

English with an Accent

**Language, ideology, and
discrimination in the United States**

Second Edition

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The unassimilable races

What it means to be Asian

There are lots of issues that Asian Americans share, . . . one being the immigrant experience, being relatively recent immigrant arrivals. And Asians also suffer from a perpetual-foreigner syndrome, meaning that you could be a fourth- or fifth-generation Asian American but still somehow it's difficult to believe that you're an American. I get that: First they compliment me on my ability to speak English, and often I get asked, "Well, where are you from?" and for some reason people refuse to take Flushing for an answer.

John Lui, attributed

Institutionalized aggression

Formal, institutionalized policies that target Asian populations have a long history in the U.S., something that we tend to forget. A short overview:

- 1790 Congress decrees that "any alien, being a free white person who shall have resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for a term of two years, may be admitted to become a citizen thereof." The "free white person" element was retained until "persons of African descent" was added in 1873. Cargile (2010) notes that while this was a major civil rights victory, it also alienated Latinos and Asians: "their status as 'outsiders' was now firmly fixed in a society only able to see in black and white" (ibid.: 60).
- 1882 President Garfield vetoes the Chinese Exclusion Act; Congress rallies a three-quarter majority to override the veto so that Chinese are not allowed to immigrate.
- 1885 Anglo miners riot against Chinese workers. Twenty-eight Chinese¹ laborers are killed in the riots.
- 1905 Anti-Japanese rhetoric escalates. Newspapers fuel this panic, and the Asiatic Exclusion League is formed in San Francisco.
- 1922 The Cable Act revokes the U.S. citizenship of any woman who marries an Asian.
- 1923 A Japanese immigrant challenges the Exclusion Act so that he might become a naturalized citizen (*Takao Ozawa v. United States*), and the Supreme Court rules that the Japanese – and all other Asians – are *unassimilable races* and thereby ineligible. A few months later the Supreme Court rules that while Bhagat Singh Thind, a native of Punjab, is Caucasian, he is not white. In accordance with the Congressional Act of 1790, this means Thind cannot

apply for American citizenship, and further, all natives of India who were naturalized citizens at the time were stripped of that status.

1933 *Time Magazine* runs a story with the headline *Again: Yellow Peril*:

Japan has driven a strategic wedge of Japanese dominion between the two American island possessions, the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands . . . Japan's purpose is obviously to absorb both of these American possessions . . . The Philippines we are helping the Japanese to acquire through our political corruption and stupidity.

1942 A few months after the Japanese military attacks Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, which allows military authorities to take whatever action they deem necessary to contain Asian presence. There is no right to a trial or representation. The end result is the removal of Japanese Americans to internment camps.

1964 The California Initiative allowing landlords to discriminate passes with 65 percent of the vote. At that point, a property owner could refuse to lease, rent or sell housing or property on the basis of race, ethnicity, or anything else he or she cared to name.

As laws and protections have evolved, overt discriminatory acts have diminished. Of course this does not mean the end of anti-Asian sentiment or action. In earlier chapters we saw that Asians are discriminated against in the workplace, in the courts and in education, and that this is true for new immigrants who speak English as a second language, for U.S. citizens who speak Hawai'i Creole, and even for those of Asian origin who are monolingual English speakers and have no foreign accent at all.



Half the world

While immigrants from Asia were once largely Japanese and Chinese, that is no longer the case. By the time of the 2000 census, there were six large Asian groups in the U.S. (Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese) that together made up 88 percent of the whole (Park 2008: 543). These six nations are both internally and externally diverse in terms of culture, politics, religion, and language. Most non-Asians are unaware of this level of complexity.

It is useful to note that taken together, the eight most populous Asian nations are home to about 3.5 billion persons, or about half of the world's population.²

Despite all this, the U.S. government has only one term that lumps all of these nations, ethnicities, cultures and languages from the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent together: Asian (Table 15.1).

While it may be an unreasonable burden on the U.S. Census Bureau to take note of each and every world language spoken in the U.S., the great disparity in the level of detail we employ to characterize the world's populations bears some consideration. *Asian* is not a comfortable term for many of the people we assign it to. For example, when asked about the place of India in Asia, one person of Southeast Asian heritage was hesitant:

That's a tough one because [when] I hear the term Asian American I consider them [Asian Indians] as separate, not Asian. I know India is located [in] Asia but then I always thought of it as separate . . . because to me it seems different.

(Park 2008)

Table 15.1 Asian household population by detailed group, 2004

<i>Total Asian population</i>	<i>12,097,281</i>
Chinese, (excluding) Taiwanese	2,829,627
Asian Indian	2,245,239
Filipino	2,148,227
Vietnamese	1,267,510
Korean	1,251,092
Japanese	832,039
Other Asian	250,666
Laotian	226,661
Pakistani	208,852
Cambodian	195,208
Hmong	163,733
Other Asian, not specified	140,571
Thai	130,548
Taiwanese	70,771
Indonesian	52,267
Bangladeshi	50,473
Sri Lankan	22,339
Malaysian	11,458

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

Most non-Asians show little curiosity or even basic knowledge about the world outside the U.S. I would suggest that this is due, in large part, to the fact that geography instruction has almost disappeared from school system curricula. The National Geographic Society, concerned about this trend, hired Roper Public Affairs to conduct a study (2006) to ascertain the depths of the problem. In the resulting report, it was established that even politicians – the very people responsible for maintaining international relations – are likely to get basic facts wrong.³ The situation is far worse for young adults. In their sample:

- 86 percent could not identify four countries in the Middle East on a map.
- 69 percent could not pick out China on a map of Asia (Figure 15.1).
- 65 percent could not locate the United Kingdom on a map.
- 50 percent could not pinpoint New York State on a map of the U.S.

One item on the poll is of particular interest here. When asked “Which language is spoken by the most people in the world as their primary language?” 74 percent answered English; only 18 percent gave the correct answer (Mandarin Chinese). The Roper Report suggests that there is a connection between the general false belief in the primacy of English and the fact that 62 percent of our young adults do not speak any foreign language (*ibid.*: 33).

This general lack of knowledge about the world could be attributed to the gap in the curriculum, but then we must ask ourselves how this gap came to be. In times of budgetary shortfalls, the programs that get cut are the ones we feel we can do without. While talk of diversity and a wider world, global perspective is popular, in practice, ethnocentrism is well established on the individual and institutional level (Kinder and Kam 2009). Language plays a central role in the structuring of these hierarchies:

Underlying the intersection of language and race is a language ideology that we call the ideology of nativeness, an Us-versus-Them division of the linguistic world in which native and nonnative speakers of a language are thought to be mutually



Figure 15.1 Asia

exclusive, uncontested, identifiable groups. At the core of this ideological model is a view of the world's speech communities as naturally monolingual and monocultural, whereby one language is semiotically associated with one nation.

