

# B

---

## BABAYLAN STUDIES

---

Referencing Alicia Magos's definition in *The Enduring Ma-Aram Tradition*, *babaylan* studies with respect to Fil-Am studies is a decolonial practice that addresses a perceived need for cultural content to fill in knowledge gaps for diasporic Filipina/x/os wanting to reconnect with their homeland and ethnic/cultural identity. Babaylan studies uses *babaylan* (a Visayan term meaning indigenous shaman healer, priestess, ritualist, herb doctor, diviner, as referenced by Leny Strobel in *Babaylan: Filipinos and the Call of the Indigenous*) to refer to indigenous, precolonial, and ancestral traditions disrupted from being handed down between generations, as a result of migrant displacement on colonial lands, assimilation, adoption of colonized practices, ways of life, beliefs, and mentalities. This entry offers an overview of the evolution of babaylan studies and discusses babaylan-inspired and indigenizing dialogues, practices, and gatherings.

### Overview

Babaylan studies has evolved through artist, activist, healer, and academic movements and community work in the global diaspora focused on learning, reclamation, and healing of ancestry, intergenerational relationships, confrontation and healing of colonial mentalities/trauma through Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Pilipino Psychology) and reconnection to precolonial Philippine history,

indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSP), and honoring ancestral land origin. Influenced by and initiated in larger scale visibility through the Center for Babaylan Studies (CfBS), babaylan studies continues to be shaped through culturally responsive leadership. Babaylan studies also requires a relationship between indigenous peoples (IP) (referring to original peoples who remain connected and in service to the lands of their ancestral lineage) in the colonized islands of the Philippines and on settled colonial lands and Filipina/x/os in the global diaspora as central to the integrity of the embodied work of the studies.

The emergence of babaylan studies began in the early 2000s in the context of a decolonization movement in the diaspora, where Filipina/x/o individuals throughout the global diaspora sought to remember and reclaim practices and ways of life that were not influenced and manipulated by colonial culture. The intention of those engaging in babaylan studies is to promote cultural practice and healing of colonial trauma. The studies are an act of social justice and activism seeking to dismantle colonial control and erasure of indigenous teachings and traditions.

Contemporary babaylan studies' emergence can be noted through the works of the following academics, scholars, and writers, beginning in the Philippines as early as the 1990s through Fe Mangahas, Mary John Mananzan, Agnes Micalat Cacayan, Grace Nono, Grace Odal Devora, Carolyn Brewer, and Katrin de Guia. The diasporic emergence of babaylan studies was ushered into the United States through the work of Leny

Strobel, mentored by Virgilio Enriquez, and facilitated by the creation of the CfBS, founded by Strobel alongside Perla Daly, Letecia Leyson, and Baylan Megino.

Before the CfBS, *babaylan* was a concept deployed by artists in the United States (*Sino Ka, Ano Ka?* SFSU art exhibit) as well as writers (*Babaylan Anthology* edited by Nick Carbo and Eileen Tabios); as such, it serves as a footprint to the beginning of the investigation and exploration of returning to one's roots as Filipina/x/o Americans primarily of second-generation upbringing of the diaspora. The use of *babaylan* was a signifier of decolonization and remembering precolonial, indigenous culture, history, and identity.

### Dialogues, Practices, and Gatherings

The Babaylan listserve (and Pagbabalikloob listserve) on YahooGroups was initiated in the late 1990s by Perla Daly and Leny Strobel to create dialogues with counterparts in the Philippines about babaylan and IKSP. These listservs were open to Filipina/x/os throughout the global diaspora who had the similar interest of discussing and creating events and work that sought to decolonize through the acts that included, but were not limited to, tracing lineage and ancestral ties, reestablishing relationship to and/or initiating pilgrimage back to the motherland, confronting and unpacking intergenerational colonial mentalities and traumas, and creating community through the shared work of remembering familial, precolonial Philippines history and traditions.

CfBS, established as an organization in 2009, became a container for the embodiment of *babaylan*-inspired practices within the context of a decolonizing and indigenizing community. Through time, interrogation of how to do this without acting through unconscious appropriation and with relation and guidance from indigenous peoples became central to this work.

In its beginnings embodied practices in the *babaylan spirit* were exchanged in communal events and gatherings through community sharings of decolonizing/indigenizing/re-indigenizing work of members of the CfBS community. These practices and explorations connected to solidarity with indigenous peoples and communities in the motherland (e.g., Tboli, Ifugao, Igorot); healers

and culture-bearers who through building of allyship and mutual-aid relational exchanges shared with members embodied lessons reconnecting them to their ancestral roots. Much of the work of CfBS and the motivation of members to embrace babaylan studies was with the purpose of tracing their own individual ancestral roots that would help them be led back to their indigenous ancestors.

Linking babaylan studies work to the leadership of surviving indigenous communities in the motherland became an important emphasis for this work. This was modeled after the work of organizations and events in the Philippines that worked to bridge indigenous people's relations with diasporic community seeking to engage in decolonial work with equity. This included the work of the Kapwa Conference established by Kidlat Tahimik and the Heritage and Arts Academies of the Philippines, Inc. (HAPI Foundation) and Pamati (Cebuano-Visayan for *listen* [verb] and *feeling* [noun]) and led by the efforts of Grace Nono and the TAO Foundation. At these gatherings, not only were participants given an opportunity to take part in Indigenous Cultural Learnings and listen to members of IP communities speak on the state of their lives, but there was also a goal of relationship building between IPs and diasporic Filipina/x/os.

In 2010, CfBS held their first conference, *Reclaiming the Now: The Babaylan Is Us*, at California State University at Sonoma, inspired by the Kapwa Conference, seeking to invite the community to gather around similar intentions and vision as their organizing counterparts in the Philippines. Those intentions included reconnecting to precolonial, indigenous roots and cultural practice through the guidance and leadership of the IP community and including the voices of diaspora Filipina/x/os exploring and creating through the remembering, reclamation, and healing of their disconnect from their indigenous cultural roots. Since then CfBS has held conferences every three years, bringing together babaylan-inspired practitioners, community members, and academicians who are invested in the healing of colonial mentality. The 2nd International Babaylan Conference, *Katutubong Binhi/Native Seeds: Myths and Stories that Feed our Indigenous Soul*, was held September 2013, at Westminster Woods

near Occidental, California. The 3rd International Babaylan Conference Makasaysayang Pagtatagpo (Historic Encounters): Filipino and Indigenous Turtle Islanders Revitalizing Ancestral Traditions Together, held in Coast Salish territory near Vancouver, Canada, on September 2016, was cohosted with Kathara Pilipino Indigenous Arts Collective Society. The 4th International Babaylan Conference, Muling Pag-Uugat (Re-Rooting) Learning Land, Unlearning Empire: Recovering *Indigenous* Roots and Creating Kapwa Relations in the Settler Colonial Diaspora, was cohosted with Kapwa Collective on Whata Kanien'keha:ka Territory, in Torrence, Ontario, Canada, September 2019.

Influenced by early academics and scholarship on decolonial work, a growing babaylan movement catalyzed a large emergence of artists and cultural bearers in the diaspora who then created work in the early 2000s, establishing communal projects, exhibitions, events, and, later on, organizations that sought to create community practices to embody babaylan studies. This included the work of Kapwa Kollektive, Kathara, Mylene Leng Leng Cahambing (*The Banka Journey*), Diyan and Nicanor Evans (*Ginto Seeds*), Jana Lynne Umipig (*The Journey of a Brown Girl, Raised Pinay*), and *Kapwa Tarot*), Sammay Dizon (*Urban × Indigenous, Daluyan*), and other practitioners. Diasporic healers in holistic medicine and practices also began to offer wider services to the broader community that were rooted in remembered ancestral practices that include re-learning and apprenticing in cultural practices through relationships with IP relations and having strengthened intergenerational, familial learning and passing down of traditions with elders in the babaylan spirit (*batok* tattooing traditions, *laga* weaving, and *hilot*).

During year one of the COVID-19 global pandemic, CfBS continued to provide programming and virtual communal gathering spaces through webinars, including the Ginhawa Series in the month of May 2020, in the style of CfBS conferences inviting practitioners, scholars, and leaders/influencers to share learning and study spaces that centralized decolonization practices to be embodied and implemented for decolonial healing, education, and community organizing topics reflective of culturally responsive interests and need.

In 2019, Jana Lynne Umipig and Olivia Sawi began the cultivation of the Decolonization School, formulating and leading a process of ethno-autobiographical practice that also included culturally relevant and responsive frameworks to guide participants through the continued and evolving work of diasporic communities to embrace IKSP, Sikolohiyang Pilipino, and decolonial work for individual and communal embodiment. They continue to hold monthly gatherings alongside facilitation with the current CfBS Core Members.

Kultivating Kapwa, also created by and hosted by Jana Lynne Umipig and produced by Olivia Sawi through the CfBS, was established during the 2020–2021 pandemic lockdown, beginning with interviews with Leny Strobel and extending to community members who, throughout the past 12 years of CfBS, have contributed to a growing dialogue around the evolution, expansion, and complication of babaylan-inspired research, cultural bearing, holistic healing, and embodiment practices.

Throughout the global diaspora and across the colonized islands of the Philippines, individuals are creating community organizations, academic frameworks, artistic creations, and means of dialogue that seek to expand on the reconnections to IKSP and unpack colonial mentalities through Sikolohiyang Pilipino that was seeded in the 1990s.

What continues to be of growing importance for all those engaging in babaylan studies, babaylan-inspired and indigenizing dialogues, practices, and gatherings is the inclusion and leadership of indigenous peoples' voices and the continuity and deepening of mutually beneficial relations between IPs and diasporic Filipina/x/os. There is an evolution taking place around the term *babaylan studies*, and indigenization is being grappled with by the community. The conversations between IPs and diasporic Filipina/x/os are complicated by the centralized topic of how to do this work with integrity and equity and with relationship to serving the protection, preservation, and sustaining of indigenous peoples and communities in relationship to governmental state, neocolonial violence, directly impacting and killing IPs throughout the colonized islands of the Philippines on their ancestral lands. Organizations such as Sabokahan in relationship to the Liyang Network is a leading

example of this work of bridging communities for the common cause of reconnecting Filipina/x/os in the global diaspora to their motherland with equity and justice.

Babaylan studies, meant to stand in symbolic relation to the acts of remembering, retracing, and reclaiming ancestral indigenous roots, continues to explore how to develop the language so as not to romanticize and exploit the lives of indigenous communities. Babaylan studies continues to evolve through community dialogue and holds the core intention to honor the precolonial and to reconnect Filipina/x/os throughout the global diaspora to their ancestral/indigenous roots.

*Jana Lynne Caldevera Umipig*

*See also* Colonial Mentality; Decolonization; Kapwa; Sikolohiyang Pilipino

### Further Readings

- Apostol, V. M. (2010). *Way of the ancient healer: Sacred teachings from the Philippine ancestral traditions*. North Atlantic Books.
- De Guia, K. (2005). *Kapwa: The self in the other: Worldviews and lifestyles of Filipino culture-bearers*. Anvil.
- Mendoza, S. L. L., Strobel, L. M., & University of Santo Tomas Publishing House. (2015). *Back from the crocodile's belly: Philippine babaylan studies and the struggle for indigenous memory*. UST Publishing House.
- Strobel, L. M. (2010). *Babaylan: Filipinos and the call of the indigenous*. Center for Babaylan Studies.
- Strobel, L. M. (2001). *Coming full circle: The process of decolonization among post-1965 Filipino Americans*. Giraffe Books.
- Wilcken, L. (2011). *Filipino tattoos: Ancient to modern*. Schiffer Publishing.

---

## BAHALA NA

---

*Bahala na* is defined by Filipino psychologist Alfredo Lagmay as risk taking in the face of the proverbial cloud of uncertainty and the possibility of failure. Lagmay's assertion is preceded by Western scholars' interpretation of *bahala na* as a passive acceptance of life's turn of events and was

thought to be an escapist value which served as a reliever of tension. Lynn Bostrom, an American psychologist, goes on to compare *bahala na* as closely related to the concept of fatalism—a belief that all events are predetermined and inevitable. Like Bostrom's depiction of *bahala na*, it is described by Filipino educator Camilo Osias to be a combination of fatalism and determination. Osias states that *bahala na* expresses courage and fortitude, a willingness to face difficulty, and a willingness to accept the consequences.

Filipino psychologists, including Virgilio Enriquez and Jose Panganiban, assert that Bostrom's conceptualization of *bahala na* fails to capture its meaning and depth. Bostrom believes *bahala na* to be a passive and fatalistic term. Filipino psychologists assert that *bahala na* is instead a confrontative value, as the phrase operates to raise a person's courage and determination. For example, when an individual is in a situation full of uncertainty, the individual utters the phrase *bahala na* and is then able to confront the situation as opposed to avoiding it. In this example, the individual is required to act in their own capacity while being resourceful and creative to improve their situation.

In 1993, Lagmay identified five instances when a *bahala na* response is evoked: (1) The prospective results or consequences of a situation cannot be determined in advance; (2) There is a personal deficiency or lack in means, material resources or funding, information or knowledge, and strength, ability, or capacity; (3) The situation is serious or delicate; (4) There is no help at the moment for a serious difficulty; and/or (5) One wishes to find out their limits of strengths or weaknesses.

Despite scholars arguing the true meaning of *bahala na*, the phrase's meaning and interpretation depends on the context of when and how *bahala na* is used. In 2005, Rolando Gripaldo, a Filipino psychologist, compiled six different definitions and usages of *bahala na* from various studies, articles, books, internet entries, and anecdotal evidence. The first definition is extracted from Heber Bartolome's 2001 song that defines *bahala na* as "Come/Happen what may" or "Whatever will be, will be." The second meaning pertains to the performer of the action that "it is up to the person(s) to take care of things. The person(s) will take care of the

situation.” The third use of *bahala na* pertains to a situation where the person is left to do what they want but must be prepared to face the consequences. The fourth situation where *bahala na* can be used is a way to communicate to others “never mind” or “it does not matter.” The fifth situation when *bahala na* is used is when tolerating a person or allowing them to do what they want and leaving them alone. The sixth interpretation of *bahala na* that Gripaldo states is a situation where a warning is tacitly implied. Specifically, the meaning of *bahala na* is “Go on with it as a warning.” Although Gripaldo agrees with Bostrom’s definition as fatalistic, he also asserts *bahala na* is deterministic and recognizes it as a responsible deliberative act of choosing that which is within one’s control. As such, the consensus among Filipino scholars appears to be that *bahala na* can be both passive and confrontive, depending on the context in which the phrase is used, and ultimately, a way for Filipinos to cope through indefinite, unpredictable, and stressful circumstances.

