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History, Culture, and Humanity: Contextualizing Modern Oppressions

Rosalyn Arvizu
University of San Diego

Payton Asch
University of San Diego

Thalia Petronelli
University of San Diego

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The background is a vibrant, abstract painting with thick brushstrokes in shades of blue, green, red, and yellow. The colors are layered and textured, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall composition is dynamic and expressive.

HISTORY, CULTURE, AND HUMANITY

CONTEXTUALIZING MODERN OPPRESSIONS

**Introduction to Asian American
Studies Fall 2020**

**Rosalyn Arvizu, Payton Asch,
Thalia Petronelli**

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FOREWARD

In the Fall 2020 Introduction to Asian American Studies class, small students cohorts were tasked with creating a zine page for the various concepts analyzed in class. We read many articles in relation to Asian American oppression, both globally and locally. This included topics such as the history of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the anti-Chinese movement, and the various racializations different Asian ethnicities faced. We read about the model minority myth and its prevalence after the Vietnam War, Korean War, and Cold War.

Additionally, we discussed the militarization and radicalization of the United States' colonial projects in Hawai'i, Guam, the Phillipines, and Vietnam.

Understanding the historical oppressions and narratives Asian Americans have endured allows us to recognize patterns and parallels within contemporary issues. This also allows us to compare these experiences with that of other minorities, such as African Americans. For more than a century, anti-Asian sentiment dominated American society which still effects these peoples today. The "positive" stereotypes Asian Americans are equated with still confine the group and mask their histories. We hope that the historical and contemporary concepts discussed empowers you to challenge the way you view the Asian American experience, and become an ally to their struggles.

THE CHINESE MUST GO

BASED ON THE TEXT "THE CHINESE MUST GO!": THE ANTI-CHINESE MOVEMENT" BY ERICA LEE

COOLIEISM AND SLAVERY

Coolies as they were called at the time, referred to Chinese and Indian immigrants who signed labor contracts during the 19th century, specifically with railroad companies who needed cheap labor to build massive tracks across the US. With the signing of the 13th amendment which federally abolished slavery in 1865, the United States was in need of a new labor force. This led to the immigration of Chinese laborers to the US, who served as proof that the US could function without the use of slaves. However, their contracts were a system of indentured servitude, and was a miniscule push away from slavery.

The Page Law was created out of the Anti-Chinese sentiment which was rampant in the United States during the 19th century, and established federal regulation around the immigration of undesired or immoral laborers to the United States. This was the first restrictive immigration law put into place by the US government, and although it did not name Chinese immigrants specifically, Chinese women were the targets of this law. Because of this, it was effectively an Anti-Chinese law in practice. Due to the focus on Chinese women in particular, this law was detrimental to the formation of Chinese families within the United States.

1875
THE PAGE LAW

The Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited Chinese people from immigrating to the United States. This act was deeply rooted in racism. When the act was proposed, the senators defending it compared Chinese people to rats, beasts, and swine. John Miller, the senator who proposed the act said that Chinese people were a "degraded inferior race." One of the main concerns Miller had about Chinese immigrants was the threat they posed to white workers' jobs. This act set the precedent for future immigration laws around race in the United States over the last 130 years.

1882
THE CHINESE
EXCLUSION ACT

This immigration act successfully barred Asian immigrants from entering the country. Those from "Asian" countries were blocked from entering into The United States. The notion of an Asian country included, but was not limited to, Middle Eastern countries, Russia, and some Pacific Islands. People from the Philippines were allowed to travel because they were seen as US Nationals due to the Philippines being a US territory at the time. Those who did enter the country had to pass a literacy test, and faced heavy taxation.

1917
IMMIGRATION ACT

TODAY...



...we are in the middle of a Global Pandemic that the President of the United States branded as Chinese. We can see parallels to the Chinese Exclusion Act since currently, China is the largest manufacturing country in the world. This anti-Chinese sentiment comes from fear of the threat that China poses to the United States Economy. By explicitly branding the Coronavirus as a Chinese disease, the President was tapping into the existing Chinese prejudice in our society that dates back to the 1800's.

