Baptist missionary from the South, Issachar J. Roberts, was very strained (see Smith, 2-3 and Estep, 90-91). Roberts was clearly identified with the set of missionaries who tried to be or act more Chinese. However, later after the First Opium War (around 1845), Shuck and Roberts were together distinguished from other Protestant missionaries in China for their practice of reporting numerous baptisms, utilizing Chinese assistants to do the preaching of their mission, and being too forward and aggressive in their style of preaching. See Michael C. Lazich, E.C. Bridgman (1801-1861), *America's First Missionary to China*, (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000), 219, 244.

[24] See Stuart Creighton Miller, "Ends and Means: Missionary Justification of Force in Nineteenth Century China," *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John King Fairbank, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 251-257. In holding these views, Shuck was not unique among other American missionaries, but he was certainly one of the most militant in espousing them.

[25] Smith, 2.

[26] Smith, 6-7.

[27] Chesneaux, 24-25. On women in the Taiping army, see P. Richard Bohr, "The Hakka and the Remaking of China," (Plenary Address at the 2004 Toronto Hakka Conference: Tradition, Change, Unity, December 2004), 3.

[28] Chesneaux, 25-26.

[29] *Ibid.*, 27-28.

See Spence, 62, 92-93, Estep, 62, 69, and Bohr, 1-5.

[30] Smith, 6-7.

[31] See *The Confession, Trial and Execution of Nat Turner, The Negro Insurgent*, 8-9. Nat Turner had also taught himself to read. Originally, Hong was from a South China farming family of modest means and a village schoolteacher fallen on hard times

SCENES FROM A FORGOTTEN WAR

By Christina Chia

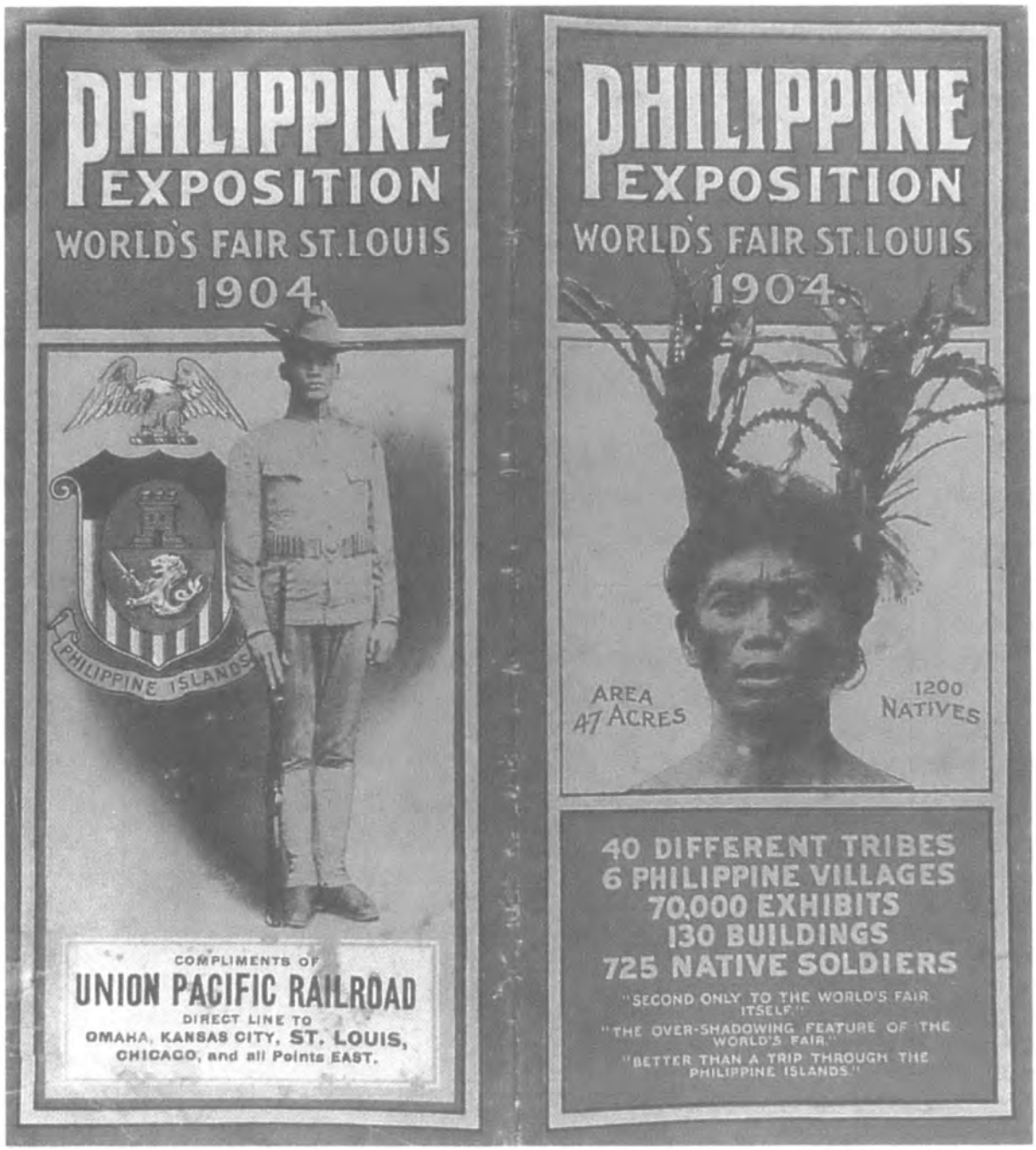
From the island of Mindanao to Jamestown, Virginia, white Southerners of the early twentieth century had their cameras—and rifles—trained squarely on Filipinos.

"America is proud of its part in the great story of the Filipino people," proclaimed George W. Bush during his 2003 state visit to the Philippines. Making a reference to the 1898 Spanish-American War, he added that "together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule." When U.S. warships arrived in Manila Bay in 1898 armed with massive firepower and high-flown rhetoric about the duties of Western nations to spread "progress" around the world, they did indeed find willing allies in a home-grown nationalist movement. What the President conveniently left out of the picture is that the American soldiers were under order to "liberate" the islands for U.S. colonization, not for Filipino self-rule. According to the design of President William McKinley—reputed to be the favorite president of Bush advisor Karl Rove—the local population would instead be put through a program of "benevolent assimilation" into American rule.

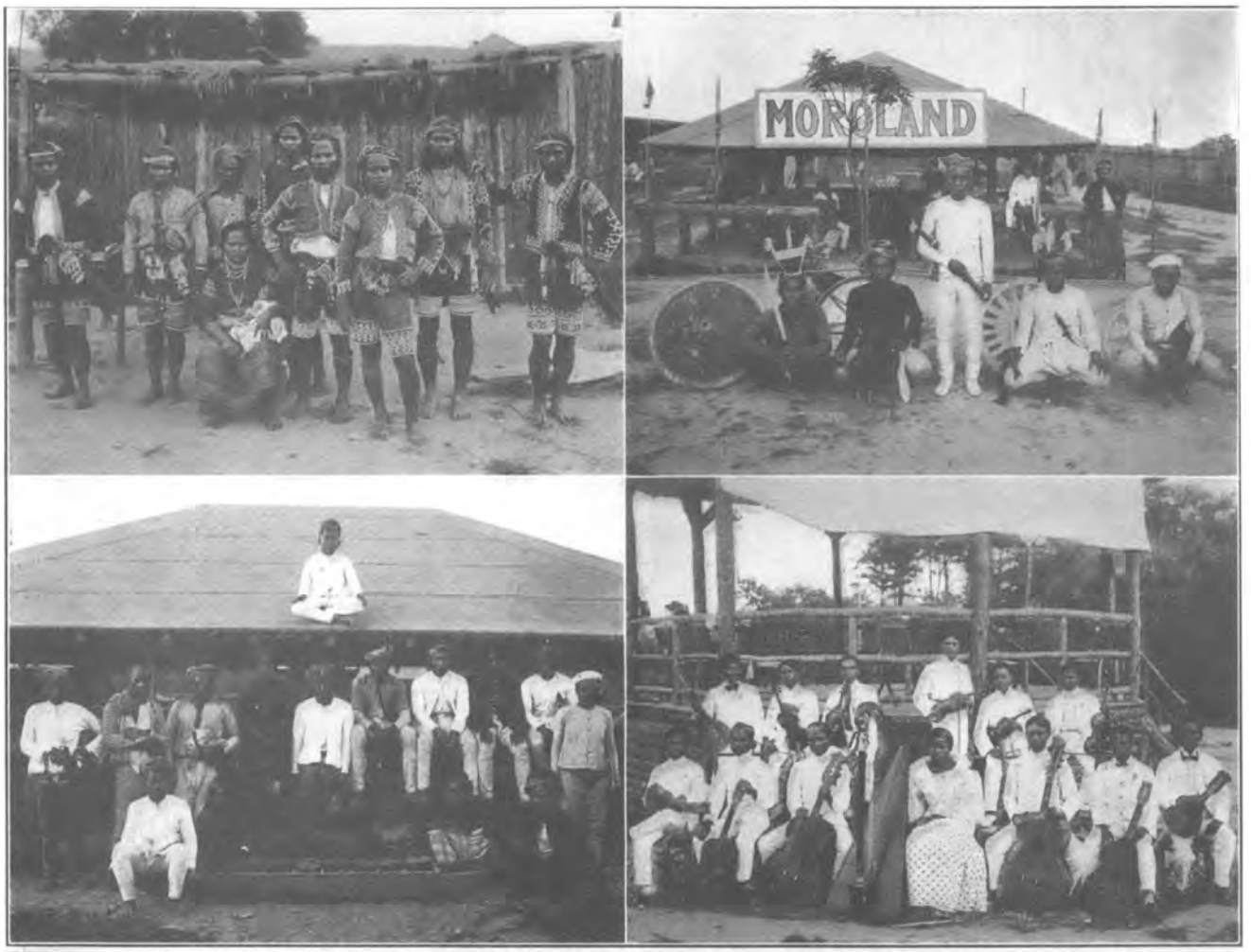
This was not a proposition the Filipino nationalists were willing to accept. What was advertised in the American media as a righteous war against a decaying European power quickly mutated into a bloody suppression of native "insurgents." As many as one million Filipinos were killed in the ensuing fighting, including a substantial number of Muslims in the Southern islands of Jolo and Mindanao (now the site of joint U.S.-Filipino special forces operations against the rebel group Abu Sayyaf). This is one of the least memorialized events in our national history, with nary a monument or Hollywood epic dedicated to its memory.

It may be hard to imagine now, but the Spanish-American and Philippine-American wars were media events of unprecedented scale in their own time. Appearing in every conceivable medium from newspapers to gift books, from postcard collections to motion pictures (some produced by Thomas Edison), images of the Philippines were ubiquitous in American culture, especially during the early years of colonization. Organizers of World's Fairs and expositions, notably those at St. Louis, Missouri, and Jamestown, Virginia, brought hundreds of Filipino "primitives" stateside and presented them as live ethnographic exhibits to white middle-class audiences. Thanks to the introduction of the portable "brownie" camera by Eastman Kodak in the 1890s, images of the Philippines and Filipinos also came to fill the private photo albums of soldiers, civil servants, and other Americans who spent time in the Islands.

Mainstream representations of the Philippines swung wildly between tourism and militarism: a typical book of commercial photographs would alternate matter-of-factly between images of native children at play and American troops on the march, between softly erotic portraits of Filipinas and gruesome scenes of rebel fighters hanging from gallows. In their private memories of war—which survive in scrapbooks and albums like the ones from which some of the following images have been gathered—ordinary American citizens show signs of a similar schizophrenia. In the album of one William Winston, a native Mississippian who fought on the Muslim island of Mindanao and went on to a mundane postwar career as a dentist in Rome, Georgia, we find this chilling triptych: sandwiched between two conventional tourist images, one of a church and one of the countryside, is a close-range shot of bodies in a trench, of nameless Filipino war dead. Imagine those infamous photos from Abu Ghraib sitting cheek by jowl with a snapshot of sunset on the Iraqi desert.



Advertisement for the Philippine exhibit at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Two years earlier, President Roosevelt declared an official end to the U.S. war effort in the Philippines, although fighting continued in parts of the archipelago as late as 1912.



LONG HAIRED BAGOBOS.
PRINCE SANSALUNA AND SLAVES.

MORO WARRIORS.
AGUINALDO BAND.

PHILIPPINE RESERVATION.

The Philippine Reservation—a study, an amusement and an educator—is one of the leading features of the Exposition and covers about five acres of ground on the romantic Canoe Trail. One hundred and forty-two natives, representing five different races and tribes, are exhibited. Here the savage Moros, the most bloodthirsty people of the Islands, are shown in a village the head of which is Prince Sansaluna. The Prince, although only 17 years old, is the absolute ruler of all the Moros, numbering more than 100,000. The long-haired Bagobos, the first ever shown in this country, have an interesting village and engage in their native pastimes and in bead-working. In the center of the Reservation is the band-stand in which the Aguinaldo Orchestra, a musical hit at the Exposition, renders concerts daily. The Exposition Hall, containing a complete display of Philippine products, the trades buildings, the Bazaar Building in which native women weave jusi and pina cloth, the iron and wood shops, the Moro fort and the five villages of the Ilocanos, Visayans, Tagalos, Moros and Bagobos are among the attractions found on the Reservation.

A photo montage from an official souvenir book of the 1907 Jamestown Exposition. Moros (Muslims) and Bagobos from the island of Mindanao were major attractions at the Jamestown Philippine Reservation. The accompanying caption describes the Moros as "the most bloodthirsty people of the Islands," but does not explicitly mention the fierce anti-American resistance on Mindanao. The image on the lower right features the "Aguinaldo Orchestra," a Western-style musical group named (it's not clear by whom) after Emilio Aguinaldo, the nationalist leader who surrendered to U.S. forces in 1901. This montage seems to imply that the progression from primitive "bloodthirstiness" to western-style civilization corresponds to the transition from resistance to capitulation. Courtesy Wilson Library, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Photograph of American soldiers with Filipino prisoners, circa 1900. Photographer unknown. Courtesy Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University.

Americans are notoriously forgetful when it comes to historical events that don't fit the script of national greatness. Southerners are no exception. But while imperial amnesia infects the nation at large, in the South it has played a part in sustaining especially pernicious myths of regional identity. The neo-confederate romance of the "Lost Cause," of the white South as powerless victim of Northern (and African-American) aggression, starts to break down when we remember Southern participation in imperial ventures like the Philippine War. In the islands, Southerners served in the military and filled civil service jobs alongside New Englanders, Midwesterners, Californians. While some Southern politicians opposed territorial expansion on the grounds that America already had enough non-white subjects, many of their cohorts among the elite eagerly rallied around the imperial banner, seeing it as an opportunity to unite Northern and Southern economic interests once and for all.

Staged to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the first British colony in North America, the Jamestown Exposition projected a vision of the New South founded on enterprise, heritage, and militarism—of the "Old Dominion" as meeting ground of John Smith, Robert E. Lee, and Teddy Roosevelt. The amusement area of the Exposition was named "the Warpath," both a reference to Jamestown's Native American past and a naked reminder of its organizers' present preoccupation. The Warpath featured not just the Wild West Show, but also a Philippine exhibit, tellingly dubbed a "Reservation." While African Americans were granted a building to exhibit their industrial and cultural accomplishments, the fairgrounds at large were segregated, with black

Two images from an album belonging to William Winston (1875-1952). Born in Mississippi, Winston was an army lieutenant and avid photographer who served on Mindanao. He also provided sensationalistic dispatches about rebel ambushes to a newspaper in Waco, Texas, where he had served before going to the Philippines. The Filipino men in these pictures appear to have been either prisoners or local people pressed into work by U.S. troops. Courtesy Duke University.