### Future Directions

Although little has been written about *bahala na* and Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs), future studies can also attempt to empirically measure *bahala na* as a psychological concept. In doing so, one may consider examining how *bahala na* can relate to other variables like colonial mentality and enculturation, and whether *bahala na* may predict outcomes in connection with self-esteem, achievement, depression, trauma, and resilience. Relatedly, because the majority of FAs are Catholic or practice other forms of Christianity, future studies can examine how *bahala na* may enhance or complicate one’s experiences with religion and spirituality—particularly how people may cope with fatalistic circumstances. For instance, *bahala na* may impact one’s motivation to seek mental health treatment, one’s responses when diagnosed with a terminal illness, or even one’s desire to fight against oppression or discrimination.

Future scholarship can also examine how the concept may manifest among FAs of different generations. Though many FA immigrants may relate to the definitions and usages of *bahala na* described

above, it is possible that FAs may relate to the concept in different ways. For instance, in the 1980s, a popular street gang in California was named *Bahala na*. Although the gang originated in the Philippines, recent and current members include both immigrant and U.S.-born FA youth. Thus, for some FAs, the phrase has been used to connote one’s willingness to rebel, to commit crimes, or to engage in anarchy. In this way, *bahala na* may be akin to “You only live once” mentalities—which may also be related to risk-taking behaviors, recklessness, or the devaluing of one’s own life.

Jessica Dionela Petalio and Von Torres

See also Catholicism; Christianity; Gangs, Filipina/x/o American; Health-Seeking Behaviors; Help-Seeking Behaviors; Psychology

### Further Readings

- Bartolome, H. (2001). *Bahala na* [a song]. <http://www.bahalana.htm>
- Bostrom, L. (1968). Filipino *bahala na* and American fatalism. *Silliman Journal*, 15(3), 399–413.
- Gripaldo, R. M. (2005). *Bahala na* [come what may]: A philosophical analysis. *Filipino Cultural Traits: Claro R. Ceniza Lectures*, 4, 203. Council for Research in Values and Philosophy.
- Lagmay, A.C. (1976). Ang kasaysayan at ang apat na ugaling Pilipino [The history of the four Filipino attitudes Pilipino]. In L. F. Antonion, L. L. Samson, E. S. Reyes, & M. E. A. Paguio (Eds.), *Ulat ng Ikalawang Pambansang Kumperensya sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino* [Chapter of the National Comprehensive Filipino Psychology] (pp. 120–130).
- Osias, C. (1940). *The Filipino way of life: The pluralized philosophy*. Ginn and Co.

---

## BASKETBALL LEAGUES, FILIPINO AMERICAN

---

Filipino American basketball leagues dot the American landscape spanning the Pacific Northwest, West Coast, the Midwest, southwest, south, northeast, and southeast. The formation of these basketball leagues demonstrates a deep passion and love for the game. This entry discusses the

historical formations of basketball in the Philippines through U.S. colonialism and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), basketball's influence to Filipina/x/o immigrant communities in the United States in the early 20th century, and its enduring relationship to contemporary Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs) in the 21st century.

Prior to migrating to U.S. shores, Filipinos had already started playing basketball and other American sports (see Filipina/x/o Americans and Sports). The invention of basketball dovetails with the YMCA connection to U.S. colonialism. Dr. James Naismith, the game's inventor, created it in 1891 in Springfield, Massachusetts, to inculcate a rendition of masculinity that was in opposition to the *barbarianism* and *violence* of rugby and football. Basketball offered a different version of physicality rooted in middle-class respectability that embodied a muscular Christian ethos. The YMCA, along with physical educators and Christian missionaries, sought to fulfill its mission by using sports to colonize Filipinos' bodies and minds. Filipinos were seen as *savages*, *uncivilized*, and unfit for self-rule. Sports, like basketball, offered one way to *assimilate* Filipino-colonized subjects.

The exuberance and passion that Filipina/x/os had for basketball was then brought to the United States in the early 20th century. Filipina/x/o immigrants' second-generation children created basketball leagues as a source of joy and pleasure, to claim their place in American society, and to celebrate their ethnic identity. One of the earliest formations of Filipino American basketball leagues took place in the West Coast and Pacific Northwest, where a significant number of early Filipino immigrants (known as the *manong* generation) came to fill labor needs in agriculture, fishing, and domestic work. Moreover, Filipinos were legally discriminated against through anti-miscegenation laws, alien land laws, and barred from certain public spaces. Excluded from claiming Americanness through formal means, children of manongs used basketball leagues and tournaments to establish spaces of their own by playing against their peers across cities and states. In the post-World War II (WWII) period, Filipino American basketball leagues continued. For example, in Hawai'i, some of these basketball players were WWII veterans who served in the Filipino Infantry Regiment. After the war, they returned to Hawai'i and

subsequently formed a basketball league in which they played against other Filipinos throughout the islands. Across the Pacific, in the California Bay Area, WWII veterans organized and funded various basketball tournaments as well as other sports.

The passage of the 1965 Immigration Act dramatically altered the composition of the FA community especially in relation to class, gender ratio, and an increase in the second generation. Educated professionals coming from the Philippines settled in various regions of the United States. These immigrants represented a professional class that filled labor needs in the healthcare professions, as well as in the sciences, and engineering fields. The children of these immigrants were born in the United States and, in the post-1965 era, also formed basketball communities and leagues throughout the nation. Simultaneously, basketball continued to grow in the Philippines as exemplified by the establishment in 1975 and sustained popularity of the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA). The PBA is the first professional basketball league in Asia and the second oldest pro hoops league in the world. Thus, many post-1965 Filipino immigrants continued to be highly socialized with basketball, and they brought their love and passion for the game with them upon migrating to the United States. This contributed to the further growth of FA basketball leagues. Cutting across generations, class, age, and gender, these leagues formed through churches, youth clubs, and peer networks that are reminiscent of their pre-WWII predecessors.

In 1987 in Los Angeles, FAs organized the Fil-Am Youth Basketball league as a wholesome alternative to the allure of drug use and gang activity. The focus on this league as a deterrent was situated in the larger context of Nancy Regan's *war on drugs* Drug Abuse Resistance Education campaign. Fil-Am Youth Basketball was eventually renamed Hooptown International in 1993, and since then it has promoted competition for its players to compete against their peers throughout the United States and to develop their skills to eventually play at the college level. Hooptown International also organized a visit to the Philippines, where its players participated in an exhibition match against Philippine-born players. This became a way to suture ties between

diasporic FAs and their fellow Philippine-born basketball peers. In addition to Hooptown International, there is also another organization called *Fil-Am Nation Select*. Founded in 2019 in the greater Los Angeles area, Fil-Am Nation Select develops players' basketball skills to eventually play in college and potentially in the PBA. This dynamic enables FAs to foster diasporic connections to the Philippines and their basketball contemporaries.

Basketball leagues enable some FAs to focus on health awareness and maintain community bonds. In Seattle there is a league called the *Life After Forty Basketball League* (LAFBL), organized for Filipino basketball players age 40 years and over. LAFBL reached out to several Filipino American businesses in the greater Seattle area, and many of these businesses agreed to participate in the league. Although their love of basketball is the primary means with which LAFBL was formed, it also promotes exercise, a way to form co-ethnic bonds, and to create professional social networks. In San Antonio, Texas, the Filipino Basketball League has members who play a unique style of basketball known as *gulang style* or *old man style*. *Gulang style* is reflective of how Filipino men who grew up in the Philippines play by favoring players who drive to the basketball hoop rather than settling for three-point shots. It is also gendered masculine. Thus, if a player does not drive to score a layup, he is seen as a *sissy*.

*Constancio R. Arnaldo Jr.*

*See also* Filipina/x/o Americans; Sports

### Further Readings

- Franks, J. (2010). *Crossing sidelines, crossing cultures: Sport and Asian Pacific American cultural citizenship*. University Press of America.
- Lawrence, J. P. (2017, August 15). 'Gulang style': Time brings change for Filipino-American basketball's elder statesmen. *NBC News*. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/filipino-american-basketball-amateurs-old-man-style-way-life-n791661>
- Reft, R. (2014, February 13). Filing the lane here and abroad: Filipino American identity and Basketball. *Television station KCET*. <https://www.kcet.org/history-society/filing-the-lane-here-and-abroad-filipino-american-identity-and-basketball>

## BATAAN DEATH MARCH

Ten hours after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i, on December 8, 1941, the Japanese Imperial Army invaded the Philippines—then a territory of the United States. For 4 months, 80,000 Filipino and American defenders endured heavy and relentless attacks by land, air, and sea. It was one of the longest and fiercest sieges of the Pacific war. On April 9, 1942, they were forced to surrender and ordered to march to prison camps. That 65-mile grueling trek in searing tropical heat with no provision for food, water, or shelter is infamously known as the *Bataan Death March*. Of the 10,000 prisoners who died along the way, 9,000 were Filipinos.

Historians describe the Fall of Bataan as the worst defeat in U.S. military history. Manila, the nation's capital, became the second most devastated city in the world after Warsaw, Poland. Approximately one million Filipino civilians died. Because this historic event is about surrender and defeat, it is not commemorated in the United States nor is it taught in schools. After the Pearl Harbor bombing, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war against Japan. But the war was fought not in the continental United States but in the Philippines, a U.S. colony for 50 years.

As a commonwealth of the United States from 1898 to 1946, the Philippines was a prime military target for Japanese expansion in Asia. To defend the country, more than 120,000 Filipinos were recruited and trained by the U.S. Army. On July 26, 1941, President Roosevelt ordered them to serve in the United States Army Forces of the Far East (USAFFE) under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. Historians point out that the defenders of Bataan and the entire Philippine archipelago were unaware that President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had agreed to save Europe first. Because the United States could not fight a war in two fronts, USAFFE troops were abandoned to fight without any air or naval support.

The Japanese had planned to take the Philippines in 50 days. But USAFFE troops were able to disrupt the timetable of the enemy and prevented them from reaching Australia. This delay enabled

the United States and its Allied Forces to build the necessary resources to turn the tide of war, eventually leading to victory four years later. Without the courage and fighting spirit of Filipino and American soldiers in Bataan, the war would likely have lasted much longer.

### Surrender and Defeat

The fall of Bataan was a devastating defeat for the USAFFE forces. Four months into the war, with dwindling food supplies and ammunition, their capacity for combat was largely diminished. By the time they surrendered, most of the men were suffering from massive disease and starvation. American commanders finally hoisted the white flag to avoid the useless slaughter of the remaining troops. USAFFE forces in Corregidor held on for another month before they, too, were forced to surrender. All were taken as prisoners of war.

Although the battle was over, the brutal ordeal of the exhausted, wounded, and malnourished soldiers was just beginning. At Bataan, Filipinos and Americans who had served side by side under the American flag and under the same commander now marched together, making the same sacrifices. From Mariveles, Bataan, to San Fernando, Pampanga, 76,000 soldiers—64,000 of them Filipinos—were forced to march for 65 miles in unbearable heat with no provisions for food, water, shelter, and medical care. From San Fernando, prisoners who survived were crammed in railway cars and unloaded at Camp O'Donnel, where they were confined for 6 months as prisoners of war and subjected to further cruel treatment.

During the long, arduous trek, Japanese soldiers barked orders, pointing their bayonets at the prisoners to keep them in line. Along the road, enemy tanks and military vehicles went racing by in pursuit of retreating Allied forces. Fighter planes were streaking above them. And bombs were exploding all over. "It was hell on earth," recalled Jesse M. Baltazar in his book, *The Naked Soldier*. A death march survivor, Baltazar describes how the Japanese soldiers used the butts of their rifles to prod the prisoners into groupings of roughly 100, with one guard assigned to each group. Prisoners were constantly

told that they were considered "captives, not POWs."

For 15 days, faced with heat, dust, and disease, the men suffered hunger, thirst, fatigue, and heatstroke. Along the way, Japanese guards brutalized the helpless prisoners. Those who resisted were stabbed with bayonets, beheaded by samurai swords, and bludgeoned with rifles. The ditches at the side of the road were littered with corpses, filling the air with the stench of decomposing bodies. Filipino villagers who lived along the route risked their lives as well when they tried to offer food and water to men along the march. But those who were caught trying to help were dealt with harshly.

In his book, Baltazar wrote about a horrifying scene:

We passed by the field where an American soldier was kneeling on the ground before a Japanese soldier. I saw the Japanese soldier's sword raised high in the air, glinting in the sun. I looked away but heard the slashing sound of the sword-like bayonet, followed by the dull sound as the man's head hit the ground. The Japanese soldier came back out to the road, wiping the blood off his bayonet and joking with his fellow soldiers. (Baltazar, 2016, p. 34)

At night, covered in sweat and mud, "we were herded like cattle into a barbed wire enclosure packed together so tightly, there was barely enough space to lie down," Baltazar wrote.

We had not been provided a proper place to relieve ourselves and had to do so wherever we could. Men died and the bodies quickly began to rot in the evening heat. Everyone was given a cup of boiled rice with a few flakes of salmon in it. We ate ravenously, ignoring the nauseating stench around us. (2016, p. 35)

On the third day, Baltazar couldn't take it anymore and managed to escape. He had resolved to make the daring move at the first chance he got. "There was no honor in dying senselessly," he wrote. "The only thing that mattered was to live another day." Baltazar, who enlisted in the U.S. Army when he was 21, went on to serve under General Douglas MacArthur during liberation.

His military career included service in the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He lived for 95 years, spending his last years with his family in Bethesda, Maryland.

### Prisoner of War Camp

Altogether, the Bataan Death March claimed the lives of approximately 10,000 prisoners. Six grueling days later, the survivors reached their final destination at Camp O'Donnell in Capas, Tarlac. The camp had served as a Philippine Army mobilization center. The prisoners looked emaciated and exhausted. Many were ill and some 16,000 more lost their lives in the first 2 months at the camp. By the time the survivors were released 6 months later, 25,000 prisoners had already died. Thousands of POWs were later transferred to other concentration camps or placed on hell ships and transported to labor camps in Japan, China, and Korea.