SOLIDARITY LAMP

A TOOL TO COMBAT ANTI-BLACK SENTIMENTS

BASED OFF OF NERISSA S. BALCE'S TEXT: FILIPINO BODIES, LYNCHING, AND THE LANGUAGE OF EMPIRE

THIS ITEM IS INTENDED TO SHINE LIGHT ON THE ISSUES OF TODAY SURROUNDING THE EFFECTS OF RACIALIZATION, SPECIFICALLY ON FILIPINO PEOPLES. THIS PRODUCT SHOWS HOW THE RACIALIZATION OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE AS 'BLACK' IS A TOOL USED TO SUPPORT WHITE SUPREMACY, AND OPPRESS THOSE SEEN AS 'OTHER' BY THE UNITED STATES. IN BALCE'S TEXT, WE ARE SHOWN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN US COLONIAL RULE IN THE PHILIPPINES, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR, AND THE LYNCHING OF BLACK PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH. SHE REFERENCES THE "PHENOMENON OF RECIPROCITY" A TERM TO SUMMARIZE THE PREVALENT CRITIQUES TAKING PLACE, MAINLY BY AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE, OF THE US'S EXPANSION OF THE VIOLENCE OCCURING AT HOME. THIS PRODUCT ILLUMINATES AND PROMOTES THE SOLIDARITY BETWEEN ALL RACIALIZED PEOPLE.



Base

The foundation of this light is based on the acknowledgement of blackness used as a tool for suppression against different peoples, and understanding how different cultures experienced this.



Lamp Shade

The lamp shade directs the actions and diffuses it so it can be spread more effectively, since unfiltered light can be overbearing.



Light Bulb

The light bulb is the action we can take to work towards solidarity. The light bulb shines light on the issues of today.



Lamp Switch

The lamp switch is the act of learning and understanding which empowers us to see in the dark.



Neck

The neck of the lamp captures all members of a community coming together, connecting a strong foundation with direct action, in order to properly illuminate the issue.



Assembled, this lamp allows us to illuminate the issues of today through acknowledging the past, our own bias, and making concise efforts through our daily actions



WARNING: This product may not erase nor heal all effects of anti-black sentiments. White supremacy has been and still is a very powerful and dominant force that cannot be dismantled with this lamp alone.

The effects of racialization are still being seen on Filipino-American's today. More than a century of racial violence has had lasting effects, and though solidarity and awareness helps, more must be done to fully heal the community. Grace Talusan shared in her memoir, "The Body Papers", that she is not accepted in the Philippines due to the assimilation she endured in the US. Still, in the States, she is 'othered' and perceived differently due to her dark skin and physical appearance. This story is not unique, but one many Filipino-Americans struggle with every day. Those with brown skin in this country unfortunately face racism at an alarming rate, and though we hope this product will help, we acknowledge that more structural change needs to occur as well.

RACIAL GROOVE WORLD TOUR

BASED OFF OF YUICHIRO ONISHI'S TEXT 'TRANSPACIFIC ANTIRACISM'

FEAT.

Paul Robeson's Spacious Conceptions

Paul Robeson was an artist, scholar, and activist in the 1920's and 30's who was particularly interested in other cultures and ran with anticolonial Afro-Asian nationalists. Robeson used his art to shape his own conceptions of what it means to be African. His creative process made it so that afro-asian solidarities could work together in a "racial groove" of activism.

Du Bois's Japan Tour

In order to discuss the connections between the racial struggles of Black Americans and Japanese people, Du Bois studied various contacts between Africans and Japan. He used this as evidence to point out the plights of other races being in tandem with Black struggles, all pointing back to imperialism and white supremacy.

Jim Crow: Oppression and Hatred

Yoriko Nakajima played a large role in postwar Japan's Black Studies movement. Nakajima was motivated to resistance work by witnessing the effects of Jim Crow in the United States and similarly in Africa. She contributed to Kokujin Kenkyu no Kai along with Du Bois and many others.