A handwritten caption on the back of this photograph reads: "Bull battery outside the barracks in Tagbilaran, Bohol, P. I. This battery is famous throughout the Philippines for the work it has accomplished and the insurgents it has killed. Note that each bull has a Filipino keeper." Photographer unknown. Courtesy Duke University.

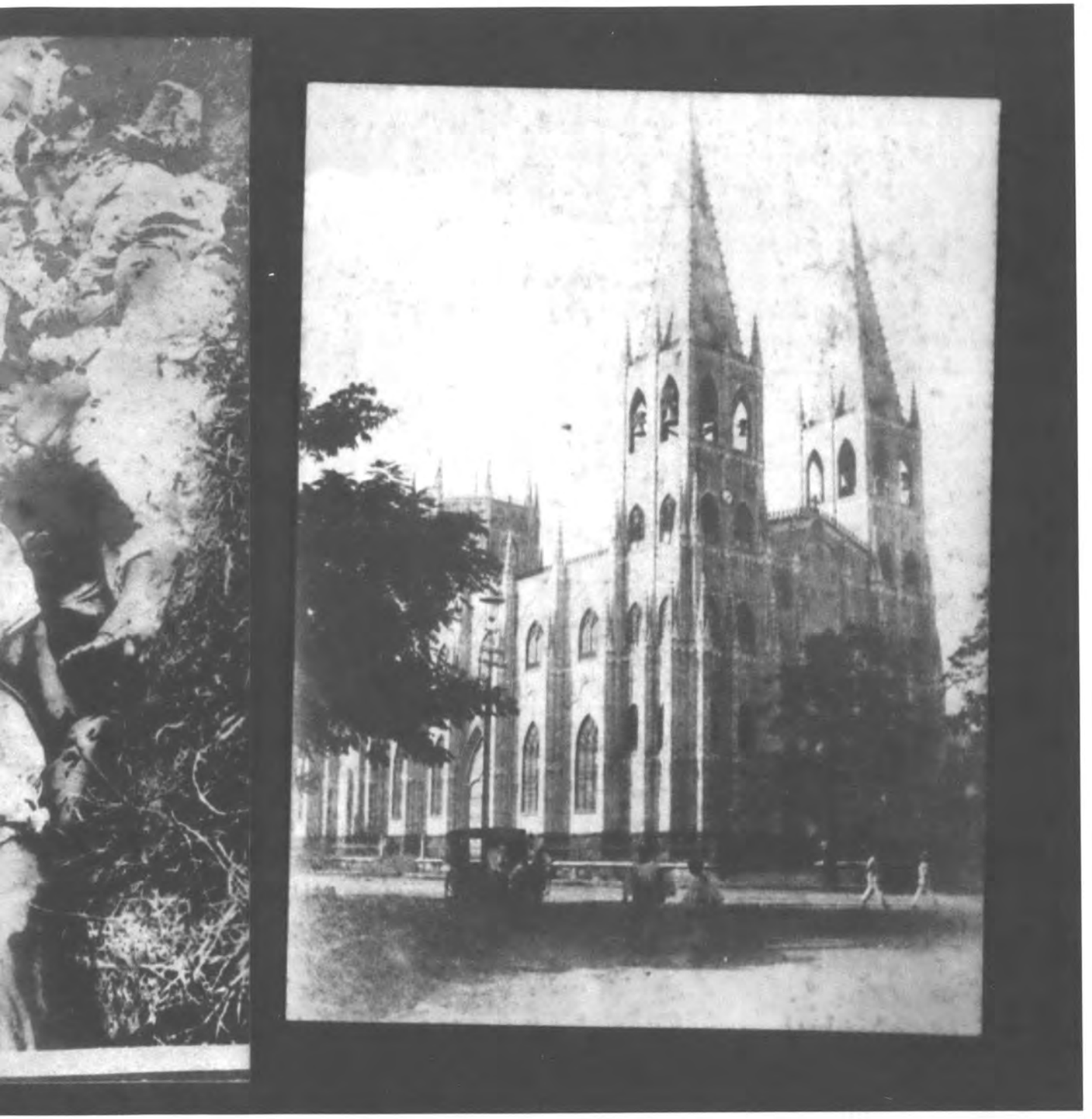
White American soldier poses on caraboo cart with young Filipino, from the Winston album. Courtesy Duke University.

patrons consigned to facilities designated "exclusively for use of the colored people." Racism in the Jim Crow South wore many colors.

When the Jamestown Tercentennial fair collapsed in financial ruins in 1910, its grounds were purchased, all too fittingly, by the U.S. Navy and later incorporated into the massive Norfolk Naval Air Station. Today, when we see stock news footage of the base with its gleaming machinery, there is little trace left of the human history of war and empire that one might have glimpsed in the faces of the Filipinos and Indians on display—or, indeed, in the faces of the white visitors to the Exposition. While the images collected here show us only the perspective of the American victors, it is not an easy perspective to pin down. The personal photographs, in particular, suggest a complicated mix of attitudes and emotions: condescension and fear, callousness and guilt, brutality and desire. They bear witness to a messy, ragged history, the kind of history that those in power today would rather keep out of sight, would rather we never see for ourselves. "Together our soldiers liberated the Philippines from colonial rule": the President wants, instead, for us simply to take his word for it.

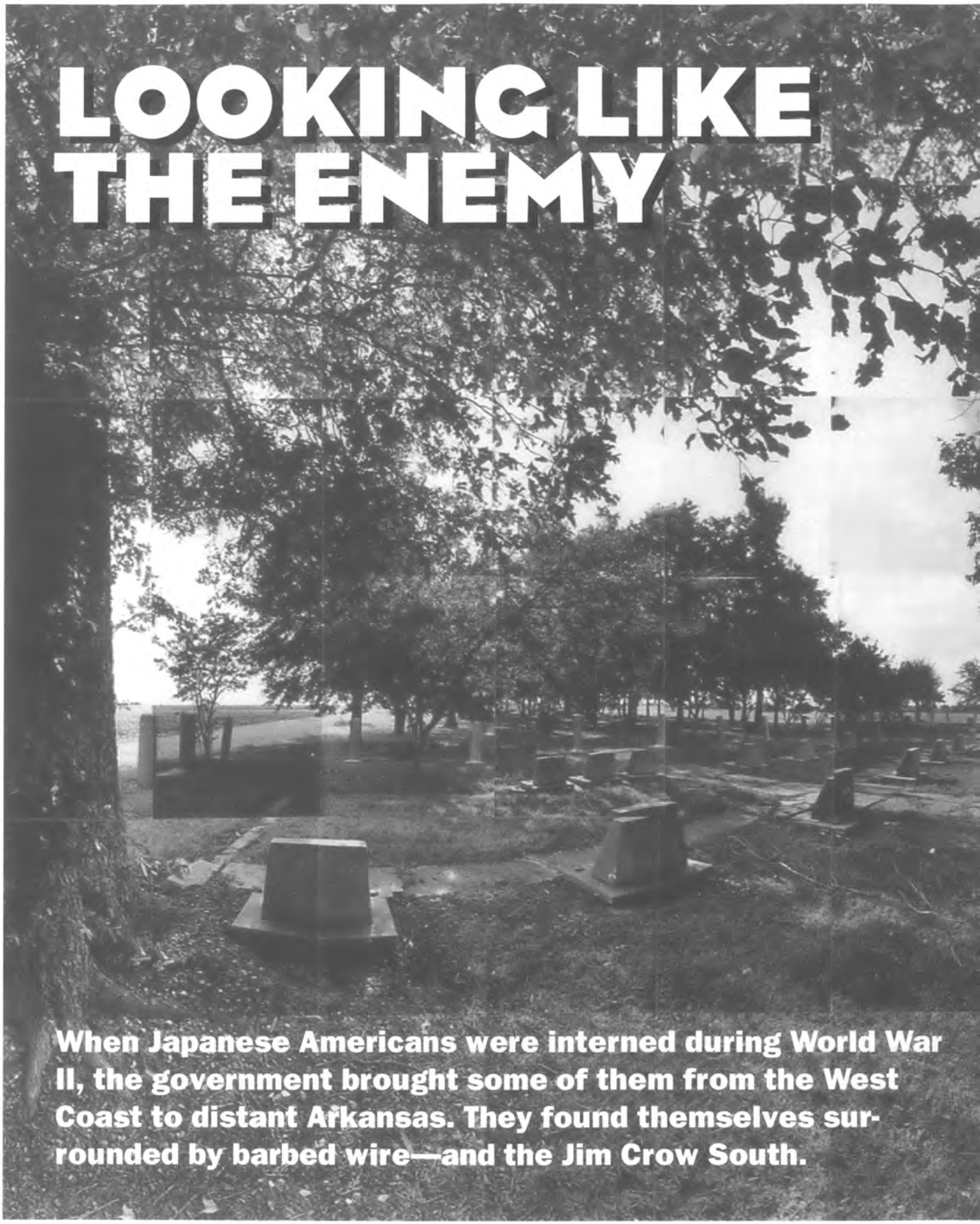
The colonization of the Philippines was not only an exercise in military power, it also involved the mass mobilization of American civilians as bureaucrats, researchers, teachers—foot soldiers in what William McKinley termed "benevolent assimilation." These images come from the collection of Edward Sharp (b. 1871), a Tennesseean who worked at the Normal Institute of Bohol in Central Philippines between 1902 and 1904, training local instructors to teach English and other American school subjects. The Filipino adults in the pictures are probably student teachers. Courtesy Duke University.

Photograph of an unnamed woman dancing from the Winston album. Young Filipino women are a common subject in both commercial and private photographs from the period. This prevalence speaks powerfully to the entanglement of sexual desire and military domination in the American colonization of the Philippines. Courtesy Duke University.



A page from William Winston's album. Only the picture on the far left appears to have been taken by Winston himself. The one on the far right is likely a postcard. The partly deteriorated image in the center is a reproduction of a widely circulated wartime photo of Filipino war dead that appeared in the Harper's History of the War in the Philippines *(1900) and other publications. The caption in the* Harper's History *read: "The American artillery did wonderful execution in the battles with the insurgents. In a trench at Santa Ana the Tagalog dead lay in piles. The group shown in the picture consisted of thirty eight bodies." Photos of the bodies of enemy dead were extremely commonplace during the American counter-insurgency. Courtesy Duke University.*

LOOKING LIKE THE ENEMY



When Japanese Americans were interned during World War II, the government brought some of them from the West Coast to distant Arkansas. They found themselves surrounded by barbed wire—and the Jim Crow South.

Rowher Relocation Camp, Cemetery, Desha, Arkansas. Photo collage by Masumi Hayashi, 1995.

By Johanna Miller Lewis

On a sunny day in late September 2004 close to 1,000 Americans of Japanese descent traveled a southeastern route from Little Rock, Arkansas, to the section of the state known as the Delta for its fertile lands and proximity to the Mississippi River. For many of them this was a return trip, after sixty years, to the place the federal government incarcerated them during World War II for looking like the enemy.

Following Japan's surprise attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, a long history of discrimination, suspicion, and prejudice against Japanese American residents combined with the attack to create fear and near hysteria, especially on the West Coast. As Japan's military forces swiftly moved through Guam, Wake Island, and the Philippines, many Americans feared that Japan would invade the West Coast and that Japanese Americans would assist the enemy. The FBI went door-to-door in these areas rounding up immigrant Japanese-American community leaders while the Federal Reserve froze all bank accounts held by Japanese immigrants. Although no creditable evidence existed, then or now, that any Japanese Americans posed a threat to national security, residents of California, Oregon, and Washington demanded protection from what they saw as a possible enemy force in their own backyards.

Closing of the Jerome Relocation Center, Denson, Arkansas. A mother and child and an Issei gentleman bid friends farewell at a Pullman car's platform. Photo by Hikaru Iwasaki, 1944. Courtesy of the National Archives.

In this climate of fear and wartime hysteria, and at the urging of Western Defense Commander Lt. Gen. John DeWitt, on February 19, 1942, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which empowered the Secretary of War and the military to establish zones from which certain individuals or groups (i.e., Japanese Americans) could be excluded. Less than a week later DeWitt created Military Zone One encompassing the western portions of Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona. Exclusion notices appeared on utility poles and Evacuation Sale signs hung in Japanese American-owned store windows.

> *None of us really knew where we were going. They never really told us where, they just said to be ready. They sent us a notice, telling us to assemble... at the old Union Church, and it was walking distance for us. All the soldiers were lined up and the buses were lined up. My husband thought that we were going to go up to the desert. We ended up in Santa Anita [Racetrack]. We thought it was going to be miles and miles away, so when we got on the bus and we got to Santa Anita, I was stunned.*
>
> *Miyo Senzaki, Rohwer*

Executive Order 9066 effectively forced more than 110,000 people of Japanese descent, 70% of whom were American citizens, from their homes and required them (if they did not have the capital to pay mortgages and taxes) to dispose of their businesses, their houses, and most of their personal possessions at a great loss. First confined in "assembly centers," such as the Santa Anita Racetrack, the government then shipped the Japanese Americans to ten "war relocation centers" located in remote areas of California, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming, Arizona, Colorado, and Arkansas.

> *We were put on trains. And I remember that, because even though I was only about eight, nine years old, it's the first train ride I ever took. And I remember the soldiers, the guards on the train, because we had to stop—it was a long distance from California to Arkansas—stop every now and then to get off the train and exercise, and get back on. But it was like a military maneuver.*
>
> *Paul S. Sakamoto, Rohwer*

In the summer of 1942, two of these "war relocation centers," Jerome and Rohwer, emerged from the swamps and forests of the Arkansas Delta. Neatly or-

dered rows of military-style barracks dotted the horizon and guard towers rose above the flat terrain. Japanese Americans began to arrive in southeast Arkansas by train from California in September 1942. Displaced from their homes and lives on the West Coast, the internees experienced the upheaval individually; each person tells a different story. This is the story of the Japanese-American experience in World War II Arkansas.

> *On September 28, we boarded a train at Santa Anita and after four days of travel we arrived at Rohwer, Arkansas. I was disappointed in this camp at first sight but I am readily getting used to it. I now reside at Block 15, Barrack 9, Unit A."*
>
> *Jack Miyaki, Rohwer high school student*

> *Our father had told us that we were going for a "long vacation in the country." I believed him. I thought it would be a wonderful adventure. Our father told us we were going to a camp called Rohwer in a faraway place called Arkansas.*
>
> *George Takei, Rohwer*

Arkansas in the 1940s was a rural, farming state where animals and humans still supplied the greater part of the labor necessary to plant, cultivate, and harvest the fields. Most Arkansans, white and black, lived and worked as tenant farmers or sharecroppers on land owned by someone else. This system kept workers continually in debt to landowners, unable to put aside enough money to buy land or get another job. In the Arkansas Delta, the population was desperately poor. Many people, black and white, lived in shacks without running water, indoor toilets, or electricity. Debilitating disease was common, and health care facilities were limited. Jim Crow dictated the rigid segregation of society and the economy by race. Few communities offered formal education beyond the eighth grade, and black schools, where available, lagged far behind white schools in their funding which resulted in inferior facilities, supplies, and curriculum.

During the Depression the Farm Security Administration, a New Deal agency, came to southeast Arkansas and purchased tax-delinquent lands in Chicot, Drew, and Desha counties to develop as subsistence homesteads for poverty-stricken farmers. When the government officials running the War Relocation Authority needed land to build the centers in remote, isolated locations with easy access to existing railroads and the potential for agricultural endeavors, they remembered Arkansas.