Antonio A. Nieva, a death march survivor, recounts what it was like in the POW camp in his memoir, *Cadet, Soldier, Guerrilla Fighter*. They were all packed like sardines in nipa-thatched barracks. He wrote:

The stench of weeks-old sweat of unwashed bodies in unlaundered clothes; dysentery excreta, vomit, festering wounds, gangrene-pus, and the foulness dripping from the upper deck. The air from outside furnished no relief. It was fetid with decay from the fly-infested, maggot-filled, open-trench latrines and pools of stale urine around the bamboo poles stabbed into the patient earth, and the sweet-sourish rot of corpses awaiting burial just outside the barracks doors. And the sounds. Even in daytime. Moans and sighs, groans and grunts, coughs, mumbles and babblings punctuated by sudden yells of fevered souls (“Yan na! Fire! Fire!”) with unexorcised [ . . . ] ghosts that refused to die. (Nieva, 2016, p. 119)

### Survivor Stories

Eyewitness accounts describe in graphic detail what the death march survivors went through. “We had no idea of the horrors that lay ahead,” recalled Filipino World War II (WWII) veteran

Montano Ramos. In a January 16, 1996, story he related to Anne Schindler, a writer for the Florida-based *Folio Weekly*, Ramos said he was 22 when a Japanese soldier struck him in the face without provocation. “We thought we would be released when we reached Pampanga (a province north of Bataan). The Japanese told us they would let us go.”

Instead, Ramos and all the prisoners were forced to march and forced to lie down on the scorching tarmac of an unrelenting Philippine summer. Their captors refused to let them pause to rest or defecate. “The road was littered with dead bodies,” Ramos recalled. “All along the sides of the road, men were dying in the dust. Sometimes the Japanese would kill the sick ones, sometimes they would just let them lie there and wait to die. They are dead already, yes—just skin and bones. But it’s very hard to die. They just live on, with the big blue flies living in their eyes and nose and mouth. I saw all of that with my own eyes.”

Prisoners who died were dumped in mass graves. Among the prisoners who survived was Pablo Caigoy, a native of Panay Island who fought in Bataan. According to his daughter, Mary Anne, her dad was tortured because he was an army officer. “Starvation and malnutrition reduced him to skin and bones,” she said.

One day, Japanese guards thought he was dead and threw him into an open pit, where others were buried. When our mother inquired about him, Japanese guards pointed to the mass grave where others were buried. My mother and my aunts looked for his body and were surprised to see him alive, although unconscious. After retrieving [him], our family nursed him back to health. It was a miracle. (Personal conversation, March 19, 2017)

Caigoy recovered and joined the Philippine Scouts, doing intelligence work as part of the resistance.

After the war, he was promoted to Master Sergeant in the U.S. Army and was later transferred to California where he was deployed for combat duty in Korea. His last assignment was in El Paso, Texas, where he married and raised six children. He was 66 years old when he died in 1976.

## Daring Escapes

Bataan Death March survivors not only endured unbelievable hardships and horrors; a daring few made a dash for freedom. Risking execution, some prisoners evaded their guards and returned safely to their hometowns. Those who regained their health would later join guerrilla units to fight the enemy.

Among them, according to Schindler, was Luis Conde. He was 21 years old when he was called to active duty and inducted into the USAFFE as a corporal. He took an oath of allegiance to America, he said, “because we really believed in America. We admired them, such a powerful country. They asked us to fight, and we said, ‘Of course, we will fight’. We never thought of saying no” (Schindler, 1996, p. 19). Conde said the Filipino soldiers were willing to keep on fighting, even when they had no food.

We would have fought to the last bullet. Had we known there would be a Death March, we never would have surrendered. The Japanese made fun of us afterwards for fighting with the Americans. They would say, ‘You’re Asian! Why do you fight with the Americans?’ But we believed in America and freedom. (Schindler, 1996, p. 19)

After a few days marching in unbearable heat, Conde realized there would be no freedom at the end of the road. “I decided to take a chance, and I was very lucky. The guard, he shot at me. I heard the bullets as they hit the ground. But I ran through a rice field and hid.” (Schindler, 1996, p. 19). Conde was lucky to escape but it took him nearly a year to recover from malaria and dysentery.

Another survivor who evaded the guards was Gil S. Dizon of Guimba, Nueva Ecija. In an unpublished memoir that he wrote in 1971, Dizon said that on the fourth day, he could no longer endure the march and that he was determined to detach himself from the line. “It was around 10:00 o’clock in the morning when the sun was about to begin its fury,” he wrote.

We had walked a considerable distance when we saw a bunch of our comrades at the back end of the line disengage. As they ran to the sugar cane fields, they attracted most of the guards who ran

after them, leaving only a few guards to watch. I decided it was the opportune time, and so taking hold of my cousin’s arm, we dashed into the sugar cane fields.

Dizon later led a guerrilla unit to fight the enemy after he regained his health.

## The Bataan Memorial Death March: A Living History Lesson

To ensure that the service and sacrifice of Bataan’s heroes are not forgotten, there are national programs established to memorialize that infamous event. Every year on April 9, Filipino American communities across the country and in the Philippines commemorate *Araw ng Kagitingan* or *Day of Valor*. Among the largest and most well-known is the *Bataan Memorial Death March* (BMDM). Founded in 1989 and held in the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico, BMDM is an annual reenactment of that grueling trek.

BMDM is a 26-mile marathon in the deserts of White Sands, covering long trails of ankle-deep sand. A group of ROTC cadets in New Mexico started the marathon to honor members of the state’s National Guard who fought in Bataan and Corregidor. From 1989 through 2019, it grew from 200 to more than 7,000 marchers each year. Participants include U.S. military units, foreign armed forces, ROTC cadets, wounded warriors, veterans, and family members.

Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba (Ret), chairman of the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project and son of a Bataan Death March survivor, has led a contingent of Filipino American families of veterans and community leaders each year since 2014. In remarks given at the March in 2017, he recalled

the brutal, brutal, brutal experience that my father and his comrades endured in the hot jungles of the Bataan Peninsula, marching for days without food or water. Let us be inspired by their service and sacrifice. Let’s do it for them, for their families, for us, and for our country. (<https://bataanmarch.com/>)

At the same event, Col. Dave Brown, White Sands Missile Range Garrison Commander, said:

The spirit of Bataan resides in each of us today. A remarkable group of World War II heroes encountered horrific combat conditions on quarter rations with little or no medical help, fought with outdated equipment with virtually no air power, and survived the atrocities of prisoner of war camps. (<https://bataanmarch.com/>)

The Bataan Memorial Death March is the nation's largest gathering to commemorate a Philippine historical event, and the prominence given to FA participation is a meaningful tribute to Filipino soldiers' role in the Pacific theater. In commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Bataan Death March, the singing of the Philippine National Anthem was included in the opening program for the first time in BMDM's history. The Philippine flag was also prominently displayed on stage beside the American flag, another significant first.

### Preserving Their Stories

To preserve their stories of bravery and courage, Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project is building an online interactive digital museum, called *Duty to Country—a Broken Promise*. It is designed to document the Filipino soldiers' role during WWII, which are seldom mentioned in U.S. history books. It also raises questions about the way the United States betrayed these loyal soldiers when Congress passed the Rescission Acts of 1946. Five months after the war ended, President Truman signed the First Surplus Rescission Act in February 1946, which disqualified Filipino WWII veterans from receiving their rightful benefits. This racially motivated act to strip them of their status is a dark chapter in U.S. history.

The dearth of information about the struggle of Filipino defenders of Bataan led to the founding in April 2012 of the Bataan Legacy Historical Society, based in San Francisco, California. Cecilia I. Gaerlan, the founder and director of the organization, is the daughter of Luis Gaerlan, Jr., a prisoner of war and a Bataan Death March survivor. Determined to bring back to life this mostly forgotten part of U.S. history, Gaerlan succeeded in getting the California State Board of Education on July 14, 2016, to approve the inclusion of

WWII in the Philippines in the revised history curriculum framework for the state. This seminal part of WWII history is now included in the Grade 11 U.S. history curriculum framework. "The approval is the culmination of many years of hard work from the Filipino community with the support of different organizations across the country," Gaerlan said.

This will be the first time that WWII in the Philippines will be taught to high school students not only in California but in the entire United States. This is the real significance of the Bataan Death March. While their bodies were beaten, their spirits remained steadfast and true to the ideals of freedom and justice for all. As stewards of this great legacy, we have a great obligation not only to our ancestors but to future generations. (<http://www.bataanlegacy.org>)

*Jon Melegrito*

*See also* World War II

### Further Readings

- Baltazar, J. (2016). *The naked soldier* (1st ed.). Design Publishing.
- Bataan Legacy Historical Society. (2018). <http://www.bataanlegacy.org/>
- Bataan Memorial Death March. (n.d.). <https://bataanmarch.com/>
- Capozzola, C. (2020). *Bound by war: How the United States and the Philippines built America's first Pacific century*. Basic Books.
- Dizon, G. S. *My story as a guerrilla fighter* [Unpublished manuscript]. A 45-page unpublished manuscript written in 1971 and given to the author for possible publication in the future.
- Duty to Country Education Project. (2020). <https://dutytocountry.org/>
- Filipino Veterans Recognition & Education Project. (2020). <http://www.filvetrep.org/>
- Melegrito, J. (2017, April). *Manila Mail*. <https://www.manilamail.us/?p=3280>
- Nieva, A. A. (2016). *Cadet, soldier, guerrilla fighter*. Pepi Nieva.
- Rocamora, R. (2008). *Filipino World War II soldiers: America's second-class veterans*. Veterans Equity Center.
- Schindler, A. (1996). No surrender. *Folio Weekly*, 9(39).

## BATTLE OF MANILA (1945)

The Battle of Manila began on February 3, 1945, and lasted until March 3, 1945. It is widely seen as the most horrific event in Philippine history, accounting for more than 100 thousand lives lost. Many people who survived this event and historians who have studied it claim this to be the second most devastating event in all of World War II (WWII), the first being the destruction of the city of Warsaw, Poland, by German forces. Before describing the battle itself, let us outline its background and context, including the triangular relationship between the United States, Japan, and the Philippines.

Tension between Japan and the United States started and intensified during the Great Depression of the 1930s. To solve its residual economic problems caused by wars (Russo-Japanese and World War I), Japan sought to expand its dominance throughout the Pacific, setting their sights on invading China. This was condemned by the League of Nations, which led to Japan's withdrawal from that organization. In 1937, Japanese forces invaded China, committing a series of atrocities in the city of Nanking, an episode historians refer to as the Rape of Nanking, or the Nanking Massacre. Japan's continued Pacific expansion positioned them as an enemy in the view of the U.S. government. In 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy, forming the Axis Powers alliance. The pact pronounced Japan's *lordship* over Asia and the Pacific.

### Tensions Between the United States, the Philippines, and Japan

With Japan's continued expansion, two major events of 1941 further foreshadowed the Battle of Manila: (1) the attack on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawai'i and (2) the invasion at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. In December 1941, two U.S. generals overseeing the operation to liberate the Philippines from Japan were General Douglas MacArthur and General Edward King, Jr. On the Japanese front, Lieutenant-General Masaharu Homma led the Japanese imperial forces to occupy the Bataan Peninsula, where military supplies and resources were

waiting to be transferred to northern Luzon. The ensuing Battle of Bataan lasted from January to April. Eventually, in March 1942, General MacArthur was ordered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to retreat to Australia so as not to risk being captured, which would have signaled a propaganda win for the Japanese. In doing so, MacArthur left behind 90,000 Filipino and American troops with few resources and little or no support. After his forced retreat, he promised to return to help liberate the Philippines. Shortly after, General Edward King, Jr. surrendered this region and approximately 75,000 U.S. and Filipino troops to the Japanese. The Japanese were ordered to transfer resources from the Bataan Peninsula to northern Luzon to regroup, where they forced U.S. and Filipino prisoners of war into what became known as the *Bataan Death March*. Throughout this tortuous 65-mile march, many of these soldiers were starved, disease-ridden, beaten, and bayoneted. This resulted in an estimated 18,000 Filipino deaths and 500 to 650 U.S. deaths in these regions: Cavite, Bataan, Mariveles, Bagac, Pampanga, and other regions of northern Luzon.

In 1944, MacArthur returned, fulfilling the promise he had made. He came aided by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and Australian allied troops. They decided to move swiftly to help liberate the city of Manila from the Japanese imperial soldiers, thereby initiating the Battle of Manila.

### The 1945 Battle and the Beginning of Liberation

In January 1945, U.S. troops landed in Dagupan, Lingyen Beach, to plan the reclamation of Manila. By this time, Manila had been occupied by Japanese imperial forces for about three years. MacArthur planned a pincer attack from the north and south to trap the Japanese imperial forces. At this time, the Japanese imperial forces were ordered by General Tomoyuki Yamashita to move their forces out of Manila into the northern hills of Luzon because they knew MacArthur's forces were coming. The Japanese imperial navy, led by Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi, refused to give up Manila, which lodged them into a month-long battle against the combined Philippine–U.S. forces. Because of this lack of cooperation between the Japanese army and navy, the Japanese imperial navy did not have

enough time or resources to prepare to face the Philippine–U.S. forces, which used both jungle and guerilla warfare tactics to advantage.

By this time, Manila was wracked by inflation, starvation, and a lack of hope for many. The Philippine–U.S. forces began their reclamation from the south, liberating 500 U.S. troops who had survived the Battle of Bataan under Major-General Oscar Griswold. Simultaneously, Hunter-ROTC guerillas, a group of around 300 cadets led by Colonel Eleuterio Adevos, along with the U.S. 11th Airborne division, converged on three locations where Japanese imperial forces had already committed atrocities and wanton killings against Allied troops and Filipino civilians. The Philippine–U.S. forces' first goals were to liberate the University of Santo Tomas, the Malacanang Palace, and the Legislative Building housing the Philippine Congress.

On February 4, 1945, having just lost three key strongholds in Manila, the Japanese continued their attacks, destroying Quezon and Jones bridges as well as killing Filipino civilians indiscriminately at the Great Eastern Hotel situated in Echague, Quiapo. General Douglas MacArthur finally entered Manila on February 7, 1945, commanding Philippine–U.S. forces to cross the Pasig River to continue their advances. On another side of the city, the Japanese continued their destruction, which included churches and education institutions. They massacred Filipino and Chinese civilians at San Marcelino church and St. Paul College Chapel. They burned parts of the University of the Philippines, De La Salle University, and Ateneo de Manila University. Even as part of the Axis powers, they killed everyone who retreated to the German Club of the Philippines, including their German allies, without prior notice. This pendulum between the Philippine–U.S. forces advancing and liberating, and the defending Japanese imperial forces causing havoc, continued until March 3, 1945. The final Japanese stronghold was the Agriculture Building, where Admiral Sanji Iwabuchi eventually committed suicide in refusal to surrender to the Philippine–U.S. forces, leading to the end of the Battle of Manila.

