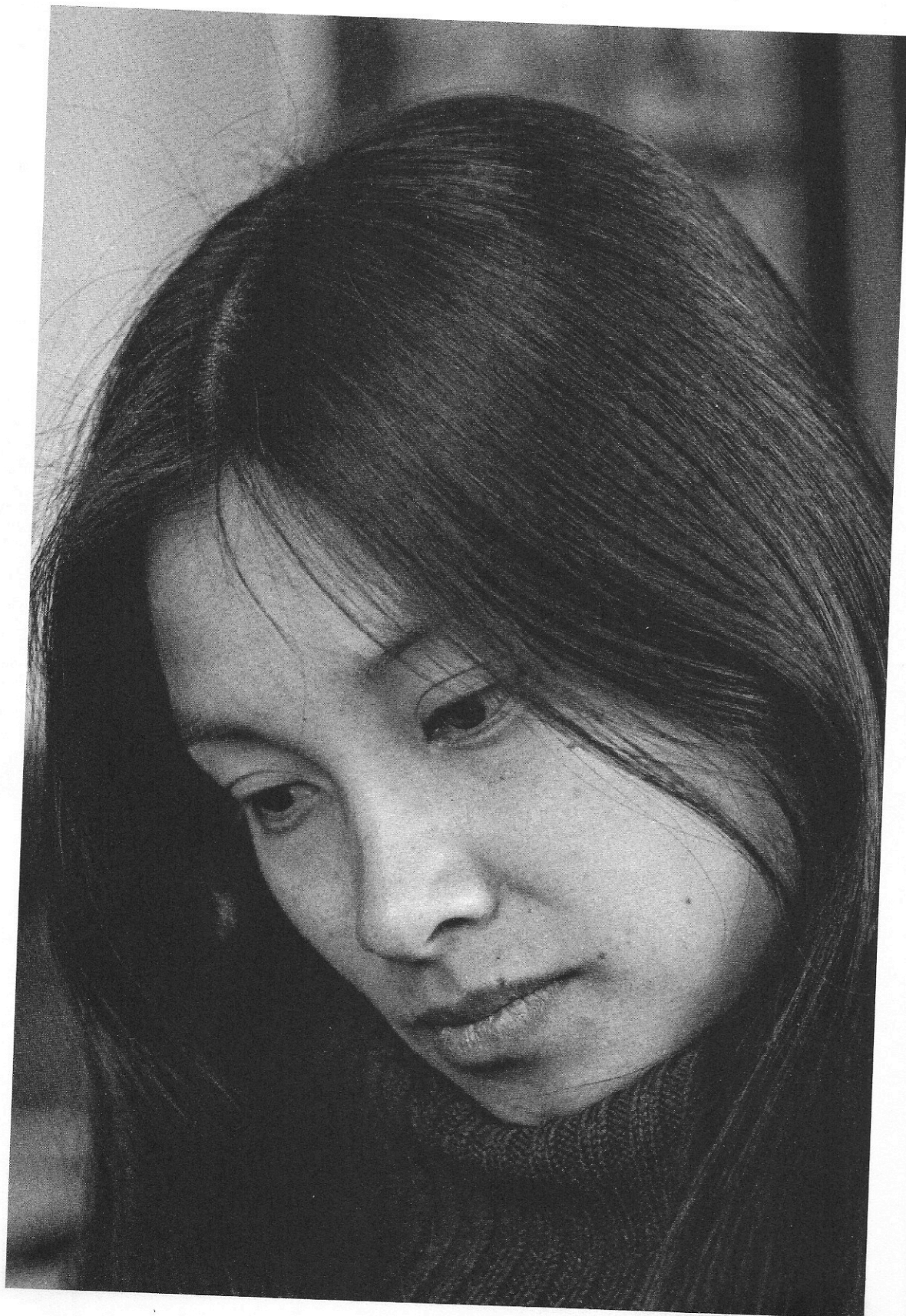


THE STRIKE IS NOT OVER

IRENE DEER COLLIER



COURTESY OF MALCOLM COLLIER, 1974

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FAMILY UPRISING IN HOIPING, CHINA

I was born in 1948, in Hoiping in Guangdong Province, China. At that time, the government was being taken over by the Communists. My father had already been to the United States as a boy when he was 12, but later returned to the village as an adult. My grandfather had been to the United States and worked as a cook for one of the businessmen in San Francisco's Chinatown, and also returned to China, because he was quite ill with diabetes.

My father had just returned a year before I was born, and I had an older brother that was born ten years before me, before my father left to America.

Growing up in Hoiping, I was one of the darlings of the village. Everyone thought I was "real spunky." They had stories of me singing at the top of my lungs from the rooftops. When I was about two years old, my mother and father thought this wasn't a good place for us. My father had returned to the United States by then, and my mother was raising me and my younger and older brothers by herself. Worried about China's new government, my father sent her passage for "paper" children—papers for two kids. The trouble was they had three.