Okinawa and The Imperialists

We see Okinawa as a territory that dealt heavily with different occupations, first from Japan and then the United States at the end of World War II (it was not given back to Japan until 1972). As a result, Onishi talks about Okinawan and Japanese scholars' discussions regarding race and empire as they began studying Black experiences in tandem to their own.

Kokujin Kenkyu no Kai

Kokujin Kenkyu no Kai is Japanese for the Association of Negro Studies. This was an example of Japanese people framing the Black experience in terms of their own. There were many scholars associated with Kokujin Kenkyu no Kai from both african and asian identities.

The Transpacific Anti War Coalition

Anti-war movements were also a place of international solidarity among colonized peoples. Onishi references the Vietnam War as a moment where multiracial organizations of various countries came together to push against the oppressive military machine driving the war. These anti-imperialist coalitions show the power that oppressed peoples have when they recognize the globality of their experiences.

& many more!

FINDING THE GROOVE

Onishi's 'racial groove' means recognizing and making various connections across the globe in order to expand Black resistance. This idea worked to bring human liberation by collaborating with multiple efforts to spread consciousness and inspire change. Afro-Asian solidarity projects began changing the groove in order to move towards social and political equality in new ways. The headlining bands all envisioned this change to exist within a radical and international movement that would defy borders and unite the transpacific.

These records are still selling out to this day due to the racial grooves that have truly paved the way for those to come. By listening to these songs again, we can hear the Afro-Asian solidarity movement giving the struggle of "Blackness" new meanings and possibilities. Black internationalism can be seen today, with the global Black Lives Matter movement capturing a worldwide audience, and having a vast number of supporters and demonstrators in Asian countries. The timelessness of the message and the power of the grooves are sure to empower many more for decades to come.

MEMORIES IN LETTERS

BASED OFF OF THE TEXT HEARTBEAT OF STRUGGLE BY DIANE FUJINO

Greetings from San Pedro

When Yuri Kochiyama was living in San Pedro Japanese Americans were being uprooted from their homes, and relocated to internment camps. This uprooting first started with Terminal Island across the bay from San Pedro when the FBI seized and arrested the fishermen who lived there. Before she left, Kochiyama decided to make a scrapbook of pictures of her friends, and packed letter writing materials. This is evidence of how much she valued friendship.

PLACE
ONE CENT
STAMP
HERE

Yuri's original home

Greetings from Santa Anita

Yuri Kochiyama and her family first arrived at the Santa Anita Assembly Center on April 3rd 1942, only two months after Executive Order 9066 was signed into law. Although this new reality was met with a range of emotions and opinions, Yuri remained positive and found joy wherever possible. Many chose to fight this discrimination with patriotism, including Yuri, and she along with other girls her age decided to start a letter-writing campaign to Nisei soldiers. Although originally a small club, it soon grew to about ninety participants writing hundreds of letters.

PLACE
ONE CENT
STAMP
HERE

a holding camp in Los Angeles

before Japanese Americans

were sent to internment camps

away from the west coast

Post CARD

"We are here to welcome you, as you come here to join us. We know that you'll cooperate, instead of making fu-uss; With your friendly additudes, With your happy moods, With your hopes to do your bit, Let's show our hearty spi-rit!"

PLACE
ONE CENT
STAMP
HERE

written by Yuri and her friends

at the Santa Anita Assembly

Center

Greetings from Jerome

The Crusaders began appearing at many camps, with the largest chapter in Jerome. Reaching over 13,000 Nisei soldiers, their patriotism was not unnoticed, even though this country dismissed them. Yuri worked to instill her values of never losing humanity and keeping a positive attitude in her community. However, the realizations and realities of discrimination and segregation forced racial consciousness to occur. Unfortunately, all Japanese Americans would face a lifetime of racial prejudice that only began with life inside of these camps.