For the rest of the month, Filipino and American troops quelled the rest of the Japanese resistance throughout the city. In Intramuros alone, there was an estimated count of 16,000 Japanese

dead. Thus concluded the first and fiercest urban battle in the Pacific arena during WWII, leaving about 1,000 U.S. dead and 5,500 wounded. Around 100,000 to 240,000 Filipino civilians were killed by the Japanese Imperial forces and as a product of artillery and aerial bombardment. The Philippines lost irreplaceable historical and cultural buildings and treasures during this fight. Commemoration in Intramuros was observed in 1995, with the dedication of the Shrine of Freedom to honor the many lives lost in the Battle of Manila.

Tony DelaRosa

See also Bataan Death March

### Further Readings

- Escoda, B. M. J. M. (2021). *Warsaw of Asia: The rape of Manila* (Revised ed.). Giraffe Books.
- Huber, T. (2003). Battle of Manila. In W. G. Robertson & L. A. Yates (Eds.), *Block by block: The challenges of urban operations* (pp. 91–117). U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press.
- Republic of the Philippines Official Gazette. (n.d.). *Battle of Manila* | GOVPH. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. Retrieved February 28, 2021, from <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/featured/battle-of-manila/>
- Scott, J. M. (2019). *Rampage: MacArthur, Yamashita, and the Battle of Manila*. W. W. Norton.

---

## BEAUTY PAGEANTS

---

When Catronia Gray won the Miss Universe pageant in 2018 (becoming the fourth Miss Philippines to win the title), she vocalized how Filipina/x/o people across the diaspora listen to beauty queens. She initially entered pageantry as a way to advocate for multiple causes. With her new global title, Gray had a built-in platform for her philanthropic work on HIV/AIDS awareness. She landed many sponsorships and corporate brands—demonstrating how she could use her popularity and power to win over consumers. With more than a million followers on each of her social media accounts, Gray had direct access to

Filipina/x/o people across the diaspora, which included Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs).

The power of the beauty queen far exceeds that of the Miss Universe crown. Filipina/x/o beauty pageants, and beauty pageantry more broadly, can project and construct gendered, racial, and sexualized ideals of desirable and attractive bodies and proper comportment. They also can stand for class aspirations and respectability. At the same time, for Filipina/x/os in the Philippines and across the globe, the title *beauty queen* and the beauty pageant itself serve as vehicles for political and personal agendas, becoming sites of contestation, performativity, and performance. With this in mind, beauty pageants can provide a prism to understand the local and global stakes for Filipina/x/o people in particular historical moments and geographic settings.

### Background

Modern beauty pageants emerge from several converging genealogies. The importance of spectacle and pageantry in the Philippines can be traced back to the Spanish colonial period where *reinas* would be selected for Catholic celebrations. Rituals and opulent displays could be advantageous to families, allowing them to broker powerful marriage arrangements and to display their wealth and status. The secularization of pageantry occurred during the early U.S. colonial period with the emergence of the Manila Carnival Queen Contest, starting in 1908. Although first established as a popularity contest for the intent of raising capital and support for U.S. colonial projects in the Philippines, the Manila Carnival Contest exceeded such plans and became a vehicle for Philippine national identity formation while still under colonial rule. The first Manila Carnival Queen in fact was White American, but in the years to follow, the queen of the carnival was typically Filipina from the elite class and celebrated not only as a symbol of the colonial capital but also as a model of the ideal woman the Philippine nation hoped for.

The large-scale contest that paraded and crowned typically young elite mestiza women would become an annual event and eventually turned into the Miss Philippines pageant. Similar contests were held across the archipelago and

continue to be held in barrios, towns, provinces, and regions. Pageants also spread throughout the diaspora as Filipina/x/o people migrated through transnational channels created by empire and global capitalism. Beauty pageants evolved into an institution firmly embedded in Filipina/x/o and FA culture.

But May Farrales argued that standards of beauty and performance transform in different time and space contexts - especially when involving colonialism. Pageants can serve as a prism to understand the specific context in which Filipina/x/o communities take shape. For example, as Filipina/x/o migrant communities grew in locations like Stockton, California, during the 1920s and 1930s, beauty contests like the Rizal Day Queen Contest became an important site to forge a sense of Filipina/x/o American identity and maintain transnational ties to the Philippines. The carefully curated display of young women and girls in such contests, according to Dawn Mabalon, provided a didactic exhibit for proper Filipina womanhood that was to be emulated on and off the stage. Even as these community-based pageants expanded beyond having solely elite participants, the pageant nevertheless advanced normative ideas of gender, race, and class as Filipina/x/o navigated White supremacy and xenophobia in the United States. The pageants of the 1930s contributed to the structure of community-based pageants.

### Contemporary Beauty Pageants

Even decades later and in sites across the Filipina/x/o diaspora, pageants are marshalled by community organizations, which all put on display a sense of Filipina/x/o cultural traditions, through dance, song, and dress. In the 2016 film *Sunday Beauty Queen*, documentary filmmaker Baby Ruth Villarama follows the lives of Filipina domestic workers. In Hong Kong, Filipina/x/o domestic workers (also referred to as *OFWs* or *overseas Filipino workers*) only have one day off during the week, Sundays. The film documents how one way in which Filipina/x/o domestic workers in a setting where they have few rights, no pathway to citizenship, and work grueling hours can create community and also infuse playfulness, fun, and pride into their lives through organizing beauty

pageants. The pageants help solidify the community and create networks needed to offset OFWs' having little to no power or authority due to their status as migrant workers.

The proliferation of beauty pageants across the Philippines and the diaspora shows the allure and power of beauty performance. Small-scale productions and mega-events draw from the long-established cultural practices of creating festive joy through ostentation or *bonggahan* (over-the-top). Events typically include similar elements such as dance numbers, national or regional and provincial *costume*, attire that is meticulously ornamented and flamboyant. The sequins, crystals, pearls, and feathers are meticulously placed to stun and amaze audiences. In more recent decades, the inclusion of a question-and-answer portion to showcase beauty and brains, or what *maganda* (beauty in Tagalog) encompasses physical attractiveness and beauty in character. The presentation of beauty queens has the power to structure what it means to be beautiful and what it means to be feminine. At the same time, beauty pageants have the potential to reinterpret beauty as *biyuti*, playful, humorous, sharp, and clever expressions that can best be seen in transgender and gender nonconforming pageants that take place across the Philippines and the Filipina/x/o diaspora such as the “Queen—Pageant for Alternatives” held in Cebu. Rather than thinking of these as mimicking the feminine, competitions that include gender and sexual minorities amplify the elaborate and dramatic elements of pageant performances through a form of *maarte* (overacting) which favor beautiful exaggerations over precision. Not only do these performances question the stylization of pageantry as a form of sexual and gender management, but these contests have also influenced and even transformed the methods and styles of presenting pageant beauty—from the way beauty queens move their bodies to the level of intricacy and size of costumes.

To stage a beauty pageant requires a tremendous amount of labor. Pageants place pressure on the contestants who desire to win titles and potentially cash prizes, sponsorships, and other forms of reward and recognition. They require hours of practice and rehearsals. The film *Sunday Beauty Queen* shows how Filipina/x/o domestic workers dedicate many Sundays preparing and rehearsing

for their live event. Beauty pageant contestants must do the work of performing on stage, train their bodies to move a certain way, and to wear sometimes incredibly heavy and cumbersome attire because the more elaborate attire is often rewarded by judges. Contestants learn dance routines and songs. For example, many community-based pageants often perform *traditional* dances to evoke a sense of unified and nationalist Filipina/x/o culture. However, the labor of beauty pageants extends well beyond the work of the beauty queen and includes a constellation of people and institutions. The presentation of beauty requires the skills of hairdressers, or *parloristas*, makeup artists, and coaches who train professional beauty queens how to pose, walk, and twirl.

At the same time, the power behind beauty pageants depends on the investment of Filipina/x/o or FA audiences. Audiences encompass both fans and critics of Filipina/x/o beauty pageants. There is legitimate criticism about pageantry's role in the disciplining of gender and sexuality. There are also important critiques of the amount of capital needed to participate in such contests and the kinds of class exclusivity that these contests perpetuate. In the early 20th century, Filipino nationalists mobilized the Manila Carnival Queen Contest as a way to articulate anti-colonial critiques of the United States. Fans of beauty queens wrote odes to the *reinas* and published their prose in local Manila newspapers. In the present-day age of social media, not only is there a persistence of a Filipina/x/o obsession with beauty pageants, but a growth in fans and fascination. In these platforms, audiences can position themselves as beauty pageant fans, experts, and critics.

### Allure and Aspirations

Why do Filipina/x/os do this pageant work? The answer is not the same across the board, but by recognizing specifics of the context of time and place we can understand the expansive reach and the multiple motivations behind Filipina/x/o beauty pageantry. In the first half of the 20th century, a beauty queen title functioned as a status marker that added to the power and prestige of families. After World War II, the inclusion of the Philippines in international beauty pageants like Miss Universe and Miss World served as proof of

Filipina/x/o cosmopolitanism and global recognition. This kind of cultural capital could also be used for political strategies. During the Marcos authoritarian regime, the story of Imelda Marcos as a former beauty queen who captured the heart of Ferdinand Marcos would play a critical part in creating their mythos as *Malakas at Maganda*—mythical origin story of the Philippine nation. The stories of beauty queens like Maita Gomez and Nelia Sancho, who joined anti-Marcos movements and efforts to end the dictatorial regime, contradicted Imelda Marcos's claims to beauty and political force. Pageants were (and continue to be) platforms to advance agendas, while both managing cultural norms and challenging them. The lure of the title also rests in the aspiration for commercial success, the launch of careers, and earning potential—a stark contrast to the level of poverty in the Philippines and the kinds of class and race struggles immigrants and migrants might face. Pageants for Filipina/x/o communities are recognized as a site of aspiration, potential, and for power. In recognizing this, it can perhaps make it easier to understand Catriona Gray's claims that when beauty queens speak, Filipinos listen.

*Genevieve Clutario*

*See also* Arts and Humanities; History, Filipina/x/o American: An Overview Performance, Filipina American; Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Filipinx Americans; Filipina American Women

### Further Readings

- Clutario, G. (2017). Pageant politics: Tensions of power, empire, and nationalism in Manila carnival queen contests. In C. C. Choy & J. T. Wu (Eds.), *Gendering the trans-Pacific world* (pp. 257–283). Brill.
- Farrales, M. (2019). Repurposing beauty pageants: The colonial geographies of Filipina pageants in Canada. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 37(1), 46–64.
- Mabalon, D. B. (2013). *Little Manila is in the heart: The making of the Filipina/o American community in Stockton, California*. Duke University Press.
- Manalansan, M. (2003). *Global divas: Filipino gay men in the diaspora*. Duke University Press.
- Villarama, B. R. (2016). *Sunday Beauty Queen* [Film]. Voyage Studios & Solar Pictures.

## BENEVOLENT ASSIMILATION PROCLAMATION

On December 21, 1898, U.S. president William McKinley spoke on the United States's recent acquisition of the Philippines, a former colony of Spain. Addressing the ongoing war against Filipino revolutionaries who had struggled for their independence from Spain and were now resisting domination by the United States, McKinley addressed the question of how to rule the newly claimed territory. McKinley asserted that the United States was not an invader, but a friend who sought to protect Filipinos. The United States would maintain the rights and freedoms of Filipino people and free them from Spanish despotic and arbitrary rule. His statement became known as the *Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation* and became situated in a complex history of struggles for independence and claims of sovereignty by the United States and the aspiring Philippine Republic.

### Establishing U.S. Rule over the Philippines and Filipinos

In 1898, when the United States went to war with Spain, U.S. politicians and elites faced questions over whether or not to claim the Philippines and how to rule over the people. Initially, U.S. politicians and state actors were not concerned with the Pacific, but with Spain's territories in the Caribbean. However, a smaller number of imperialists also wanted to take the Philippine archipelago (or a small portion of it) from Spain to build a naval base in the northern island of Luzon. On February 26, 1898, Theodore Roosevelt, assistant secretary of the Navy, ordered Commodore George Dewey to depart the Pacific shores of the United States for Hong Kong to wait for further instruction. After the United States formally declared war on Spain, Dewey and the U.S. Navy entered the islands of the Philippines, battling with the Spanish. On May 1, the U.S. Navy defeated the Spanish at Manila Bay. President McKinley ordered U.S. troops to the Philippines, and on May 25 the first expedition left. By July 1898, nearly 11,000 U.S. soldiers were in the Philippines. The Navy and

War Department saw claiming these islands as part of a coherent military stratagem and McKinley supported annexation. On December 10, 1898, the United States and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. The United States now laid claim to the Philippine archipelago.

The Spanish transfer of the Philippines to the United States brought questions about who would rule the Philippines and how Filipinos would be treated by its new colonial authority. Nevertheless, without question, to the vast majority of U.S. elite, Filipinos were deemed racially unsuitable to become full members of the U.S. nation-state. Lawmakers from both nativist and anti-imperialist perspectives were in agreement that Filipinos were not White. As is well documented in the Congressional Record and political cartoons, the media and state actors characterized Filipinos as uncivilized savages. The U.S. elite compared Filipinos to racial minority groups with whom the United States was familiar, including American Indians, Chinese, and Black Americans.

### An Opportunity for American Empire

Imperialists leveraged the war and rule over the Spanish colonies, including the Philippines, as opportunities for the United States—as White Anglo-Saxons, as inheritors of the British empire, and as *civilized* people—to bring civilization to the rest of the world. U.S. politicians also argued that this imperialist war and rule could strengthen the political capacity of young Anglo-American men. Imperialists like Theodore Roosevelt argued that U.S. men were becoming weak and feminine. Colonial pursuits would prevent national and racial degeneracy. In these newly acquired tropical territories, young American men could train in the *strenuous life*, which Theodore Roosevelt popularized. By these accounts, an honorable man was brave and courageous—one who wielded power and was willing to fight. War could strengthen American men.