(Shuck 2006)

More specifically, Devos and Banaji (2005) conducted a series of six quantitative studies to answer a straightforward question: "Do people differentiate between ethnic groups within the concept of 'American'?" The data gave them a simple answer: "To be American is to be White" (ibid.: 463). The college students who participated in the study were unambiguous in their view of the relationship between race and belonging. Even when an individual subscribes to the belief that all races and ethnicities are entitled to equal human rights and liberties, there is still "an exceptionally large effect demonstrating, at least among White American students, a strong automatic association between American and White compared with American and Asian" (ibid.: 452–453).

There is a large body of scholarly work that has examined the complicated way Asians are perceived – and how they perceive themselves as residents and citizens of the U.S. Some of the findings include:



- Native English speakers are not good at identifying Asian accents on the basis of voice alone (Lindemann 2002, 2005); however, many people believe that they are, in fact, quite capable of distinguishing, for example, Japanese from Chinese, or India from Pakistan.⁴ In a situation where the speakers see each other, the non-Asian will sometimes hear a foreign accent that is not there, a phenomenon called accent hallucination (Atagi 2003; Fought 2006; Rubin 1992; Rubin and Smith 1990).
- The communicative burden is usually divided unequally, the brunt of this responsibility resting on the non-native English speaker; however, it is possible to ameliorate this tendency, though few take the time and trouble to do so (Derwing *et al.* 2002).
- Native English speakers are willing to judge Asian learners of English – their intelligence, friendliness, work ethic and many other complex personality traits – on the basis of very little information – as long as there is no ambiguity about race. That is, race sometimes has more of an effect than actual English language skills when such judgments are made (Barry and Grilo 2003; Devos and Banaji 2005).
- Negative attitudes about Asians, whether they are conscious or not, can make successful communication difficult or impossible (Cargile 2010; Cheryan and Monin 2005; Lindemann 2002, 2003, 2005). Asians are still seen – and may always be seen – as the Other, and not authentic Americans (Park 2008; Pyke and Dang 2003; Rosenbloom and Way 2004; Volpp 2001; Wang 2008; Yoo *et al.* 2009).

Microaggressive behaviors which may seem simply rude or uninformed are rampant and contribute to an overall atmosphere of other-ness. Examples: “All Asians look alike,” “I used to have a Japanese neighbor” (Sue *et al.* 2007). It must be clear to anyone familiar with the way language subordination works that the history of institutionalized discrimination against Asians has had a broad and negative impact on self-image and self-confidence (Cargile 2010; Cheryan and Bodenhausen 2000; Cheryan and Monin 2005; Goyette and Xie 1999; Kawai 2005; Park 2008; Pyke and Dang 2003; Rim 2009; Sue *et al.* 2007; Tamura 1994; Tsai *et al.* 2002; Wu 2002).

Stereotypes

The evidence establishes that the concept *Asian* evokes an association not with a specific nation or geographical region, but with race. In the general view of things, anyone with a particular bone structure and skin color will count as Asian. Take, for example, the way Asian stereotypes are used in entertainment film as a kind of shorthand, as in the 1993 film *Falling Down*:

The proprietor, a middle-aged ASIAN, reads a Korean newspaper . . . the Asian has a heavy accent . . .

D-FENS: . . . You give me seventy “fie” cents back for the phone . . . What is a fie? There’s a “V” in the word. Fie-vuh. Don’t they have “v”s in China?

ASIAN: Not Chinese, I am Korean.

D-FENS: Whatever. What differences does that make? You come over here and take my money and you don’t even have the grace to learn to speak my language . . . (1993: 7–8)

D-Fens, the white-collar worker on the edge of his sanity does not distinguish between Chinese and Korean; that is not important to him. The Korean has committed three sins

in D-Fens's eyes: he has "come over here" and having immigrated, he "takes my money" by establishing himself in a social position in which he has economic capital and goods to dispense. These sins are compounded by the fact that the shop owner "doesn't have the grace to learn to speak my language."

Of course, the claims are erroneous: the shop owner does speak English. He speaks English well enough to get into a rousing argument with the customer, to assert his rights as owner of the shop, and to ask the customer to leave. But, crucially, he does not speak English to the customer's satisfaction, because he speaks English with an Asian accent. Here we are reminded of Heath's characterization of situations in which non-native speakers of English gain social or economic currency: "their language has become a focus for arguments in favor of both restrictions of their use and imposition of Standard American English" (Heath *et al.* 1981: 10).

Non-native English-speaking Asian Americans, as a large and diverse group, experience something in common, regardless of their economic status, education, or national origin: there is a special stigma attached to their presence which is externalized in reactions to the way they speak English. So conditioned are we to expect a different world view, a different accent, that we hear one where none is present. Individuals experience this regularly.

A young woman of Asian Indian heritage, but a native and monolingual speaker of English, relates a story in which a middle-aged man in a music store is unable to help her when she asks for a recently released Depeche Mode tape (Kapoor 1993). "You'll have to speak slower because I didn't understand you because of your accent," he tells her. She is understandably hurt and outraged: "I have no discernible accent. I do, however, have long dark hair and pleasantly colored brown skin. I suppose this outward appearance of mine constitutes enough evidence to conclude I had, indeed, just jumped off the boat and into the store."

The pain of this experience is real whether or not a foreign accent is present. In this case, the harm was real, but without repercussions which affected the young woman in a material way. Others are less fortunate:

In February 1992, at the Department of the Treasury building on Main Street in San Francisco, a Treasury official called down to the lobby with a question. Irritated by the quality of response that he or she received, this official made a formal complaint of "communication difficulties" based on Filipino accent. He or she did not provide the name of the security guard responsible for the poor service. Subsequent to this report, the General Services Authority directed the subcontractor who supplied the security guards to *remove all five Filipino agents who had been on duty that evening*, due to "language barriers" (Cacas 1994). The men removed from their positions were not given regular employment at another site, but were used as fill-ins on a variety of assignments, which caused them significant financial and other problems.