The WRA centers at Jerome and Rohwer housed approximately 17,000 Japanese-American inmates between September 18, 1942, when Rohwer opened and November 30, 1945, when it closed. Jerome opened on October 6, 1942, and closed on June 30, 1944—it had the distinction of being the last camp to open and the first camp to close. Inmates assigned to Rohwer came from Hawaii, as well as Los Angeles and San Joaquin counties, California, and totaled 8,475 at peak population. In addition to inmates from Los Angeles, Fresno, and Sacramento counties in California, Jerome housed inmates from Hawaii and totaled 8,497 at its peak.

The WRA designed the relocation centers to be self-contained and mostly self-sufficient communities, complete with hospitals, post offices, schools, warehouses, offices, farmland, and living quarters. Organized in military fashion, each camp was built on a grid system with barracks grouped into blocks. Each block contained ten to fourteen barracks; a mess hall with a kitchen, storeroom, and dishwashing area; toilets for men and women; and a recreation hall.

With sewer systems, water treatment plants, and electricity, the Jerome and Rohwer camps featured amenities ironically unavailable to many Delta residents. These advantages, coupled with three meals a day supplied by the U.S. government, spurred anger and resentment among some white residents of the Delta. Families in McGehee watched in astonishment as mess-hall table scraps, including almost-whole hams, bread, and vegetables, became pig slop. Although African Americans sometimes received the opportunity to work at Jerome and Rohwer, black Arkansans generally had little interaction with the Japanese American internees.

> *[Rohwer was] far enough south to catch Gulf Coast hurricanes, far enough north to catch midwestern tornadoes, close enough to the [Mississippi] river to be inundated by Mississippi Valley floods, and lush enough to be the haven for every creepy, crawly creature and pesky insect in the world.*
>
> *Eiichi Kamiya, Rohwer*

> *[Arkansas] was very cold. I was there six months; from about the end of October to April, so it got very, very cold. I had not experienced such a cold climate. The camp was supposed to be a mile square. I don't know if it was, but it was a square, I think. We lived on the one end of the camp... So we had to walk—of course, there was no transportation. We just walked everywhere. It was so bitterly cold. I remember that so well because our knees ached from the cold to walk to our jobs.*
>
> *Haruko (Sugi) Hurt, Rohwer*

With its humid summers and icy winters, acclimating to the Arkansas Delta proved difficult for the Japanese Americans. The tarpaper-covered barracks absorbed heat in the summer and made the structure unbearably hot while providing little insulation from the freezing temperatures in the winter. Wall partitions inside the barracks separated the apartments but they only reached to the eaves, limiting privacy. The wood flooring had large gaps between the boards, allowing dirt and bugs into the barracks. Each unit came equipped with a heating unit fueled by coal or wood; a bare light bulb; army cots, blankets, and mattresses. Living quarters provided neither running water nor cooking facilities.

"I learned to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag within sight of armed sentries watching over us. I was too young to appreciate the irony as I recited the words, 'with liberty and justice for all.'" – George Takei, Rohmer

These "government-issue" camps imposed a military lifestyle with group bathrooms and showers without dividers for privacy. The shower and bathroom buildings resembled a capital "H," with a laundry on one side and the men's and women's bathrooms on the other with the hot water heater in the crossbar. Since inmate families could not eat together in their quarters, children ate with their friends in the mess hall, and sometimes parents only saw their children in the early morning before school and in the late evening before bedtime.

Young people just could go to the mess hall and eat their three meals with their friends. They didn't have to go with their family. . . There was no family life as such in camp, because family didn't eat together, didn't have to.
Haruko (Sugi) Hurt, Rohwer inmate

Communal living posed problems for the inmates, especially in the way it caused the breakdown of family structure and parental authority. Standing in line became a way of life for inmates. They stood in line to get on the train to come to Arkansas; they stood in line to get off the train at Rohwer or Jerome; they stood in line to register, to eat, to shower, to use the restrooms, to get ice, to get wood or coal; and they stood in line to get back on the train to leave Arkansas and go to their next destination, whether it be another relocation center or Chicago or Cleveland.

To me, the tall guard towers and the barbed wire fence that incarcerated my family and me became part of my normal landscape... It became normal for me to line up three times a day to eat in a noisy mess hall. It became normal for me to go with Daddy to a communal shower and bathe with many men. It became normal for me to go to school in a black, tarpaper-covered barrack. I learned to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag within sight of armed sentries watching over us. I was too young to appreciate the irony as I recited the words, "with liberty and justice for all."
George Takei, Rohwer

Despite their forced removal from the West Coast and placement in what were effectively prisons, inmates at Rohwer and Jerome refused to assimilate totally into this pseudo-military culture. They held onto the Japanese language as well as symbols and cultural practices such as ikebana, flower arranging, calligraphy, embroidered wall hangings, and kimonos. Inmates also created new routines in their daily activities. Children attended camp schools while younger adults worked in WRA administrative offices and other facilities. Older adults tended small garden plots wherever they could find space, raising both vegetables and flowers; many worked in the fields cultivating crops that eventually helped feed all ten WRA camps. Young people attended dances, worked on writing, drawing, editing and publishing the daily center newspapers, the Rohwer Outpost and the Denson Tribune, or played baseball, basketball, and football, along with traditional Japanese sports such as judo and sumo wrestling. Both Buddhist and Christian worship services were available. Life went on, in the face of adversity, within barbed wire and shadowed by guard towers.

It was life beyond barbed wire, however, that distinguished Rohwer and Jerome from the other eight camps. Inmates from all the camps frequently applied for, and received, permission to travel into nearby towns and cities for shopping and recreation. But in Arkansas excursions to Dumas, Pine Bluff, and Little Rock not only provided a respite from the monotony of camp life, they gave these Japanese Americans from the West Coast a powerful sense of segregation in the rural South. Confusion arose among inmates, many of whom had ex-

perienced racial segregation in California, about their place in the racial structure of the Delta. Was their place was at the front or back of the bus? Should they use the white or colored bathrooms? Could they drink from the white drinking fountains?

> *I got on the bus and my first decision I had to make outside of camp was "Where do I sit?" The white people sat in the front of the bus. The blacks were in the back. And so I got on and I thought, "Gee, I don't know where should I sit?" So I said, "Gee, we were confined so long and we were discriminated so much that maybe I'll be considered black"' so I went to and I sat in the black area. The bus driver stopped the bus and he says, "Hey, you gotta sit in the front." So I got up and moved, but I didn't come way in the front either, I sat right by the dividing line.*
>
> *Ben Tsutomu Chikaraishi, Rohwer*

If the Japanese Americans were unsure of their place in the segregated South, Arkansans weren't—it was obvious that the "Japanese" were were not black. This made travel beyond the Delta easier and so some young women made chaperoned bus trips across the river to Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi for dances with Japanese-American soldiers courtesy of the United States Army. A Boy Scout Troop from Stockton, California, temporarily residing at Jerome held a jamboree on the banks of the Mississippi River with a troop from Arkansas City. Many of the Stockton Scouts remember they had uniforms while the Arkansas City troop didn't; a few inmates gave their uniforms away. Perhaps the most remarkable excursion outside camp was made by the distinguished artist, Henry Sugimoto. In February 1944 Sugimoto exhibited his paintings and drawings of daily life in Jerome and Rohwer in a one-man show at Hendrix College in Conway.

In accordance with Administrative Notice No. 289... you are hereby advised that you are scheduled to leave this Center during the week of November 5-9, 1945...

Letter from Ray Johnston, Rohwer Project Director, October 22, 1945

In December 1944, the Supreme Court ruled that American citizens of Japanese ancestry who signed a loyalty oath could no longer be detained behind barbed wire. The War Department subsequently rescinded the order barring all Japanese Americans from the exclusion zones, and the War Relocation Authority began to close the relocation centers. Japanese Americans were dismissed from the internment camps as peremptorily as they had been summoned. Each inmate received $25 and transportation to the location of their choice. Most found "resettlement" difficult to deal with, especially with few savings to live on, no homes or property awaiting their return, and the shame they felt from being imprisoned. At Rohwer, the last Arkansas camp to close, some elderly inmates balked at leaving because they could not face starting life over again. Other camps reported inmate suicides.

Of the more than 16,000 Japanese Americans relocated to Arkansas during World War II, only a handful remained after the war. Most Japanese Americans refused to resettle in the South out of fear they would be "classed and treated like the Negro." In a May 1945 letter to WRA Director Dillon S. Myer, Rohwer Project Director Ray Johnston stated, "The evacuees strongly fear that [the 'caste' system of the South] will reduce them to the economic level of the poorer whites and Negroes, and to

Jerome Relocation, Denson, Arkansas. Dorothy Maruki having her identification picture taken prior to leaving the center. Photo by Tom Okano, 1943. Courtesy of the National Archives.

the social level of the Negroes as a caste group. This is no doubt the basic cause for the general lack of interest to date in the South as a relocation area."

Most inmates chose to return home to California and Hawaii, though a few resettled in the Midwest. The American Friends Service Committee reported in early 1944 that "crude literature of vigilante-type organizations continues to be circulated" in California and that returning veterans demanded that "all persons of Japanese ancestry be forever barred from California soil and deported after the war along side of other subversive-minded aliens." A year later, however, the American Friends Service Committee noted in their newsletter "that veterans' organizations...have now swung over to support of the rights of Japanese American citizens, give full recognition to the distinguished service record of Nisei in the United States Army, and have rebuked instances of racial discrimination on the part of local posts."

A farming cooperative located in Scott, Arkansas, persuaded some Japanese Americans from Rohwer to become sharecroppers. About eighteen families moved to Scott but only one family remained in Arkansas permanently—Sam Yada, his wife Haruye, and their two sons, Robert and Richard, who moved from Scott to North Little Rock in 1953. Yada opened a successful nursery and was one of the few voices in Arkansas to talk about the camps. To remind Arkansans about the legacy of Rohwer and Jerome, Sam Yada donated books about Executive Order 9066 and the relocation centers to libraries around the state. He also participated in a two part documentary about Rohwer and his experiences in camp. Today Bob and Richard carry on their father's work in keeping the memory of the internment camps alive, most recently raising money to conserve and restore the cement monuments and headstones in the Rohwer cemetery.

After the war, most of the physical traces of the camps' existence disappeared when the federal government sold off the buildings, the equipment, and the land. Oats, soybeans, winter wheat, and cotton now grow where the Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Centers once stood. Today, little evidence remains of the incarceration of Japanese Americans that took place in southeast Arkansas during World War II. At Jerome, a smokestack from the hospital complex, two concrete tanks from the wastewater disposal plant and a former administration building are visible from U.S. Highway 165. Farmer and landowner John Ellington lovingly tends those remnants, along with a granite memorial erected by the JACL dedicated to the wartime experience of Japanese Americans. A cemetery and two cement monuments dedicated to Japanese-American soldiers during the war, along with two contemporary granite monuments, mark the site of Rohwer, while a smokestack remains visible across the cotton fields in the distance. Still owned by the War Relocation Authority through a bureaucratic error, in 1992 the cemetery at Rohwer was named a National Historic Landmark.

Imprisonment of Japanese Americans during World War II was the most serious government violation of civil rights since slavery. While no simple reason explains why it happened, in 1988 a Presidential Commission investigating possible redress for former inmates concluded that "the broad historical causes were race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership." For many Japanese Americans, the experience created deep distrust in the government, and events immediately following the war did little to dispel it. In 1948 President Truman signed the Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act, which appropriated $38 million to reimburse Japanese

Former Internee Sam Mibu and John Ellington, a local farmer active in perserving the site of the Jerome camp. Photo courtesy of Johanna Miller Lewis.

Americans for "damage or loss to real or personal property" they experienced when forced to leave their homes and businesses. No provisions were made for lost income or profits. While approximately 23,000 Japanese Americans filed claims requesting $131 million in damages under the Act, in 1950 the government cleared 210 claims, and only 73 individuals received financial compensation.

It would be nearly forty more years before some measure of justice toward internees was achieved, and then it was partial and bittersweet. Although the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 finally included a formal apology to Japanese Americans for their wrongful imprisonment and provided a one-time payment of $20,000 to camp survivors, these measures could not erase the profound humiliation and pain suffered by Americans of Japanese ancestry.

The questions raised by the internment of Japanese Americans resonate strongly in our post-9/11 world. From the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to the Patriot Act of 2001, the United States has always struggled with contradictions between national security and civil rights; the legacy of the Arkansas internment camps warns us of what can happen when we punish people for looking like the enemy.

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LIFE INTERRUPTED

Many Japanese Americans were long reluctant to speak of their incarceration because of the shame, but the campaign for redress combined with an aggressive educational campaign about Executive Order 9066 and Japanese Americans during World War II has begun to reverse that trend. In late September 2004, *Life Interrupted: The Japanese American Experience in World War II Arkansas*, a partnership of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Public History program and the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles with major funding from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, invited the survivors of Rohwer and Jerome (and the other War Relocation Centers) back to Arkansas. They came, surrounded by family members, to participate in Camp Connections: A Conversation about Civil Rights and Social Justice in Arkansas. Over the course of three days the former inmates and their families learned more about their "Arkansas experience" and its place in the larger context of U.S. history through exhibits, panel presentations, speakers, curriculum kits, and a documentary, Time of Fear, which aired on PBS in May. On the last day of the conference they returned home to the Delta, frequently fanning out across fields to stand in their barracks' exact locations.

For the Japanese Americans (and their families) who attended, the fellowship and memories renewed, and the knowledge gained from *Life Interrupted* helped to resolve years of guilt and confusion. Many younger generation Japanese Americans (children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren of those who had been in camp) learned about their family's World War II experiences for the first time.

For Arkansans, an important chapter of their state's history emerged from anonymity. Not only did the extensive press coverage of *Life Interrupted* and the Camp Connections conference in particular, rate as one of the top ten news stories in Arkansas by an Associated Press poll; the only state-wide daily newspaper, the Arkansas *Democrat-Gazette* featured the project on its September 23, 2004, editorial page. On that day readers could learn about the conference, the exhibits, and the educational materials for Life Interrupted as well as two opposing commentaries on Michelle Malkin's controversial book *In Defense of Internment*. The history of Jerome and Rohwer will remain visible throughout the state for the foreseeable future thanks to training almost 600 teachers in the curriculum packages and lesson plans (available at http://www.ualr.edu/lifeinterrupted/curriculum/index.asp) developed by the Life Interrupted Education Director and nine master teachers. Those teachers reach approximately 41,000 students of Arkansas history, geography, fine arts, and language arts.

Yoshimi and John Turner, Sergeant First Class, 82nd Airborne Division, on their wedding day, Japan, 1953.

BY DWAYNE DIXON

For these Japanese women, marrying American soldiers meant leaving everything they knew. So they created their own, unique community in the shadow of Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

MIXING BLOOD

The South has long been crucial within the U.S. military's strategic web of installations and outposts around the world. North Carolina in particular has had its contemporary history shaped by the presence of three bases: Camp Lejune, Pope Air Force Base, and the massive Fort Bragg complex next to Fayetteville that houses a tenth of the U.S. Army's active duty force, including the 82nd Airborne Division. The bases have positioned eastern North Carolina as a primary exporter of soldiers for nearly every American military action since World War II. With these actions came the establishment of even more bases elsewhere: forward airstrips and relay points, listening posts and supply depots all circulating American military personnel from the frayed and distant edge of U.S. foreign policy interests and back again to stateside assignments at places like Fort Bragg.