These claims about Anglo-Saxon men as racially fit to rule over others informed the crafting and reception of McKinley's speech. Elihu Root, soon to become McKinley's secretary of war, authored the speech. Root was an important figure in crafting U.S. colonial policy, and he subscribed to the idea of White racial rule, arguing that Filipinos

(and Puerto Ricans) were akin to children and not yet ready for self-government. He thought they could be trained in self-governance and develop into more civilized people.

These notions are reflected in McKinley's speech, which asserted sovereignty over the whole Philippine archipelago and laid down a plan for military governance. In asserting sovereignty, the speech not only affirmed the Treaty of Paris but went back on the U.S. recognition of the Filipino struggle for rights from Spain. In this speech, the United States attempted to set itself apart as a different kind of empire from Spain. It would not rule in arbitrary and despotic ways; instead it would uplift Filipinos toward civilization. McKinley would later give multiple speeches around the United States, emphasizing the duty of the United States to prepare Filipinos for self-governance. U.S. rule was cast as an uplift and betterment of Filipinos.

The Philippine (Schurman) Commission—charged with collecting data and information on the newly acquired archipelago and making recommendations about the appropriate terms of rule—tried to use this statement to justify the ongoing Philippine–American war and put down what they considered a Filipino rebellion. The commission continued to issue similar proclamations of spreading peace and freedom as propaganda to justify their colonial rule over the Philippines.

*Katrina Quisumbing King*

*See also* Assimilation; Colonialism; Philippine–American War; Racism; Spanish–American War; *The Forbidden Book: The Philippine–American War in Political Cartoons*; White Man's Burden

### Further Readings

- Golay, F. H. (1997). *Face of empire: United States–Philippine relations, 1898–1946*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Hoganson, K. L. (1998). *Fighting for American manhood: How gender politics provoked the Spanish–American and Philippine–American wars*. Yale University Press.
- Kramer, P. A. (2006). *The blood of government: Race, empire, the United States, and the Philippines*. University of North Carolina Press.

- Love, E. T. L. (2004). *Race over empire: Racism and US imperialism, 1865-1900*. University of North Carolina Press.
- McKinley, W. (1898) Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation. In C. J. Schlund-Vials, K. Scott Wong, & J. O. Chang (Eds.), *Asian America: A primary source reader*. Yale University Press.
- Miller, S. C. (1984). "Benevolent Assimilation": *The American conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903*. Yale University Press.

---

## BIPOLAR DISORDER

---

Bipolar disorder is a mental health condition characterized by changes to one's mood, energy, and activity level. Approximately 4.4% of U.S. adults will develop bipolar disorder at some point in their lifetime. Although the prevalence of bipolar disorder among Asian Americans, and more specifically Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs), is not well documented, this entry describes the disorder and reviews the limited relevant literature on bipolar disorder as experienced by FAs.

### Overview

According to the 5th edition of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, there are three main types of bipolar disorder: Bipolar I Disorder, Bipolar II Disorder, and Cyclothymic Disorder. Each of these categories is a distinct diagnosis; however, all share common features such as notable changes to mood, energy, and activity levels.

Bipolar I Disorder is defined as an individual having at least one manic episode in their lifetime. A manic episode may include a persistent and abnormally elevated, irritable, or expansive mood for the majority of at least 1 week, although manic episodes could last from several weeks to several months. During a manic episode, an individual may experience noticeable changes in their usual behavior, such as becoming more talkative, needing significantly less sleep than usual, or excessively engaging in activities that have a high potential for negative consequences. An individual may also have an inflated sense of self or feelings of grandiosity. Unlike Bipolar II Disorder or

Cyclothymic Disorder, depressive symptoms are not a defining characteristic of this type of bipolar disorder. Despite this, it is still common for individuals living with Bipolar I to experience periods of major depressive episodes. Additionally, individuals might also exhibit hypomania, which is a less severe form of a manic episode, between manic episodes.

Bipolar II Disorder is defined as having at least one episode of hypomania and one major depressive episode in an individual's lifetime. A hypomanic episode is characterized by a persistent and abnormally elevated, irritable, or expansive mood for the majority of at least four consecutive days. The hypomanic episodes typically do not cause significant impairments to an individual's functioning. In fact, individuals may experience these episodes as periods of increased creativity and productivity, while others may feel scattered or unproductive. Despite Bipolar II Disorder presenting as a less severe form of mania, depressive episodes may be lengthier and occur more frequently than with Bipolar I Disorder.

Cyclothymic Disorder is defined as having many hypomanic and depressive symptoms over a 2-year period in adults and over 1 year for adolescents, without ever meeting the full criteria for a manic, hypomanic, or major depressive episode.

Some individuals may have symptoms that are characteristic of bipolar disorder; however, these symptoms never meet the full criteria for Bipolar I Disorder, Bipolar II Disorder, or Cyclothymic Disorder. As a result, they may be diagnosed with *other specified bipolar and related disorders*.

### Suicide and Functioning

The suicide risk for individuals living with bipolar disorder is high. It is estimated that individuals living with Bipolar I Disorder are at least 15 times at higher risk for suicide than the general public. And while lifetime suicide attempts for Bipolar I Disorder and Bipolar II Disorder are similar, the lethality of attempts for individuals with Bipolar II Disorder tends to be higher than for those with Bipolar I Disorder.

Although most individuals living with bipolar disorder are fully functional between episodes, some individuals will continue to experience bouts

of impaired psychosocial functioning between episodes. These ongoing impairments can result in significant implications for one's occupation, relationships, and self-esteem. One study found that over a 12-month period, 82.9% of individuals living with bipolar disorder had reported severe functional impairments to their occupational, social, and family life—the most of any mood disorder.

### Cultural and Gender Considerations

A survey from the late 1990s showed that Asian Americans were less likely to have bipolar disorder than White Americans, while more recent research found that Asian American university students were more likely to be diagnosed with Bipolar I Disorder, and had a higher prevalence of a history of psychosis than did their White peers. With regard to gender, the gender ratio of Bipolar I Disorder tends to be equal, while findings on Bipolar II Disorder are mixed. Some research findings suggest equal gender ratios for Bipolar II Disorder, while others show that the disorder is more common in females.

Specific to FAs, few studies have focused on learning how bipolar disorder affects this group. Research indicates that FAs tend to seek mental health services less frequently than do other Asian American groups. Furthermore, research has shown that adult Asian Americans are among the lowest of any racial group to pursue outpatient mental health services, as well as prescription medication. The disparity in using mental health services by FAs is not indicative of any lower rate of serious mental health issues and psychological distress, as research shows that FAs have mental health conditions at rates equal to, and in some cases higher than, other ethnic groups.

Owing to the limited research, especially with regard to multiple marginalized identities, such as transgender, nonbinary, queer, and multiracial identities, it is difficult to know the actual prevalence of bipolar disorder among FAs, and to what degree bipolar disorder may be expressed differently than in other groups. Having this information accessible could help to improve interventions, and minimize barriers to accessing treatment, which will better meet the needs of FAs.

### Treatment

While bipolar disorder is a serious condition and can have far-reaching impacts on a person's quality of life, access to client-centered and culturally responsive treatment can dramatically improve an individual's well-being. The most common plan for treatment of bipolar disorder is a combination of psychotherapy and medication. In addition to a patient's specific goals, the general goal for treatment is to help the patient reduce current symptoms in the immediate term, and ideally prevent relapse. However, most patients will experience multiple episodes over their lifetimes and so treatment plans more typically focus on reducing their frequency.

Andrew Zarate

See also Anxiety; Depression; Mental Health Treatment of Filipina/x/o Americans; Psychology

### Further Readings

- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.)*. Author. <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>
- Nadal, K. L. (2021). *Filipino American psychology: A handbook of theory, research, and clinical practice*. Wiley & Sons.
- Sue, D., Neville, H. A., Sue, D. W., & Smith, L. (2019). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice*. Wiley & Sons.

---

## BLACKIPINOS

---

Blackipinos are people with Black and Filipina/x/o heritage who identify as multiracial. In the modern era, Blackipino people have been documented all over the world—from the many Blackipino children who were born in areas surrounding military bases (due to the longstanding military relationship between the United States and the Philippines) to metropolitan areas in the western United States (e.g., San Diego, CA, Stockton, CA, Seattle, WA), where Black Americans and Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs) lived in the same or adjoining neighborhoods, married, or had children together. Although the literature concerning this population

is relatively sparse, Blackipinos (which includes the feminine term *Blackipinas* and the gender-neutral term *Blackipinxs*) are becoming increasingly visible in our society. This entry presents the background of the subgroup, reviews the existing literature, examines the experiences of some notable Blackipinos, and discusses challenges and celebrations about being mixed-race Black and Filipina/x/o in the United States.

### Demographics

Although it is unknown how many people in the United States identify as Blackipina/x/o Americans, some relevant statistics are helpful to acknowledge. First, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, there were approximately 185,000 mixed-race Black and Asian people living in the United States at that time. Second, 21.8% of the FA population identifies as belonging to two or more races—a percentage higher than that of the general Asian American population. Third, compared with other Asian American ethnic groups, FAs (both men and women) are most likely to marry Black people. Fourth, FA men are more likely to marry Black women than women of other Asian ethnicities, and FA women are equally likely to marry Black men than men of other Asian ethnicities. Finally, according to the American Community Survey and IPUMS-USA, there were 27,805 children and adolescents who were Black and FA and an additional 17,920 children and adolescents who were Black, White, and FA. Together, FA children and youth with Black heritage comprised 5.07% of the total population of FA children and youth. Given these numbers, it is clear that the population of Blackipino people, or mixed-race Black-FAs, will increase even more in younger generations.

It is also important to note that there are some indigenous people from the Philippines who may identify as *negrito* and who may phenotypically present as Black (i.e., darker skin, curly hair), and who represent various ethnic groups from different regions of the Philippines (e.g., the Aeta from Luzon, the Ati from Panay). Historians, anthropologists, and geneticists have argued for decades as to whether these indigenous peoples derive from Africa or from Australia. Because of their features, these indigenous people are often

ridiculed, othered, or told they are not Filipina/x/o—despite their connection to the precolonized lands. Although this group is not included under the definition of Blackipino, it is imperative to acknowledge that they may have shared experiences of mixed-race Black–Filipina/x/o people in both the Philippines and the United States

### Literature Review

Two of the first written narratives about being Blackipino were by Janet Mendoza Stickmon and Evangeline Canonizado Buell—two Blackipinas who wrote memoirs about their lives. Stickmon discussed aspects of being Black and Filipina—from relationships with friends and classmates to challenges of navigating identity among loved ones. Buell described memories of growing up in her hometown among supportive community and friends. In 2018, Teresa Hodges wrote an article for the *Pilipinx Radical Imagination Reader* entitled “Blacknpinay is . . .” While all of these works provide useful insights into experiences of mixed-race Black and FA people, much more is needed to understand the lived experiences of the group.

Previous scholarship on multiracial Black–Asian people also provides a foundation for understanding Blackipino experiences. One of the central components of this literature is that the experiences of mixed White–Asian people are very different from those of mixed Black–Asian people. For example, a study by Christine C. Iijima Hall and Trude I. Cooke Turner found that mixed Black and Japanese people experience more discrimination than do mixed White and Japanese people. Paul Spickard’s work also confirms that multiracial Black–Asian people tend to experience more discrimination than Asian–White people, largely on account of their skin color.

One of the chief differences between mixed Black–FAs and other mixed-race FAs is experiencing colorism and antiblackness. In 2016, YouTube content creator Asia Jackson created a campaign called *#MagandangMorenx* that described colorism across the Filipina/x/o communities. She discussed challenges of colonial mentality and how standards of beauty are derived from the

Philippines' history of colonialism. As part of the campaign, hundreds of Twitter users posted pictures of themselves using the hashtag with captions that acknowledged both their struggles and celebration of brown skin.

### Parents of Blackipino People

There are many different ways that parents of mixed-race Black–FAs meet, with the most common way being through the U.S. military presence in the Philippines. For example, the first documented FA family in Seattle, Washington, was the Jenkins family. With American colonialism, Sergeant Frances Jenkins (the son of a formerly enslaved Black man and a Mexican woman) was sent to the Philippines as a translator. There, he met Rufina Clementi (a Filipina woman whose family worked for the Spanish governor). Together, they had five children and settled in Seattle in 1909.

In more contemporary times, parents of Blackipinos often meet as a result of shared historical and geographic proximity. For example, Stockton, California, is home to different minoritized groups living in proximity to one another, including Blacks and FAs. As a result of the small population of FA women in the early 1900s, as well as the anti-miscegenation laws that prohibited FAs from marrying Whites, many FA men formed romantic relationships with Black women—resulting in the earliest communities of Blackipinos on the West Coast.

Another way Black and FA parents meet is through social events and common political and cultural interests. Black and FAs have lived and worked in solidarity in numerous ways—from political movements (e.g., the fight for ethnic studies; the civil rights movement) to FA participation in earlier and contemporary hip-hop culture. Whereas Anthony Ocampo described FAs as *the Latinos of Asia*, sometimes Filipina/x/os can also be considered the Black people of Asia—because of their close physical or ideological proximity. In fact, whereas historically, media and other systems have tended to highlight a social distance between Asians and Blacks, FAs (especially second-generation FAs) tend to experience the opposite, particularly compared to other Asian groups.

### Notable Mixed-Race Black–FAs

While the literature on mixed-race Black–FAs is scarce, there are many Blackipinos who have been notable across various career fields and who span various ages and locations. Some of these notable Blackipinos include:

- Sugar Pie De Santo—singer born in 1935 in New York, raised in San Francisco, California.
- Joe Bataan—a musician born in 1942 in New York, commonly known as the *King of Latin Soul*. In 1975, he released an album called *Afro-Filipino*.
- Apl.De.Ap—a singer born in 1974 in the Philippines. As a member of the group Black Eyed Peas, he wrote many popular songs (e.g., *Bebot*, *the Apl Song*) that incorporate Tagalog and reflect on his experiences growing up in the Philippines.
- Doug Baldwin—a professional football player born in 1988 in Florida. As a member of the Seattle Seahawks, he entered a football game in 2013 carrying the Filipino flag to draw attention to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.
- Gabrielle Wilson, known more commonly as H.E.R.—a Grammy-award winning singer born in 1997 in Vallejo, California, who has spoken publicly about her experiences of being both Black and Filipina.