This kind of treatment is not unusual, but the reaction of the men in question was quite remarkable. As a group, they sued their employer under Title VII, in order to restore their honor and dignity. For Filipino Americans, the charge of insufficient or inadequate English is especially stinging, as English is one of the primary languages of education in their homeland, where in the 1975 census more than 15,000 claimed it as a first language and almost half a million listed it as a second language in 1980 (Lewis 2009). The five men in question had lived in the U.S. for most of their lives, and their public comments on the case left no doubt that the harm was as much emotional as economic: "It was a slap to my face," "It deeply hurt my feelings" (Ancheta 2006; Doyle 1994; Tiongson *et al.* 2006).



In fact, the attorneys for the security guards established that they were qualified and experienced workers, with between three and nine years on the job without any complaints about their language abilities. The Filipino security guards won their lawsuit, but a question was never raised: how was it that an anonymous official could bring about the removal of five men with solid work histories, solely on the basis of an unsubstantiated claim of an irritating and distracting accent? If the guards in question had been Italian or Norwegian speakers, would the same progression of events be imaginable?

Our relationship to the Far East and Pacific is shaped to a great degree by the facts of nineteenth-century colonialism, in which the U.S., young in comparative terms, followed the European model in targeting smaller nations to dominate – politically, economically and socially. We have a history of dealing with the Asian world as a warehouse of persons and goods available to suit our own purpose and fill our own needs, a practice rationalized by the supposition that those people are inherently weaker.

In order for such rationalizations to work, Asians must be seen as manipulative, with a tendency to use natural wiles and treachery to achieve their own ends. This kind of thinking provides a way to justify aggression. Thus a prominent Asian stereotype is of an intelligent, clever, but crafty and unreliable person. A secondary stereotype grows out of the mystification of Asia, the mysterious Orient where hard-working but simple people ply their crafts and study arcane philosophies, attaining wisdom and a spirituality specific to their race. We are uncomfortable with Asians unless they correspond to the stereotypes we have created for them.

There was a great deal of affection for Charlie Chan, the wise Chinese detective employed by the Honolulu Police Department (played first by the Swedish-born Warner Oland and then by Sidney Toler, both in “yellowface”), who dispensed calm fortune-cookie wisdom and always solved the crime. His sons, played by Keye Luke, Victor Sen Yung (both native Chinese) provided the comic foil. As Americanized second-generation types, they played the gap between expectation and reality for all it was worth. While the actors portraying Charlie Chan contrived Chinese accents, the sons (both of whom came to the U.S. as very small children) spoke English as a primary language and with a markedly urban discourse style (“Pop!”). In a similar way, the 1937 film of Pearl S. Buck’s *The Good Earth* also used white actors to play the leads, to the satisfaction of reviewers who found that the main character met (stereotypical) expectations: “Physically, Muni becomes satisfactorily celestial, imbued with racial characteristics” (*Variety*, January 29, 1937).

Female Asian stereotypes focus on submissiveness, beauty, a need for strong male direction and a talent for tragedy (the opera *Madam Butterfly* is perhaps the ultimate example of this stereotype). While Asian male stereotypes have evolved (over-achieving in education and business, whether the business be a greengrocer’s or computer chip research and development), female images seem to be more persistent.

The stereotypes in film linger, but there are other stereotypes that have evolved since World War II that are far more restrictive and damaging on a day-to-day basis. The most prevalent and deeply rooted Asian stereotype of all is encapsulated in a series of questions and statements often directed to Asians (Cargile 2010; Cheryan and Bodenhausen 2000; Kawai 2005; Le 2010; Lee 1994):

Where are you from?

Where are you REALLY from?

But you speak English so well!



Scholars and analysts see this as a symptom of a larger problem, often referred to as the *perpetual foreigner syndrome*: "We are figuratively and even literally returned to Asia and rejected from America" (Wu 2002: 79). Wu is affronted by such casually racist and condescending remarks which imply "that I am not one of 'us' but one of 'them' . . . I am a visitor at best, an intruder at worst" (ibid.: 80).

Our discomfort with those Asians we see as unable or unwilling to assimilate into Anglo society is balanced out and made tolerable by the contrasting stereotype, those model Asians who are unobtrusive and well behaved in their other-ness, who assimilate to the point that we can overlook (or at least, claim to overlook) issues of race and physical characteristics and language.

Today the model minority is the "most influential and prevalent stereotype for Asian Americans" (Kawai 2005: 109). The concept was first articulated in print in a 1966 *New York Times Magazine* story ("Success Story, Japanese Style") and later in the same year, a "Success Story of One Minority in U.S." about Chinese Americans (*U.S. News and World Report*). In both cases the immigrant group in question (Japanese, Chinese) were provided as examples of good immigrants, who obeyed the laws, respected the government's authority, put great value on family ties and responsibilities, pursued education and believed in hard work as the primary route to success. The two articles celebrated Japanese and Chinese Americans as the model minority groups who had close family ties, were extremely serious about education, and were law-abiding (Kawai 2003; Park 2008b). Asian American had come to mean "exhibiting cultural values that are conducive to socio-economic success" (Park 2008: 552).

More than forty years later, the condescending tone of these pronouncements published in the early 1960s is hard to overlook. In the jargon of the Transactional Analysis movement of the 1960s, this would be called a "cold fuzzy," or something that sounds at first like a compliment but is decidedly less (as in "you look great – for your age"). Another negative aspect of the model minority stereotype is the implied juxtaposition of *good* (Japanese or Chinese) with *bad* (all other minority and/or immigrant groups). In the late twentieth century, both those who supported affirmative action and those who opposed it drew on the Asian-as-model-minority stereotype that set up a competition between Asians, African Americans, and Latinos/as (McGowan and Lindgren 2006).

In his interviews with Asian American students, Park found that an individual can identify with the term "model minority" while still chaffing under its restrictions:

Asian Americans cannot perform as "normal" students, cannot be countercultural, contentious, unconventional, or lead an independent lifestyle. The ramifications are not that the image itself is threatened but that the individual is somehow less authentically Asian American if he or she diverges from it. It is an identity imposed by others and places considerable constraints not only in the area of study one selects but the very trajectory of one's work and contribution to society.

(Park 2008: 552–553)

Anglos often deny or minimize the negative effect of Asian stereotypes. This becomes clear if discriminatory behavior toward Asians is compared to other stigmatized groups. For example, on a website where theater professionals discuss their work, someone posts a question:

Topic: Caucasian to Asian makeup tips? . . . Working on a production of "Thoroughly Modern Millie" where we have Caucasian actors playing Bun Foo and Ching Ho . . .

as far as makeup, we want it to look as authentic as possible, while exaggerating it enough for an extremely large venue. Any tips or ideas? Anyone have photo examples?