My mother was going to leave me behind, but she told me later that because of my spunkiness, everyone wanted me to stay. When they were just about to leave, she looked at my little face and said, "I can't do it. They're too little! I'm going to stay in the village." So my father lost the money he had paid for the passage.

But by the time we were five, we had to leave. Mother could still only get passage for two children. We all left China and got to Hong Kong, hoping to find her brother living there. But there was some miscommunication and he didn't come to get us. So there she was—stuck with three children with no place to go. But a very kind old woman said to us, "You can sleep in my bed and I'll find your older brother."

My mother had his address, and eventually, my uncle came and brought us to his house. My mother still had to decide which one of us to leave behind. Because my brother was 15, she left him behind, hoping to bring him later. She took us, the two younger ones, to America. She left my older brother with my uncle. Everyone said, "We'll get him later, somehow."

I've always felt so grateful to my mother, because usually you bring the boys and you leave the girls behind. My fate could've been very, very different. I feel very fortunate even though we had to leave my brother behind and it was another ten years before we would see him again.

We came to America in 1953 and lived in a small SRO (Single Room Occupancy) housing unit on Grant Avenue for about a year. We had no toilet of our own. We had to share it with five other families. We also had no kitchen. When I was five and my brother was four, my mother had to go to work as a seamstress and left us home alone.



COURTESY OF MALCOLM COLLIER

Dea Collier at age two with her mother and baby brother in Toisan, China. The photo was taken by an itinerant Chinese village photographer circa 1950.

The good thing about those days was the Chung Mun family association provided help and bought clothes for us. My father was the darling of the family association because he was very handsome and articulate. He worked at a hardware store and at different enterprises that members of the family association had.

My father was quite active in the family association and well-known in the community. Years later, in the '80s, people wanted to build a school near our village in China, and my father raised \$180,000 from all the people in his family association. They built a middle and high school with a dormitory and a chemistry lab that my father was very proud of.

CHINATOWN: THE SPUNKY CHATTERBOX BECOMES SILENT

When I first came to this country, it was a shock to me, because I was placed into American school right away. We mostly spoke Hoiping at home. They gave me a new name: Irene. Everyone spoke a totally different language. I did not understand one single word. Suddenly, the whole world changed. Also, in Chinese school, they didn't speak Hoiping. They spoke Cantonese. My brother and I didn't know what the heck was going on both in American and Chinese school! Nobody was speaking what we spoke. Nobody understood us. That was a great shock to us.

In China and at home, I was a very spunky chatterbox, but once I got to America, I stopped talking. I refused to talk in class and I became very quiet at home. I didn't really talk again until after college. When I was called upon to speak in public, I couldn't do it. So you can see a very big shift in personality because of the language policies. It was always "sink or swim" in the American school.

I grew up in Chinatown and lived there all my life until I got married in 1972. I always lived on Stockton Street opposite the Ping Yuen housing projects. It was a segregated neighborhood, but in some ways, I really think it was good for us, because we grew up with neighborhood friends. These were friends and people that I knew for the rest of my life. We went to school together. Everyone was poor, but we never felt poor because everyone was in the same boat as you.

I went to Old Saint Mary's Chinese Mission, a K-8 Catholic school. It was a mission school at that time, because they wanted to save us "pagans." They didn't charge any tuition. The curriculum was Catholic, so we learned about saints and different stories from the Catholic faith. There were no stories about Chinese people. We had one Chinese nun who was a third grade teacher there. Everything was in English and everything was a Western-style program.



ASIAN COMMUNITY CENTER ARCHIVES

The 1968-69 SF State strike not only brought young people together in political struggle demanding "Power to the People"; it also created close human and social connections among activists like the Colliers.

In fourth grade, the school inserted a half-hour of Chinese into the curriculum. It was just tacked on. We were angels in American school, but the worst kids in Chinese school! We were disruptive and didn't pay attention to the teacher. That kind of helped me later, when I became a teacher, to understand how language curriculum needs to be really infused. It can't just be tacked on, as much as the parents wanted it, and the teachers saw a need for it. It just doesn't work like that.

American school was taught by nuns. One nun really tried to teach us about the Chinese and the railroads. But again, because it was tacked on, it didn't do anything for us. We never understood. "Yeah, we built the railroads. So what?" This really helped me to understand how curriculum was much more complex than just introducing the subject.

I was always a good student. Once I got into Francisco Middle School for ninth grade, it was totally different—mostly Chinese students! But then we came face-to-face with more middle-class Chinese people. The teachers at Francisco were pretty good. But when I got to high school, that was when things changed. I went to Galileo High School. At that point, we had teachers who were mostly men. They would yell at us because we would not speak up in class.

We also had some very good literature teachers who taught us about the backgrounds of the authors, what the authors were trying to do, and the social situation of the society in which he or she lived. Those classes really helped me and developed a love of literature in me. We learned so much. But looking back, couldn't we have had one book that took place in China or in Chinatown? We had none, nothing about people of color.

