**Asian Identity Politics Counter K**

A. Links: The Black-White binary is grounded in African-American sociohistorical experience- it perpetuates racial exclusion of nationalities lumped under Asian-American-discussions of identity politics must account for unique historical patterns and policies that shape identity. Junn and Masuoka[[1]](#footnote-1) ‘08

In today’s diverse environment, **racial identities are not** created **equal**ly. There are **distinctive historical conditions**, **migration patterns, and government policies** that **influence** the **politics of group affinity** in particular ways for Americans classified by race. The importance of racial group consciousness for political behavior should be treated as a hypothesis rather than an assumption. Making **the con- nection from** shared **classification in a racial category to group-based** political **behavior is neither simple nor obvi- ous for non-black minorities**, particularly those whose pop- ulation growth is attributed to new immigration. It is unclear how new immigrant members will adopt and apply the racial and ethnic categories imposed upon them.1 In contrast, the shared historical experience of profound struc- tural, economic, and social bias aimed against blacks cou- pled with comparatively low migration rates of new black immigrants leaves less room for maneuvering.2 Michael Dawson’s theory of the “black utility heuristic” remains a powerful explanation of strong racial group identity among blacks, and has had important influence on the language social scientists use to understand the inter- action between racial identity and politics. **The** contem- porary **study of racial identity in the U**nited **S**tates **is based** largely **in concepts developed from the black case**, and it remains an important foundation for the politics of race.But the persistence of **Asian American racial identifi- cation demonstrates** that the **processes of racial categori- zation** also **influence**s the **group identities** of minority groups **who do not share the** same **history** of subjugation and degree of discrimination that is **key to explaining black** racial group **identity**. **Asian Americans have been** historically **situatedin a triangulated position in relation to the black-white binary, and** therefore **represent a criticalcase to examine** how **racial identification** influences polit- ical behavior in a multiracial political environment. Using the dynamism of racial construction and the implicit comparisons across groups in the racial order of the U.S. as a backdrop, we analyze the dynamics of racial group consciousness among blacks and Asian Americans by exam- ining the results of an embedded survey experiment designed to activate group identity. The findings from the experiment raise a number of questions about how to study and think about how racial group consciousness is manifested in politics once we consider racial identity beyond black and white. We introduce a set of theoreti- cal imperatives outlining how to better understand the formation of racial group identity among non-black minor- ities. In particular, we advocate for more explicit consid- eration of the structural incentives and costs of adopting racial and ethnic identities by highlighting the signifi- cance of U.S. immigration policy and its role in creating group-based stereotypes and racial tropes.

These impacts first- examination is crucial to breaking out of the epistemological black-white binary.

B. Impacts: His criticism masks the term “Asian-American” which homogenizes a diverse group the categorization is perpetuated in state immigration policies that classifies acceptable social categories- our method of assimilation and epistemological viewpoint is distinct from the Black or Europeans- you must endorse this criticism to recognize a diversity of population and reject racial tropes. Junn and Masuoka 2