Since World War II, the majority of these overseas installations have been in Asia with Japan poised as the most strategic site for America's growing military apparatus in the region. The Occupation of Japan following the 1945 surrender ensured that the newly reconstituted nation would be politically predisposed towards serving the future needs of U.S. policy through the generous accommodation of an extensive military presence. By the end of the Korean War Japan found itself thick with nearly 600 American bases, a presence that has slowly receded to eight major bases stretching from the far north and pooling in a heavy concentration in Okinawa, with Kadena Air Base continuing to serve as the largest U.S. base on foreign soil.

The robust logistical and personnel networks of the military, which have circulated materiel and soldiers out to these bases, have found a second network developing along their seams. This is an organic network, threading from overseas duty stations back to flimsy stateside military housing and the spare, tidy developments that cluster just outside the main gates of bases. This is a circuit of intimacy and family that casts fine tendrils around the mission-oriented traffic of national defense. An unintended consequence of the sprawling reach of U.S. militarism is that the South has become home to a particular type of community: the Asian wives of American men who shipped off as soldiers to Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, or Japan.

The women move with their husbands and growing families from one duty station to another, sometimes waiting for months at a time while their husbands are on indefinite temporary assignments elsewhere, consoling one another, sharing information about schools, hospitals, banking and the minutiae of everyday life in order to acclimate to new systems, unfamiliar bureaucracies, and strange geographies. Japanese women in Fayetteville have been a visible and growing presence in the military community since the late 1950s and have thrived at the precise point where the U.S. military, the American South, and Asia triangulate.

At an afternoon meeting of the Japanese-American *Kaeda Kai* (Maple Society) nine women gathered around the table in Yasuko Kelly's modest brick ranch house close to Ft. Bragg's main gate. A large, ornate *sensu*, a Japanese fan, decorated the wall facing the kitchen door through which Yasuko passed mugs of black coffee and cups of green tea. Seventy-two year-old Ruiko Long pulled the ashtray closer as she lit a slender menthol cigarette, listening to the other women discuss an absent member's sick daughter. The group had met today to plan for the upcoming traditional Japanese *natsu matsuri*, the summer festival held in July. They put their agenda aside for awhile as Yasuko explained my interest in the Japanese community that had formed in Fayetteville. Chieko Mitsui laughed as she said, "You know, all of us have been in America longer than in Japan! We're Americans!" The older women arrived in the U.S. during the tumultuous years of the Civil Rights struggle and soon after the war in Korea, a confluence of events that marked them out as problematically different in multiple ways. They were "war brides", typecast through popular culture depictions such as the Marlon Brando feature, *Sayonara* (1957). They were undifferentiated "Orientals"—the face of the enemy in America's long series of wars throughout Asia. They were foreign nationals with intimate and risky ties to the U.S. military. They were non-whites married to white men in the Jim Crow South.

"A long time ago, some kids at the bus stop would say, 'Look, it's Chinese!' All the time people just call us Chinese," Chieko recalled. She had married an enlisted man in 1954 in Tokyo and when they arrived in America, they confronted the anti-miscegenation laws of her husband's home state, Virginia. They had to register their marriage in Washington, D.C. Chieko held her cigarette in mid-air, squinting through the smoke as Satchiko agreed softly. "I was doing accounting in a supply depot. The sergeant major reassigned my husband before we got married, trying to separate us. He was looking at me, telling me not to do this." After eight months the paperwork was approved.

"We go to the American Consul and we say, 'I do,' and that was the saddest wedding. After that we got the orders to come back to the States...I cannot go home because my father disowned me, but I can call my mother during the daytime. She talked to my father and he agreed that if we had a Japanese wedding..." Satchiko's voice became faint, but she continued, "We didn't have money, but we thought, 'If that's what he wants!' Because it's my father and if we do it, after that he can tell his friends his daughter was married properly. We needed the money to come to America, but...Later my husband even lost his Top Secret Clearance because of me."

Tamako, younger than Chieko and Satchiko, had married an African-American soldier stationed in Okinawa. Pausing briefly after Satchiko had finished and staring straight ahead, she said loudly, "I just ran away. Seventeen years later I finally went home. I was crossing a lot of boundaries...even here, in the U.S., people have different eyes and look at me and my husband differently. My younger sister was ashamed of me, because of who I married, and she didn't want me to come home. My parents are both passed and they never saw my husband. Japanese are strict, and don't want to mix blood. Even high class and low class can't mix in Japan."

As the harsh logic that marked different bodies with different consequences mutated across the globe, it was entangled through love and familial care. Kuniko emphasized that their parents were trying to shield their daugh-

(L-R) Kumiko Gibson, Chieko Mitsui, and Masako Brown at a meeting of the Japanese American Maple Society of Fayetteville, North Carolina. Photo by Dwayne Dixon.

ters from the loneliness of forever leaving Japan and the fierce gossip that was sure to fester around them. "Yes, my older sisters said, 'You'll have no education and be dependent only on your husband and won't know anybody...in a way they were trying protect our happiness." Satchiko nodded while Chieko expanded the issue further. "And they said, 'Your children will be mixed breed—ainoko [in-between child]!' Our parents worried what other people would say."

Over the course of their lives in America, the women stressed, they had seen things change. Their children had been able to grow up as Americans, though not entirely without difficulty, as Tamako pointed out. "I'm married to a black man and I have one daughter. I've watched her since she was little and all her friends were white. When she starts junior high school, her white friends are trying to match my daughter with other boys, but only black boys. If my daughter had a white boyfriend, her white girlfriends didn't like it. Eventually they kind of shy away and the friendship was kind of gone. Some people have the idea that mixed relationship isn't good."

"We are all museum women!" Chieko chortled as she exhaled a thick cloud of smoke. "Japan has changed but we only remember it the way it was when we were twenty-four."

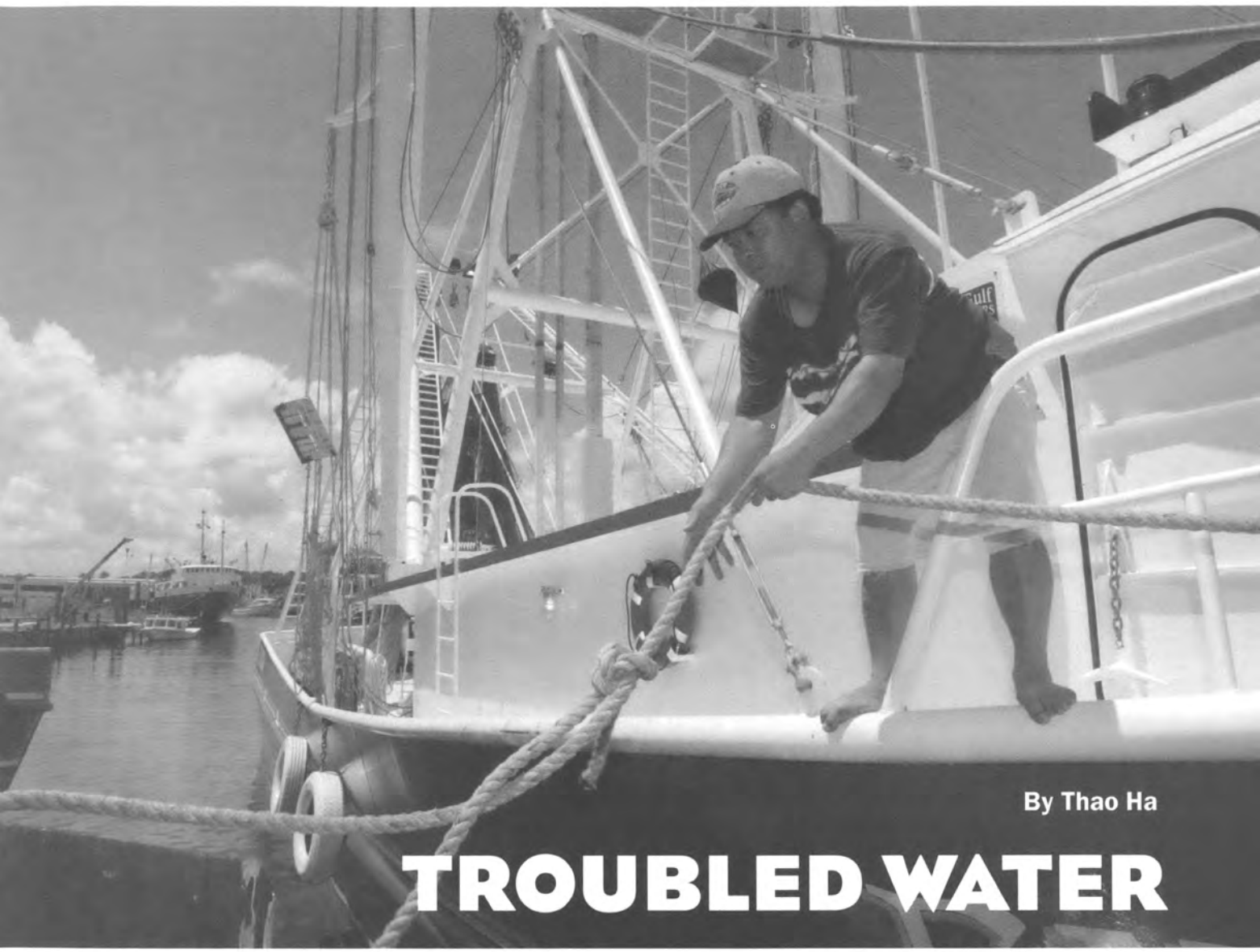
Despite the difficulties around race they and their children have been forced to navigate, the women viewed "American" as an ideal identity. Though they celebrated a few traditional Japanese holidays in their homes, they largely had not emphasized Japanese culture with their children even as they themselves felt increasingly distant from Japan. "We are all museum women!" Chieko chortled as she exhaled a thick cloud of smoke. "Japan has changed but we only remember it the way it was when we were twenty-four." Kuniko, now an American citizen, described the complex and ambivalent feelings the space of Japan provokes for her. "I have such a strange feeling when I go to Japan, at Narita Airport when I have to go in the Foreigner Lane. I am like a *gaijin*—an outsider! It feels funny." Abruptly switching to emphatic Japanese, her tenor conveyed the painful duality she still contends with. "*Kankaku ga kirai da.*" I hate the sensation.

None of the women want to move back to Japan, nor do they want to move to places like Los Angeles or Seattle with their established Asian communities. Civilian life in small town America is equally unappealing. Setsuko tried to live in Florida with her husband after he retired but she was lonely and the way of life away from military culture was strange and uncomfortable. Finding it hard to settle into her husband's ordinary hometown, Setsuko insisted they move back to Fayetteville. "Our husbands are American. They can get along anywhere, but we have our friends here. That's why there are so many old Japanese women here. This is what we know."

The Japanese women who form this vibrant community still shop at the Post Exchange and the commissary with its shelves well-stocked with *miso*, *tofu*, *nori*, and *sushi* rice pointing to how the everyday life on the base has shifted to accommodate the tastes and demands of the steadily growing population of Asian women. The rhythms of Fayetteville are familiar and the years of living behind the barbed wire of military bases has created a unique culture largely unintelligible to the "Japanese-Japanese," as Chieko calls them, who live in the suburbs of Raleigh and Cary and work on the landscaped grounds of corporate campuses in Research Triangle Park. Those families have arrived here through a different network than the military circuits which women such Chieko and Tamako have traveled. These professionals and their families arrived in the South via the sleek networks of globalization and enjoy class privileges quite unfamiliar to the Japanese wives of enlisted men.

The military continues to serve as the organizing feature for the landscape these Japanese women inhabit. Chieko acknowledges the powerful, mediating presence of the military, proclaiming, "It may be the South, but it's a military town!" The South has been filtered and rearranged by the inexorable, uniform structures of military life that insulate dependents and soldiers from the intense shocks of the local that await beyond the base culture and its near vicinity. The military networks have impacted the South by forging familial links that stretch out as far as American political and economic interests extend. In turn it is exactly through these military networks that some of the most complex and intimate exchanges continue to occur at the level of individual, everyday relations and where identities and local cultures are refashioned. The women of the Maple Society, along with the numerous other wives of Asian origin, have significantly reshaped the nature of military communities such as Fayetteville through their struggle, adaptation, sacrifice, and resistance.

Dwayne Dixon is a graduate student in the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University studying youth culture in Japan. He is the son of a career Army officer and has lived on numerous military bases, including Fort Bragg.



Deckhand Kiem Pham of Pensacola, Fla., moors the 95 -foot the shrimp trawler Enterprise *in Bayou La Batre on Thursday, August 16, 2002. The new boat was being outfitted for a shrimping trip. The boat was built in Bayou La Batre. Photo by Mike Kittrell/*Mobile Register

By Thao Ha

TROUBLED WATER

A quarter century ago, Vietnamese-American shrimpers faced down the Klan. Now they have to contend with an even more powerful enemy – globalization.

It is 5:30 in the morning on a misty dock along the coast of Galveston Bay. It's the usual dawn for Chanh Le as he prepares his catch from the days before. He has been out at sea for several days and nights. His skin is dark and leathered and his eyes are glazed red, scorched from the blistering sun that burnishes the Texas Gulf. He looks especially weary, but he won't rest just yet. He still has work to do. He piles the shrimp in heaps so his brother Minh, and two cousins, Ngan and Trinh, can sort them out by hand. Relying on more than twenty years of experience, they gauge the size of the shrimp with the naked eye. Grasping about a dozen in two hands, they remove the heads with a flick of all ten fingers. They do this until the last of the catch is sorted. There are no machines, no scales, no indications of technology whatsoever. The harvesting and sorting is all done by hand. This is the way of life for thousands of Vietnamese-American shrimpers.

This unique Asian-American community may be facing its most difficult challenges now, due to a "perfect storm" of environmental pressures, de facto racial discrimination, and a globalizing shrimp industry.

Le, like the majority of Vietnamese-American shrimpers, arrived in the United States during the second and third waves of immigration following the end of the Vietnam War. Immigrants from the first wave arrived immediately after the fall of Saigon in April 1975 and up until around 1977. These refugees were mostly from the more privileged populations of Vietnam – mostly well-educated, relatively affluent, and often English-speaking. Many of them were also South Vietnamese soldiers or civilian workers for the U.S. military who fled Vietnam with American assistance.

The second and third wave refugees are commonly referred to as "boat people," as they embarked on treacherous and often deadly journeys into the waters of the Gulf of Tonkin. Their hopes were to land in a country that would accept them for asylum, such as Malaysia or Thailand, and then possibly relocate to the U.S. or another western country. Second and subsequent wave immigrants were less educated and less advantaged than their predecessors. Many were from the rural parts of Vietnam, including shrimpers and fishermen from fishing villages like Nha Trang and Vung Tau.

A substantial majority of Vietnamese-American shrimpers came from Phuoc Tinh in Southern Vietnam. Many inhabitants of this fishing village were migrants from North Vietnam; opposed to communism, they were among the two million sojourners who trekked to South Vietnam following the 1954 Geneva Accord. After two decades of living and working free from the Communist government, the people of Phuoc Tinh panicked when Saigon fell to Northern troops in 1975. Nearly the whole village packed their boats and took to the open sea, hoping to make it to America.

After these refugees arrived in the U.S., their lack of formal education and unfamiliarity with English made it difficult for them to find work. But they had their fishery skills, so naturally they sought places of resettlement where they could put these abilities to use. Coastal towns along the Gulf of Mexico and eastern seaboard, with their warm weather and available work, seemed the best bets.

The initial good fortune of Vietnamese shrimpers in the South encouraged others to follow, and soon there was a substantial Vietnamese-American population along the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi, among other states. They prospered beyond what they could have imagined. In time, many owned multiple boats as well as retail and wholesale businesses. But along with their successes have come struggles. Through it all, many have managed to stay afloat in the shrimping industry, but this unique Asian-American community may be facing its most difficult challenges now, due to a "perfect storm" of environmental pressures, de facto racial discrimination, and a globalizing shrimp industry. It's not at all clear whether it will survive.