By the late 1960s the whole school exploded with many immigrant Chinese students. We were the first class that elected Chinese American student body officers and a homecoming queen! We were resented by the non-Asians because Galileo was seen as the Italian school, where several generations of Italian kids' fathers and mothers had gone.

SAN FRANCISCO STATE: FINDING LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE, THE COMMUNITY, AND MALCOLM

I knew that my parents couldn't afford the tuition and the books, so I always had to work throughout high school. Tuition was about \$50, and books were \$5 each. Still, it was a lot for us, because I was only paid 75 cents an hour to work in the Chinatown curio shops. I saved up my money and paid for my own tuition because I didn't want to ask my parents to work any harder than they already were for money.

When deciding where to go for college, I thought about applying to UC Berkeley. It was very prestigious, but I still had to work, and taking public transit there was too difficult. When I came to San Francisco State College (now San Francisco State University), the first thing that I noticed was the green lawn! There were plants and flowers here, and a huge library full of books, full of knowledge. I wanted to go in there and learn everything I could learn!

My first class was Psychology. There were mostly women, but only a few Chinese kids in my class, maybe about six of us. It was an encounter group, which is what they had in those days. We had to turn to the person next to us, introduce ourselves, and to talk to them. Well, the person I sat next to was Malcolm, who later became my husband! Who would've thought that the first person you meet in your first college class is someone that you're destined to be with for the rest of your life? Fate, I suppose.

Malcolm was very nice, but I thought, "God, what an odd character he is!" I knew some white people, but had never been friends with any all through my life. I only had Chinese friends. And then suddenly this guy comes up to me, dressed oddly—wool shirt—unlike anybody else. I think he thought I was odd too, because I was dressed like a Chinatown kid. Two oddballs sitting next to each other. He was very easy to talk to—much easier than some of my

Chinese friends. And right away, because he had grown up in New Mexico speaking Spanish, he asked me, "What language do you speak at home?" He understood right away the challenges of growing up as a Chinese American!

I really loved literature because I had some very good high school teachers. But my college literature teacher was like some of my worst high school teachers. She would say, "You people all need to talk. You're bumps on a log if you don't talk, so talk." Instead of seeing a piece of literature as an expression of people's feelings and thoughts, she forced us to analyze literature, taking everything apart like a chemistry lab experiment.

I took an intro anthropology class, and who would be sitting next to me again? It was that odd guy! He plopped himself next to me and started appearing in a lot of my classes years later. Was it by accident or by design? I guess it was by design and I didn't know.

I became an anthropology major because it was one of the few classes that taught about non-white people. In my geography class, we had a very good teacher who used a relevant study of Africa. We were just yearning to learn about people from other cultures and other parts of the world. That was the only class that did it for me. History was mostly a European perspective. In my "History of Immigration" class, the professor went on and on about Europeans. When my classmate asked, "What about the Chinese?" The professor said, "The Chinese are only three percent of the national population, so they represent a very insignificant group." His teaching and most of the curriculum at SF State was just a continuation of the high school teachers that made us feel insignificant.

WORK AND ACTIVISM

In Chinatown, not only did I have to work to make money so I could go to college, but I also volunteered at the Chinatown YWCA. I tutored immigrant kids who needed help, almost every night, partly just to get out of the house to have a little bit of freedom. During the summers, I worked as a day camp counselor helping immigrant kids integrate with predominantly African American kids from the Western Addition.

I had always worked in the community as a volunteer. At that time, President Kennedy inspired many of us to go into public service with his signature phrase, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." That shows how important leaders are in setting the tone. We had a growing number of community social workers, like Alan Wong, advocating for more services for the Chinatown community.

The first year and a half at SF State, I participated in a social Chinese American student club. But I was never comfortable because I felt that there had to be more to life than just going to dances and parties.

When the Third World Liberation Front strike came along at San Francisco State in November 1968, it just spoke to me. Everything that I had wondered and cared about, everything that I was working on in the community—it all came together in the strike.

Immigration laws had changed and suddenly, we had this whole group of new people who needed services. With all the experiences of my life, of having teachers yell at us, and the way we were taught English. . . when the Black students said, "We need classes that reflected our own communities," it really spoke to me, because you could just see in our Chinatown community—we needed services.