Scholars of black politics point to the role of race and its influence on individual life chances. According to Daw- son, it is race rather than other individual characteristics such as class that structure black worldviews.20 Black individuals are classified as a group based on their racial phenotype which is linked to a variety of negative stereo- types.21 Yen Le Espiritu contends that **Asian Americans**, like blacks, **are** also **subject to** a similar process of **racial lumping**, and that their individual experiences are framed by the fact that this lumping occurs.22 **People of Asian origin share** a set of **physical characteristics** that allows racial group status to be assigned quickly and at face value. Whether of East Asian, South Asian, or Southeast Asian origin, **Asian Americans**, like blacks, both races **are** readily identifiable and **racialized at first sight.** The acknowledgement that Asians are lumped together visu- ally as well as by the U.S. government as a racial category provides the foundation for a racial identity that is directed at politics.Yet the key to the formation of black linked fate is the idea that blacks share a common history as a subjugated racial group. For blacks, the experiences of slavery, Jim Crow, and the persistence of barriers to mobility have demonstrated a historical pattern that underscores the infer- ence that unless the fate of the entire racial group improves one’s own individual life also will not change. Blacks con- tinue to link their own individual life chances to that of the racial group even as their individual socioeconomic status improves.23 For Asian Americans, however, this infer- ence has less resonance because the majority of Asian Amer- icans in the U.S. today immigrated after 1965 and therefore do not share the experience of a long history of racial discrimination. Further, structural barriers inhibiting Asian American individual life chances appear to be less rigid than that experienced by blacks as evidenced by their rel- atively faster rates of assimilation and integration into the mainstream economic sector.**Why**, then, **would** shared **racial status matter to Asian Americans**? We conceptualize the structuring of racial polit- ical identity as a complex interaction between policies of the state, institutions, political economy, and the stereo- types that result to create incentives for people categorized by race to either adopt or turn away from a group-based political identity.**24First**, state-sponsored racial **classification** places **limits** on **how people** can **identify**, and there are clear incentives to accept this scheme of racial classification. “**Asian**” **has** **persisted as a non-white racial group** throughout most of the history of the United States, nor does it appear that this racial classification will disappear in the near future.25 Throughout the history of the United States, assignment to a racial group has carried important consequences, among them freedom, voting enfranchisement, property ownership, and citizenship rights. The imperative for the U.S. government to classify people by race in the census emanates from none other than the notorious three-fifths compromise codified in the nation’s founding document. The census began to enumerate Asians as a separate racial category in 1860 when Chinese in California were first counted. While racial classification has shifted through- out the twentieth century, Asian categories has been con- sistently included as a distinctive racial group.26By counting groups of people through the census, **the state establishes** those who are **recognized members of the polity and which social categories are acceptable**.27 Racial classification has been most significant to Americans clas- sified as something other than white since federal and state laws made explicit discriminatory practices against blacks, Mexicans, Asians, and others. Categorization has both political antecedents as well as implications, and Asian Americans have historically provided a critical link in the racial triangulation of minority Americans by serving as a buffer group between other groups at various points in the continuum. As long as Asians are differentiated as separate and non-white, those so classified will continue to under- stand their identity as racialized.**Second**, immigration policy plays a critical role in deter- mining the structural advantage and disadvantage for new immigrants.28 Yet, many scholars have overlooked the role of institutions in favor for more individual-level expla- nations for immigrant behavior and attitudes. **Many point to Asian Americans**’ relatively **high** levels of **socioeco- nomic status as evidence of their successful assimilation** into American society or even the byproduct of a supe- rior ethnic culture. But the size and composition of the Asian population today has been fueled primarily by new immigration, and federal immigration policy offers a more accurate causal explanation for the contemporary com- position of the Asian American population. **U.S. immi- gration policies** create preferences for certain types of immigrants and **disproportionately award** the status of lawful **permanent