The following hypothetical comparison paragraph is my composition:

Caucasian to African American makeup tips? Working on a production of "Show Boat" where we have Caucasian actors playing African American stevedore Joe and his wife Queenie . . . as far as makeup, we want it to look as authentic as possible, while exaggerating it enough for an extremely large venue. Any tips or ideas? Anyone have photo examples?

The wording here is not overtly racist, but its offhand, casual tone is almost as disturbing as slurs heard more commonly. It doesn't occur to the writer that there might be some problem with *yellowface* (as discussed earlier in connection with film representations of Asians).⁵

Blackface was a theatrical practice in the late 1800s and into the twentieth century when Anglos performing in minstrel shows and vaudeville would appear as African American caricatures. To do this they used burnt cork or black greasepaint to change white faces to black faces. There were also actors who painted broad red lips around their mouths, outside the borders of their own lips. Later the red paint was dropped, but the space remained either flesh-colored or painted white. Some of the most persistent and virulent African American stereotypes originated with Blackface performances. It is not hard to understand that today any theater person suggesting that an Anglo play an African American – and wear makeup as part of that costume – would meet with tremendous, nationwide backlash. It is hard to imagine anyone so uninformed that they would raise the possibility of Blackface in a current day, non-satirical production in a public forum.

Yet here a number of people responded to a question about yellow face with suggestions that included using tape on the eyelids and heavy eye liner. In the first half of the discussion, very few responses addressed the racist underpinnings of the question, and those few comments ("If we ignore the history behind 'black face', why is 'Asian face' less offensive?" "Come back next year when you do Ragtime and need help turning white people black!" (ibid.)) are not responded to directly by the original writer until this exchange:

This thread's unbelievably racist. How about just have the actors AS THEY ARE. When non-Caucasian actors are cast in traditionally white roles they don't get made up as white. Don't you grasp what it is you're actually suggesting? Creepy.

To which the original writer responds: "You obviously failed to read my post."

At a later point the thread turns to a more thoughtful discussion of race and ethnicity in casting. This is just one of hundreds if not thousands of examples that are easily found on the internet, radio, television and in print. It is a particularly good example because it makes very clear how unaware Anglos are when it comes to racism toward Asians. Many will claim that the primary image for Asian Americans is thoroughly positive.

The flip side to the model minority stereotype is an older and less ambivalent construction of Asians as the "Yellow Peril," an image which arose in the mid- to late nineteenth-century xenophobia and racism, in response to increasing numbers of Asian immigrants. This duality – model minority and threat in one – is a common feature of racial stereotypes. Whether seen as models of successful assimilation or as yellow devils,

Asians – both native to the U.S. and immigrants – are mocked and berated for their accents (real or imagined) and seen as perpetually foreign (Chou and Feagin 2008; Gee 2009; McGowan and Lindgren 2006). In extreme cases they are denied employment, or become the victims of violence (Chow 2001; Hall and Hwang 2001).

For example, two Anglo autoworkers, angry because they were about to lose their jobs due to a downturn in the industry, picked a fight with Vincent Chin, a stranger to them they had mistaken for Japanese. According to the police report, a bystander heard one of the two men of say to Chin, “It’s because of you little motherfuckers that we’re out of work.” He was beaten with a baseball bat and died of his injuries a few days later.

As terrible as this crime was for Chin and his family, it got worse. The judge who heard the case allowed the attorneys to come to a settlement without hearing any witness testimony. The two men – who never served any jail sentence despite multiple attempts to try them – were given probation and a fine of \$3,000 plus court costs (Choy *et al.* 1990, documentary, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*). Public criticism at the time compared this sentence to similar court cases in the age of Jim Crow in the Deep South.

The outrage about such a sentence for a brutal, premeditated hate crime (a term not yet in use at the time) sparked a new wave of activism across the country and the formation of American Citizens for Justice (ACJ). This was the first time that

[People] who traced their ancestry to different countries in Asia and the Pacific Islands crossed ethnic and socioeconomic lines to fight as a united group of Asian Pacific Americans. They were Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino; they were waiters, lawyers, and grandmothers who were moved by the incident that heightened their awareness of discrimination and racism directed toward the APA community.

(Yip 1997)

The two young Anglo men who murdered Thien Minh Ly, a Vietnamese native and graduate of UCLA, were arrested when a letter written by one of them was given to the police. This small excerpt is a vivid display of matter-of-fact racism, but it is fairly calm compared to the rest of the letter:

Oh I killed a jap a while ago I stabbed him to Death at Tustin High school I walked up to him Dominic was with me and I seen this guy Roller blading and I had a knife. We walk in the tennis court where he was I walked up to him. Dominic was right there I walked right up to him and he was scared I looked at him and said “Oh I thought I new you” and he got happy that he wasn’t gona get jumped. Then I hit him . . .

Not all aggression is so overtly violent. More usually, those who speak English with an Asian accent are met with a combination of irritation, unease, distrust and condescension. One such situation was made public when Dell Computer put a new and unusual policy in place in response to customer complaints about dealing with Asian support staff on the telephone. A new level of paid customer service was introduced; for a fee, subscribers would be helped on the phone by native speakers of English from North America (Whoriskey 2008. See also Chapter 17 on linguistic profiling).

There is also a large body of public commentary with no obvious racial or ethnic triggering event, much of which is extreme and virulent, which will be considered in the next section.

Mockery

As discussed in earlier chapters, mockery can be an effective tool when the goal is subordination by means of trivialization. There are many examples of linguistic mocking on the internet targeting Latinos/as and African Americans (Calafell 2006; Chun 2004; Hill 1995, 2008; Ronkin and Karn 1999). There are fewer sources of such material for Asians, but there are many day-to-day examples. Public mockery of Asian-accented English comes from politicians (as discussed earlier in this chapter), from talk-show hosts (Jay Leno seems to be particularly fond of pseudo-Asian accented English), newspapers ("We likee Hirally! Shè best quality!"), news commentators (Maloy 2009), lawyers (Soo 2003), and judges speaking to petitioners (Angulo 2008). It also comes from those who simply like to participate in discussions online. An example from the *Urban Dictionary* which was made on August 14, 2006 (when it was downloaded in October, 2010, there were 180 up votes, and 82 down):

Ching chong bing bong: The language of those born to the Asian countries. It is the root of all evil and when heard for an excessive amount of time, causes one to vomit uncontrollably. *Excuse me, I can't understand your ching chong bing bong, please try English when you are in America.*

Taken at face value, this kind of statement – and there is a great deal of it – indicates that the stereotypes of Asian Americans are very narrow and persistent, and discrimination is broad and unapologetic.

