

# The AACCP Newsletter

Since 1970

Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.

November/December 2008

AsianAmericanBooks.com - The Most Complete Nonprofit-Source for Asian American Books

## Presidential Election, Anti-Community Crimes, and Hope

An editorial by Leonard D. Chan

When I came up with the idea for this editorial, the following thoughts and pieces seemed to go together. I'm not sure how, but let me ramble on and maybe I'll come up with something by the end that can tie them all together. Here goes.

### The United States Presidential Election

For those of you that voted for someone other than Barack Obama, please don't stop reading. This is not going to be an article that resembles the showboating celebrations that you sometimes see on a football field. I'm not going to gloat, but please indulge me a little by allowing me reflect on this amazing election.

Back when I was in grade school and being president still held a special exalted respect, kids would say that they wanted to be president when they grew up. I never imagined that I or anyone like me could ever really become president.

Not that long ago, a friend of mine and I would test others about which one of us was more likely to be elected president. Although my friend is a white male, he is a naturalized American and I am native born. The lesson was that even though he looked more the part, I was the one constitutionally qualified to be president.

Among the hundreds of millions of Americans throughout the 220 years of the existence of the American Presidency, only 43 non-minority white males have ever become President of the United States. Barack Obama has truly broken through the highest glass ceiling of our country. Even John McCain in his concession speech acknowledged that Obama's win was truly historic. People around the world also seem amazed by our election and how American democracy appears to have lived up to its promise of opportunity for all.

A friend of mine, knowing my tendencies towards writing critical newsletter articles about the government, kidded me about how I would have a harder time finding bad things to write about now that the Democrats were coming to power. I can't say that I was disappointed with the election results, but President Elect Obama really does have a tough road ahead and I can't imagine that his performance could ever be criticism proof.

While I rejoice at the prospect that any job in our land now seems obtainable, I am concerned that the doors of opportunity could once again be shut.

After the Civil War, there were over 600 African American in state and local government, and over 17 in the US Congress, but all this had essentially ended by the end of the 19th Century. No

African American represented a Southern State in the US Congress from the period of 1901 to 1972. Although those pioneering African Americans had broken through the glass ceiling, that ceiling was rebuilt.

With no track record of any minorities serving as United States President, those citizens that are on the fence about the acceptability of minorities for the job may end up feeling less likely to vote for a minority in the future if Obama does a bad job. Most fair-minded people know better than to categorize a whole group of people by one lone representative, but we must also expect that many will. Rightly or not Obama is the symbolic representative for all of us that have yet to make it through that ceiling.

For all of our sakes, even if you were not a supporter of Barack Obama, it is important that, by the end of Obama's term in office, a sizable majority of Americans feel that he did a good job. A job well done will go a long ways in keeping the doors of opportunity open, while a poor job will play into the hands of the advocates of prejudice and hate.

### Hate Groups and Hate Crimes

Although it is highly unlikely that we will ever see a collapse of racial gains made since the Civil Rights Era of the 50s and 60s, the number of hate groups like the KKK are increasing (48% since 2000) and racially motivated hate crimes have spiked since the Obama election. Several recent hate crime incidences have attracted such notice, that seven civil rights organizations came together on November 24, 2008 to hold a news conference to alert people about this alarming trend.

Here is an excerpt from a statement at this news conference made by Janet Murguía, President and CEO of the National Council of La Raza (NCLR).

*As a civil rights organization, NCLR stands here today with representatives from MALDEF, the National Urban League, the NAACP, the Asian American Justice Center, and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights to express our alarm over the rise in hate and violence against our communities.*

*Most recently, on November 8th, in Suffolk County, New York, Marcelo Lucero was going to visit a friend to watch a movie when he was attacked and murdered by seven teenagers. Mr. Lucero was 37 years old. Originally from Ecuador, he had lived in this country for 16 years. According to Newsday, Suffolk County police said the defendants "simply wanted to beat up someone who looked Mexican."*

(Continued on Page 2)

## Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at -  
aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

### Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
Jan. 10 9:00am- 12:30pm	The Association of Chinese Teachers Lunar New Year Event	Alice Fong Yu Elem. School San Francisco, CA
Jan 17 1pm	5th Annual Poetry In San Mateo Day- A Beginning of the Year Poetry Celebration	SM Main Library San Mateo, CA
Feb. 15 5:30pm- 7:30pm	The 29th Annual San Jose Day of Remembrance 2009	Betsuin Bud. Church 640 N 5th St. San Jose, CA
Mar. 8 11am-5:30pm	Chinese New Year's Celebration	Stockton Civic Aud. 525 N. Center St. Stockton, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACP May Not Attend		
Jan. 24- Feb. 15	Chinese New Year Celebration Events in SF Chinatown	San Francisco, CA
Jan 31 1-5pm	Families with Children from China - N. CA 14th Between Two New Years Celebration!	Mill Valley Community Center Mill Valley, CA
Feb. 1 11am-3pm	Foster City Chinese New Year Celebration	Foster City, CA
Feb. 7 5:15pm	Chinese New Year Parade	San Francisco, CA
Feb. 8 10am-6pm	12th Vietnamese Spring Festival & Parade	Parkside Hall 180 Park Ave. San Jose, CA
Mar. 6-8	California Council for the Social Studies Conference	Ontario Convention Center Ontario, CA
Mar. 28-29	Reading the World XI USF	2350 Turk Blvd. San Francisco, CA

(Continued from Page 1)

### Presidential Election, Anti-Community Crimes, and Hope

*On election night, Alie Kamara, a teenager from Liberia, was assaulted by two teenagers shouting racial epithets and "Obama" in Staten Island, New York.*

*While we are grateful that the authorities have taken swift action, Mr. Lucero's death should serve as a wake-up call to all Americans.*

*The Southern Poverty Law Center recently reported that it has seen "hundreds of incidents" throughout the country since Election Day, including hate crimes, vandalism, and threats.*

*Late last month, the FBI released its latest hate-crime statistics, which show that attacks against Latinos and Asian Americans have risen steadily over the past four years. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that the number of hate*

## Editor's Message

Hello Everyone,

Seasons Greeting to you all!

Several announcements to make - first of all the date of our poetry event has been changed to January 17. If you are a poet or budding poet or just love listening to poetry, please come to our event. This is an open invitation to all of you. If you're a published poet, write to me of your intent to come. We would love to publicize your appearance at our event.

If you have some poetry you'd like to share with our newsletter readers, please feel free to email us your poems by January 4th.

If you live in range of our San Mateo store, bring this email in to receive 20% off any non-sale items.

Thank you very much Philip, Sophie, Sharon, and everyone else that contributed to our newsletter this year. We couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you Florence. Your continued dedicated effort to our organization goes beyond accolades.

Thanks to all of you out there for your continued support throughout the year. We do it for you.

Happy Holidays and take care!

Leonard Chan  
**Executive Editor**

*groups targeting Latinos and immigrants has also increased over the same period.*

*And a USA Today article late last month noted that the recent resurgence of White supremacist groups was being "fueled by illegal immigration."*

*We believe that the wave of hate unleashed by the polarized debate over immigration has led to the increase in violence and hate groups targeting Latinos.*

*And the key players in this wave of hate are found among elected officials and the media, especially talk radio and cable news...*

*Mr. Lucero's death is a direct outcome of the anger and hate spurred on by certain media outlets that mischaracterize all Latinos and the institutions that serve them as a threat to our country...*

*For two years we have urged politicians and members of the media to show some restraint in echoing the damaging rhetoric that demonizes our communities. We have asked them to question the source material of those who suggest our community is somehow a threat to the health and safety of all Americans.*

*We recognize that there are many who disagree with our policy positions. And we welcome a spirited debate over those positions. But there is no place for hate in civil discourse.*

*Words have consequences. And hateful words have hateful consequences. In Suffolk County, hate has trickled down to a new generation of Americans and it should disturb everyone in this room.*