Some of the UC Berkeley and SF State students were in the Red Guard, a radical youth organization. They really looked up to the Chinese government. It was political—Marxism. But I grew up in a communist government and saw what it was like. So, my motivation was never that. I knew what Marxism and communism were on a very practical level. My main concern

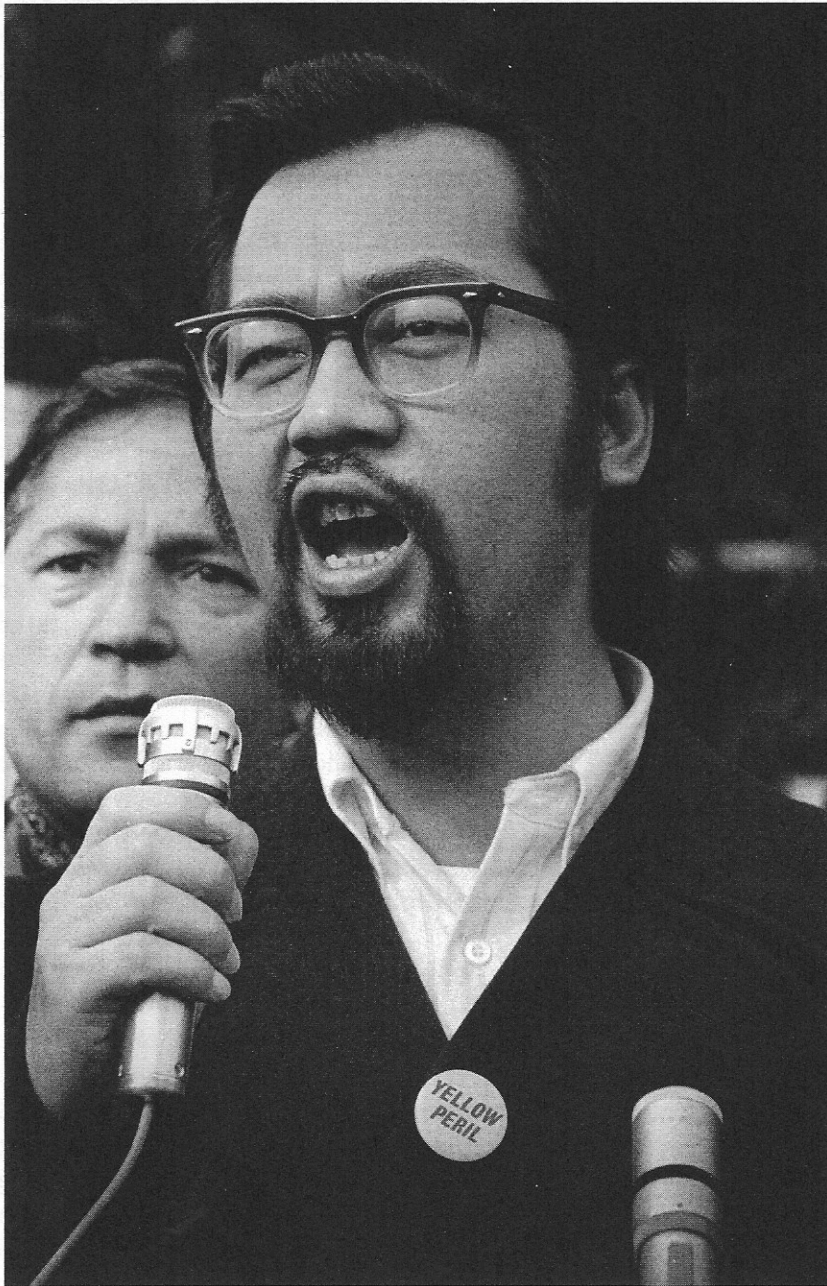


PHOTO BY NACIO JAN BROWN. 1968

George Woo speaks at a SF State strike rally. Woo was a leader of the Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action, a member organization of the Third World Liberation Front. He also served as the spokesperson for the Wah Ching, a Chinese American youth gang that advocated for better living conditions in San Francisco, particularly Chinatown. He became Chair of Asian American Studies and is now a Professor Emeritus.

was the community and the lack of services given to it.

Chinatown at the time had a budding group of young social workers—Alan Wong in particular, Buddy Choy, and Larry Jack Wong. All those people supported the strike. When they needed money for social work and organizations in the community, the students supported them, and they came out to support us. There are famous pictures of Alan walking the picket line. I have to hand it to the community people. When we were not eligible for federal funding because Chinatown was not considered a poverty area, Alan fought tooth and nail to have it included in Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. He took people to the SROs and public housing, and tours through Chinatown. But because he did those things and it appeared in the paper, his life was threatened. This was no laughing matter because people were putting their lives on the line!

We had a lot of student gangs—high school and young people; they weren't in college. They had some legitimate gripes. They were concerned about the community and angry that Chinese people were getting no services. But they were also involved in some illegal activities, too. George Woo was asked to be their spokesperson because they didn't feel that their English was good enough. George was not a member of the gang but was always labeled as one. He was very bilingual and could present their viewpoints in English and Chinese. That was very courageous of him to do that, so I'm sure he took some heat for many, many years after that.

As George always said, "The line between legitimate and illegitimate business is very thin." A lot of the legitimate businesses were also operating illegitimate businesses and the gangs would sometimes be the lookouts. There was money passing back and forth all the time.