PLACE
ONE CENT
STAMP
HERE

an internment camp located
in Arkansas where Yuri
lived for two years

Post CARD

“For each in turn must leave this camp
And part with those now near
And yet we’ll take a bit of all
The things we once held dear...
Though years and distance lies
between
And paths may never cross
The richness of our memories
Will never bring a loss”

PLACE
ONE CENT
STAMP
HERE

written by Yuri the night
before she left Jerome

POSTCARD

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Today we can see many parallels between Japanese internment camps and ICE Detention centers. People in both groups are taken to the camps against their will, and they’re held until the United States decides what to do with them. Just as the Crusaders started a letter writing campaign, there have been several letter writing campaigns for the ICE detainees. By looking at Yuri Kochiyama as an example, we too can advocate and take action towards global community and solidarity.

looking towards the future

FROM: _____

MODEL MINORITY

BASED OFF OF TEXT BY CRYSTAL MUN-HYE BAIK: MILITARIZED MIGRATIONS
BASED OFF OF TEXT BY HYEJIN SHIM IN OUR LIFETIME

BRAIN

"In a related sense, the capacity of Korean women and children to successfully integrate into the American populace depended on their steadfast ability to quickly forget the Korean War"
- page 65 (Militarized Migrations)

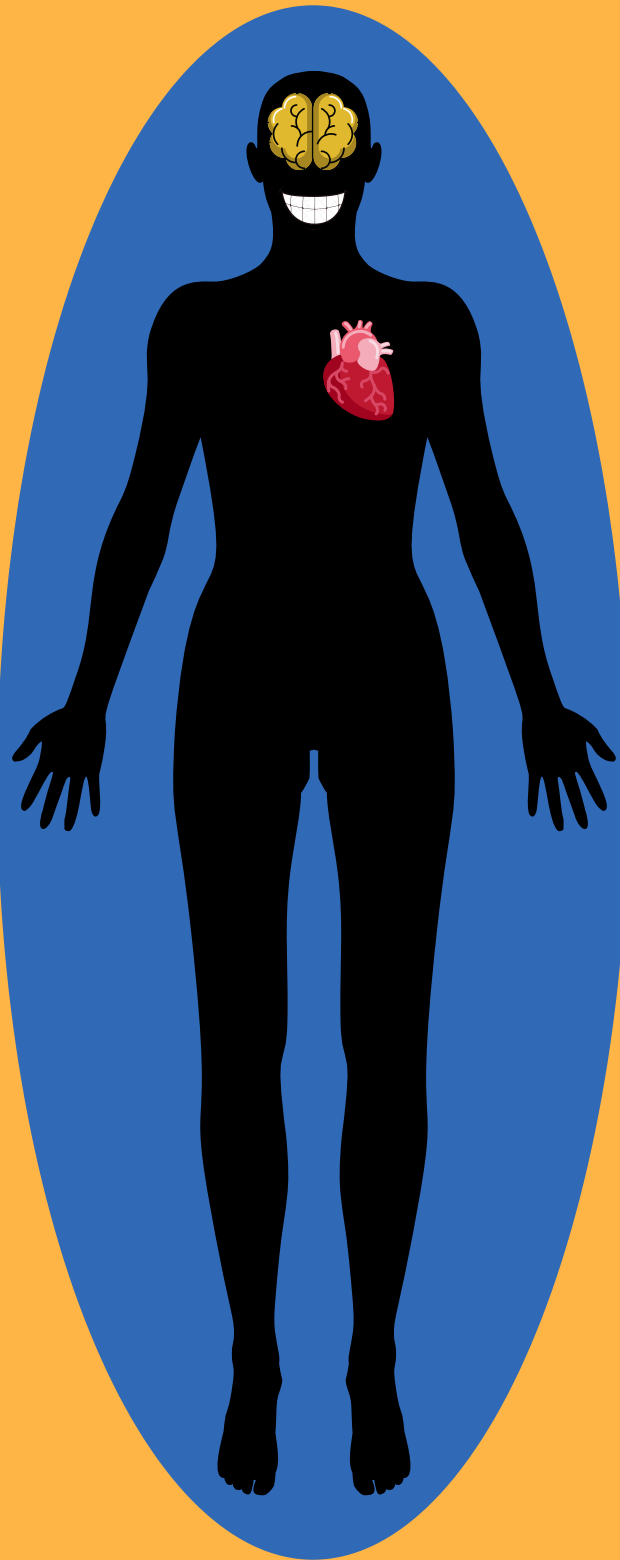
MOUTH

"Even when I was in school in Chicago in college, I majored in-in east asian history we learned about- you know, we covered the Korean War in our East Asian civ class. But even at that point, it didn't occur to me to go back to my parents and say, 'Sit down, let's-let's talk about the war'" page 51 (Eun-Joung Militarized Migrations)

GENDER

"...gendered transformations of Korean migrants displaced by armed conflict into naturalized American immigrants via the Cold War lexicon of heteronormative sexual intimacies..." - page 37 (Militarized Migrations)