*In the wake of an historic election that sent a message to the world about freedom and liberty in America, it seems incongruous, today, to raise the specter of hate in our communities. Thankfully, hate did not win in this election, but hate is still here with us.*

*The organizations represented here are committed to working together to monitor incidents of hate crimes and hate rhetoric, to urge policymakers and the media to cease resorting to bias and bigotry, and to increase tolerance and understanding among all communities.*

As Janet Murguía stated, the media holds some of the blame - these amplified voices from the media, the Internet, and even some elected officials help fan and stoke the flames of hate. Civil rights groups like the ones that held this news conference are pushing for legislation for tougher federal hate crime laws. Those that oppose these laws are afraid that the proposed laws will somehow limit their free speech. This article was not meant to delve into this expansive issue - we'll have to save this for another day. However, without a doubt, there are limits to free speech. One only needs to look at the country of Rwanda as a recent example of how the media could horribly help incite one community against another.

In our current economic downturn we must be particularly guarded against scapegoating. Throughout American history there have been countless incidences where groups have been persecuted during hard times. Any knowledgeable person of Asian American history should be keenly aware of this.

Another point of view of those that oppose hate crime legislation is that most violent crimes have a component of hate, so why do

we need to have new laws? One conservative website states it this way - Real crime always involves "hate", there are already laws to handle real crimes.

So what's the real difference between a hate crime and other types of crime and why do hate crimes need special consideration? Wouldn't additional punishment for hate crimes just be prosecuting people for their hateful thoughts?

The FBI defines a hate crime as a criminal act that is motivated by race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity/national origin, or disability. The crime may be committed against a person, property, or society.

But aren't hate crimes really always crimes against society? The perpetrators of hate crimes aren't just targeting individuals, they're really venting their anger at a whole community. When communities begin to act out their aggressions against other communities, society begins to crumble. When civility ends, civilizations are at jeopardy. This is the real difference between hate crimes and regular crimes, and that is why it deserves special recognition.

Perhaps we need to stop using the term "hate crime" and start calling it what it really is "anti-community crimes." With this nomenclature, perhaps people will begin to understand that these types of crimes are crimes that truly hurt us all.

What hate groups (AKA: terrorist) really want is to reorder civilization to a way where they are in power. These disenfranchised sociopaths would rather tear down the world in which they live, than build towards making the world better through non-violent means.

## Hope

This is where the Obama election and his time in office comes back into the picture. A successful Obama administration would prove that non-violent change is possible and that democracy really can work. Perhaps the success of Obama could forever be proof that no one should ever feel inferior and without power, and that the meek really could inherit the earth.

In this holiday season of hope, peace, and love, let us hope for a successful Obama government that will forever dim the flames of hate.

## Related Links

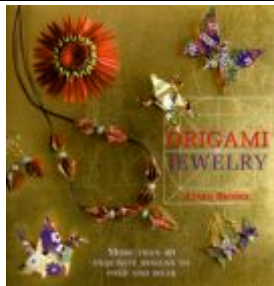
- **Teaching Tolerance Magazine's special** - providing educators strategy to respond to racial incidents following the Obama Election <http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=987>
- **We Can Stop the Hate** - website that takes the hate out of the immigration debate <http://www.wecanstopthehate.org/>
- **History of Reconstruction** <http://www.thenation.com/doc/2008/1103/fooner>
- **Southern Poverty Law Center** - number of hate groups on the rise <http://www.splcenter.org/intel/intelreport/article.jsp?aid=886>
- **Civil Rights Groups News Conference** <http://www.nclr.org/content/news/detail/54882/>
- **Janet Murguía Statement at the News Conference** <http://www.nclr.org/content/viewpoint/detail/54889>

## Article of Interest

- **reporternews.com** - Obama's election didn't cure racism <http://www.reporternews.com/news/2008/dec/09/obamas-election-didnt-cure-racism/>
- **Washington Post** - White Supremacists report an increase in visits to their websites <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/06/21/AR2008062101471.html?hpid=topnews>
- **Chicago Tribune** - hate incidents in U.S. surge [http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chiklan\\_bdnov23,0,4928113.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chiklan_bdnov23,0,4928113.story)
- **The St. Louis American** - more than 200 hate-related, anti-Obama incidents in two weeks [http://www.stlamerican.com/articles/2008/12/09/news/local\\_news/localnews00000000000001.txt](http://www.stlamerican.com/articles/2008/12/09/news/local_news/localnews00000000000001.txt)

## ADDITIONS TO OUR WEBSITE

The following books are discounted for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end January 5, 2008.