resident** for those who match those favored characteristics. This results in a particular config- uration of immigrants, both lawful and undocumented. Past policies aimed at Asian immigration favored poor and unskilled workers to serve as railroad workers, min- ers, and farm workers. The current policies privilege legal entry **for workers with high**-level **professional skills and advanced degrees**, and is responsible for determining the shape and composition of Asian migration to the U.S. today. We recognize that immigration policy creates a selection bias that explains the highly-educated and skilled Asian American population on the one hand, compared with the size of the relatively poor and uneducated Latino immigration population on the other.Thus, the relationship between socioeconomic status and **assimilation for Asian immigrants** today **is not the same as that for European ethnics** that entered the U.S. a century earlier. Traditional assimilation theories, which were used to explain European ethnics in the nineteenth century, note a direct and positive relationship between socioeconomic status and assimilation.29 We argue that the trajectory of incorporation for today’s Asian immi- grants is different from that experienced by Europeans or even today’s **Latino immigrants given** that **Asians enter the U.S. under** very **different economic circumstances**. Among Asian immigrants, many enter the U.S. with an already extensive array of individual resources. Since the relationship between socioeconomic status and assimila- tion is unique for today’s Asian immigrants, the relation- ship between assimilation and ethnic identification may also be different for Asian Americans. According to Dahl (1961), ethnic identification for European ethnics faded as Europeans assimilated into U.S. society and acquired higher levels of socioeconomic status.30 With greater indi- vidual resources, European ethnics did not need to rely on their ethnic identity or ethnic community. Some claim that this pattern is occurring for Asian Americans today and that they will follow a similar trajectory.31 While thereare longitudinal data to counter this contention, Asian Americans clearly enter U.S. society under very different circumstances, and we know that their relatively high lev- els of socioeconomic status cannot be explained entirely by ethnic assimilation. Thus, we remain skeptical that Asian Americans will follow a traditional path to assimilation in terms of racial identity.**Third**, as a result of racial categorization and the selec- tion bias of immigration policy, **Asian Americans are sub- ject to** specific **racialized tropes** that influence their individual life chances regardless of their length of resi- dence in the U.S. As long as an Asian American is clas- sified as “Asian,” the prevalent racialized tropes of the time will be applied and treatment as a racial “other” will encourage Asians to maintain a sense of racial group identity.32 Racial tropes have implications for the incen- tives and costs people face when identifying with a racial or ethnic group. **The most dominant** trope **is the “model minority” stereotype** that frames Asian Americans as hard working, smart, and successful.33 The term model minor- ity is applied to Asian Americans as a whole, but is per- ceived as an individual-level trait.34 So while Asian Americans might connect their racial identity with a par- ticular set of stereotypical characteristics, the positive and more individualistic frame of their identity as a “model minority” provides fewer motives to form group racial identity than more economically deprived groups. Simi- larly, if Asian Americans believe they have greater oppor- tunities and hold higher status than others in society, there may be less reason to engage in group solidarity to achieve political ends.35 But this is **tempered by the “for- ever foreigner” trope of Asian Americans as inscrutable, untrustworthy, and perpetual outsiders**. The image has the effect of a glass ceiling, preventing Asian Americans from full social integration. Indeed, some have argued that **the construction of Asian Americans as a model minority works hand in hand with the characterization of Asians as perpetual foreigners**.Model minority is clearly a more positive racialized trope than coolie, but it is not without negative conse- quence. Dueling contemporary tropes of Asian Ameri- cans as simultaneously a model minority while forever foreigner create a unique context of incentives and costs for racial group consciousness. Lauded for some charac- teristics and considered suspicious for others, **Asian Amer- icans exist in a distinctive racial position** from other minority groups in the United States. Thus, **Asian Amer- ican** political **identity is forged out** the complex inter- action **of** all of these factors—the **diversity of the population**, the history of **anti-Asian racism** in the United States, the **contemporary bias within immigration policy** for high-skilled workers that produces a particular selec- tion bias among Asian immigrants, **and** the **competing stereotypes** of Asian Americans as simultaneously a model minority while remaining forever foreigner.