### Antiblackness, Alienation, Ambiguity

Scholars such as E. J. R. David and Joanne Rondilla have described the negative impact of colonial mentality and the detrimental impacts of the skin whitening industry in the Philippines and across the world. The perpetuation of colorism, colonialism, whiteness, and light skin affects mixed race Black and FAs, but also negatively impacts monoracial FAs with darker skin. Mixed-race Black–FAs sometimes also get told they are more beautiful if they straighten their curly hair or that their curly hair is the *good* kind of Black hair. If they have straighter hair, they are sometimes told that they have more beautiful hair.

As discussed earlier about proximity between Asian and Black communities, and Filipina/x/o and Black communities, mixed-race Black–FAs can have wide range of proximity to other Black

people or other FAs. Proximity may be one factor that affects one's relationship to each community and even to oneself as a Black person, an FA, or a mixed person. For example, if one lacks close proximity to the Black community, one might feel out of place among Black people. If one does not have close proximity to FAs, they might then choose to identify more with their Black side. The vast exposure of Black cultural knowledge can make one feel alienated if they are not familiar with it, just as FAs and others who have a lot of Black cultural knowledge may feel more affinity with the Black community. There could also be instances where people choose to align with either side more due to phenotype and perception of others (e.g., if people usually perceive them as Black, they might identify as Black). Further, being in closer proximity to other Asian Americans might encourage them to identify more with being Asian rather than specifically Filipina/x/o or Black.

FAs—particularly elders and immigrants—are often culturally nonchalant with their comments on the skin color or hair texture in general—particularly toward multiracial Black–FAs. Relatedly, many FAs may make casual judgments about whether Blackipinos look *Filipino* or not. Such experiences may be similar to that of *mestizos* (or mixed-race White–FAs) who are questioned of whether they look *Filipino enough* but who are often celebrated for their features, as a result of colonial mentality and glorified White standards of beauty.

Further, cultural knowledge may be seen as giving mixed Black–FAs an *edge*. For instance, some Blackipinos may be overly applauded for their interest or participation in FA activities—as if they would not have a natural interest to learn or participate in such cultural activities.

When they do display cultural knowledge, Blackipinos are often compared with other FAs (especially second-generation FAs) who might not know as much. Again, in this way, they are viewed as *examples* because they were not expected to have any knowledge.

A hurtful practice that is all too common, especially among mixed Black–FAs, is the questioning of their authenticity. This can manifest through judgments about one's appearance or cultural knowledge in determining Filipina/x/o authenticity. Another common microaggression is the

experience of being labeled as an *exceptional multiracial*. For Blackipino people, this may occur when people make anti-Black comments in their presence, only to be followed with “Oh, but not you.” This form of erasure and disassociation of the person's Black identity essentially deems blackness as *bad* and marks the multiracial as the exception. Ralina Joseph discusses the idea of *exceptional multiracial* as the mixed-race Black–White person that is perceived to uplift the Black community because they are a *good* kind of Black, an *exceptional* one.

### The Power of Mixed-Race Black–FAs

Although there can be many challenges from the various communities, there are many positive and enriching experiences for people who are multiracial Black–FA. First, the process of naming one's self is a powerful endeavor in capturing experiences that have not been named very extensively. Author and scholar Janet Stickmon names herself Blackipina, combining Black and Filipina. I use the term *blacknpinay*, combining Black and Pinay, embracing the politicized expression of Filipina women and feminist sisterhood. Some may use *blackipino*, *Afro-Pinay*, *BlackPinoy*, and more. All of these words can serve as a form of empowerment, as this existence and exposure are often marginalized within both communities. These terms can embody strength of each community and pay homage to ancestors from people of the diaspora.

There are similarities within communities that may play a role in identities and communities. Both Black and Filipina/x/o communities sometimes draw from our ancestors and intuition as sources of guidance. One may have strong community ties that promote our growth and development. This can even be seen in nonracial communities, or *outside of the box* communities, where we may feel comfort in those who also feel on the margins. There is not one way to be multiracial Black and Filipina/x/o, there is a multitude of possibilities.

Finally, one of the biggest strengths for mixed Black-FAs involves adaptability. Some describe being able to navigate situations where contradictions clash, while others share the ability to more readily understand intersectionality and

oppression. Some talk about how, because they are so used to encountering people with multiple perspectives, they are vigilant and prepared to handle an array of microaggressions or interpersonal conflicts in their lives.

Teresa A. Hodges

*See also* Critical Race Theory; Filipino-Black Relations; Indigenous People of the Philippines; Multiracial Filipina/x/o Americans Psychology

### Further Readings

- Buell, E. C. (2006). *25 chickens and a pig for a bride*. T'boli Publishing.
- Hall Iijima, C. C., & Cooke Turner, C. I. (2001). The diversity of biracial individuals: Asian-White and Asian-minority biracial identity. In T. Williams-Leon & C. L. Nakashima (Eds.), *The sum of our parts: Mixed heritage Asian Americans* (1st ed., pp. 81–91). Temple University Press.
- Hodges, T. (2018). Blacknpinay is . . . In Nievera-Lozano, M. A., Santa Ana, T. (Eds.), *Pin@y radical imagination reader*. Philippine American Writers Artists Inc (PAWA).
- Hodges, T. (2019). *Blacknpinay, Blackapina, and Halfricanpina: Mixed race Black and Filipina epistemologies and pedagogies* [Dissertation, University of Hawaii at Manoa]. <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/66200>
- Houston, V. H. (2017). Rising sun, rising soul: On mixed race Asian identity that includes Blackness. In J. Rondilla, R. P. Guevarra Jr., & P. Spickard (Eds.), *Red & Yellow, Black & Brown: Decentering Whiteness in mixed race studies* (pp. 21–32). Rutgers University Press.
- Stickmon, J. (2003). *Crushing soft rubies: A memoir*. Broken Shackle.
- Stickmon, J. (2017). Blackapina. In J. Rondilla, R. P. Guevarra Jr., & P. Spickard (Eds.), *Red & Yellow, Black & Brown: Decentering Whiteness in mixed race studies* (pp. 33–46). Rutgers University Press.

because of political turmoil, underemployment, and lack of opportunities. American colonization of the Philippines precipitated the brain drain of Filipino workers to the United States; and the U.S. Immigration Act of 1965, which established a preference for highly skilled professionals, together with the Philippine Labor Export Program of the 1970s, accelerated it. Highly skilled professions are defined as those that are exportable and adapted globally. Push-and-pull factors such as labor shortages in the United States create conditions for Filipino emigrants to leave en masse. For college students in the Philippines, global market forces dictate their fields of study; they major in studies leading to desirable professions which will allow them to be employed abroad and remit money home. There are financial and mental health impacts of the brain drain, both on emigrants and on their families left behind.

### Impacts on Emigrants and Families Left Behind

Emigrants build new lives abroad, providing a future and opportunity for themselves and their families; many never return home. Although remittances present a salve for those in need of financial stability, family separation does not offset the emotional and mental toll on individuals and families. After arrival in the United States, Filipino immigrants face barriers based on their positionality as people of color and the exploitative conditions that come with their racialization. While employed in highly skilled jobs, immigrants often find themselves without access to high-paying positions and sometimes experience downward mobility (where their credentials go unrecognized).

The brain drain may lead to loss of culture and language for emigrants and their descendants. It may also create fractured family relationships. Families left behind are often financially and psychologically dependent on remittances as a means of survival. Those in the Philippines may rest in the belief that opportunity and resources are to be found abroad and not at home, triggering further emigration. This can lead to sadness, despair, and feelings of loss, particularly startling against the backdrop of the historical colonial relationship between the Philippines and the United States.

---

## BRAIN DRAIN

---

Brain drain is a phenomenon whereby the emigration of highly trained individuals from countries like the Philippines occurs in significant numbers

## Brain Drain in the Context of American Colonization of the Philippines

It is important to discuss the concept of brain drain within the context of American colonization of the Philippines, beginning with the 1823 Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny, the widely held belief in 1845 that the United States had a God-given right to westward expansion. First applied to lands in the western United States, the idea of Manifest Destiny soon included Pacific Islands such as the Philippines. The U.S. colonial occupation of the Philippines was characterized as a policy of benevolent assimilation that belied the violent subjugation of Filipinos by the American military where approximately 1 million Filipinos died during the Philippine–American War of 1898.

With the Philippines established as a colony, White American educators called *Thomasites* (for the USS *Thomas*, the ship on which they traveled) arrived to construct its public school system and train Filipino teachers. The medium of instruction was English. By doing so, the United States manufactured a labor pool of American-schooled Filipino workers who could fill American labor shortages. In the early 1900s, Ilocano and Visayan farmers traveled as American nationals to earn money toiling in the fields of Hawai'i, following the seasonal agricultural work up through California, Oregon, and Washington, and in the fishing canneries of Alaska. While anti-Asian sentiment ran rampant in the American West with strict immigration laws barring entry for Chinese, Japanese, and Indian migrants, the United States circumvented immigration laws, granting entry to as many as 150,000 Filipinos. Rising anti-Filipino sentiment helped to bring about the 1934 Tydings–McDuffie Act, which declared the Philippines as an independent country and Filipinos as *aliens*. The immigration policy ensured Philippine independence in 10 years and limited Filipino migration to 50 persons annually. However, after the Philippines had been a U.S. possession for 50 years, the United States and the Philippines maintained a semicolonial relationship through the continuation of military, industrial, and cultural ties.

It was not until the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965 that quotas relaxed for non-White countries like the Philippines, opening the doors for foreigners to enter the United States in larger

numbers than ever. The immigration policy created a preference for highly skilled professionals, particularly in the fields of science, technology, medicine, and the high arts, as a strategic move to boost America's competitive position through the cold war era. The large influx of well-educated and skilled Filipino professionals completely changed the characteristics of the population of Filipinos already in the United States and contributed to the emergence of the *model minority* stereotype imposed on all Asian Americans. Filipinos filled labor queues in the fields of healthcare, the military, education, engineering, business, and the sciences.

In the 1970s, the relaxed U.S. immigration rules coincided with the Labor Export Program established by Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos. The Philippines remains caught in a web, situated at its peripheries, as its former colonizer, the United States, occupies a dominant position at the center of political, economic, and cultural power. Operating within a race-based economic system, Filipinos emigrating to the United States for employment fit within this paradigm in which the creation and driver of value is based on the exploitative labor of people of color. Although labor export is a means toward economic solvency for the Philippines, it also stunts the Philippine economy, as professions are highly concentrated in a few fields.

Through the Labor Export Program, Filipinos migrated not just to the United States but throughout the whole world. In the 1990s, these emigrants became known as *OFWs* or *Overseas Filipino Workers*, and their numbers into the 2020s totaled over 10 million. The greatest concentration of Filipinos are to be found in the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and North America. Their remittances number in the tens of billions and provide an economic lifeline for the Philippines.

Melissa-Ann Nielo Nievera-Lozano

See also Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965; Labor Market Patterns; Model Minority Myth; Nursing, Filipina/x/o Americans in; Overseas Filipina/x/o Workers; Pensionados; Transnationalism

### Further Readings

Choy, C. C. (2003). *Empire of care: Nursing and migration in Filipino American history*. Duke University Press.

- Espiritu, Y. L. (2003). *Home bound: Filipino American lives across cultures, communities, and countries*. University of California Press.
- Francisco-Menchavez, V. (2018). *The labor of care: Filipina migrants and transnational families in the digital age*. University of Illinois Press.
- Parreñas, R. (2015). *Servants of globalization: Migration and domestic work*. Stanford University Press.
- Rodriguez, R. M. (2010). *Migrants for export: How the Philippine state brokers labor to the world*. University of Minnesota Press.

---

## BREAST CANCER

---

Globally, breast cancer is among the most frequently diagnosed malignancies, second only to lung cancer. For women, it is the most common malignancy. As of 2020, in the United States specifically, breast cancer remains the second most common cause of cancer-related death. Furthermore, healthcare expenditure on breast cancer management and treatment in the United States is the highest in comparison to all other cancers. On an individual level, patients spend widely varying amounts depending on clinical variables. Nonetheless, advancements have been made in treatment modalities and, more importantly, screening methods. The push for regular screening via mammography has led to earlier stage detection and improved rates of diagnosis. On account of its global impact, burden on the healthcare system, and potential for prevention and treatment, breast cancer has become a well-studied disease and is a budding field with regard to Filipina/o/x Americans (FAs). This entry describes disparities for FA breast cancer risk, prevalence, incidence, mortality, treatment, and prevention, and concludes with insights on future research directions.

### Breast Cancer and FAs

Although health research has been limited among FAs, breast cancer research involving the FA community is on the upswing. However, the issue of data disaggregation remains an ongoing problem in Asian American research studies, often masking the issues of FAs and other Asian subgroups. Little research has been done exclusively on breast

cancer in the FA community largely due to this fact as well as the lack of data collection tools within the clinical setting. Therefore, much of the research done on FAs is garnered from small studies or from large epidemiological studies on Asian Americans where the data are disaggregated. These studies are usually localized to regions of the United States where there are larger populations of FAs: Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, New York, New Jersey, Honolulu, and Seattle. Beginning with data collection in 1973, the National Cancer Institute has established a comprehensive database through which epidemiological cancer data are stored and readily accessed by scientists: the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program. Although some research has identified imperfections with the use of the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program, it remains to be something of a gold standard in this field. The majority of breast cancer research comes from this database, pulling information from studies performed in the aforementioned regions with a few studies conducted in other areas.

### Epidemiology

As it pertains to FAs with breast cancer, much of the research is mixed, especially depending on what region of the United States is studied. For the most part, Asian Americans as a whole have better incidence rates, mortality rates, and survival rates as compared with the non-Hispanic White counterpart, with a few exceptions. When broken down by subgroups, complexity ensues. FAs have had increasing incidence rates of breast cancer despite the overall decline or steadying in national and Asian American rates. Some studies suggest annual incidence rate increases as high as 4%. FAs also have the highest mortality and lowest survival rates compared with other Asian American subgroups, but these rates are still better than those of non-Hispanic Whites. However, some studies in particular geographic areas report significantly poorer survival rates, much of which can be attributed to stage at diagnosis.

Stage at diagnosis is one of the most significant prognostic indicators of disease severity. FAs have higher odds of presenting with late stage (stage IV) disease, are diagnosed with more advanced stages

at younger ages, and have a higher risk of death with local stage disease. As with most cancer types, age is a significant risk factor in the development of breast cancer and has been a suspected explanation for this disparity in stage at diagnosis. However, some research has statistically adjusted for age and the disparity remains, thus leaving room for further work to be done.