Certainly those who speak English with an Asian accent have the impression that they are not taken seriously, and that "native speakers deliberately chose not to understand them, and that some native speakers tended to 'shut down' or 'close up' when the L2 learners started talking" (Derwing *et al.* 2002: 247). This correlates with other research that has established the ability of native English speakers to hallucinate an accent where none exists (as discussed in Chapter 9).

To this last point must be added the odd case of not only hallucinating an accent, but mocking what has been hallucinated. A case in point is the way Senator Alfonse D'Amato mocked a prominent Asian-American High Court judge by quoting him using a stereotypical Asian accent (Henneberger 1995). The judge D'Amato was mocking is a native speaker of English, born in Los Angeles.

The inappropriate nature of this behavior is clearer if you substitute a different public figure, one from a minority population that has its own variety of English, but who speaks *SAE natively. President Obama is one such person. If during a Senate session, a Senator mocked President Obama while employing features of AAVE – and employing them badly – there would be a very large (and deserved) backlash. Not because Obama isn't a native speaker of AAVE, but because such an act lays open the speaker's true feelings about that language and the people who speak it in a way that is difficult to ignore or gloss over.

The transmission and rationalization of racism

When children play together, quite a lot of information about the world and the way it works passes from oldest to youngest in the form of chants, rhymes and games. In the

seminal study of childhood games, folklorists Knapp and Knapp put this much more prosaically:

We are so preoccupied with what we have to offer children that we overlook the education they can offer one another; yet, in the unsupervised nooks and crannies of their lives, where they perpetuate centuries-old folk traditions, children learn what no one can teach them.

(Knapp and Knapp 1976: 9)

Some of the things children teach each other include turn-taking, the negotiation of rules, the difference between cheating and testing the rules (*ibid.*: 31), how to claim prestige or power, and how to deny prestige and power to others. Chants and rhymes are also part of the process of learning to face fears and superstitions, and the acquisition of social skills such as accommodation and resistance.

Knapp and Knapp contend that children's lore helps them cope with the day-to-day in three ways: (1) they are comforted by the assurance that everybody has the same troubles; (2) they learn how to cope with what is frightening in the present by escaping into fantasy; and (3) most important in the context of this book, folklore provides a tightly controlled frame for the expression of hostility and frustration. In connection with this last point, children learn about how to repair misunderstandings, deny culpability, and apologize. It is in this last context that children experience and begin to understand racism and xenophobia.

Collections of children's rhymes, songs and games recorded by folklorists and anthropologists between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century contain many shocking examples of extreme, unapologetic racism, some of which promotes violence. The three groups targeted most often in the collected children's lore are African Americans, Jews, and Asians. Here is an example of one version of a very widely known rhyme that has been in circulation since the early twentieth century (as I learned it growing up in 1960s Chicago):

Ching chong Chinaman
Sitting on a bench
Trying to make a dollar
Out of fifty-five cents.
He missed. He missed.
He missed like THIS.

There is some speculation that *ching chong* originated as an imitation of a dialect of Chinese as heard by native English speakers. That is a perfectly reasonable – but unverifiable – hypothesis. It is also true that between the years 1850 and 1950, major newspapers in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles reported legitimate (but not necessarily unbiased) stories about Chinese nationals or residents, and that Ching Chong appeared as one of many actual given names. Undoubtedly the overtly discriminatory epithet *chink* is derived from *ching chong*. It should also be noted that while these terms were first coined in connection with Chinese immigrants and residents, they now are used more broadly in reference to anyone with an Asian appearance.

These two syllables spoken together have a history and a significance that evoke strong reactions from Asians:

[Ching Chong] comes from an ugly place deep in this country's history, when Chinese were viewed as strange interlopers, the "heathen Chinese," an economic and social scourge. Those words once accompanied violence and lynchings. "Ching-Chong Chinaman" rhymes dating to the 19th century weren't just schoolyard taunts. To be ignorant of that . . . doesn't eliminate the history.

Nor are schoolyard taunts harmless:

"I would get 'sighted' – picked out – as the 'chinky girl' and those words would come out, then fists would hit me," remembered Doris Owyang, the program manager for San Francisco State University's Center for the Integration and Improvement of Journalism. Three years ago, a group of white teenagers attacked Asian-American youths while shouting imitation Chinese, a case that ended in felony and misdemeanor convictions.

(Chung 2006)

Chung's article – and many others like it – were written in response to an exchange that took place on *The View*, a popular morning television talk show, on December 5, 2006. The panelists were discussing a guest from the previous taping who had, it seemed to them, showed up drunk for his televised interview. Rosie O'Donnell, a panel member, commented on the whole matter:

The fact is that it's news all over the world. That you know, you can imagine in China, it's like: "Ching chong . . . ching chong. Danny DeVito, ching chong, chong, chong, chong. Drunk. 'The View.' Ching chong."

(*The View*, ABC, December 5, 2006)

Objections from the Asian community followed immediately in the form of newspaper articles, letters to the editor, and television interviews and statements (Chung 2006). The complaints were unified in their shock and displeasure that O'Donnell would have used such blatant ethnic slurs, and demands for a public apology. Some Asian-Americans *performed* their disapproval; for example, ultra-conservative Filipina Michelle Malkin (infamous for her pro-government stance on the matter of the internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II) posted a video on YouTube, as did younger Asians whose anger was just as potent.⁶

Rosie O'Donnell, a comedian, actor and talk show host, is a prominent figure in the LGBT⁷ civil rights movement, someone who has publicly confronted others who make homophobic statements or gestures; thus, her reaction to the demand for an apology was perplexing to many who followed the incident. Rather than end the episode by apologizing directly and clearly, she embarked on a passive-aggressive non-apology apology.

Apologizing-but-not-apologizing is a speech act that has been studied by linguists interested in pragmatics and political discourse strategies as well as by casual but insightful observers (Kampf 2009; McCall 2001; Robinson 2004). A few generalizations can be made about this kind of speech act: it is never neutral (that is, there is always an underlying power dynamic and conflict); the maintenance of "face" plays a role; the person apologizing is seeking a way to mollify – or at least to silence – the offended party while still minimizing his or her own responsibility:

Indeed, the apologizer's acknowledgment of a transgression is the most important feature for facilitating an understanding of the motive for apologizing or avoiding it. In addition to a clear acknowledgment of responsibility, an ideal apology should . . . be void of any other type of excuses and/or justifications.

