



In Chapter Four of Angela Kong's dissertation, "Re-Examining Diversity Policy at UCSD", Kong discusses the lack of support and knowledge of Asian-American racial struggles and dialogue, using the Compton Cookout to exemplify the absence of Asian American inclusion in racial activism. She raises three key points of Asian American struggles: 1) the reduction of Asian Americans to the model minority myth, which perpetuates the harmful stereotype that Asian Americans never struggle academically and always succeed. 2) lack of awareness of Asian American student standing in universities, due to insufficient in-depth academic courses on Asian Americans. 3) the exclusion of Asian Americans in racial discourse and activism on campus (Kong 84). In my experience living on UCSD campus, I identify with the main points of Asian American racial struggles Kong outlined, however, I disagree with Kong that Asian American racial experiences are ignored and never recognized by other students when discussing racial struggles in general, especially when considering the example she provided of the Compton Cookout event.

Kong's main example, the Compton Cookout event, was entirely targeted at African American students, perpetuating harmful stereotypes that depict African Americans as loud, angry, violent, poor, and unintelligent- essentially at the bottom of the tier. Often, these stereotypes cross over to students of other races, such as Latinx and Chicanx students, and Native American students, who are also subject to being seen as poor, uneducated, violent, and uncivilized. Thus, the issue at hand being dealt with was much more nuanced than just simply excluding Asian Americans out of the dialogue of racial tensions on campus. The events following the Compton Cookout made students of color afraid, especially the ones targeted- African American students, thus the urgency to promote diversity and change within the school system. I believe Asian Americans

should be more included in discussions about change in diversity policies, however in this specific case, it was not our place to hi-jack the movement created by African American students. The Compton Cookout was an incident that is specifically a black issue, that had the chance to become a Latinx issue or Native issue in the same time span. Therefore, the need for change for specifically those students.

Moreover, in my experiences on campus, Asian-American racial struggles are discussed and encouraged, and often people are open-minded and understand when we explain why a certain stereotype is not acceptable and harmful to us. I understand the benefits of having more visibility in a community of students of color, such as educating others of Asian American racial interactions and history, and abolishing the model minority myth that often cripples many of us in fear that we will never live up to that. However, if we truly want change within the community, or are dissatisfied with the roles we are given in the community, it is not the responsibility of others to include us in their own movement for change or create one for us, but it is up to us to make change where we need it. Additionally, I feel that as a Korean-American student, I don't experience direct Asian discrimination or outright racism, I internalize the subtle racism we experience, like the model minority myth that perpetuates the idea that all Asians are set up to be intelligent and successful, which creates this standard that a lot of Asians can not measure up to, leading to depressing, negative thoughts we create on our own. Although I disagree with Kong on the exclusion of the Asian-American experience, I do agree that an Asian American resource center would be helpful not only to educate others and thus gain traction for a movement toward better Asian American representation within UCSD campus community, but

also to combat the internalized racism and self-hate that is so common within Asian-American students.

In conclusion, Kong's dissertation reinforced what I thought of UCSD campus: an inclusive and accepting community of students that strive for unity in spite of events that attempt to divide our community and create a place of hatred and fear. I agree that an Asian American experiences need to be more well-known, however we need to rely on our own community to create a movement towards more Asian American representation on campus and within racial discourse between communities of people of color, instead of expecting others to do it for us. Furthermore, in my experience as a UCSD student, an Asian American resource center would be helpful in fostering unity and self-love within our community while combatting the harmful stereotypes we often face and internalize.

Works Cited

Kong, Angela. *Re-examining Diversity Policy at University of California, San Diego: The Racial Politics of Asian Americans*. Diss. U of California San Diego, 2014. N.p.: n.p., n.d. Print.