Interestingly, these breast cancer rates are worse for FAs born in the United States, as compared to those who were born in the Philippines. Researchers speculate that this is due to the development of risk factors that arise from acculturation and the transition to a Western diet. It is widely accepted that obesity, and the metabolic and hormonal factors involved with increased fatty tissue, is associated with an increased risk in the development of breast cancer, especially for postmenopausal women. FAs do have increased rates of being overweight and obese as well as decreased rates of physical activity, more so than any other Asian American subgroup, which is largely attributed to acculturation and Westernization. It then follows that the breast cancer statistics are worsened for the U.S.-born FAs.

### Subtype Analysis

Receptor and molecular subtyping have emerged as a compelling portion of breast cancer research. The discovery of certain molecular receptors—the means by which cells communicate with each other—within breast cancer tumor cells has led to the pharmacological development of targeted drug therapies in recent decades. These advances have remarkably improved treatment algorithms and outcomes. Three particular receptors are of importance in the management of breast cancer: estrogen receptor (ER), progesterone receptor (PR), and HER2 receptor. These receptors on breast tumor cells have been found to be differentially expressed in different communities and contribute to differential survival within these communities. For example, Black Americans are at higher risk of having the triple negative subtype of breast cancer, tumors which have none of the three receptors. Given that the triple negative subtype does not respond as well to medical therapy, these cancers are more aggressive and contribute to poorer survival rates.

For FAs, there is an increased risk of two subtypes of breast cancer relative to non-Hispanic Whites: (1) ER negative/PR negative/HER2 positive, and (2) ER positive/PR positive/HER2 positive otherwise known as *triple positive*. On a separate note, although FAs are at a decreased risk of being diagnosed with the ER positive/PR positive/HER2 negative subtype, the outcomes from management of this subtype are poorer for FAs.

Considering that certain subtypes respond more adequately to different treatment regimens, molecular receptor subtyping is often what guides treatment decisions. For hormone receptor positive cancers (e.g., ER positive, PR positive), a class of drugs called *selective estrogen receptor modulators* is employed (e.g., tamoxifen) to slow the activity of these tumor cells. Similarly, for HER2-overexpressing tumors, a drug class of monoclonal antibodies that specifically targets the HER2 receptor is employed (e.g., trastuzumab). Patients may also receive radiotherapy or surgery depending on the clinical relevance. Despite these medical treatment options, the link between molecular subtyping and overall disparities in the FA community remains relatively unclear and presents an opportunity for future study.

### Treatment

As mentioned previously, there are many potential treatment modalities available to patients when clinically relevant: hormonal therapy, immunotherapy, radiotherapy, and surgery—breast-conserving surgery and mastectomy being the most common. Despite treatment algorithms that are largely clinically based, disparities exist in the treatment of breast cancer that are not necessarily explained by clinical factors alone. A few studies have shown that FAs are more likely to receive appropriate medical treatment than are Asian Americans generally and non-Hispanic Whites. However, a good amount of research has elucidated that Asian Americans and, more specifically, FAs are less likely to receive breast-conserving surgery and more likely to undergo mastectomy.

The choice between breast-conserving surgery and mastectomy is mostly clinical in nature, taking into account tumor-to-breast-size ratio and

obvious contraindications. However, there is a lot of room for shared decision making between patient and provider, where both parties will decide between the two surgeries based on cosmetic appearance as well. Some studies have shown that after controlling for tumor size, FAs are still more likely to receive mastectomy over a breast-conserving surgery. Furthermore, immigration status, a recurring theme in FA health, is present here as well: foreign-born FAs are more likely to receive mastectomies. Research assessing physician attitudes regarding the differences between Asian American receipt of mastectomies versus breast-conserving surgeries largely cites patient attitudes, small breasts, and cultural ideologies as reasons for this discrepancy. Like much of what has been mentioned in this entry thus far, treatment disparities are still being elucidated. The budding ideas of FA cultural ideology will be discussed later in this entry as a means of introducing the topic of where the research goes from here.

### **Prevention: Screening and Mammography**

The normalization of and recommendation for routine clinical breast examinations and mammography—a form of imaging of the breast so as to visualize masses and other abnormalities—has made a significant impact on incidence rates, stage of diagnosis, and survival of breast cancer patients in the United States and across the globe. Due to its impact and accessibility, or lack thereof for certain communities, mammography has become a widely studied topic in breast cancer research. Researchers have identified specific barriers and facilitators for mammography in FA communities and have also begun to break down the cultural ideologies surrounding preventive care.

In general, FAs have higher, if not the highest, rates of mammography screening relative to other Asian American subgroups. Collectively, FAs usually have health insurance, higher educational and socioeconomic status, and better access to medical care—typical predictors of mammography screening—than do other Asian American subgroups. On another note, research has also identified certain variables that negatively impact

likelihood of screening in FAs. Despite a higher likelihood of being insured, FAs who are under- or uninsured are significantly less likely to undergo a screening mammogram. In addition to medical cost barriers, FAs are kept from preventive screening when a medical home is not established or when there is lack of strong guidance from a provider. Unsurprisingly, immigration status is also a predictor of mammography; FAs who have recently immigrated to the United States or who have been in the United States for a shorter time are less likely to obtain mammograms. Although the connection between these variables and the likelihood of obtaining mammograms is unclear, research has been trying to carve out more definitive associations through cultural ideologies.

### **Cultural Considerations**

The illumination of disparities in the FA community begs the question of how these disparities have arisen and where they come from. Researchers have turned to cultural explanations, largely attributable to the deep-rooted history of Spanish and American occupation of the Philippines. This history manifests in commonly held beliefs and attitudes within the FA community.

The religious nature of FAs stems directly from Spanish occupation. This religiosity manifests in a fatalistic attitude toward health and life in general where putting health problems in God's hands becomes as much of the healing process as surgery or chemotherapy. As another example, researchers have attributed FA authoritarian, patriarchal cultural ideologies as the mechanism by which this community of breast cancer patients relies on provider guidance for adherence to mammography screening. Much of this research has been conducted via strong community ties in areas where there is a large FA presence and where word-of-mouth and social capital are valuable assets. This type of research, otherwise known as *community-based participatory research*, relies on utilizing community leaders within the FA community as footholds for researchers to obtain involvement and trust.

Research on breast cancer within the FA community is nascent and has relied heavily on data collection tools and the disaggregation of data on Asian Americans. However, with the knowledge

garnered and the advent of new research methodologies, this crossroads in research between epidemiology, medicine, and cultural anthropology could lead to improved screening, diagnosis, and treatment outcomes for FAs.

*Jared Miguel Duldulao and  
Joyce R. Javier*

*See also* Acculturation; Colonialism; Community-Based Participatory Research; Data Disaggregation; Health Care; Health-Seeking Behaviors; Obesity; Physical Activity

### Further Readings

- Chuang, E., Christos, P., Flam, A., McCarville, K., First, M., Shin, S., Vahdat, L., Swistel, A., Simmons, R., Osborne, M., Moore, A., Mazumdar, M., & Klein, P. (2012). Breast cancer subtypes across Asian-Americans differ according to Asian ethnic group. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 12*(5), 754–758. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1007%2Fs10903-012-9577-7>
- Gomez, S. L., Quach, T., Horn-Ross, P. L., Pham, J. T., Cockburn, M., Chang, E. T., Keegan, T. H. M., Glaser, S. L., & Clarke, C. A. (2010). Hidden breast cancer disparities in Asian women: Disaggregating incidence rates by ethnicity and migrant status. *American Journal of Public Health, 100*(S1), S125–S131. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2105%2FAJPH.2009.163931>
- Lagman, R. A., Yoo, G. J., Levine, E. G., Donnell, K. A., & Lim, H. R. (2014). “Leaving it to God”: Religion, spirituality and Filipina American breast cancer survivors. *Journal of Religion and Health, 53*(2), 449–460. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-012-9648-z>
- Lin, S. S., Clarke, C. A., O’Malley, C. D., & Le, G. M. (2002). Studying cancer incidence and outcomes in immigrants: Methodological concerns. *American Journal of Public Health, 92*(11), 1757–1759. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2105%2Fajph.92.11.1757-a>
- Ryu, S. Y., Crespi, C. M., & Maxwell, A. E. (2013). What factors explain disparities in mammography rates among Asian American immigrant women? A population-based study in California. *Women’s Health Issues, 23*(6), e403–e410. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.whi.2013.08.005>
- Villero, O., Macaerag, I., & Burke, N. J. (2014). *Pakikisama*: Lessons learned in partnership building with Filipinas with breast cancer for culturally meaningful support. *Global Health Promotion, 21*(1), 68–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1757975913514463>

## BRIDGE GENERATION

The term *bridge generation* (BG) refers to children born in America before the end of 1945 to at least one Filipino parent who had immigrated to the United States earlier in the century. Members of the BG are American-born offspring of the *Manong* (a Filipino word used to show respect to someone older) generation (MG)—the first sizable migration of Filipinos to the United States, which began in 1906. The MG have passed on but are not forgotten, thanks to books such as the classic *America Is in the Heart* by Carlos Bulosan (1946). However, their BG children have yet to be similarly examined. Peter Jamero had hoped his exploratory BG work, published in 2011, would inspire future scholars to begin undertaking more extensive studies on the BG’s role in the Filipino experience in America. It did not. The absence of BG documentation has left a significant void in the history of Filipinos in America.

### Growing-Up Years: 1940s–1950s

The BG grew up during the Great Depression and came of age during World War II (WWII, 1941–1945) and the Korean War (1950–1953). In *Common Destiny: Filipino American Generations*, by Juanita Tamayo Lott, the BG is identified as the *Silent Generation*, encompassing those born before the Great Depression through the end of WWII. Situated between two populous generations that Lott identifies as the *Pioneer Generation* and the *Baby Boom Generation*, the Silent Generation is described as a relatively small cohort. Early BG experiences are discussed through personal accounts.

Jamero uses a similar approach in VFA and in *Growing Up Brown: Memoirs of a Filipino American*. Each book describes similar experiences of (1) growing up culturally as Filipino in a Filipino or mixed-race family; (2) identifying with Filipino culture and contemporaries in reaction to an often unfriendly White society while embracing American values; (3) dealing with discrimination in education, the workplace, and housing; (4) validating their Americanism by enlisting in the armed forces during WWII and the Korean War; (5) marrying early and raising children; and (5) participating in multiethnic America.

## In the Labor Force

At the end of WWII, the BG had reached or were approaching adulthood and began the process of navigating their way within the U.S. labor force. Thanks to the GI Bill and the increase in high school graduations, the end of the war also sparked an unprecedented increase in the number of BG enrollments in colleges, universities, and technical schools. By 1970, Lott reported Second Generation members—in their 40s, 50s, and 60s—were in the prime years of employment. The same year, the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) reported that over 25% of Filipinos were in managerial, professional, and technical occupations. Almost 20% were in sales or clerical positions. The largest group, at 33%, were service workers and farmworkers.

How did the BG compare with the findings of the 1970 DHEW report? As noted earlier, the BG has yet to be comprehensively studied. Moreover, labor force data are nonexistent. A Filipino American National Historical Society initiative—the Central Valley Chapter’s 1998 project *Who’s Who Among Bridge Generation Filipino Americans*—is believed to provide the only labor force information dealing exclusively with the BG. The project attracted 105 respondents and yielded BG data on the following categories: white-collar jobs 72%; blue-collar positions 21%; homemaker 4%; music 3%; farmworker or domestic 0%. Although the project consisted of only a small sample and did not match DHEW categories, it does provide a glimpse into BG labor force participation. Of most significance: (1) The high percentage of BG participation in white-collar positions greatly exceeded that of the MG—a generation largely relegated to the lowest paying jobs; (2) zero respondents reported employment as a farmworker or domestic—indicating that the BG were becoming successful in climbing the labor force ladder.

## Civic Participation

Lott describes BG civic participation in the context of voting, serving in the military, and taking advantage of access to higher education in the United States.

## Voting

From 1906 until 1934, immigrant parents of the BG were classified as *nationals*, which enabled them to live in the United States but did not grant them the right to citizenship and voting. In the watershed book *Little Manila Is in the Heart*, the author, Dawn Bohulano Mabalon, described the plight of Filipinos as “living in limbo—neither citizen or national, barred from citizenship and the vote, yet deeply committed to living in the United States.” The passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934 reclassified Filipinos as aliens and continued their exclusion from citizenship and voting. After enduring years of discrimination and in limbo as second-class citizens, Filipinos were ecstatic when the United States granted them the rights to citizenship and voting in 1946. They now were *real Americans*. Their BG children, while helping them study for citizenship, personally experienced the joy and passion for citizenship. Inspired by the example of their parents, voting-age BG could also be counted upon to be among the most reliable of American voters.

## Military Service

Following the December 7, 1941, bombing of the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, virtually overnight the BG throughout Hawai’i and the West Coast enlisted in the armed services. They were not solely motivated by patriotism. Joining the military was a validation that they too were Americans. Similarly, the BG turned out in force to join the military after the Korean War broke out in June 1950.

## Education

Inspired by teachers who spread an American-style school system throughout the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century, the MG immigrated to America holding education as a strong value. Many came to further their formal education. Others came for economic benefits. Many who found their goals unmet in America looked to their BG children to fulfill their dreams for a better life. In the Filipino American National Historical Society initiative, 79% of respondents reported obtaining some education beyond high

school—thanks to the example set by their parents, the GI Bill, and a strong economy.

Peter Jamero

*See also* Labor Market Patterns; Little Manila Is in the Heart; Second-Generation Filipina/x/o Americans; World War II

### Further Readings

- Bulosan, C. (1946). *America is in the heart*. Harcourt, Brace & Co.
- Cordova, F. (1983). *Filipinos: Forgotten Asian Americans, A pictorial essay/1763–circa 1963*. Kendall/Hunt Publishing.
- Jamero, P. (2006). *Growing up brown: Memoirs of a Filipino American*. University of Washington Press.
- Jamero, P. (2011). *Vanishing Filipino Americans: The bridge generation*. University Press of America.
- Lott, J. T. (2006). *Common destiny: Filipino American generations*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mabalon, D. B. (2013). *Little Manila is in the heart*. Duke University Press.
- Revilla, L. A. (1997). Filipino American identity: Transcending the crisis. In Maria P. P. Root (Ed.), *Filipino Americans: Transformation and identity*. SAGE Publications.
- Rodriguez, R. M. (Ed.). (2020). *Filipino American transnational activism: Diasporic politics among the second generation*. Brill.