"In effect, the gendered migration of Korean war brides alluded to a larger dilemma associated with Asian women, who were doubly constructed by American popular culture as sexually exotic, threatening, and licentious, as well as properly domesticated, feminine, and delicate." - page 47 (Militarized Migrations)



HEART

"What we have now came at the cost of so many lives, and entire worlds of possibility. Watching Moon and Kim cross over this arbitrary, absurd thing called a border so easily made my heart constrict with emotion, thinking of all the senseless violence, pain and suffering that led us to this point, seven decades later. It doesn't undo everything, and it's still important. It doesn't undo everything, and maybe that's what hurts." Hyejin Shin

ARMS

"The United States...obligated itself to generously accept these "poor and destitute" subjects with open and compassionate arms" - page 46 (Militarized Migrations)

HANDS

"...Eun-Joung's family fulfills the "American dream" by vertically traversing the socioeconomic ladder: while her father is demoted from a white-collar profession in South Korea to a blue-collar occupation in Atlanta's service sector, her parents eventually save enough money to purchase a small business." -page 58-59 (Militarized Migrations)

LEGS

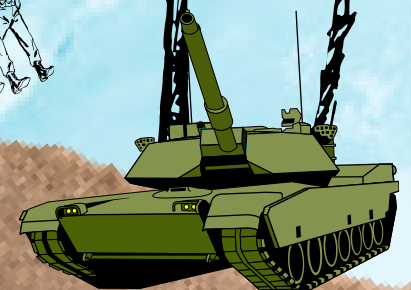
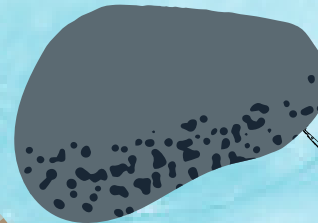
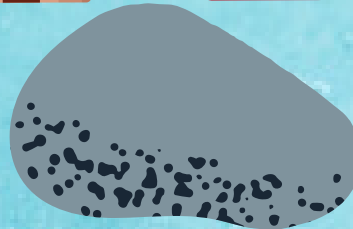
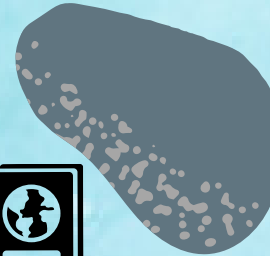
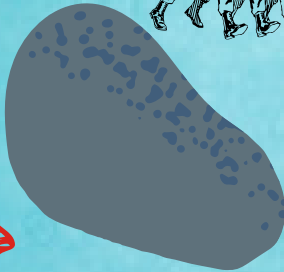
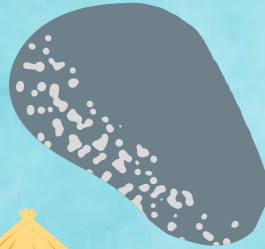
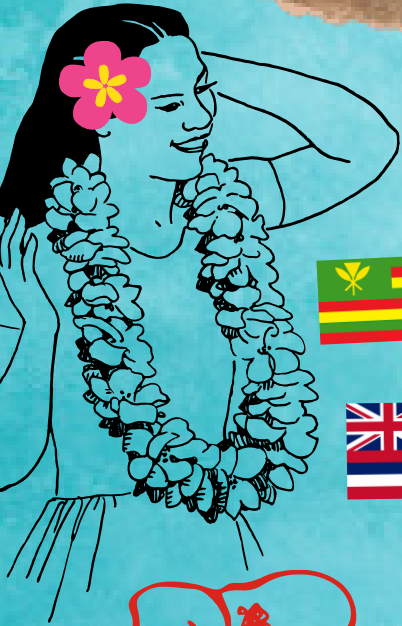
"When I meet friends and people, I'm cheerful, big smile. And then when I'm asked about some personal family story, then I just avoid or ignore telling some other things ... I never mention about my brothers and sisters who disappeared" page 57 (Min Yong Militarized Migrations)