(Kampf 2009: 2258)

I'm sorry, I just refuse to apologize

It is common practice to apologize while maintaining that no offense was actually given, as happened in the O'Donnell case. The strategies for pulling off a non-apology are varied:

- 1 *If in fact my words offended anyone, I regret that fact.* This is a gambit to save face and throw doubt on the fact of the offense itself. Just beneath the surface is denial of having caused offense at all.
- 2 Express regret that a statement had an adverse effect on others or was perceived as offensive: *I'm sorry that your feelings were hurt.* This puts the onus on the person who was offended. One way to think about this: *When I punched you in the face, it was not my intent to break your nose. Really.*
- 3 Apologize for the style alone: *I apologize for my abrupt tone.*
- 4 Apologize for a specific and limited component of the offense while rejecting the bulk of it; *I apologize for generalizing about Asians. It's only the Japanese who are the true model minority.*
- 5 Apologize using passive constructions and euphemisms to mitigate responsibility: *my words were taken out of context* (you deliberately misunderstood me); *the situation was misinterpreted* (the situation rather than the act itself); *people have told me I was wrong to say it* (that's what people say, but I'm not buying it); and the classic: *mistakes were made* (but not by me).
- 6 Apologize while using gestures and facial expressions to undermine the sincerity of the words themselves. *I'm sorry that you were [AIR QUOTES] offended.*
- 7 Apologize while claiming authority to do so: *I'm sorry if you were offended, but I'm a straightforward person, I call 'em like I see 'em.*
- 8 Often a person will simply go on the offensive: *Can't you take a joke?* or *You're the one who is racializing this discussion, not me* or *Wow, you are a drama queen, aren't you?* or *How dare you say I'm prejudiced. I am the one being discriminated against.*

In the aftermath of the December 5, 2006 performance by O'Donnell, many of these strategies and tactics were employed by herself, her colleagues and her weblog visitors. Her exchanges with people who visit her weblog were particularly interesting, because it was her policy to respond briefly to every comment visitors left.⁸ In that venue her "ching-chong" joke came up repeatedly over a few weeks, with two kinds of audience comment: those who defended her performance and those who criticized her roundly and pursued the issue of an apology.⁹

A short examination of the weblog comments and her responses provides insight into what seems to have been O'Donnell's sometimes conflicted feelings about the whole incident. Please note that I have corrected typos but left abbreviations in common use across the web as they are used, and further, these are not all the comments, nor do they necessarily appear in this order. Read these with the strategies discussed above in mind.

Excerpt from www.reappropriate.com, Rosie O'Donnell blog post, October 9, 1998.
Reprinted by permission of blog owner.

(1) Rosie: for someone who comes off to be so sensitive and aware of lgbt issues, why did you think it was alright to mock Chinese people and the language on The View (re: danny devito: ching chong . . .)???

RO: it was not my intent to mock / just to say how odd it is that danny drunk was news / all over the world even in china / it was not meant to mock

(2) Rosie, what made you think it was okay to make fun of the way Chinese people speak?

RO: the joke was about the danny devito drunk news / making headlines all over the world including china / just comedy folks / no intent 2 harm / peace

(3) JP writes: Hey Rosie, why aren't you getting your head out your butt and be more sensitive to Asian-Americans. Don't post this message and see how you are hiding your true facade. You suck and need to get off tv.

RO: go fuck urself, jp

(4) Leema writes: U r a great role model. I respect ur courage. I'd like 2 know what makes u imitate a foreign language as a joke. It'd be funny if u knew how 2 speak it, it sounds racist and ignorant, which u r not.

RO: i am irish / i do an irish accent / make drunk jokes / stereotypes / this is comedy / i do many accents / and probably will continue to / my mom in law impression offends some Southerners / what can u do / i come in peace

(5) Chao writes: Rosie – I am very appalled at your comments on The View regarding Asian people. They were so insensitive and hurtful. How can you possibly explain this and what can you say to help heal my wounds?

RO: sorry u were offended chao / it was not my intent

(6) Beth writes: It's so silly that Bill O'Reilly is having a segment on how you angered the Asians – you didn't do anything at all – you were saying how silly it is that Devito became world news! Don't listen to them!

RO: i don't

(7) toni writes: Ro, I can not believe that the Chinese are mad at you about a JOKE!!! Oh My God, lighten up people. Bill O'Reilly even stood up for you tonight on "The Factor"! Calm down people it was just a joke!

RO: go bill

(8) Yves writes: Rosie – I don't see the big deal about the Chinese routine. You've done English accents before on TV and the Brits didn't get bent out of shape. They took it out of context and they need to chill.

RO: the whole thing is odd 2 me

(9) Max writes: I'm a hypersensitive politically correct leftist. I checked out YouTube to see what the fuss was about. Give me a break! You were speaking Gibberish to symbolize a language you didn't know. So what?!



RO: so what is right

(10) Hiroyuki writes: Rosie, Till this latest incident I was on your side. How could you use racist stereotyping? If what you say in the past is true, what you say in the unguarded is true – then I guess you are a racist

RO: come on hirou gotta be kidding

(11) Ben writes: If the joke were about fat people and instead went: "Fat people around the world heard it. They probably said, 'Gobble gobble, munch munch, DeVito, drunk, munch view, gobble.' Would it offend you?"

RO: well / it would offend me / as it makes no sense / but the joke was about / the absurdity / of danny devito drunk on the view / being INTERNATIONAL NEWS / then the offensive ching chong / and we're off 2 the races

(12) Ploy writes: Did you really think that Chinese bit was funny? Going "ching chong" is exactly how people degraded and mocked my family all our lives. It's distasteful and it hurts me that it comes from you.

RO: i am sorry it hurt u poly / all the people who made fun of u / in a negative way / for being who u r / my bad accent was not meant to insult or degrade / linguistic incompetence – guilty / mocking – never

(13) mel writes: i love you rosie and i'm not offended by your asian joke but the reason people are is because you weren't doing an accent. you weren't speaking actual chinese, just mocking their speech.

RO: i wasn't mocking / that's my best impression / accents r tough / on the whole

(14) denise writes: Rosie you would have had a cow if someone did what you did to the chinese about Gay people. For Shame.