Nearly the whole village packed their boats and took to the open sea, hoping to make it to America.

In the 1970s and 80s, Vietnamese-American fishermen faced a mix of competitiveness and envy from disgruntled local shrimpers, mostly white, who had been long-time residents and workers in the area. The shrimp industry's changing racial composition angered many white fishermen and shrimpers whose perceptions of these immigrants were shaped by racist por-

The KKK at Seadrift, Texas, 1979. Photo by John Van Beekum.

trayals of Vietnamese people during the U.S. war in Vietnam. Saigon had only recently fallen, and with over 58,000 American soldiers dead at the hands of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong, negative images and stereotypes of Vietnamese people were transferred to the newly-arrived shrimpers War-related prejudices only exacerbated the tensions created by economic competition. Shrimpers reported that they were often assailed with racial slurs and called "Viet Cong," "VC," and "Charlie" – terms that once described Vietnamese Communists now being used to address Vietnamese immigrants, many of whom had fought against the Communists, and nearly all of whom had risked their lives to escape Communist rule.

Due to miscommunications and misunderstandings, hostilities amplified into violent confrontations between Vietnamese and white shrimpers in Texas and Louisiana. In 1979, Seadrift, a town with a population of 1,250 on the southern Texas coast, was the scene of an argument that ended with the violent death of a white shrimper. In 1981, worried about diminishing opportunities in the industry, white shrimpers in Texas alleged the Vietnamese were "overfishing" and encroaching on territories informally claimed by long-

The KKK threatened the Vietnamese, and conducted a boat ride along the docks of Galveston Bay that terrified and angered not only the Vietnamese but many others in the area. On the boat, they donned white hoods, fired a cannon, screamed racial epithets, and displayed an effigy of a Vietnamese fisherman hanging from his neck.

time local shrimpers. Some of the whites even sought out the Ku Klux Klan as allies. The KKK threatened the Vietnamese, and conducted a boat ride along the docks of Galveston Bay that terrified and angered not only the Vietnamese but many others in the area. On the boat, they donned white hoods, fired a cannon, screamed racial epithets, and displayed an effigy of a Vietnamese fisherman hanging from his neck. The Southern Poverty Law Center intervened and took the KKK to court, charging that they infringed on the Vietnamese shrimpers' civil rights. The courts ruled in favor of the Vietnamese, and the Klan as well as the shrimpers they attempted to help were forced to back down.

The lawsuit against the KKK was a victory for the Vietnamese shrimping community, and during the next decade, they reached the pinnacle of their economic success in the industry. Vietnamese families along the coast were buying more boats and equipment, establishing retail and wholesale seafood businesses, purchasing new homes and cars, and sending their children to college.

However, their struggles weren't over yet. In the last half decade, dockside prices for domestic shrimp have gone into steep decline, while U.S. shrimp imports have risen rapidly. In the past few years Vietnam's shrimp industry, based on cheap, coastal shrimp ponds, has led a global surge in shrimp production that, between 1997 and 2004, has depressed world shrimp prices by about 40 percent. On top of this, the Bilateral Trade Agreement between Vietnam and the United States, signed on July 13, 2000, sparked a sharp increase in Vietnamese imports to the U.S. Tariffs on Vietnamese goods were slashed from an average of 40 percent to just 3 percent, and by 2003 the U.S. had become Vietnam's largest trading partner, importing $500 million of Vietnamese shrimp annually. Meanwhile, the value of the U.S. shrimp harvest plummeted from $1.25 billion in 2000 to $560 million in 2003, a 50 percent drop. The average dockside price for Gulf shrimp dropped from $6.08 to $3.30 per pound during the same period. U.S. imports from Vietnam and other developing countries have increased so drastically that by 2003, 90 percent of the shrimp consumed in the U.S. was imported. In a survey conducted by researchers at Texas A&M University's department of wildlife and fisheries sciences, a majority of Texas fishermen strongly agreed with the statement that "Imported shrimp cause dockside prices to be lower."

Evidence suggests that the crunch has afflicted Vietnamese-American shrimpers more than others; the Mobile Register reported in April 2005 that "most of the hundreds of [shrimping] boats repossessed over the past three years belonged to Asian Americans." Some families have already given up their businesses and taken up new lines of work; others question how much longer they can stay in the shrimp industry. Dung Tran and his wife Ngoc own several boats and a wholesale seafood business in Kemah, Texas. Their losses in the last five years have them seriously considering a new business altogether. "We know a lot of people who left. We plan on selling our boats to buy chicken farms. We don't make the money like before. We will close the wholesale business at end of this year. The only way we stay alive now is from people who live in Houston and come to our boats to buy direct from us." Dung and Ngoc are unique because they have the resources to get out. The majority of Vietnamese shrimpers do not have the funds or assets to leave. "Many [Vietnamese-American shrimpers] can't speak English and have no other skills. They have nothing to fall back on," says Kim Nix, a community activist and advocate for Vietnamese shrimpers. Shrimping is a way of life for them, and they have no other alternatives.

Dang Nguyen entered the business as a shrimper on his brother's boat when he arrived in the U.S. in 1982. He recalls the turmoil of the past, but has never left the industry because he was more concerned with making money to bring over the wife and two children he left behind when he escaped Vietnam. Now he, his wife, and eldest son work side by side on the docks in Galveston, Texas. "This is our life. This is the only thing I know how to do. I don't have education. My wife doesn't have education. We don't have the money and [we're] too old to start something else." Their second son dropped out of the University of Houston to work full time as a retail manager to help his family make payments on the loan they took out years earlier to buy the boat. They wonder what they will do if things don't get better.

In 2003, an industry trade organization, the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA), asked the federal government to impose tariffs against Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Thailand, and Vietnam. The SSA accused these six countries of deluging the U.S. market with shrimp at artificially low prices supported, it argued, by government subsidies illegal under international trade agreements. Within the SSA, white and Vietnamese shrimpers have come together in a sometimes uneasy alliance. SSA spokesperson Deborah Long calls Vietnamese-American shrimpers "very supportive of the antidumping cases." Their story, she says, can stand in for "the entire U.S. shrimp indus-

try": small entrepreneurs "with a long family history of fishing for their livelihoods" watching their businesses wither away under the onslaught of globalized competition.

And yet most of them are reluctant to be too vocal against Vietnam, a country some still consider home. Long confirms that Vietnamese-American representatives of the SSA have declined to participate in press stories that single out Vietnam. Thanh Nguyen, a shrimper in Kemah, Texas, for over fifteen years, says, "It is hard to think about because I know some people in Vietnam from my village who make money in [the] shrimp business. If we cut off the business for Vietnam, I am afraid for them. They will have to look for other work again. But it is same for me, too. I will lose my job if we can't sell the shrimp we catch for a good price."

Many Vietnamese-American shrimpers question how much longer they can stay in business.

Vietnamese-American shrimpers seem to blame China more than any other country. This is not surprising, given China's frequent role in Vietnamese history as invader, as well as more recent memories of its support for the North during the "American War," especially among refugees from Phuoc Tinh who had twice fled the Communists (though the two regimes went their separate ways after the fall of Saigon, fighting a war in the late 1970s). Moreover, ethnic Chinese living in Vietnam have often been stereotyped as avaricious merchants. These negative ideas are reflected in the rumors that have spread among the Vietnamese-American community about China. Vietnamese-American shrimpers believe China is doing the most damage to domestic shrimp prices. Several shrimpers in Seabrook, Texas, insist that China exports much of its shrimp through Vietnam; thus, they claim, it is not Vietnam dumping shrimp on the American market, but rather China.

In December 2004, the U.S. Department of Commerce agreed with the SSA that the six countries were guilty of dumping shrimp on the U.S. market and instituted tariffs against all six, though at a much lower rate than the American shrimpers had wanted. Duties ranged from 4 to 25 percent for Vietnam, while higher duties were imposed on Chinese shrimp, from 27 to 112 percent. Vietnamese-American fishermen saw this as vindicating their suspicions about China.

Whether their claims are true or not, it does appear that the duties on Vietnamese shrimp are still low enough that business has not been severely disrupted. According to the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia Pacific's December 2004 newsletter, the president of the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) told local reporters that business contacts between U.S. customers and Vietnamese seafood companies have returned to normal. In another instance reported in the newsletter, an order worth $2 million was placed by a U.S. customer with the Ho Chi Minh City Coastal Fisheries Development Corporation a few days after the tariffs were determined. Its director announced that 23 other regular customers of the company began seeking information for future orders through e-mails.

News of resumed business between U.S. importers and Vietnamese shrimp companies worries American shrimpers. Although the higher tariffs will certainly have some effect, will it be enough to spur sales of domestic shrimp? Will the SSA's anti-dumping suit really help its members in the long run? Domestic shrimpers have only just embarked on the journey to rebuild their industry. One of the SSA's ideas is to market domestic shrimp as "American wild shrimp," to distinguish it from pond-grown imported shrimp. The advertising campaign, which has featured celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse, conveys the message that domestic shrimp caught in its natural habitat is a healthier,

Photo by Hong-An Truong.

"It is hard to think about because I know some people in Vietnam from my village who make money in [the] shrimp business. If we cut off the business for Vietnam, I am afraid for them. They will have to look for other work again. But it is same for me, too. I will lose my job if we can't sell the shrimp we catch for a good price."

tastier product than farm-raised shrimp. Van Ngo, a member of the Vietnamese American Fishermen's Association and a long time fisherman from Port Arthur, Texas, has high hopes for the new marketing direction: "I always thought I have to do what I do because I don't have an education. I had no chance to learn something new. But now we need to learn how to do our business better so people will buy our shrimp again. I have a chance to learn to do something in a new way. I am excited and hopeful."

It may be too late. In addition to falling prices that have already devastated the industry, Vietnamese shrimpers now have to deal with new licensing restrictions that could limit their ability to recover. In the mid-1990s, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) became concerned with the dwindling wild shrimp population in the Gulf. Dr. Larry McKinney, director of the TPWD's Resource Protection Division, put it plainly: "The fishery is headed for a collapse." Recruitment over-fishing was the problem; in other words, shrimp were being taken from the waters faster than they could reproduce. Soon, the Gulf's shrimp population will hit an all-time low mark, and it may never rebound.

With this crisis in mind, individual states as well as the federal government have closely restricted the shrimping industry in recent years, closing off certain areas, imposing seasonal closures and catch limits, regulating the size of mesh in nets (so as to minimize dangers to sea turtles and fin fish), and "retiring" shrimping licenses. And in December 2004, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council limited the total number of federal shrimping licenses (for fishing in federal waters) to 2,700, the number of boats that were registered in December 2003. This will disproportionately affect Vietnamese-American shrimpers, as most aren't even aware they need a federal license (the rule required such licenses was instituted in 2002). Perhaps more importantly, the large number of Vietnamese-American shrimpers who have had their boats repossessed in recent years may now be unable to get back in the industry.

Photo by Hong-An Truong.

The de facto resurgence of racial exclusion through limiting licenses, combined with the economic pressures of globalization felt through the whole industry, may be enough to put an end to the Vietnamese shrimping communities of the Gulf coast. But some, like Chanh Le, hang on still. Their profits are marginal, but they manage to continue doing the only thing they know. They have fought fiercely against many different challenges, and they are determined to persevere.

Thao Ha is a doctoral student in the sociology department at the University of Texas at Austin. She was born in Viet Nam and grew up in Houston, Texas.

ON SHRIMP IMPORTS, STRANGE POLITICAL BEDFELLOWS

Important players cross ideological lines in the debate over shrimp imports from Vietnam and other countries.

CATO INSTITUTE—In a piece entitled "Big Shrimp—A Protectionist Mess," Cato policy analyst Radley Balko criticizes the U.S. government's largesse toward the American shrimp industry, which he scorns as "Big Shrimp." Balko claims this proves that "the fight for free trade isn't about protecting big business at all," but rather standing up for American consumers who want cheap shrimp. Balko, however, makes no mention of "big businesses" involved in shrimp importing.

AMERICAN SEAFOOD DISTRIBUTORS ASSOCIATION—An industry group representing importers, wholesalers, retailers, and distributors who account for more than 80 percent of seafood sold in the U.S. The ASDA has teamed up with restaurant trade groups, soybean producers (who sell feed to overseas shrimp producers), the Consuming Industries Trade Action Coalition (CITAC), and high-powered, Republican-connected lobbying firm Akin Gump to form a "Shrimp Task Force" dedicated to fighting high tariffs on imported shrimp. The task force often refers to duties on imported shrimp as a "shrimp tax" on American consumers.

FUND FOR RECONCILIATION AND DEVELOPMENT (FFRD)—describes itself as "an independent non-profit organization seeking normal economic, diplomatic, and cultural relations between the U.S. and Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam." The FFRD defends the trade and environmental record of the Vietnamese shrimp industry. Andrew Wells-Dang, the group's Hanoi representative, argues that "the rules of the global economy, as enshrined in the WTO, are already tilted in favor of the strong over the weak. Unfair trade practices enabled by US anti-dumping laws deepen the injustice, taking away from the baby shrimp to give to the jumbo." In particular, the FFRD opposes the Continued Dumping and Subsidy Offset Act—known as the Byrd Amendment after its major sponsor in the Senate, Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.)—under which tariffs collected in anti-dumping cases are turned over directly to U.S. producers. The FFRD calls this "a direct transfer from Third World farmers to the U.S. shrimp industry."

ACTION AID—VIETNAM—Part of the U.K.-based NGO Action Aid International, Action Aid—Vietnam argues that U.S. anti-dumping actions could cause thousands of Vietnamese farmers to fall back into poverty. Vietnamese shrimp, the organization contends, is "highly competitive and affordable in the U.S.," not because of illegal subsidies or dumping, but due to "enormous favourable conditions such as natural advantages, modern aquaculture techniques, and low labour cost."

SOUTHERN SHRIMP ALLIANCE—An organization of American shrimpers in the Southeast, the SSA accused six countries of illegal dumping on the U.S. market, "sometimes below the cost of production," and successfully sued to have the Commerce Department sanction the shrimp-exporting nations. The Alliance points out that "while the wholesale price of shrimp dropped 42 percent, shrimp entrée prices actually skyrocketed as much as 28 percent between 2000 and 2003," and accuses "shrimp middlemen" of pocketing $4.2 billion in resulting profits.

PUBLIC CITIZEN—In 2004 Ralph Nader's organization launched a campaign to warn against the health and environmental dangers of farm-raised shrimp (the method in most shrimp exporting countries, including Viet Nam). "Shrimp farms produce a wretched cocktail of chemicals, shrimp feed and shrimp feces," the campaign's director, Andrianna Natsoulas, says in a press release, which goes on to claim that "Wild-caught shrimp from U.S. seacoasts such as North Carolina and California do not pose the same health risks as farm-raised shrimp." The Shrimp Task Force has happily tied Public Citizen (which it refers to as an "anti-trade" organization) to the American shrimp industry, accusing the Nader group of an elitist program to make shrimp once again a rare (and presumably expensive) delicacy.

–GARY ASHWILL

BEYOND THE MODEL MINORITY

*Milan Pham. Photo: Cathy Seith/*Durham Herald-Sun.

A North Carolina activist talks about Ward Connerly, spy planes, organizing Asians in the South, Real ID, and figuring out you're not white.

Milan Pham is the Director of the Department of Human Rights and Relations in Orange County, North Carolina. This May EAST MEETS SOUTH co-editors Hong-An Truong and Christina Chia sat down with Milan to talk about how Asian Americans fit into the South's complex racial and cultural equations.