During the strike, I participated by not going to class, and went to the demonstrations instead. I was never really active in the ICSA (Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action), or Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), because by then, Malcolm and I had become involved and it was difficult for me. At that time, ethnic consciousness and concerns about your own community were so strong. In some ways, it was very ethnocentric. Our relationship was not seen as totally on the up-and-up. It was also hard because both of us participated in the strike and were committed to the principles of it. I did support ICSA though by tutoring for their program while I remained active in the community.

GENDER ROLES AND FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Gender roles during the strike were very sharply defined. ICSA leader Mason Wong was very charismatic, and a leader, because he could get along with people. Among the women like Laureen Chew and Dorothy Yee, Laureen was very flamboyant. But at that time, she didn't perceive herself as a leader. Yet she became a leader as a result of the strike. It helped develop her. It changed us. The women's movement was just kind of starting, but we saw it nationally as a white women's movement. It really didn't seem to touch us. At home, we knew who made the decisions—our mothers did. But publicly, it was always the men. In our organizations, the men did the public work. But the women—Laureen and Dorothy—were pretty strong too. Laureen participated in disrupting classes, which I never had the nerve to do. That's the way it was.

The Black Student Union (BSU) was the first group that disrupted classes and made demands of the university. It was very powerful to see a group of people demanding classes about themselves. This expanded into the Third World Liberation Front, which was not an organization but coalition of many different ethnic groups. The BSU had a list of ten demands which were on the news all the time. The TWLF grew out of that and the spokesman was Ron Quidachay, who later became a judge in San Francisco.

Mason and a couple of the men did a lot of negotiating and working with the other TWLF groups. I guess the TWLF was kind of sexist because the women handled the community end, while the men handled the campus groups. But we didn't see it as sexism in those days. Our moms were very strong women—my mother, Lauren's mother, Dorothy's mother. They ran the family. It was always like that. The dads would ask, and the moms would respond with their opinions. And mom's opinion ultimately was the family decision.

It kind of was like that in ICSA too. The men wouldn't always ask, but whenever they did, they respected our opinions. On the surface, it looked very sexist, because the men were out in front. We, the women, were out in front in the community. So I think sexism isn't really the right construct for us. Even sexism within the Chinese family—people always see it as Black and white, but it's always the yin and yang, where the struggles are always shifting all the time. Sometimes you're on top. Sometimes you're on the bottom. Each yin has a yang, and each yang has a yin. Both of them form a complete body. That's what it was. It wasn't two opposing segments just butting heads all the time. It was more fluid.

My parents and my family didn't really know about my involvement in the strike. They knew I was tutoring and going out every day, but they didn't know I wasn't going to class, that I was walking the picket line. My dad could speak some English, but my mom spoke none. She never learned. When they found out about my involvement after the Strike had ended, they hit the roof! They were mad! I received several F's that year because I did not go to class. They said, "Don't do that again!" Lauren's mom knew. Lauren was very open with her mother, who was very upset when Lauren got arrested. And Dorothy's mother knew. But I think Dorothy's mother was a little bit more knowledgeable about the ways of this country. My mother was a village girl—no clue.

ESTABLISHING ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES

The Strike was very suddenly settled after the professors got involved. It would've been over much more quickly and we would've gotten a lot less, or maybe nothing, if the professors hadn't stepped in and said, "We're going to go on strike too—because we want a raise!" It was them taking advantage of the situation.

People usually don't understand how those first Asian American Studies (AAS) classes were formed. They were brilliant, and ICSA leader and later, AAS faculty member, George Woo, must have had a hand in it. There were history, community, identity, and literature classes. There were also Cantonese classes, which ate up a lot of time. All of us wanted these classes to prepare us to go back into the community as teachers, social workers and community leaders. That was the original intent of AAS.

Asian American Studies also offered an unusual class on Chinese art. It was not Chinese art just for art's sake. It was Chinese art to get at the underlying assumptions and influences in the way that we were thinking, and the way that we approached problem solving. The first group of teachers included Him Mark Lai, Phil Choy, Jeff Chan, and Bill Woo. The whole thrust of AAS at that time was to develop people who would go back to the community to address the issues of poverty, which was different from the other schools with ethnic studies. Berkeley was much more focused on a global phenomenon and more Marxist in nature. Ours was never that. It was to give us enough knowledge so we could function as good leaders in the community.

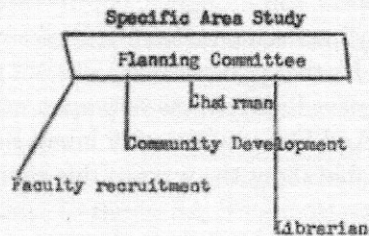
But many of us were already in the community. I took a class from Phil Choy who suddenly started talking about things that my parents were always kind of talking about. My dad had come as a young kid through Angel Island. He was imprisoned there. He always talked about the "Wooden House." I had no idea what it was until Phil Choy brought it out into the open.

SCHOOL OF THIRD WORLD STUDIES

Structure, organization and personnel for planning the School of Third World Studies.