RO: like someone doing a gay guy with a lisp / like i do / a lot / 4 shame back at ya

(15) John writes: Miss O'Donnell, I was wondering when your public apology for insulting the Asian American community will be? P.S. I will make it my personal vendetta to make this public to everyone I know.

RO: do ur best john / go in peace

(16) Ben writes: You say how you don't understand what the fuss is about, but it's hard 2 understand w/o having grown up Asian. Imagine a derogatory gay joke. If YOU got bent outta shape about it, I WOULD understand...ben

RO: i am sorry it hurt u / i didnt think of it the way it was taken / i will b more sensitive / promise

In the December 14, 2006 airing of *The View*, O'Donnell addressed the issue directly.

This apparently was very offensive to a lot of Asian people. So I asked Judy, who's Asian and works here in our hair and makeup department. I said, "Was it offensive to you?" And she said, "Well, kinda. When I was a kid people did tease me by saying ching-chong." So apparently "ching-chong," unbeknownst to me, is a very offensive way to make fun, quote-unquote, or mock, Asian accents. Some people have told me it's as bad as the n-word. I was like, really? I did not know that [. . . The joke was]

never intended to hurt anyone, and I'm sorry for those people who felt hurt or were teased on the playground . . . there's a good chance that I'll do something like that again.

(O'Donnell, *The View*, ABC, December 14, 2006)

On the basis of the public record it seems that O'Donnell never issued a sincere first person, unqualified apology, one which might have gone like this: "I was wrong to use those words to imitate Chinese or Asian speakers, I understand now how offensive it was and it will not happen again. Please accept my sincere apology." Quite the opposite, she gave notice that she was likely to repeat her performance.

One of the points many critics raised had to do with O'Donnell's advocacy for LGBT rights and protections. The assumption underlying these complaints seemed to be that those who advocate for one peripheralized group should do the same for other groups who are discriminated against. In fact, this is another example of the depth and breadth of language-focused discrimination and standard language ideology. Even the most liberal people will demonstrate what they believe to be their right: to use language as a tool to establish and re-establish social boundaries and privilege.

If nothing else, this episode and others described here make clear how unaware – and unconcerned – most Americans are when Asians are the focus of discriminatory policies and practices.

In the classroom

In educational settings an unwillingness to engage in conversation with anyone who speaks with an Asian accent has been well documented. Such refusals could be due to simple laziness, disinterest, animosity, fear of being socially linked to foreigners, resentment, racism, ethnocentrism, or any combination of these.

In my own experience teaching at the University of Michigan I considered this problem at length because it was one I saw personally on a regular basis. I decided to try a small experiment when I was teaching an introductory linguistics course to 250 undergraduates in lecture format. In teaching this course I worked with graduate student teaching assistants who took over discussion sections, common practice at almost all universities. A number of my TAs were Asian non-native speakers of English who had come to the States to work on advanced degrees in linguistics. They had accents, but their English was fluent and colloquial and each one of them had been accepted into the graduate program.

The first time I taught this class, I had multiple emails and phone calls after the first discussion section. Students complained about having a TA who spoke with an accent; they couldn't understand the TA and wanted to be moved to another section. Sometimes these complaints were very harsh and accusatory in tone, as if by being assigned to an Asian teaching assistant, they were being denied some basic right. Resolving these conflicts required that I meet with each of these students individually to discuss the actual nature of their worries, and to suggest ways to ameliorate what they perceived as an irresolvable conflict. Not one of these students ever considered that they might have some work to do in order to achieve successful communication; in every case, it was seen as the TA's responsibility alone.

The next time I taught this course, I spent half an hour in the first lecture talking about accents in general and foreign accents in particular and about common-sense ways to



resolve difficulties – if difficulties ever arose. These included asking for clarification in a straightforward but polite way, requesting that a word or sentence be written on the board, along with the benefits of patience, open-mindedness and empathy for those who were now in a situation that the undergraduates might someday be in themselves, if they were lucky enough to study abroad. That year I had two disgruntled undergraduates asking to be removed from a discussion section led by a native Japanese speaker, and both those individuals had missed the first lecture.

This is, of course, only anecdotal, but others have spent years researching the elements that cause communication difficulties between ESL learners and native speakers, from phonetics to ideology. In a particularly insightful study, Derwing, Rossiter and Munro set out to “determine whether native speakers’ comprehension of accented speech can be enhanced through instruction. The experiment involved both cross-cultural content and explicit instruction in the characteristics of a particular accent” (Derwing *et al.* 2002). The study required pre-testing of comprehension after listening to Vietnamese accented recordings, accent lessons, cross-cultural communication lessons, and post-comprehension tests.

The students, all enrolled in a class in the social work program, were divided at random into three groups:

- 1 The Accent Instruction group, which received instruction in the nature and characteristics of English spoken with a Vietnamese accent *in addition to* cross-cultural training by means of readings and conversations tied to the curriculum, recorded by the Vietnamese speakers.
- 2 The Familiarity group did not receive instruction on the way Vietnamese influences English language learning, but they did get the cross-cultural communication instruction, which included listening to the content-related recordings made by the Vietnamese participants.
- 3 The Control group received neither type of training, and concentrated on the course material alone.

The experiment itself took eight weeks and consisted of the pre-test, the in-class instruction sessions, and the post-test. In the testing, students listened to a recording of Vietnamese speakers talking in English about a topic relevant to the coursework; they answered comprehension questions and transcribed sentences. Finally, they filled out a questionnaire on their attitudes and perceptions about the material and presentation.

The only difference between the Accent Instruction and Familiarity groups was the fact that the former got additional instruction in the way Vietnamese influenced pronunciation of English.¹⁰

On the basis of this experiment, there is some reason to believe that anti-Asian sentiment and language-focused discrimination are not immutable. Some proportion of individuals reject Asians and communication with Asians out of unfamiliarity; an effort to replace stereotype with real interpersonal experience will bear fruit. In this particular situation, the students were not given a choice of which group to join; those who found themselves in the Accent Instruction or the Familiarity groups were required to participate in the exercises which by their nature challenged stereotypical expectations.

Table 15.2 summarizes this study. Given a choice, would students participate in this kind of instruction? Should they be compelled to participate? What would be gained or lost by instituting such policies?