HONG-AN: Can you tell us a little bit about the affirmative action debate at UNC when you were a law student there?

MILAN: This was the time when Molly Corbett Broad started as the president of the UNC university system. She came from California, and on her heels Ward Connerly visited campus. He was one of the regents of the University of California system. He was the primary sponsor of Proposition 209, which is the proposition that dismantled affirmative action across California.

In North Carolina we aren't qualified for affirmative action because we're not considered minorities, even though we obviously are minorities. It's written all over our faces.

There are lots of issues, being Asian American, that concern me about affirmative action. In North Carolina particularly it's that we aren't qualified for affirmative action because we're not considered minorities, even though we obviously are minorities. [Laughter.] It's written all over our faces. So I, along with a group of other law students and the National Lawyers Guild, decided that we weren't going to let him come quietly. And we organized with some of the undergraduate groups a huge protest against Ward Connerly. [The cover photograph shows Milan at this protest, in December 1997.-ed.]

[After Connerly's visit,] we organized a debate on affirmative action. We brought in national folks – one person from the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, and the director of Americans for a Fair Chance, who also used to be the director of the Glass Ceiling Commission under Reagan. So we brought them in with a local person and then we let the Republicans bring in their people as well. They had John Hood from the John Locke Foundation [and] one completely inarticulate student, and that was their side. And it started a huge debate across campus about what UNC should be doing about affirmative action. But in the law school, I got a lot of backlash from Caucasians who were like, "What are you talking about? Affirmative action is for unqualified people. Your people don't need affirmative action." And so it was an exciting time but it was also really depressing.

HA: Can you talk a little bit more about Asian Americans being eligible for affirmative action in North Carolina? What defines "minority" in North Carolina?

M: Minority is defined as a group of people who can show historic discrimination. In North Carolina we haven't proved that, at least not at the university level. And this is the thing that really kind of makes it clear that they know exactly what they're doing. I mean, this is institutionalized racism: When it comes to counting their numbers for reporting out on affirmative action, they count us, but when it comes to qualifying for minority scholarships, they don't count us.

The reason why I've even discovered this is when I went to law school I ended up having to take out a bunch of loans, which I just didn't want to do because I wanted to work in public interest law and if you take out a bunch of loans you can't afford to do that.

I got a lot of backlash from Caucasians who were like, "What are you talking about? Affirmative action is for unqualified people. Your people don't need affirmative action."

So I wanted to get a minority presence grant at Carolina. I went to the dean of admissions, and she said to me, "Well honey, you have to be a minority!" *(Laughter.)*

CHRISTINA: Is Asian American a box you can check on the form?

M: Yes. It's a kind of painful thing to watch happen. Latinos are considered minorities, but they envisioned a certain kind of Latino—someone of Mexican or Central American descent. Not every person with a

Spanish name. Well, an intern who worked in the office where I was working decided that he was going to apply to law school. This is a person who had a Caucasian name and a Latino name. He had two drivers' licenses, one reflecting his Caucasian name and one reflecting his Latino name. And everyone knew him by his Caucasian name. His family is from Spain. He applied, and was granted affirmative action benefits.

HA: So you can see how easily manipulated the system can be. But also your story epitomizes the struggle for Asian Americans organizing in North Carolina. Because if Asian Americans aren't even recognized as being a group of people who have experienced and do experience cultural, social, and economic oppression and struggle, then where do you even begin?

Minority is defined as a group of people who can show historic discrimination. In North Carolina we haven't proved that, at least not at the university level. And this is the thing that really kind of makes it clear that they know exactly what they're doing. I mean, this is institutionalized racism: When it comes to counting their numbers for reporting out on affirmative action, they count us, but when it comes to qualifying for minority scholarships, they don't count us.

M: Well, the North Carolina Asian Pacific Islander American Community Leadership Forum we had this weekend ended up being really useful. We had a speaker there named Jay Chaudhuri, who works at the attorney general's office and works pretty heavily with Indian-American groups. My piece of the forum was to talk about the racialization of Asians, and why it was important for us to engage in pan-Asian organizing. After the forum Jay came up to me and said, "You know I never thought I needed to be engaged in pan-Asian organizing." And I said, "When it comes down to it, whenever there's an international incident, we're all Sikhs, or we're all South Asian, or we're all Chinese. And what we identify as our ethnicity is not pertinent to Americans as a whole. You know, the spy plane fell down over China and everybody who looked remotely Asian became Chinese, and people were saying give us back our damn spy plane, like you could hide it in your back pocket. *(Laughter.)*

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HA: Can you give a little bit of background on how [the forum] got started and who attended?

M: I guess it started about 2 years ago, in 2002, when Ben de Guzman, the community education manager from NAPALC [the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium], started coming down to North Carolina. I used to just call Ben and say angry things to him, you know, because there were no community partners [to NAPALC] in the Southeastern United States. I would call him and just berate him on his voice mail, until he finally called me back and he was like, "I don't know who this bitch is, but I need to call her back!" *(Laughter.)*

He called me back and was like, "Okay, I don't know what the problem is, but let's try to figure something out." And I said, "We have a growing population down here, and there are no services to us. And in North Carolina no politicians are talking about serving the APIA community, and even our advocates are not talking about us. Here we are growing by leaps and bounds in the Southeastern United States—like, the home of Racism Incorporated!"

He slowly started sending people our way. When Helen Zia [journalist, historian, and author of Asian-

American Dreams] was coming through, we met with her. And then [de Guzman] started looking for money to put on something in this area – to funnel money through NAPALC to North Carolina, which is how we got the forum.

HA: Who attended?

M: There were all local people except for Ben, who spoke on national policy issues. We also had a leadership development session from Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics which is out of California. There were about 35 people there. All heads of organizations, like NAAAP [National Association of Asian American Professionals], TACAS (Triangle Area Chinese-American Society], the North Carolina Chinese Business Association, and the Hmong National Development, North Carolina Chapter. So it was good. A lot of people were like, "We just had no idea that these are issues for our community."

Here we are growing by leaps and bounds in the Southeastern United States—like, the home of Racism Incorporated!"

C: You mentioned that there were a couple of national groups or California-based groups that came to present [at the forum]. What are some issues that are unique to this area that maybe people in those other regions aren't aware of? Do you feel that there's a way that people in California are used to thinking about issues, that doesn't work here?

M: I guess the issues that are really unique to this area aren't really quantifiable as issues. Some of the things that are unique to this area are things like, the local population is the population that you really have to rely on in order to get the work done. Asian Americans who come in from other places also leave, because they come in and find there's no infrastructure, which makes it very different from the Washington D.C.'s, New Yorks and Californias. People from Washington and California come in, with the exception of Ben, and think, why don't these people just get on the ball already and do something? Well, there's completely no infrastructure here to do anything. And we're having to start with educating funders that we're a community in need.

I had a really disturbing conversation with a funder once where he was like, "Your people don't need help!" And he pulled out a News and Observer article that said that Indian Americans were taking the best jobs in the Triangle as his evidence. And I was like, "Okay there are 49 other countries of origin for us. Do you have an article for each of them?"

One of the things that has been a real difficulty is that local folks by and large don't tend to get onto the organizing band wagon until they're well into their 20s – after they're out of college and they hit the workforce. That's when they finally begin to see that there are real differences and they're being treated differently. So in college, when other people are beginning to organize, Asian Americans, if they're organizing, will go to the women's groups, or the African American groups, or the economic justice groups, and organize there. Mostly because we don't have infrastructure except for ASA and they're kind of like the dumplings and dragon dances kind of group, you know? *(Laughter.)*

He threw in a plug for people-of-color and LGBT organizing and the intersectionality of multiple oppressions and then suddenly you could see the glaze. I mean, it was like a Krispy Kreme doughnut!

So our organizing curve is a little bit behind everybody else's as well. I mean those are our difficulties. Our issues are the same as everyone else's issues across the country, just more magnified because there's nothing being done, or at least what is being done is not staffed. It's being done by a bunch of volunteers so there's nobody who's committing all of their time to doing work. You know, these are people who have worked 8-10 hours already and they come home and they're like I need to get on this press release for ANCAPA [Advocates for North Carolina Asian Pacific Americans]. That's tiring work.

HA: Do you feel after this meeting that there is a lot

of potential? How do you feel like the community leaders were responding to the discussions about the need for Pan-Asian organizing and organizing for APIAs in North Carolina period?

M: I think they responded pretty well. I mean most of them are by choice non-political. They've had the discussion; they don't want to rock the boat; they want somebody to do it, but they don't want to be the ones. So at this point, they're happy [to say], "Oh we'll just let her do it. We'll come and we'll help and we'll give money, as much as we can, and then we'll let her and her people handle it." Which is okay, as long as they're willing to provide the bodies and the money. That's fine by me. I don't want someone who's avowedly unpolitical trying to forward a political agenda. That's never going to work.

They told him he wasn't a minority. And he was like, "Look around! Do you see any other Asian people here?"

I had a friend of mine who's a videographer come videotape the [forum] and we're going to create a DVD of the policy piece – the national policy piece which frames the North Carolina piece – and we're going make enough copies to distribute to every locally elected official in the area, at least in the Triangle, to say, "You know, you have to be responsive here to our community. Because our community is growing in these ways."

HA: So why do you think that is that some of these cultural and business organizations tend to want to stay apolitical, or try to not rock the boat?

M: I think by and large it has to do with our immigration patterns to the United States. I mean most of the cultural and business organizations are run by, at this point, immigrants to the United States, and not their children. And that I think makes a huge difference in the way that they see what's happening.

For every immigrant who lives substantially in another country, the United States is just so much better than anything that you could imagine. So it really takes an American to be talking – I mean an American, someone who was raised here, someone who has the expectations and the entitlements of an American – to be talking about what racism looks like in America. Right now, most of our community organizations are run by foreign nationals.

C: And that's probably particular to the South just because there haven't been the generations of immigrations, third, fourth, fifth generations, of Asian Americans here.

M: So we're waiting for the Hong-Ans and the Chris's to finish their studies and head up organizations. I mean that's when you'll begin to see this conversation growing. Either there are people like us who begin to head up Asian organizations or we'll get into places where we can advance our agenda. I don't work for an Asian organization but I can leverage the power of government to talk about our issues.

C: So you've been talking mostly about how to educate and get government entities and the media invested or even interested in APIA issues. I was wondering how you feel about the state of the conversation between you guys and other community groups who have a longer history in this area. What's that conversation like?

M: Well, I feel like until we have our act a little bit more together, we're probably not really suitable to be talking about coalitioning. I think we have to have a little bit of stability in our house before we're like, okay, let's make a neighborhood. Because I think that that creates danger for other groups that don't necessarily need it. Even though the Latino community is a little bit more organized than us, and the African American community, there are still lots of issues in those communities. What

"The groundbreaking work is here in North Carolina, whether or not you want to admit it."

I don't want to bring to the table is just a bunch of problems and nothing to contribute for other organizers who are struggling already.

I think it's important to coalition with other people of

color, but it's not time yet. I also think that within other people of color communities, as well as within the API community, there isn't a real understanding of the belonging to the people of color umbrella. Asian and Pacific Islanders are having a hard enough time identifying as Asian. Just imagine going beyond that and saying, "Okay, you're not Asian, you're a person of color." [This is] vocabulary and terminology for people who have been working for a while on these issues and have done all their own personal work in addition to the work of the movement. So I don't think we're there yet. And that's not saying anything about how intelligent or qualified or organized our community is – its just part of our development. The southeastern United States is not there yet.

The way our academic systems are set up, you hear about African Americans in the South, and then you hear about their tyrannical oppressors, and you don't hear anything else about anybody else.

HA: A lot of the stuff that you guys were talking about at the forum was on the policy level, so how does that kind of work happen?

M: Well, Ben and I specifically decided to kind of keep away from "people of color" organizing. He did kind of throw in a plug for [it as well as] LGBT organizing and the intersectionality of multiple oppressions and then suddenly you could see the glaze. I mean, it was like a Krispy Kreme doughnut! *(Laughter.)*

Ben talked about immigration-related issues, which I think will be impacting our area pretty heavily. He also talked about the Real ID Act, and how that will be impacting our area pretty substantially as well. We talked about more concrete things, laws and policies that exist or don't exist to help our community. I identified our top three issues as number one: Community Capacity Building. By that I mean getting elected officials who represent our issues, having organizations that are funded and engaged in organizing, and doing things like getting Asian American Studies in our universities. There are lots of things that could happen in the budget process, you could have money ear-marked to go to certain non-profits if you can do work with your legislatures.

The second most important issue was Language Access, because our community is so largely immigrant. Forty-six percent of our communities don't speak English well. They're considered linguistically isolated, no matter their country of origin, which means they're not accessing any of the services that help move people from lower economic class to middle class.

And the third most important issue was Affirmative Action. And that is because our community is growing, and because we're in the process of setting up infrastructure for the APIA community here, we really need access to affirmative action programs like minority contracting programs. One of the first people who contacted us at ANCAPA was a business owner in Durham who didn't qualify for any of those small business administration loans. He wanted to run a printing business, and they told him he wasn't a minority. And he was like, "Look around! Do you see any other Asian people here?" So I think it's really important.

It takes us until we're out of college to figure out that we're not white. The coming out process for Asian Americans here is really quite long!

With our growing immigrant population a lot of that population is not going to be the more affluent, more educated Asian American community. We're going to have much more needy immigrant populations, and we're going to look more like the Latino community. That's what happened in California, and they had to set up their community centers to deliver social services--that's what happened in New York, that's what happened in Washington D.C.

C: Can you talk a little more about the Real ID program? You mentioned that Ben talked about the impact of those programs on communities here. Could you elaborate on that?

M: The Real ID Act basically establishes a national ID. North Carolina is one of the few states where you

can get a driver's license without being a citizen. What this would require is all kinds of proof of citizenship in order to get a driver's license. As you can imagine, it's not quite as easy for Asians to immigrate illegally to the United States. But a lot of what people do is that they come over on student visas or work visas and they stay. And that's particularly true in our area – heavy with IT corporations, heavy with universities. So what Ben said is that we're going to begin to see a flood of folks who are now unable to either renew their driver's licenses or get driver's licenses and those people will begin to show up in the criminal justice system, which is probably where we'll see them first. And it's really disconcerting because it's a way for the BCIS [Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services] to identify people they might label as potential terrorists—and then deport them summarily.

HA: So switching topics a bit, back to local organizing. Chris, you work at the Multicultural Center at Duke. What does your job entail?

C: It basically works with students of color at Duke and actually the position that I'm going to be holding for the year is one that is relatively new. It's primarily geared towards working with Asian American students.

M: I think that it's really important, and I'm glad to know that you're working there, Chris, because we have an ongoing project with NAPALC to work with Asian student groups. But this is what Ben said to the entire audience of people, some of whom were potentially transient, he said, "If you leave you're just a bunch of chicken shits." *(Laughter.)* He said, "You know if you want to do the real work, the groundbreaking work for APIAs, it's not in California. It's not in Washington, and it's not in New York. Been there, done that, everyone's done everything over there. The groundbreaking work is here in North Carolina with this group of 35 folks, whether or not you want to admit it."

HA: I think that's true. It's exciting. I alternate between feeling really depressed, and then have moments of feeling that we're getting somewhere.

C: There are a couple of faculty people over at Duke who are interested in Asian American Studies and we are going to have a series of monthly meetings. We're going to talk to folks at UNC and have some kind of event to talk about Asian American Studies in the South. In a way the issues on the policy level that you mentioned are the same issues on the university level. So it's the administrators are reluctant to start anything with Asian American Studies. They're kind of like, well, why do you need it? We're sort of already redressing the question of African American Studies and we don't need anything else, right? So its kind of this weird zero-sum thing.