The 'model' of a Korean immigrant as shown above is a way to connect the diaspora to ways in which the Korean War and US occupation thereafter affected the lives of Korean people. The 'militarized migrations' as a result of the war show the continued effect that the split of Korea had on its citizens, resulting in the complete separation and identity shift of those on either sides of the Demilitarized Zone. We also see the existence of US soldiers in Korea justified by emphasizing the need to protect South Korean citizens due to the feminization of the nation. This also led to the beginnings of the model minority myth, as South Korean immigrants were framed as being non threatening to the status quo.

Crystal Mun-hye Baik's explanation of "We are Here Because You Were There" widely applies to the immigration to America today. The Korean Diaspora occurred due to the United States' participation in the Korean War, which caused many people to be displaced due to a lack of safety and security within the nation. Today, a number of migrants coming to America are refugees seeking asylum. Both the Middle East and Central America have had violence in their countries amplified and fueled by the United States. Like the Koreans, these people are actively pursuing immigration to the US to escape tense conditions at home.

STEPPING STONES A BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

BASED OFF OF TEXT BY SIMEON MAN: ALOHA, VIETNAM: RACE AND EMPIRE IN
HAWAII'S VIETNAM WAR



The range of imposed savage and exotic ideals on Vietnam and Hawaii by the United States through militarization as a means of racial domination.

VIETNAMESE REFUGEE ITINERARY

BASED OFF OF THE TEXT MILITARIZED REFUGE(ES) BY YEN LE ESPIRITU



“Moving from one U.S. military base to another, Vietnamese refugees in effect witnessed firsthand the reach of the U.S. empire in the Asian-Pacific region.”



Vietnam - Due to the threat of war in Vietnam, Vietnamese Refugees were evacuated and airlifted out of the country by the United States. The discomfort they faced while traveling in military cargo carriers that were not designed for passengers foreshadowed what was to come.



Philippines - Clark Air Force Base (AFB) in the Philippines was used not only to aid in the Vietnam war, but also as a stopping point for Vietnamese refugees. The Philippines has a long history as a US colonial project, being a prime location near to mainland Asia. Clark AFB was first a U.S. Army Cavalry post created in 1903.



Guam - The Andersen Air Force Base tent cities in Guam were erected to house the incoming refugees. Due to the overpopulation of the island there were long lines for the resources such as food and water.



United States - Once in the United States, refugees found themselves without a *Quê Hương*, or homeland. Today, many of these people live without the memories of their homeland, or only of the war and militarization that they faced while there.

MONARCH MIGRANTS

BASED OFF THE TEXT "ON EARTH WE'RE BRIEFLY GORGEOUS" BY OCEAN VUONG

"Tell me,' you sat up, a concerned look on your face, 'when did this all start? I gave birth to a healthy normal boy. I know that. When?"

"Sometimes, I imagine the monarchs fleeing not winter but the napalm clouds of your childhood in Vietnam. I imagine them flying from the blazed blasts unscathed,... you can no longer fathom the explosion they came from, only a family of butterflies floating in clean, cool air, their wings finally, after so many conflagrations, fireproof."