Table 15.2 The effect of preparation on communication between Asians and non-Asians

Question	Groups					
	Control		Familiarity		Accent Instruction	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Rate your ability to understand foreign accents. 1 = very poor 9 = excellent	4.71	5.52	4.27	5.70	3.10	5.25
When I hear someone start to speak with an accent, I expect that it will be difficult to understand them. 1 = strongly disagree 9 = strongly agree	5.76	5.33	5.27	4.55	6.50	4.63
Circle how confident you are that you can understand someone who speaks with an accent (0 to 100% in increments of 10)	54%	60%	47%	60%	34%	59%
I understand people with accents better now (not limited to Vietnamese accent). 1 = strongly disagree 9 = strongly agree		4.5		5.52		6.70

False speakers of language

In Chang-Rae Lee's critically acclaimed 1995 novel, *Native Speaker*, a Korean-American narrator called Henry Park tells the story of how he came to fall in love with his wife, an American who is of interest to him not just as a woman, but because as a speech pathologist she works with children who are non-native speakers of English.

"People like me are always thinking about still having an accent," he tells her in their first discussion. What he does not say, but which is clear to the character from real-life experiences is that people "like" himself must always be thinking about having an accent, because that is what is expected of them: to be different, and to externalize that difference with language. Caught between his own and public expectations, Park can please no one. When his wife leaves to travel without him, and perhaps forever, her note of explanation is a simple list of descriptors for him, which include:

illegal alien
emotional alien
Yellow peril: neo-American

Later he finds another scrap of paper with a definition of himself on it that she could not quite include on the final list: *False speaker of language*.

Like African Americans, Asian Americans have more and more difficult hurdles to leap before they can transcend stereotype and be accepted as individuals. Accent, when it serves as a marker of race, takes on special power and significance. For many in the African American community there is little resistance to the language subordination process, in part because the implied promises of linguistic assimilation – while obviously overstated – are nevertheless seductive, precisely because the threats are very real.

The idea of perfect English, of belonging absolutely to the mainstream culture of choice, is one that is hard to resist for Asian Americans as well.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

- Consider the series of court rulings beginning in 1883 that led to the shutdown of all immigration from China for about sixty years. Look also at the related rulings that made it illegal to grant Asians naturalized citizenship. In that broader context, read the story of Bhagat Singh Thind, who came to the U.S. in 1917. What were the long-range repercussions of the Supreme Court decision that sent him back to Punjab? In linguistic terms, how factual was the Court's definition of Indo-European? The website: <http://goo.gl/4wKkS>.
- Look closely at Table 15.2 adapted from the Derwing *et al.* (2002) experiment. What conclusions can you draw from these figures? How do the three control groups compare to each other? Consider differences between the first and second groups, and then compare them to the third group. On this evidence alone, what measures seemed to be most effective in alleviating communication stumbling blocks? Argue for or against the proposition that all first year college students should be required to participate in an orientation session that addresses communication issues such as these.
- In 2005, a student of Asian heritage applied to Princeton. He had an excellent academic history and hit all the usual marks for admission, but he was not admitted. He enrolled at Yale, and shortly thereafter filed a lawsuit against Princeton for discrimination on the basis of national origin. In the following spring, a column appeared in *The Daily Princetonian*, the campus newspaper. A short excerpt:

Hi Princeton! Remember me? I so good at math and science. Perfect 2400 SAT score. Ring bells? Just in case, let me refresh your memories. I the super smart Asian. Princeton the super dumb college, not accept me.

What is the purpose of writing this in what is supposed to be the plaintiff's own language? What underlying beliefs and ideologies might be informing it?

- How aware were you, before reading this chapter, of how offensive "ching-chong" is as an ethnic slur. How did you react to this information? If you felt any irritation, can you get to the bottom of that, and figure out where it comes from? If you are Asian, what are your experiences with this term? Have you ever talked to non-Asians about the impact this term has? Why or why not?

- If you are Asian and you are willing to volunteer to answer questions, please let your instructor know. It would be especially helpful if you were willing to talk to the other students about the various viewpoints in this chapter, and whether you agree or disagree with conclusions drawn.
- To test your own knowledge of Asia, try the quiz you'll find here: <http://www.mccollam.com/fun/geoquiz/asiaquiz.html>.

Notes

- 1 See also a *New York Times* article from 1905 entitled "CONFERENCE INDORSES [sic] CHINESE EXCLUSION; Editor Poon Chu Says China Will Demand Entrance Some Day. A PLEA FOR THE JAPANESE Committee on Resolutions Commends Roosevelt's Position as Stated in His Message." Available at: <http://goo.gl/wRxTE>.
- 2 Consider that the government of India (a nation of almost 1.2 billion persons) officially recognizes fifteen languages, some of them with as many as fifty or more dialects. India is linguistically complex, but it is not unusual in this; it is not even extreme in the larger global view. China has 55 official minority nationalities, eight major languages and hundreds of other language families from Mongolian to Hmong. Fiji has less than a million residents but they are spread out over 7000 square miles of islands on which fifteen languages (in addition to Fijian) are spoken (Ethnologue.com; population figures taken from the CIA Factbook, the U.N. website, and from census reports of some of the nations).
- 3 At one point George W. Bush seemed to think that Africa is a country rather than a continent; John McCain spoke publicly about the Iraq/Pakistani border, which does not exist. There are multiple examples of politicians from both parties making similar errors.
- 4 A website created and maintained by a Chinese-American provides some insight into this issue, along with photos. AllLookSame? Available at: http://alllooksame.com/?page_id=2.
- 5 The Wikipedia entry on Blackface is especially thorough and well documented, with many excellent references for anyone interested in pursuing this subject further. Available at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackface>.
- 6 Michelle Malkin: <http://youtu.be/0qINiw6ub5U>; Ruby Ibarra: <http://youtu.be/BEZ8KbWUzP8>.
- 7 LGBT is the common abbreviation for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender communities. Available at: <http://www.gaycenter.org/>.
- 8 As is the case with most weblogs, O'Donnell reserves the right not to publish comments which violate the standards that have been established for the discussion board.
- 9 There were also numerous responses on other websites and weblogs, many of which were written by Asian Americans recounting their own experiences with racism. Many wrote of being taunted using "ching chong," and attempted to make clear how very offensive this term was to the Asian population. Some were angry, and some were more diplomatic. See, for example, <http://mamazilla.blogspot.com/2006/12/i-wasnt-hallucinating.html>.
- 10 This description of the research is, of course, vastly simplified. The original article is

accessible to non-specialists and makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in learning more.

Suggested further reading

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