The planning committee for the school is orientated toward developing the school from a Third World perspective; meaning organizationally the division of the planning committee into three major areas. The areas are as follows: Black Area Studies, Native American Area Studies, and Asian American Area Studies. The division of specific area studies within the major areas occurs on the basis of ethnic origin. In other words, within the general area of a total Third World race; African, Native of Asian, the area study of Filipino peoples is to develop within the division of Asian area studies.

Each of the Organizations in TWLF will have a planning committee involved in developing the specifics for their area study. The organization of each planning committee is as follows:



THE ETHNIC STUDIES PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

I. Committee Chairman

A. Curriculum Development: The assistant in charge of curriculum development is responsible for action leading to the creation and development of courses most pertinent to the goals of the department. Basically, this assistant must function in the processes of:

1. Course foundation: the description, evaluation and explanation of chosen curriculum
2. The transition: the establishment of a method of inter-relationship curriculum and the reservation of allowances for experimentation
3. Growth: the process of academic objectives as defined by departmental goals.

II. Assistant for research development and librarian

The responsibilities of the assistant for research development include:

1. The intense survey for and conscientious accumulation of data that relate to the general functions of the department.
 - a. literature (e.g. texts, books, periodicals, etc.)
 - b. all other possible sources of material for further development of department in cooperation with other assistants within the department.
2. The refinement of such general data into particular information concerning specific areas of study. (i.e. behavioral sciences into sociology, psychology, history)
3. The evaluation of materials by:
 - a. the determination of the validity of obtained research information

COURTESY OF THE SF STATE STRIKE COLLECTION, SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

In the aftermath of the strike on March 21, 1969, SF State students and faculty began the process of planning and designing Asian American Studies courses, recruiting faculty and staff, and ensuring a democratic structure of decision-making.

You couldn't come into the U.S. unless you were interrogated, and could also be sent back to China. He talked about all these restrictive covenants, taxes, and discriminatory laws that were passed.

One of the first Asian American Studies classes was taught by the first Dean of the School of Ethnic Studies, Jim Hirabayashi. All the students from the activist groups were in that class. Malcolm signed up it, and of course, that created a lot of controversy. A lot of people did not want him there. A lot of people were thinking, "This is an ethnic movement. Why are we having a white person here?" Jim knew Malcolm and his family, because he was an anthropologist and had worked with Malcolm's father, who also was an anthropologist. George Woo, PACE leader and AAS professor Dan Gonzales, and Jim Hirabayashi all accepted and advocated for Malcolm, who eventually became a very important and respected member of what became the AAS Planning Group. This group created the early AAS curriculum and courses like the "Nine Unit Block" that allowed students to receive academic credit for applying classroom knowledge to active involvement in community organizations and struggles.

NINE UNIT BLOCK AND BUILDING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

I was the secretary of the Nine Unit Block. George Woo was the director, but we had to have a tenured faculty member from another department be the official one. The Nine Unit Block was an attempt in those days to fast-track people through the college, and to have people from other departments co-teach classes with Asian American Studies. Students would get nine units of credit and meet once or twice a week. We had people from Social Work, Geography, and Psychology each teaching. The students were expected to work in their respective communities for over twenty hours a week. There was a Chinese section, a Filipino section, and a Japanese American section, each directly involved with creating leaders for our communities. It was one of the most successful programs and fulfilled the dream of Ethnic Studies—developing leaders. Out of that, we had: Gordon Chin, who later built the Chinatown Community Development Center and contributed greatly to San Francisco's affordable housing issues citywide; Jeff Mori in the Japanese American community; Ed de la Cruz, founder of West Bay Pilipino Community Multi-Service Center; and Fred Lau, who later became San Francisco's police chief.

Everybody worked in the community to develop nascent community organizations.

I can't even mention how many community leaders came out of the Nine Unit Block.

Even though it only lasted for two years, it was just enough time to get those people their bachelor's degrees. After that, they went directly into the community—most of them. And we're very proud of that.

THE ASSOCIATION OF CHINESE TEACHERS

The Association of Chinese Teachers (TACT) was founded in 1969 by people like Ruby Hong and other educators. The mainstream educational approach to teaching children was to use "sink or swim" English teaching methods. You just plop them into the classroom and they had to learn how to survive. I knew as an immigrant that that was the worst way to teach a child. You received punishment for speaking Chinese and weren't encouraged to use your language in any way. Schools were beginning to start supporting English as a Second Language (ESL) and later on, they thought, bilingual education was even better. But there was great resistance to ESL techniques—to pull out a child or to integrate exercises for immigrant kids.