M: One of the things Ben said that he thought was really interesting about this area is that the students weren't the primary driving force for starting ASAs and Asian American Studies departments. It was the community, the community of professors and academics and other community folks who were like, "We need Asian American Studies." And I told Ben, "Well the reason why that is is because it takes people until they're out of college here to figure out that they're not white!" Because the way our academic systems are set up, you hear about African Americans in the South, and then you hear about their tyrannical oppressors, and you don't hear anything else about anybody else. I mean, we don't even hear about Che Guevara around here. *(Laughter.)* So you're like, "I'm definitely not African American, so I must belong to this other group." And so it takes us until [we're] out of college to figure out that we're not white. The coming out process for Asian Americans here is really quite long!"

SOUTH ASIAN AMERICANS IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH

Some immigrant women face difficult times when relationships turn abusive. Do social services in the South have what it takes to help them?

BY SHIVALI SHAH

Shivali Shah speaking at the 2005 Women of Color Institute Conference in Greensboro, N.C., organized by the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

"Do you think India will ever join the European Union?" Officer David asked me as our unmarked police car left one ward of Durham and entered the next. I didn't understand his question at first since India cannot remotely be said to be in or near Europe, but he quickly clarified to fill the silence. "You know," he said, "because they're talking about admitting Turkey...and India is right next door." After probing, I learned that in his geography of the world, Turkey and India were contiguous. The countries actually in between the two—Iran, Iraq, Syria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Pakistan—seemed to be positioned elsewhere in his mind's map. I was doing a "ride along" with one of the officers in the Durham Police Department's Domestic Violence Unit. Keenly aware of my vulnerable position in his police car, I refrained from giving Officer David the geography lesson that I usually give to those with a loose concept of any location outside of the 50 states. My silence reaped a further treasure: additionally, he envisioned Pakistan as a region in which Iran and Iraq were located.

Unfortunately, his ignorance of Asian and Middle Eastern geography does not put him in the minority. With the growth of Asian and Middle Eastern communities in the South, however, law enforcement and social services providers must become familiar with more than a map.

The first significant population of South Asians came to North Carolina during the wave of Asian immigration in the 1960s and 1970s. These immigrants were highly skilled in professions such as medicine, engineering, research. They took the open positions offered throughout

I learned that in his geography of the world, Turkey and India were contiguous.

the country in hospitals and universities. In North Carolina, these jobs were concentrated in Charlotte and the Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill area, also known as "the Triangle." With the Family Reunification Act in the 1980s, North Carolina saw an influx of Asian immigrants more likely to hold blue collar jobs. These newer immigrants

chose North Carolina either because they had relatives already situated in the state or because the growing economy offered greater opportunity and less competition than the larger cities of the North and West. These immigrants mostly took maintenance and repair jobs, as well as restaurant and factory work. Those able to save money started small businesses or bought franchises in motels and convenience stores. Even in the most remote parts of the Blue Ridge Mountains, you can find South Asian-owned Subway sandwich shops and motels.

One Muslim client was told by a local domestic violence advocate, "If you weren't so attached to your culture, you wouldn't be having such a hard time."

During the technology boom of the early 1990s, many multinational corporations took advantage of the inexpensive land, lower cost of living, and favorable business conditions in North Carolina. They set up large bases of operation or moved their headquarters to the Research Triangle Park area. Companies such as IBM, Cisco Systems, Glaxo Smith Kline, SAS, Nortel and others were infusing capital and creating new jobs in the local economy. Many South Asians migrated to the Research Triangle to work in computer technologies and engineering. The engineering and computer science departments were expanded at area universities, such as Duke, North Carolina State, and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, attracting more South Asian students and faculty. In the Triangle and Charlotte areas, the Asian Indian population grew from 5,266 to 16,340 in the 1990s, a 310 percent increase. Including South Asians from countries other than India, I estimate the total number of South Asians in these two areas totals approximately 35,000.

Historically, the primary methods of social interaction of immigrant communities have been through their own religious and cultural gatherings. With North Carolina South Asian populations becoming more significant, music and dance associations formed to invite renowned artists to the Triangle area and to teach children about their cultural heritage. Ethnic groceries, restaurants, and clothing and music stores appeared in the Triangle and Charlotte areas to meet the needs of the new South Asian migrants. The coffers of the various houses of worship grew as they served a larger population every year. The communities continue to invest their growing wealth in cultural and religious activities—yet have not proportionally invested in addressing the social needs of their most vulnerable members.

Women in crisis usually rely first on traditional sources of community assistance: friends, family, and houses of worship. While these networks are essential to every battered woman, not every immigrant woman has access to them. Often with migrant populations, the men move to a new area first, establishing relationships and garnering the loyalty of the community members. Their wives migrate later, either due to immigration laws or because the men may marry after having established a career and home in the United States first. By the time their wives follow, the men are frequently ensconced in a circle of friends into which the wives comfortably nestle themselves. While initially comforting for an immigrant woman new to the U.S., the woman may discover she does not have friends of her own whose loyalties are not split. Combined with a predisposition in all communities to blame tension in a marriage on the wife, this often means the immigrant wife cannot turn to community members in times of marital crisis.

The situation can be made worse by immigration laws. Many South Asians have come to North Carolina to take high tech jobs under the H-1B visa, which is given to foreign nationals working in certain white collar positions that cannot be filled by U.S. residents. The visa allows the holder to reside and work in the U.S. at a particular company for up to six years. The employer may within this time to opt to sponsor this employee for a green card. Each year, between one third to one half of H-1B visas are granted to nationals from South Asian countries, with Indian nationals receiving the highest number.

Countries in South Asia include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The various South Asian communities are extremely diverse in terms of language, customs, and religious practices. For example, within India alone there are over 25 distinct languages, many with their own scripts. However, because of basic cultural and historical similarities, many of the attendant social issues have a common overlay. While Kiran is most equipped to handle South Asian clients, because of the lack of services for non-Latino immigrant communities in North Carolina, we have also assisted immigrant clients from Africa, the Middle East, East Asia, and Eastern Europe.

H-1B workers' spouses may come to the U.S. under the H-4 visa. Most H-4 visa holders are women, and the legal constraints of the visa make them particularly vulnerable to domestic violence. H-4 visa holders are not allowed to work legally in the U.S., obtain social security numbers, or open their own bank accounts. They need their husband's cooperation to apply for a driver's license, although in some states they are not even allowed to have one. Their husbands also control their immigration status at each stage of the process. Those "H-4 wives" who find themselves in abusive marriages are not eligible to receive protection under the Violence Against Women Act or the Battered Spouse Waiver, provisions created specifically for battered immigrant women. While the U Visa available to crime victims is technically an option, suspicion of the legal system and fear of uncertainty prevent many from pursuing this possibility. In the first half of 2005, 75 percent of women who contacted Kiran, a North Carolina organization dedicated to helping abused South Asian women, were current or former H-4 visa holders.

When I suggested to a white woman in rural North Carolina that we look into a battered woman's shelter for her, she emphatically said no. "Mother Mary would not want me to leave my husband," she said. Similarly, when I counseled a 24 year old woman from India in Raleigh, N.C., she also cited religious authority: Sita would never have abandoned Ram. How would it look if I did?

H-4 wives typically are English-speaking, most have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and many worked in white collar jobs in their home countries. Despite all these advantages, because of immigration constraints cause them to be, they are no better off than less-privileged women if caught in an abusive marriage. With no money of their own, no control over their status, and little familiarity with the survival skills necessary in American society, these women find they have left a comfortable life back home for abuse and uncertainty in the United States.

When they look for help outside their communities and families, battered South Asian and other immigrant women find that mainstream domestic violence organizations are often unable to provide appropriate services. Most domestic violence advocates and social service providers have little or no training in immigration issues and their role in perpetuating violence. Mainstream services are also not equipped to handle matters which require an understanding of cultural differences. Some, like Officer David, are not even sure where South Asian countries are on the map. Cultural constructs such as the joint family, arranged marriage, and dowry are alien to most North Carolinian social workers. Women have reported enduring racial stereotyping and pressure to "Americanize" their belief system to obtain assistance. For example, one Muslim client was told by a local domestic violence advocate, "If you weren't so attached to your culture, you wouldn't be having such a hard time." Women

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

Like the women who started Kiran, a group of Korean immigrants in Atlanta found that there was a need for social and human service programs for the growing Asian/Pacific Islander American (APIA) community. Founded in 1980, the Center for Pan Asian Community Services is the first and only of its kind in the Southeast, working with Korean, Chinese, Indian, and Vietnamese communities in Atlanta. CPACS has responded to APIA community needs, helping families gain access to affordable care and serving as an important resource for many immigrants and refugees. Their vast services include linguistically and culturally appropriate programs in the areas of health care, social service, community education, elderly enrichment, legal service, parent-support and youth education, and DUI and risk reduction.

In Georgia, there are approximately 170,000 legally documented APIAs, with 75 percent residing in Atlanta. In the past ten years, the APIA population has increased by 200 percent. But despite such exponential growth, there exist few organizations that work with these communities, many of whom are low-income and recently immigrated. For CPACS, the main challenges of working in the South are 1) the struggle to show government officials and funders that APIAs are a growing community in need of resources, and 2) trying to change a black/white political and cultural paradigm that sees Asians as problem-free and needs-free model minorities.

—HONG-AN TRUONG

told of being confused for other clients of similar skin tone, of advocates conflating Hindu and Islamic beliefs, and of advocates unable to understand why maintaining immigration status often trumped managing the violence. This lack of familiarity with important aspects of South Asian women's experiences, combined with an element of suspicion of those who are neither black nor white, made it clear by the late 1990s that creating a safe space specifically for South Asian women in North Carolina was essential.

So in 1999 Kiran: Domestic Violence and Crisis Services for South Asians in North Carolina was founded in the Triangle area by six women committed to supporting South Asian women through abusive relationships. We aimed to fill gaps in services provided by both mainstream women's groups and South Asian communities, and to get women help and advice from someone who can understand their issues and constraints and has their safety and long-term goals as the first priority. Kiran is designed as a multi-cultural, non-religious, community-based, South Asian organization. Through outreach, confidential peer support, and referrals, Kiran has been promoting the empowerment of South Asian women for six years.

In both the American South and South Asian communities, women are expected to respect male authority and the judgment of their community elders and religious leaders.

One crucial insight our work has afforded us is that, while some of the specific cultural dynamics of South Asian communities may be unfamiliar to American Southerners, the overarching family dynamics are, ironically, quite similar. At base, the family dynamics are driven by unresolved tensions between the individual and collective identities. In both the American South and South Asian communities, women are expected to respect male authority and the judgment of their community elders and religious leaders. When I suggested to a white Christian woman in rural North Carolina that we look into a battered woman's shelter for her, she emphatically said no. "Mother Mary would not want me to leave my husband," she said. Similarly, when I counseled a 24 year old woman from India in Raleigh, N.C., she also cited religious authority: Sita would never have abandoned Ram. How would it look if I did?

In actuality, it is not the battered woman's culture that prevents her from helping herself, but her personal level of traditionalism. Most cultures have beliefs and practices that enforce women's inequality. Traditionalism reflects the degree to which these beliefs are allowed to inform expectations of behavior. In both the U.S. and South Asian countries, traditionalism has retreated the most in the larger cities. Members of smaller, more rural communities still face the challenges of balancing individuality with community expectations. Religion also plays a larger role in Southern communities in the United States than in other areas of the United States in which where South Asians have concentrated, such as the Northeast and West Coast states. As a result, one might expect that advocates in the American South would be the most well-positioned to understand the role of culture and religion in the lives of battered immigrant clients. Unfortunately, Southerners, in my experience, have instead tended to emphasize the cultural differences between themselves and their foreign-born clients.

As part of Kiran's mission, we educate both the South Asian community and mainstream social workers by conducting outreach and training sessions. Building competencies among those who are in a position to help South Asian and other immigrant women in crisis is essential. These kinds of connections are being made throughout the American South. Other organizations such as Raksha in Atlanta, Saheli in Austin, Texas, and Daya in Houston, have also been working to facilitate a dialogue between South Asian communities and mainstream domestic violence service providers.

In conducting trainings at shelters and domestic violence organizations in the Triangle, I've been encouraged by many advocates' interest in learning about the specific barriers that their immigrant clients face. Though there is a much work ahead, these exchanges are stepping stones towards providing better understanding of immigrants in the American South.

As I learned the back roads of Durham and the Domestic Violence Unit's procedure on taking domestic violence calls, Officer David learned about the barriers that immigrant women face in accessing the police in the U.S. Our cultural exchange was a microcosm of the learning that needs to take place to fully integrate new populations into the fabric of a changing American South.

Shivali Shah is one of the co-founders of Kiran: Domestic Violence and Crisis Services for South Asians in North Carolina (www.kiraninc.org) and sits on its Board of Directors. At Duke University, she received a J.D. from the School of Law and a G.Cft. from the Department of Women's Studies. She is currently teaching in the Political Science Department at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. and surveying women on dependent spouse visas, such as the H-4 visa. For more information, please visit http://www.hvisasurvey.org/.

FROM VIET NAM TO THE CAROLINAS

ONE MONTAGNARD FAMILY MAKES A LIFE IN THE SOUTH.

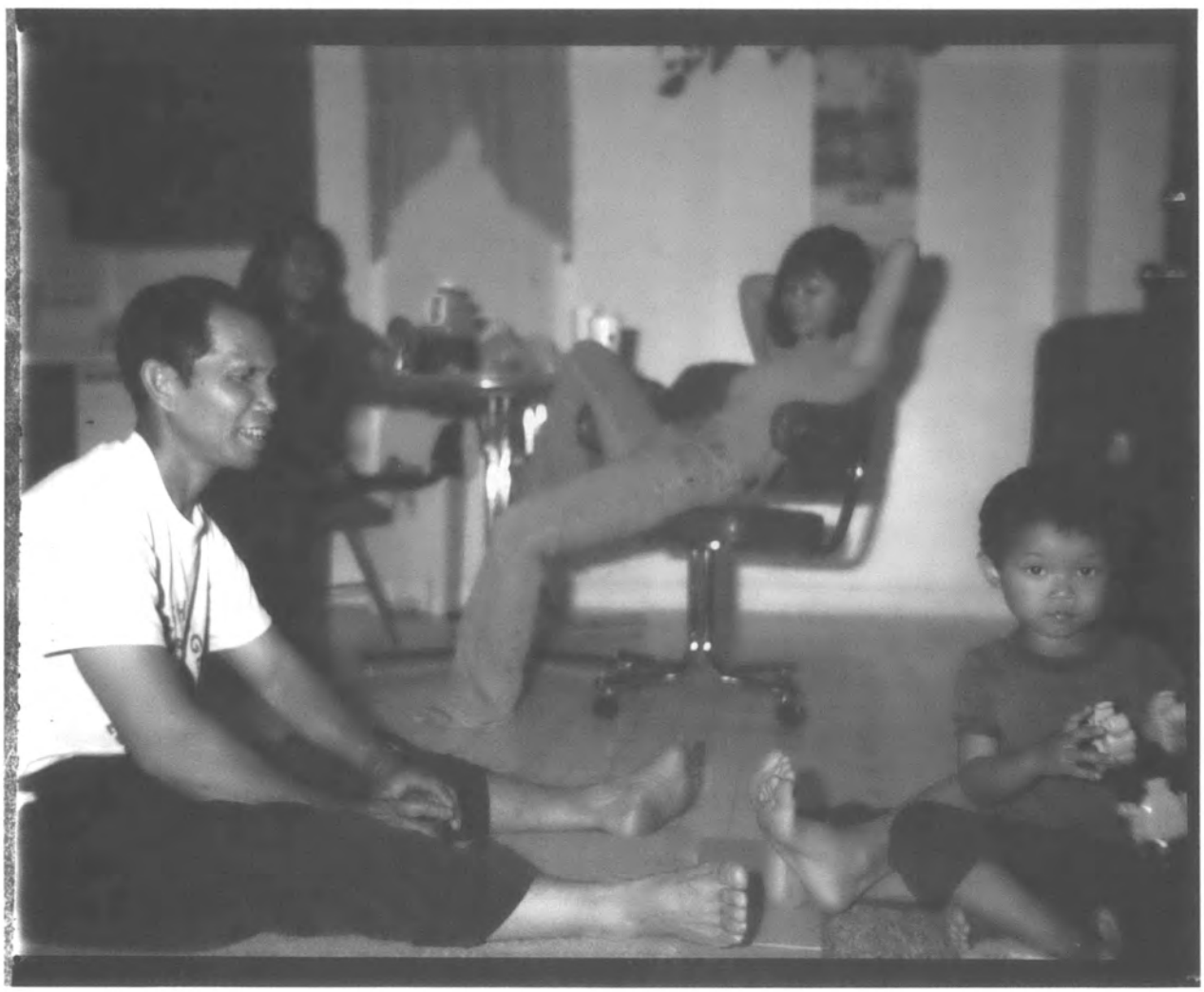
I met A'pi and H'punh Puih R'com in 2000 when I worked with them during an after-school photography and oral history program. The following photographs were taken later that year. A'pi and H'punh were still in high school, and had only lived in the United States for four years. They, along with thousands of other Montagnards, were resettled in Raleigh, North Carolina, through Lutheran Family Services' Vietnam Highlands Assistance Project.