MINORITY MYTHS

BASED ON THE TEXT "THE COLD WAR ORIGINS OF THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH" BY ROBERT LEE



The existence of a 'model minority' necessitates a 'problem minority' which directly pits Asian Americans against Black Americans. Asian Americans are perceived as successfully achieving the American Dream and integrating into society whereas Black Americans are perceived as incapable.

TERROR RHETORIC IN THE US

BASED ON THE TEXT "THE CITIZEN AND THE TERRORIST" BY LEDI VOLPP

"Middle Eastern, Arab, and Muslim" Acts of Terror

Federal appeals court overturns Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's death sentence



BBC News

New York truck attack suspect 'spent a year planning'

The Uzbek immigrant, who faces federal terrorism charges, says he was inspired by so-called Islamic State. He was shot and injured by police at the scene. US ...

Nov 2, 2017

New York Times

Islamic State Claims Responsibility for Lower Manhattan Terrorist Attack

The Islamic State claimed responsibility late Thursday for the terrorist attack in ... rampage "one of the most prominent attacks targeting Crusaders in America."

Nov 2, 2017



Mechanic charged with sabotaging flight may have ISIS ties

In July, Abdul-Majeed Marouf Ahmed Alani allegedly tried to interfere with a plane's navigation system

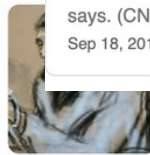
SEP 18, 2019

CNN

ISIS wing claims responsibility for Minnesota mall attack

Story highlights. The attack is "a potential act of terrorism," the FBI says; Minnesota mall stabber was "soldier of the Islamic state," ISIS-linked media says. (CNN) ...

Sep 18, 2016



USA TODAY

Islamic State claims responsibility for Brussels attack that killed dozens

BRUSSELS — The Islamic State claimed responsibility for brutal attacks that ... "We were fearing terrorist attacks and that has now happened," Belgian Prime ... day of a Latin American tour, said the U.S. stands with Mar 22, 2016

Is France Fueling Muslim Terrorism by Trying to Prevent It?

Emmanuel Macron's government may unwittingly be breeding the kind of communalism it wants to ward off.

White Acts of Terror

Iran calls U.S. airstrikes in Iraq and Syria acts of 'terrorism'

The Iraqi president said it was "unacceptable and considered as an aggressive action and violation of Iraqi sovereignty."

CNN

Orlando shooting: 49 killed, shooter pledged ISIS allegiance

Orlando, Florida (CNN) An American-born man who'd pledged allegiance to ISIS ... United States and the nation's worst terror attack since 9/11, authorities said.

Jun 13, 2016



Virginia Tech Shooting Leaves 33 Dead



Virginia Tech students prayed in a church near the university after a shooting rampage.

Stephen Crowley/The New York Times

Suspected gunman in El Paso Walmart shooting pleads not guilty to attack that killed 22

CRIME NEWS

Man arrested in NC was plotting assassination of Joe Biden, mass shootings, terrorist attacks



As stated by Volpp, "Through these actions and these statements, the American public is being instructed that looking "Middle Eastern, Arab, or Muslim" equals "potential terrorist."" On this page we hope to show the differences in media representations between white and brown acts of terror.

THE FILIPINO WORKER

BASED OFF OF THE TEXT "NEOLIBERALISM AND THE PHILIPPINE LABOR BROKERAGE STATE" BY ROBYN RODRIGUEZ

LOOKING FOR A SOURCE CHEAP LABOR?

LOOKING TO EXPLOIT EXPERIENCED WORKERS?

Able Minds

- "Highly skilled"
- "well-educated"
- "English speaking"
- "productive"
- "efficient"
- there is an expectation for immigrants to know English in order to be of value globally

Able Hands

- household services
- plumbers and electricians
- nurses and caregivers
- Migrants are continuously trained
- Filipinos are seen as short term labor that can be outsourced and contracted when the need arises.

To Foreign Lands

- Deployed to 200+ countries and territories around the globe
- money the Phillipines makes from remittences goes to "debt servicing rather than to generating new local employment" creating a cyclical problem

CALL THE PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT ADMINISTRATION TODAY!