**Race and Law - The Asian American Perspective**

**Required Readings:** *Timeline of U.S. History* pg. 41 along with RCR-15, 16, and 18.  
RCR-17 was optional.

AAS 293 Lecture  
Monday, November 27th

RCR-26
- Plessy vs. Ferguson - emphasis on this case; the Supreme Court case that enacted the concept of “separate but equal”; referred to as a bogus concept that prevented African Americans from accessing their rights as citizens.
- Immigration Act of 1924 - placed limitations on immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, plus, those of Asian nations could not become citizens and that immigration from those countries was limited. Very important to know and realize (alongside the Immigration Act of 1917 and the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act).
  - Created to keep people out of the United States; designed to encourage people from Western Europe/Northwestern Europe to immigrate instead. A very ethnicist/racist act (ethnicist in that those from Greece, Italy, etc… were undesirable even though they were “white”).
  - Changed by 1965 Immigration Act; removes limitations placed on new immigrants from those nations and all other nations. Removed quotas on who could immigrate to the United States. As long as they met basic, certain criteria then they could be admitted into the United States.
    - Came about on the heels of the Civil Rights movement (which is why this act is so important, as it showcased the social upheaval and change experienced by the United States and its judicial/social systems). No longer were discriminating immigrants based upon race or ethnicity.
    - Consequence of this is a major demographic change within the U.S.; ripple effect of the Civil Rights movement, changed the whole population structure of the U.S. → after a few years, Asians and previously “undesirable” nations increase in immigration while immigration from Western Europe decreased. 65% of European ancestry today compared to the dominant past figures.
    - Mid 1980s - a diversity lottery is established, where people could apply and if they won the lottery they could be allowed to immigrate to the United States. Designed to encourage Italian and Irish people to the United States, rather than the overlooked minorities.
      - Italian and Irish were facing economic hardships in home country, politicians and legislators in the U.S. passed the diversity, “multi-
cultural based” legislation in order to encourage immigration from those from the more overlooked or underrepresented populations (within the United States).
- Designed to make the U.S. population more representative of the world with its diverse population.
- Black people from Africa (new immigrants) are not seen the same as black Americans; the shift goes from race to ethnicity.
  - Africans benefited the most from this legislation.
  - Consequence for all this; linked from the other readings dealing with the image of ethnicity and clashes. The election of Obama is connected to the 1965 Immigration Act - that act brought in a great influx of minorities that in turn voted for him; majority of white population did not vote for him, but the vast majority of minority communities did vote for him.
- Readings and how they are interlinked; they all dealt roughly with the same minority groups (Asian-Americans/African-Americans).

RCR-15 → Cases against Asians and Latinos and how persecution works;
- The two Latino teens with graffiti that were shot by a white guy and he was subsequently hailed as a hero. The point of the reading is that the justice system is not immune to stereotypes; people think that stereotypes only affect those who are ignorant, but yet the stories show how the justice system truly treats people brought into the system (especially in concern to their race).
- Weird quote; the idea of a “foreign American” - it makes sense in the context of Asian and Latino’s, due to the stereotype of certain classes of people are not “real” Americans, regardless of how long they’ve been here.
- If you have that stereotype, it can have implications on what happens when you enter the American justice system. Contrast in the way the two Latino kids were treated by the justice system vs. the white kid in Singapore even though they committed the same crime (vandalism).
- Stereotypes corrupt the justice system; the people who are in charge of the justice system fall for the stereotypes, and thus justice does not take place for the victims of stereotypes.

RCR-16 → “Los Angeles” Reading
- Basic point: The perception that minorities have of each other is shaped by the perception of the majority at large (white people). Racist views held by whites transfer down to minority groups who then fight against other minorities based on those perceptions.

- Stereotypes adopted by other nations peoples from Hollywood movies and American media even though they may have never met a person from those stereotyped groups.

- Many people come to the United States after being middle-class in their home countries or suffering hardships such as being in refugee camps → forces those immigrants to do whatever it takes to survive once they arrive in the United States. Family often helps to start a small business to make ends meet, and they tend to work mad hours and work without pay (within family businesses).

- The Master Narrative → the majority held stereotypes perpetuated by the entire U.S. population in the form of pitting minority groups against one another and against the majority.

- The Model Minority → the switch from Asians being viewed negatively to being positively; the Civil Rights movement portrays African-Americans as being unruly, uncivilized which forced the white majority to uphold the Asian-Americans as being well-behaved and civilized because they were not challenging the racial status quo.
  - Asian Americans pick up the American Dream concept, which foundation holds that hard work is what defines success. If you work hard, you’ll achieve your dream. Korean-Americans said they were pursuing the American dream and thought that African Americans were NOT hardworking (were lazy and thus poor and therefore inferior to them) which played into the majority held stereotypes about black people.

RCR-18 → Sexual Harassment and Unfriendly Work Environment reading

- Did not cover reading in class due to time constraints.