Montagnards are an indigenous ethnic minority who live in the central highlands in the southern part of Viet Nam. During the Viet Nam/American War, the Montagnards fought alongside U.S. Special Forces troops, and have since suffered serious persecution from the Vietnamese government for their religious and political beliefs. When A'pi and H'punh's family left their native village of Plei Blang Hai in 1996, there were already over 600 Montagnards who had been resettled by Lutheran Family Services in Raleigh. LFS's Vietnam Highlands Assistance Project has made North Carolina home to the largest community of Montagnards outside of Viet Nam. Almost 4000 Montagnards now live in North Carolina.

IMAGES AND TEXT BY HONG-AN TRUONG

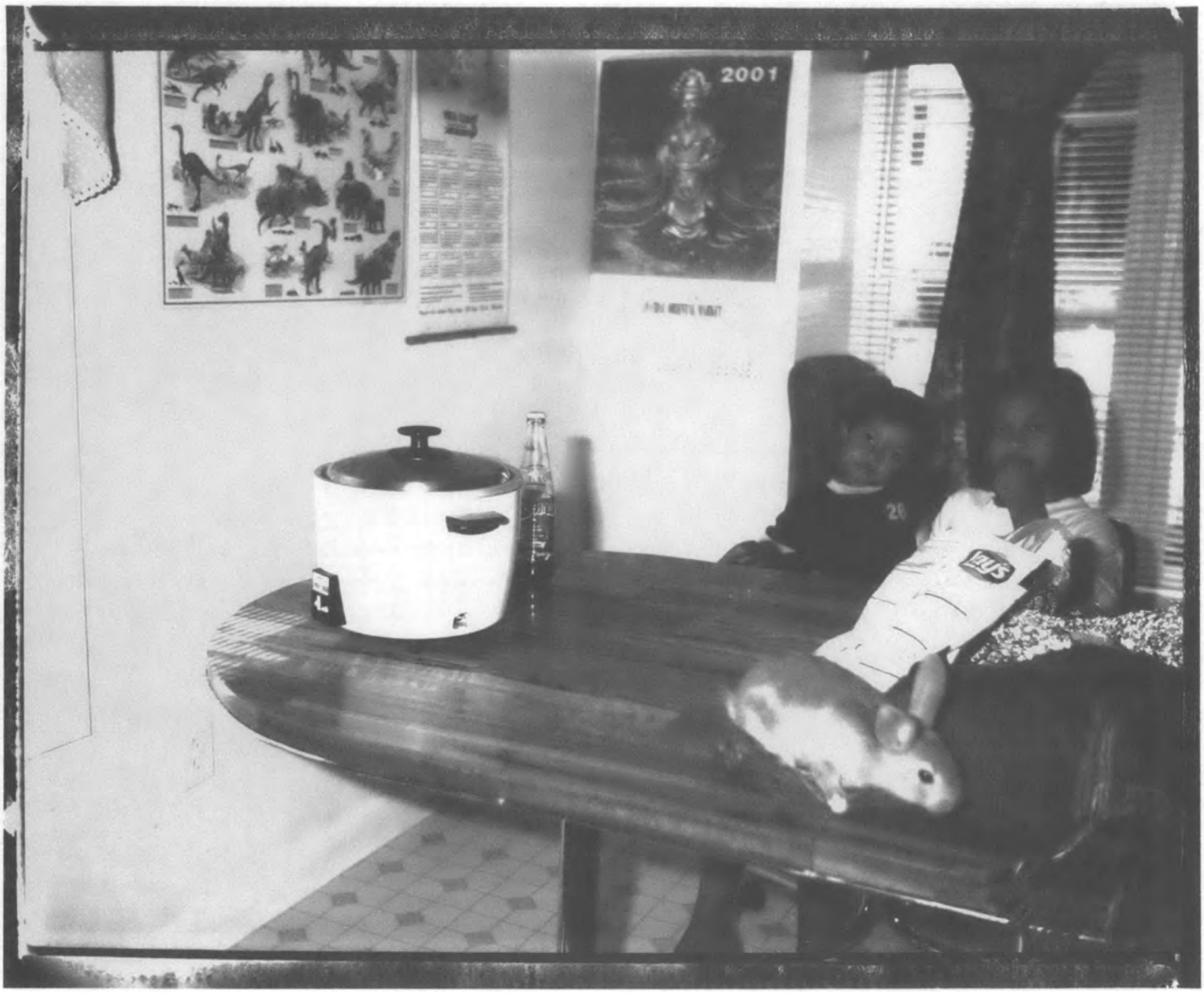
H'punh and A'pi Puih R'com dressed in traditional Montagnard clothing in front of their home in Raleigh, North Carolina. Their little brother, James, age 3, peeks through the front door.

H'punh and A'pi's mother, H'peng R'com, shows me a tattoo of her name written in her native language, Jarai. There are over 30 tribal Montagnard languages.



H'punh and A'pi's father, H'mer Puih with James.

H'peng, H'puk, aged 9, and James.



James and H'puk with their pet rabbit.

Self-portrait with H'punh, James, and H'mer Puih.

"THIS IS HOW I GOT HERE"

INTERVIEW BY BARBARA A. LAU

A Cambodian in the South on eating her home country's food with American spices, explaining where Cambodia is, and why she doesn't call herself American.

Ran Kong with her grandmother. Photo courtesy of Kong family.

Ran Kong shared this story with me just after completing her first semester of college. Her parents fled Cambodia in 1980 and arrived in North Carolina as refugees in 1984. Ran was just four years old. The first member of her family to seek higher education, Ran won a scholarship at Salem College. She was part of a small group of Asian students attending this private, women's institution in Winston-Salem. Although Ran grew up attending public schools, she spent much of her childhood at the Greensboro Buddhist Center learning traditional dance, participating in religious ceremonies, and absorbing Cambodian culture and traditions. Ran befriended me in 1992 when I began doing folklore research at the Greensboro Buddhist Center. The experience Ran relates in this interview shaped the way she sees herself as an Asian American in the South. –Barbara Lau

BAL: I wanted to ask you to tell me a story that you told me a while back. Now that you've graduated from high school, you are now attending…?

RK: Salem College [in Winston-Salem, North Carolina].

BAL: So tell me a little bit about meeting some of your fellow students.

RK: Salem is an interesting little college. A lot of its reputation is that it's an elite school, you know, mainly white. White families send their girls there and they're mostly well-off families and so they are starting to try to like, diversify the number of students in there.

I remember a while back I was studying with one of my friends for my macroeconomics finals. We decided to take a two-hour break and just sort of like, talk about each other and this is at, maybe two o'clock in the morning. It's supposed to be an all-nighter, and she was like, "Wow, I've never met anybody from Cambodia. The school that I went to was mainly all white and I've never really seen an Asian."

A lot of people don't even know where Cambodia's at. A lot of the girls that go there are like, "You're from Cambodia, where's that at?" and I'm like, "Southeast Asia," and they're like, "Where's that at?" So if you name some place like China or Japan, they'll know. But you say Cambodia and they're like, "Whoa, where?"

And so I started talking to her a little bit about my family, my culture, the war, how it is that I got here, what my family experienced on the way here, and she was just awed. She was like, "I've never heard anything like that." And she told me a little bit about herself, about her family and what her plans for the future were. And we talked a lot about our marriage customs and I told her about arranged marriages in Cambodia and how my sister was arranged, and she talked about how she wanted her wedding to be, what her ideal wedding would be. So it was a nice exchange there at 2 o'clock in the morning.

BAL: Can you tell me the story about being with some other students where everybody had do something or talk a little bit about themselves?

RK: Well, I live in Babcock dorm on the third floor and it's really interesting how they paired me up. We took personality tests – "What do you want in your roommate?" "What are some qualities that you have?" And I had requested a roommate who had gone to school with me and she's Ethiopian and her name is Urgaba. And so we got each other as roommates and we get along perfectly well. And near me there is a black girl and another girl who has some Honduran in her—I think her parents are half Honduran, so she is maybe like a quarter Honduran. And then down the hall from me there's an Indian girl and one who is half Puerto Rican and there's another girl who can trace her ancestry back to, I think, Scotland and then, you know, everybody else [is] mainly white.

And so there's an interesting mix we have. We have a Catholic, Buddhist, Christians, Hindu, Swaminarayan, and we get together at night, so we've come to know each other pretty well. Just about every night they come into my room and we eat snacks, chips or whatever, and we just start talking, you know, normal, I guess, girl talk – starting off with unimportant things, about, you know, things. And then there were a couple of times where we talked about really serious things.

One topic that comes up a lot is religion. And two or three girls down there don't know what Buddhism is. They've heard of it and they know that, you know, this movie star, he's Buddhist, and they've heard of the Dalai Lama, but they don't what a real Buddhist is, what a Southeast Asian Buddhist is. And so we talk a lot about that and they ask me questions and I try to explain it to them, and I, in turn, ask them questions. You know, I ask my Hindu friend about her religion. She's like, "We're non-violent, we don't eat meat," and I say, "Well you know, our religion's also non-violent but we're allowed to eat meat." And so we've had huge debates about that and [we] pair off and one would defend me because we are all meat eaters, so it was like the whole of us against her.

It's really interesting how much we can pull out of ourselves, just from sharing, how much we learn about our own religions. Because ever since then, I've come back and I've started to ask my father about digging deeper into my religion, talking to the monk a little bit more, reading some stuff on my own. So that's been a really good way for me to learn about myself and I know that she had done the same thing and also the other girls. There's an inter-varsity group there, which is like a Christian fellowship club, and she goes there and she's like, "Oh, Ran, this is what we talked about today. It reminded me of something that we talked about the other night." Or she'll say, "We talked about something today and I thought about you and I really disagreed with it." So it really makes you feel good when you hear that you've taught somebody something and that your words could affect them so much.

And we also talk about my history, you know, how it is that I got here, and they're like, "I was born, I went to this school, I went to this school," and that's about it. They're like, "Tell me about yourself." I'm like, "Well, this is how I got here."

But one night – I think that this is really something significant that happened with us – one of my friends there, she's a great person, a very devout Christian, and we were talking about what it is to be American. It was me and my Indian friend and my Ethiopian friend, and we're all, you know, we're non-citizens, we're just legal residents. So immediately we had this bond—we mainly agreed [about] everything. We're like, "It's kind of hard to call yourself American." I label myself Cambodian, she labels herself Indian, Urgaba is Ethiopian.

And then my American friend was . . . she, I don't know, there must have been something that she did not get. She must have felt that we were belittling her nationality, or whatever. And so she stormed out and she's like, "I don't get it." At first the conversation was about problems within

our communities, Julie (my Indian friend), me, and Urgaba. We were saying a lot of teenagers in our communities were losing not only their religious side, but also their cultural side. They were going around not only Americanizing in the way that they dressed, in the way that they talked, but even in the way they acted and thought, and that was a great concern for Julie and me and Urgaba. We're like, "It's not good to lose that, because you're being a fake. You're living a life of charades."

And so my [American] friend comes in and says, "What's wrong? Why can't they call themselves American? You know, they live here, they eat and they drink, you know, speak and whatever, everything American. What is wrong with that?"

And we were trying to explain to her. We're yelling and there's a lot of tension in the room, and we're just like, oh my gosh, it was supposed to be a simple conversation. She storms out and she goes, "I don't know what it is that is wrong with me and those other white girls down the hall, you know, I don't know what it is. What is wrong with us? What is wrong with being American?"

And I run up to her and I'm crying at this point, you know, it's hysteria, and I'm like, "There's nothing wrong, okay, there's nothing wrong with being American. My point here, Julie's point is that we're not American, we can never be American."

Why are you going to go around and lie that you're American when it's obvious to everyone that you're not American, when most people will not accept that you're American simply because [of] your physical appearance? And also, your parents are not Americans; they don't call themselves Americans, because they know they're not. They were raised a whole different way with a different culture with a different religion, you know, and they've shared all that with us. They've shared their language with us; they've shared their history with us. I've seen Cambodia through my parents' eyes, through my grandmother's eyes, through the monk's eyes, through every other adult as they tell stories. I'm eating my country's food, even though we mix American spices in it.

I remember telling her, "Would you want to go to Cambodia? And would you ever call yourself Cambodian?"

I don't think she answered me. I was like, "It's the same way with us, you know."

"Think about you going to Cambodia and not ever telling your kids about Christmas. Think about going to Cambodia and celebrating Christmas, and not saying that you are American but that you're Cambodian, but still having American ideals, still carrying through with American customs, and then calling it Cambodian. Wouldn't you also be offended?"

And you know, she finally understood me. It was so emotional. I had never done anything like that. And I had never realized how important it was that I not call myself American; that I be identified as a Cambodian and be accepted as that; that my parents really knew that I valued that so much, all that my parents had shared with me.

BAL: I am sure it was very difficult

RK: It was very difficult, very difficult.

BAL: But sometimes out of that we learn a lot.

RK: Yes, I learned a lot about myself that night and we hugged. It ended happily, you know. I think we've grown a little bit closer together because of that. Everybody says college is a place where you grow and learn and I think it's just not in [the] classroom. I would never have gotten that out of a classroom.

BAL: Well, are you glad you went to college?

RK: I'm glad. I'm glad it turned out that way.

Barbara A. Lau is the Community Documentary Programs Director at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. She recently served as guest curator at the Greensboro Historical Museum on the collaborative exhibition, From Cambodia to Greensboro: Tracing the Journeys of New North Carolinians. *She has also published an exhibit catalog of the same name and co-authored an award-winning children's book,* Sokita Celebrates the New Year: A Cambodian American Holiday.

Ran Kong is a 2002 graduate of Salem College with a degree in Math and Economics. She is currently a distribution counselor with Amvescap Retirement in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. She recently served as a community scholar for the Greensboro Historical Museum exhibition, From Cambodia to Greensboro: Tracing the Journeys of New North Carolinians.

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