C. Alternative: Reject the methods and discourse of the 1AC/1NC- the model minority myth and homogenous culture allows for infinite structural violence against the oppressed because culture becomes a tool for political agendas- the only way to solve racism and collective Asian problems is to embrace Asian Americans as dynamic and diverse. Wu[[2]](#footnote-2) ‘14

Previews of[Amy Chua](http://www.latimes.com/topic/education/amy-chua-PECLB00013064.topic)'s forthcoming book, "The Triple Package" (co-written with husband Jed Rubenfeld), detonated a social media uproar among Asian Americans. Many were infuriated by the New York Post's report that Chua, the self-styled Tiger Mom, was identifying eight superior "cultural" groups in the United States: Jewish, Indian, Chinese, Iranian, Lebanese, Nigerian, Cuban and Mormon. For Asian Americans, the problem is about another Chua production that seems to perpetuate the "model minority" myth and, in particular, the notion that Asians are culturally — even genetically — endowed with the characteristics that enable them to succeed in American society.Before the mid-20th century, the Tiger Mom did not exist in the national imagination. Instead, Americans believed that Chinese culture was disgusting and vile, viewing U.S. Chinatowns as depraved colonies of prostitutes, gamblers and opium addicts bereft of decency. Lawmakers and citizens deployed these arguments to justify and maintain the segregation, marginalization and exclusion of Chinese from mainline society between the 1870s and World War II. Those efforts were more than effective: to have a "Chinaman's chance" at that time meant that one had zero prospects.**There is danger in** offering **culture as a formula for success**, because our **ideas of culture are hardly fixed.** The history of Americans' views about Chinese immigrant behaviors shows that **"culture"** often **serves as a blank screen onto which individuals project** various **political agendas, depending on the exigencies of the moment**.During World War II, white liberals agonized that racism was damaging the United States' ability to fight a war for democracy against the Axis powers. Many felt that the Chinese exclusion laws, which had barred migrants from China from entering the country or becoming naturalized citizens since the 1870s, risked America's trans-Pacific alliance with China against Japan. A coast-to-coast campaign emerged to overturn the laws. The Citizens Committee to Repeal Chinese Exclusion recognized that it would have to neutralize deep-seated fear of "yellow peril" coolie hordes. So it strategically recast Chinese in its promotional materials as "law-abiding, peace-loving, courteous people living quietly among us."[Congress](http://www.latimes.com/topic/politics/government/u.s.-congress-ORGOV0000131.topic)repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943.In the 1950s, journalists, social scientists and policymakers recycled this fledgling idea, circulating it further and wider as they groped for a solution to what they perceived as a national juvenile delinquency crisis. The New York Times Magazine emphasized that Chinese youths displayed "unquestioned obedience" toward their elders, while Look magazine celebrated their "high moral sense." U.S. Rep. Arthur Klein of New York praised his Manhattan Chinatown constituents for their "respect for parents and teachers," "stable and loving home life" and thirst for education.These narratives gained traction because they upheld two dominant lines of Cold War-era thinking. The first was the valorization of the nuclear family. Popular portrayals of Chinese American households that attributed their orderliness to Confucian tradition resonated with contemporary conservative mores. The second was anti-communism. Observers who lauded stateside Chinese and their "venerable" Confucianism effectively drew contrasts between U.S. Chinatowns and Mao Tse-tung's China to suggest that superiority of the American way of life.By the 1960s, **the concept of strong**, disciplined **families** **became the basis of the new racial stereotype** of Chinese Americans **as "model minorities**": domestic exemplars, upwardly mobile and politically docile. In the midst of the black freedom movement of the 1960s, numerous politicians and academics and the mainstream media contrasted Chinese with African Americans. They found it expedient to invoke Chinese "culture" to counter the demands of civil rights and black power activists for substantive change.In 1966, then-Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan defended his controversial claim that the too-strong emphasis on matriarchy in black "culture" was to blame for the "deterioration" of African American communities by pointing to the "enlightened family life" of the relatively well-to-do Chinese. The magazine U.S. News & World Report unequivocally made the same charged comparison: "At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent to uplift Negros and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese Americans are moving ahead on their own — with no help from anyone else."Then, as now, Asian Americans were troubled by what they saw as untrue juxtapositions. For one, **the stereotype glossed over** the myriad **difficulties** **their communities faced**: **poverty, drugs, suicide, mental illness**. Ling-chi Wang warned in UC Berkeley's Asian American Political Alliance newsletter (1968) that Chinatown's **problems** "**will** forever **be neglected by the government**" **unless the community liberated itself from** "**the tyranny of this** Chinese **myth**."Moreover, critics disliked the ways in which **ideas about Asian Americans reinforced** the **denigration of African Americans**. Writing for Los Angeles-based Gidra magazine in 1969, Amy **Uyematsu resented being implicated in "white racism" by being "held up" before other minority groups as a "model to emulate."**Today, the "model minority" concept both fascinates and upsets precisely because it offers an unambiguous yet inaccurate blueprint for solving the nation's most pressing issues. The obstacles Americans face in the global economy, our declining prospects for socioeconomic mobility and the uncertainty of parenting in difficult times — all are real challenges. But "culture" cannot explain "success" any more than it can serve as a panacea for the dilemmas of the new millennium.We've heard enough of specious generalizations about "model minorities." **We need to see Asian Americans** — and other racial, ethnic and religious groups — for what they are: **[as]** **dynamic, diverse and** much **more than one-dimensional** stereotypes.

1. Jane Junn and Natalie Masuoka , “Asian American Identity: Shared Racial Status and Political Context”. Perspectives on Politics, Dec. 2008, American Political Science Association. Quals: Associate Professor of Political Science, Rutgers and Tufs, respectively. RP 3/2/14 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ellen D. Wu, “Asian Americans and the 'model minority' myth”. LA Times, *January 23, 2014. Quals: history professor at Indiana University.* [http://www.latimes.com/opinion/commentary/la-oe-0123-wu-chua-model-minority-chinese-20140123,0,849364.story#ixzz2upZfKqSt](http://www.latimes.com/opinion/commentary/la-oe-0123-wu-chua-model-minority-chinese-20140123%2C0%2C849364.story#ixzz2upZfKqSt). RP 3/2/13 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)