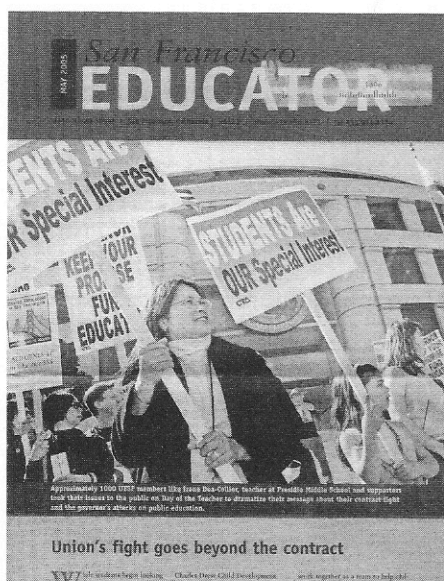
TACT was founded on the premise that the Chinese were not being included in the educational policy process. It became an advocacy organization for some of our young teachers. The way I got involved was the same way everyone gets involved: somebody asked me, "Do you have a few minutes to spare? Come to a meeting!" And that's what I did. I went to meetings and they said, "We need a treasurer. Just keep track of the money coming in." I agreed. Later on, they asked me to become secretary, and then president. At that time, I had two kids and said, "I will only become president if you take my children for one day, so I can spend some time with my husband!"

THE BILINGUAL SCHOOL MOVEMENT

I was second director of the bilingual Wah Mei School. A lot of our community leaders felt that the school district wasn't going to meet the needs of our students, so we started our own school in 1974. We became a preschool because of the growing need for childcare. Women were joining the workforce and needed more care for their children. Wah Mei was only a half-day program. Parent leaders wanted to start it for their own children who weren't being exposed to anything ethnic. Built into the description of the directorship was a require-

ment to be an advocate. So I did a lot of advocacy for bilingual education and children's rights.

We had a state-funded preschool program because income levels were very low. Wah Mei could have made a lot more money and bought its own site if we got rid of that program. The director had to spend ninety percent of their time dealing with reporting requirements, site requirements, and food requirements. People thought, "Why don't we just get rid of that program and just have private kids? We could make a lot more money." But I fought very hard against that idea. We needed to be a mixed-income school, so I expanded the program. I got a full-time daycare and childcare program. I wrote a proposal and we received an additional \$80,000 per year and started the full-day program. Again, it was low-income. We added the private kids later and they just integrated with the low-income kids. For a mix of children's language learning abilities, mixed-income was better.



UNITED EDUCATORS OF SAN FRANCISCO

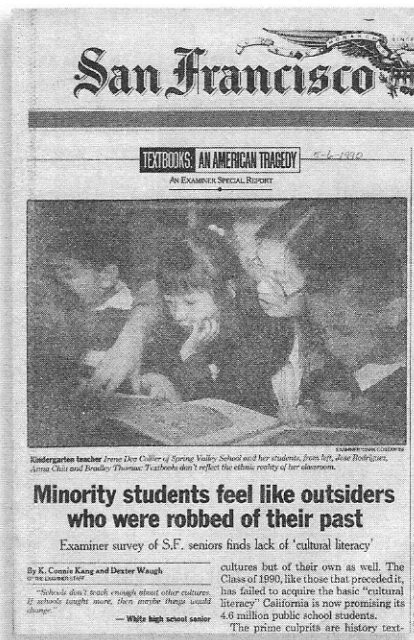
Dea Collier was active not only in Chinese and Asian American community groups but also her union, United Educators of San Francisco.

As TACT president and director of Wah Mei, I was involved in creating and advocating for the first Chinese Immersion Program, a bilingual school. I sat on the original committee and we did a lot of work lobbying the school board, getting parents to speak at school board meetings, and drawing up the plans. I also sat on the hiring committee of that program. We got it through the school board. But once we got the program approved in principle, we had to worry about the philosophy of it. I was only there for the groundwork during the very early days. The first set of teachers always dropped in at Wah Mei whenever they needed some encouragement.

When I became TACT president, we fought with some school board members who wanted to disband the San Francisco [Unified] School District's bilingual program. Former Chinese