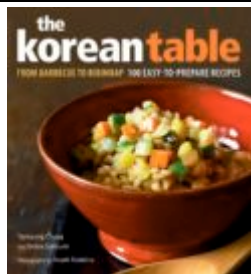


### Origami Jewelry

By Ayako Brodek  
2007, 128 pages, Hardback.

Thinking about learning a new craft, maybe even a new trade, or perhaps you're thinking of making your holiday gift this year. It's not too late. Whether as a gift in itself or as an aid in making some gifts, Origami Jewelry by Ayako Brodek just may be the original idea you're looking for. This book includes over 40 project ideas that are suitable the year round.

Item #3531, Normally \$24.95 ... for newsletter subscribers **\$19.96**



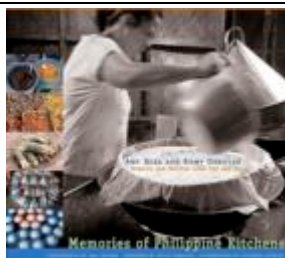
### The Korean Table From Barbecue to Bibimbap 100 Easy-to-Prepare Recipes

By Taekyung Chung and Debra Samuels  
Photography by Heath Robbins  
2008, 159 pages, Hardback.

I can't vouch for the quality of the recipes because I haven't tried any of them yet, but if the end products taste half as good as they look, then this is one marvelous cookbook. The pictures are so good that you'll swear you can almost smell and taste the food.

The Korean Table includes over 100 recipes, informative background information on the common ingredients, and many additional ideas on how to add the flavors of Korea to your meals using sauces, dressings, condiments, side dishes, and more.

Item #3534, Normally \$27.95 ... for newsletter subscribers **\$22.36**



### Memories of Philippine Kitchens Stories and Recipes from Far and Near

By Amy Besa and Romy Dorotan  
2006, 232 pages, Hardback.

Many of the superlatives used in my description of the book The Korean Table goes ditto here. Memories of Philippine Kitchens is filled with page after page of wonderful pictures and recipes. The biographical and cultural information from the authors makes this a wonderful read whether or not you ever decide to try the recipes. After reading this book, you'll wonder why there aren't more fine Filipino restaurants in your area.

Item #3533, Normally \$35.00 ... for newsletter subscribers **\$28.00**

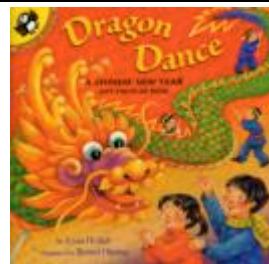


### Bringing In the New Year

By Grace Lin  
2008, 26 pages, Hardback.

This is a charming tale of a family and how they celebrate Chinese New Year. There are many customs surrounding the celebration, which are steeped in centuries old traditions that symbolize the hopes and wishes for good fortune in the coming year. These customs are related through the eyes of a little girl whose joy and enthusiasm reveal why Chinese New Year is such a special time of year to millions of people around the world.

ORDER -- Item #3532, Normally \$15.99 ... for newsletter subscribers **\$12.79**



### Dragon Dance A Chinese New Year Lift-the-Flap Book

By Joan Holub  
Illustrated by Benrei Huang  
2003, 17 pages, Paperback.

Dragon Dance is a nice compact introduction to the Chinese New Year celebration. Kids will enjoy lifting the flaps to see the hidden pictures and constructing the dragon puppet from the directions at the end of the book.

ORDER -- Item #3530, Normally \$6.99 ... for newsletter subscribers **\$5.59**