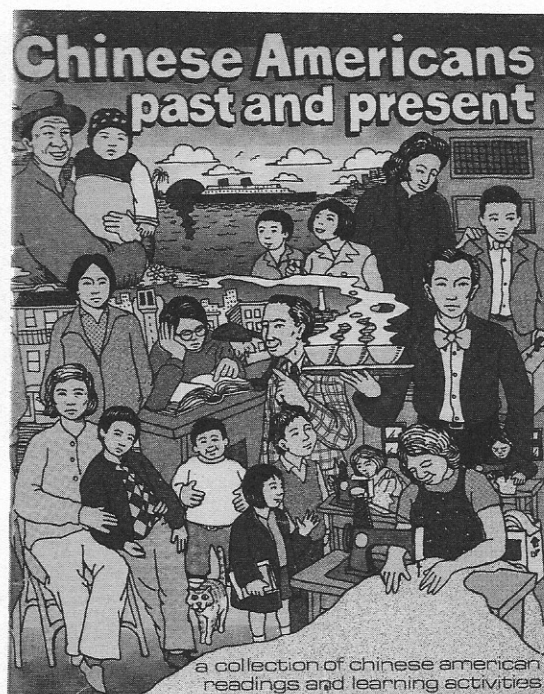
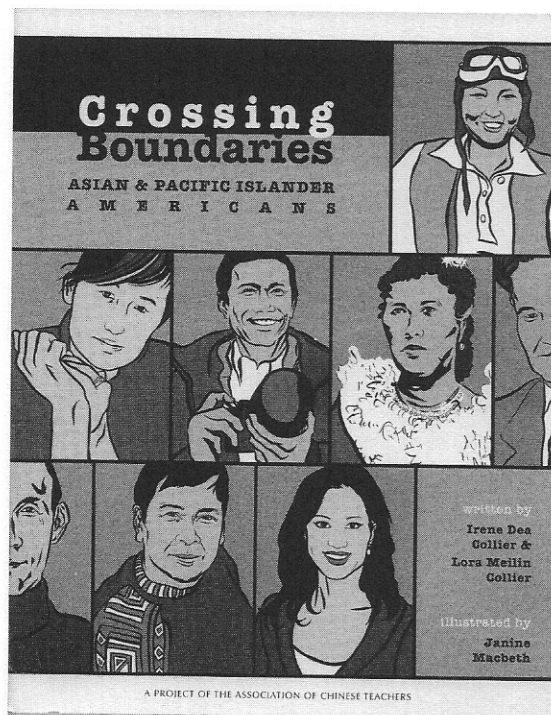


PHOTOS COURTESY OF MALCOLM COLLIER



Above, Irene Dea Collier speaking on Asian images in children's books in 2016.

Below: As the director of Wah Mei School and leader in the Association of Chinese Teachers (TACT), Irene Dea Collier led community campaigns for bilingual education and educational rights.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF IRENE DEA COLLIER

Irene Dea Collier worked with other educators, including her daughter Lora Meilin Collier, and the Association of Chinese Teachers to produce relevant curriculum materials for teachers, community groups, and school districts.

for Affirmative Action director Henry Der and I were always speaking out at school board meetings, talking about the need to include a Chinese American curriculum. I had already written *Chinese Americans Past and Present* (1977) with Don Wong; a set of short stories about the history of Chinese Americans in the United States. The act of speaking out at the school board meetings got so bad that they called us the "Chinese mafia." They were not used to seeing Chinese people speaking out.

ETHNIC STUDIES CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

I worked hard to develop a lot of curriculum, and that's what I'm still doing today. It's so depressing to hear about racism and oppression. We needed stories for kids to show them how Asian Americans fought racism and oppression.

I wrote *Crossing Boundaries: Tools for Teaching APIA Histories* (2010) with my daughter, Lora, for fifth to eighth graders. Jim Hirabayashi is one of the people that we chose to feature because he was the one who shepherded the School of Ethnic Studies. Nobody expected the School to survive more than three years. Jim didn't let that happen. Everyone thought we would self-destruct and never follow any of the college guidelines for maintaining classes like course outlines, reading lists, getting grades done on time. People like Jeff Chan and Dan Gonzales had to write them for other Ethnic Studies departments. They went to the library to research the information so that they could turn in a credible college outline and reading list.

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They spent a lot of time at the library reading these horrible texts. At that time, there weren't that many resources. In support of the strike, they did the hard work to develop the Asian American and ethnic studies curricula.

Walking the picket line and disrupting classes may seem very glamorous when they write stories or make films about the strike. That is the part that they focus on. What nobody writes about or understands is the development of curriculum: all the hours spent in the library, all the hours trying to meet the requirements of the college. A lot of people put in a lot of time, going over and above, for our department and others as well, so that Asian American and Ethnic Studies could survive. Jim had to go around and sweet talk everyone. It just wore on him.

I also have to give a shout-out to people like AAPA (Asian American Political Alliance) member and AAS staff Betty Matsuoka, who willingly typed up everything and did so with a smile. She did a lot of work for the faculty and never complained. That's commitment. All these people worked hard so that the Ethnic Studies, now the College of Ethnic Studies, could survive. Those first three years were rough.

LESSONS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The strike is not yet over. It's still ongoing. We continue to do this work. We're still fighting the fight. We're still trying to figure out how to do this. And fifty years later, we're still doing this.

In some ways, we've lost our focus in Asian American studies. It has become a program of Ph.D.s instead of its original focus on educating and training working community activists. There are scholarly works available now, but there is a great de-emphasis in preparing students to go back into the community. I hope that AAS is preparing students to think about helping the community in whatever way they can, no matter what their profession is.

I'm really disappointed however that we're not pushing more students towards social service occupations and getting them more involved in the community as part of their coursework. Some AAS faculty seem to care more about footnotes than they do about the community.

In the past fifty years, we've had Asian American mayors, police chiefs, people in elected offices—things have changed somewhat. But we need more. We need more people to help out in the community. The original purpose of ethnic studies for me was to serve as a conduit to serve the community, and I hope that will be the case over the next fifty years.