---

## BROADWAY, FILIPINA/X/O AMERICANS ON

---

Broadway theater—often simply referred to as *Broadway*—specifically references the performances in more than 40 designated theaters in New York City. Broadway plays and musicals are widely respected and recognized around the world, and the “Theater District” has long been a popular tourist destination. Along with the West End in London, Broadway represents the highest commercial level of live theater in the English-speaking world.

Although theatrical performances began in New York as early as the late 1700s, Broadway theaters did not arrive in the Times Square area of New York City until the early 1900s. In the 1920s

and 1930s, the theater scene in New York began to solidify, and Broadway has continued to change, grow, and evolve over the years—particularly regarding the diversity of its stories and the ethnic diversity of its performers and creators. For decades, Filipina/x/o American (FA) artists have been integral to Broadway and to this evolution. In this entry, FAs include those who were U.S.-born and raised, as well as Philippine-born immigrants who currently reside in the United States.

### FAs in the Golden Age of Broadway

The writers Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II ignited what is often called the Golden Age of Broadway musicals in the 1940s. In 1949, their hit Broadway musical *South Pacific* featured FA actress Barbara Luna in the role of Ngana—making her the first known FA actress to perform on Broadway. In 1951, Luna joined the original Broadway production of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *The King and I*, which later featured Patrick Adiarte (who is credited as the first FA male actor on Broadway). In 1956, Adiarte played the role of Prince Chulalongkorn in the film version of *The King and I*; and in 1958, Adiarte went on to star in Rodgers and Hammerstein’s original Broadway cast of *Flower Drum Song* as Wang San (a role he also played in the movie). FA actress Cely Carillo began in the ensemble of the original Broadway cast of *Flower Drum Song* and took over the role of Mei Li in 1960, making her the first FA lead actress in a popular Broadway musical. Carillo’s daughter, Cynthia Onrubia, has performed in seven Broadway musicals as of 2021; her debut was in *A Chorus Line* when she was just 15 years old.

This trilogy of Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals that featured Asian characters would provide many employment opportunities for FA performers—as they were often revived in the decades that followed. It was not until 1996, however, that an FA actor would play the pivotal role of the King of Siam in *The King and I*. For his portrayal, FA actor Lou Diamond Phillips received Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award nominations. Years later, in 2008, FA actress Loretta Ables Sayre also garnered a Tony Award nomination for her portrayal of Bloody Mary in *South Pacific*.

Beyond Broadway's Golden Age musicals, Victoria Racimo (an original Broadway cast member of *Flower Drum Song*) went on to have a successful film and television career. Linda Dangelil made her Broadway debut at age 12 in the 1954 production of *Peter Pan* and later danced in the 1961 film version of *West Side Story*. In 1968, FA Victoria Mallory (born Victoria Morales) starred as Maria in the first Broadway revival of *West Side Story*; she then originated the Stephen Sondheim-written roles of Young Heidi in *Follies* (1971) and Anne Egerman in *A Little Night Music* (1973). Mallory's daughter, Ramona Mallory, also played Anne Egerman on Broadway in the 2009 revival.

FAs played a vital role in Broadway plays as well. Ching Valdes-Aran played Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* in 1986, while also performing the role of Lady Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet* in repertory. Furthermore, FA Alec Mapa replaced B. D. Wong in the lead role of Song Liling in *M. Butterfly* in 1988.

### FAs and Megamusicals

During the 1980s and 1990s, megamusicals, or large-scale musicals produced for large commercial profit, achieved success on London's West End and were transferred to successful runs on Broadway. Productions of *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats*, and *Les Misérables* became Broadway staples for decades, and the producer of these shows, Cameron Mackintosh, cemented his role in Broadway history.

Following the success of their 1985 hit *Les Misérables*, writers Claude-Michel Schönberg and Alain Boublil opened *Miss Saigon* on Broadway in 1991, which was set during and after the Vietnam War. The musical made a venerable star out of its Filipina lead actress, Lea Salonga, who played the role of Kim. Salonga won the Tony Award for Best Actress (1991) as well as the Laurence Olivier Award (1990), the Drama Desk Award (1991), and many others. In 1993, she became the first Asian actress to play Éponine in *Les Misérables* on Broadway. Salonga later starred in the 2002 Broadway revival of *Flower Drum Song* as Mei Li, in the 2015 Broadway production of *Allegiance* as Kei Kimura, and in the 2017 revival of *Once on This Island* as Erzulie.

*Miss Saigon* proved to be a vital show for many FA performers. Joan Almedilla, Rona Figueroa,

Leila Florentino, and Deedee Lynn Magno Hall all played the leading role of Kim on Broadway. FA actor Alan Ariano performed in the show through the entirety of its 1991–2001 run. In 2017, the musical was revived and again starred many FA artists—including Jon Jon Briones as the Engineer, Devin Ilaw as Thuy, and Eva Noblezada as Kim (which earned Noblezada a Tony nomination for Best Actress in a Musical). In 2019, Noblezada starred as Eurydice in the Broadway production of *Hadestown*, which earned her another Tony nomination for Best Actress.

*Les Misérables* was also an important show for FAs, particularly in the realm of nontraditional casting, which Actors Equity defines as a role in which race, ethnicity, or gender is not germane to the character or play development. In 2006, *Les Misérables* was revived on Broadway starring FAs Adam Jacobs as Marius and Ali Ewoldt as Cosette. Lea Salonga joined the show later on in its run as Fantine, and all three were the first Asian Americans to play these roles on Broadway. Jacobs went on to play title roles in two Disney-produced Broadway musicals: *The Lion King* (as Simba in 2011) and *Aladdin* (as Aladdin in 2014). In 2016, Ewoldt became the first FA, Asian American, and actress of color to play the role of Christine Daaé in *The Phantom of the Opera* (Broadway's longest running musical as of 2021).

Other notable examples of nontraditional casting are FAs Angel Desai as Marta in the 2006 Broadway revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Company*, as well as Darren Criss as J. Pierrepoint Finch in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (2012) and the title character in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (2015). One of Criss's *Hedwig* costars, Lena Hall, also of Filipino descent, won the 2014 Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in a Musical. Furthermore, FA actor Josh Dela Cruz played the title role in *Aladdin* in 2017, and Marc dela Cruz became the first FA and Asian American to play the title role in *Hamilton* in 2019.

### Filipino Characters on Broadway

FA actor Jose Llana starred on Broadway in *The King and I* (1996 revival as Lun Tha), *Rent* (as Angel), *Street Corner Symphony* (as Jessie-Lee),

*Flower Drum Song* (as Ta), *Wonderland* (as El Gato), and the 2015 revival of *The King and I* (as the King of Siam). In 2005, Llana made Broadway history by playing its first recognized FA character, Chip Tolentino, in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. J. Elaine Marcos later played FA characters in *The Wedding Singer* in 2006 and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert* in 2011. In 2015, Jaygee Macapugay originated the role of Mrs. Macapugay in *School of Rock*. After she left the show, all future productions of this Andrew Lloyd Weber-written show have kept the character that was named after her.

### FAs in the Greater Broadway Community

With every Broadway production, there is a community of people on and off stage who are vital to ensuring each show's success. Some of these roles include the chorus, designers, composers, conductors, and producers, to name a few. In each of these roles, FAs have been trailblazing these paths for decades.

The chorus creates the world of the musical, and the ritual of the "Legacy Robe," which is bestowed upon the chorus member who has the largest number of Broadway credits on every Broadway musical's opening night. At the time of this writing, FA Legacy Robe recipients include J. Elaine Marcos (2018, *Gettin' the Band Back Together*), Catherine Ricafort (2017, *Miss Saigon*), Aaron Albano (2012, *Newsies*), Lydia Gaston (1996, *The King and I*), and Alan Ariano (1991, *Miss Saigon*). Notably, Cynthia Onrubia has received the Legacy Robe four times—*Little Me* (1998), *Victor Victoria* (1995), *Damn Yankees* (1994), and *Song & Dance* (1985).

Beyond the actors and ensemble, the Broadway community also consists of FA leaders behind the scenes. In 2016, Clint Ramos received a Tony Award for Best Costume Design of a Play for *Eclipsed*—making him the first person of color to win in this category. Since then, he had been Tony-nominated for his costume designs for *Once on This Island* (2018), *Torch Song* (2019), and *The Rose Tattoo* (2020) and for his scenic design for *Slave Play* (2020). In 2013, Jhett Tolentino became the first FA producer to win a Tony Award for Best Play for *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. In 2014, Tolentino won two more Tony

awards—one for *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Best Musical) and *A Raisin in the Sun* (Best Revival of a Play).

As of 2021, there have been only two FA conductors on Broadway. First, Marco Pagua who conducted five shows: *Everyday Rapture*; *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*; *If/Then*; *Sponge-Bob SquarePants, The Broadway Musical*; and *Girl From the North Country*. Second, Steven Cuevas conducted *Kinky Boots* and *Once on This Island*.

Robert Lopez is an FA composer of musicals, best known for cocreating the Broadway shows *Avenue Q* (2003) and *The Book of Mormon* (2011) and cowriting the Disney-animated films *Frozen* (and its Broadway production in 2018), *Frozen II*, and *Coco*, with his wife Kristen Anderson-Lopez. At age 39, Lopez became the youngest person to receive the Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony (EGOT) Awards; he is also the only person to have received all four awards more than once.

### Beyond Broadway

Although there have not yet been any musicals or plays on Broadway written by or about FAs, many off-Broadway theater companies (i.e., designated theaters which have smaller capacities than Broadway houses and are located outside of the theater district) have been more successful in producing shows with predominantly FA casts and stories. First, Ma-Yi Theater Company, founded in 1989, has produced three new works about FAs: *The Romance of Magno Rubio* (2003) by Lonnie Carter, which received eight Obie Awards; *Flipzoids* (2010) by FA Ralph B. Peña (who has served as Ma-Yi's artistic director since 1996); and the musical *Felix Starro* (2019) with book and lyrics by FA Jessica Hagedorn and music by FA Fabian Obispo.

Second, the National Asian American Theater Company (NAATCO), founded in 1991, specializes in classic works realized by an all-Asian American cast. Their producing artistic director and founder, FA Mia Katigbak, is an Obie Award-winning actress (*Awake & Sing*, 2014) and recipient of the 2019 Sam Norikin Off-Broadway Drama Desk Award. Third, Pan Asian Repertory, founded in 1977, produced the first off-Broadway FA musical: *IMELDA: A New Musical*. The show starred FAs Jaygee Macapugay as Imelda Marcos, Liz Casasola

as Cory Aquino, Mel Maghuyop as Ferdinand Marcos, and Brian Jose as Ninoy Aquino.

Finally, the Public Theater, founded in 1954, presented the play *Dogeaters* by FA Jessica Hagedorn in 2001. Based on the award-winning novel of the same name, the show was set during the Marcos regime in the Philippines. In 2013, the Public Theater presented a different telling of that era with David Byrne and Fatboy Slim's *Here Lies Love*, an immersive pop and disco musical that focused more on Imelda Marcos. It starred FA actors Jose Llana as Ferdinand Marcos, Conrad Ricamora as Ninoy Aquino, and Melody Butiu as Estrella Cumpas. FA actress Jaygee Macapugay later took over the role of Imelda Marcos. *Here Lies Love* won the Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards and received rave reviews by *The New York Times* and other media outlets.

The future direction of FA shows on Broadway is full of potential. Composer Paulo Tirol and his FA immigrant song cycle *On This Side of the World* was first produced off-off-Broadway in 2019. In 2021, Jessica Hagedorn began production on her new musical, *Play Like a Girl: The Amazing Life and Times of a Band Named Fanny*. That same year, Gayle Romasanta and Bryan Pangilinan premiered songs from *Larry: A New Musical* in San Francisco; the musical brings to life the story of Larry Itliong and the Filipinos behind the Delano Grape Strike of 1965. These projects all demonstrate how the community of artists providing social support for each other has been vital for FA success in theater.

One organization that directly supports FAs on Broadway is Broadway Barkada. Founded in 2009 by Liz Casasola, Brian Jose, and Billy Bustamante, the organization provides FAs opportunities to hone their talents, gain exposure, and build confidence through philanthropy and community engagement. This support, coupled with the rich history of FAs on Broadway, signals a bright future for FA artists on Broadway.

*Elizabeth Casasola, Ali Ewoldt, and Jaygee Macapugay*

*See also* Dance, Filipina/x/o Americans in; Musical Arts, Filipina/x/o Americans in; New York City, Filipina/x/o in; Performance, Filipino American; Theater, Filipina/x/o American

## Further Readings

- Alejandro, R. G., & Florentino, E. S. J. (1998). *Pinoyork: The Filipino Americans in New York*. Filipino American National Historical Society, Metropolitan New York Chapter.
- Ang, W. (2018). *Barangay to Broadway: Filipino American Theater History*. Author.
- Brantley, B. (2013). A Rise to Power, Disco Round Included. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/24/theater/reviews/david-byrnes-here-lies-love-at-the-public-theater.html>
- Castro, A. (2019). Cely Carrillo, the Philippines' First Broadway Star. *Esquire*. <https://www.esquiremag.ph/culture/cely-carrillo-broadway-first-filipino-a2289-20190121-lfrm>
- Nadal, K. L. (2015). *Filipinos in New York City*. Arcadia.
- Taylor, C. (1986, November 29). Non-traditional casting explored at symposium. *Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1986-11-29-ca-16057-story.html>

---

## BROOKLYN NAVY YARD

---

The Brooklyn Navy Yard was an official shipyard of the United States Navy, which was active between the early 1800s and 1966. Also known as the *U.S. Naval Shipyard, Brooklyn* and later as the *New York Naval Shipyard*, the locale spanned up to 225 acres on the northwest side of Brooklyn, NY. The site included numerous buildings and structures, including the Brooklyn Naval Hospital, Admiral Row (which housed several residences for naval officers and their families), and six dry docks (areas where ships are inspected and repaired). Upon its initial opening in 1806, the yards were the site of production for official ships for the U.S. Navy. Prior to the Civil War, the Navy designed and constructed wooden ships at the yard; from the 1870s and beyond, steel ships and aircraft were produced on-site.

After the Spanish–American War of 1898, the Brooklyn Navy Yard increased significantly, in both physical size and workforce numbers, predominantly due to the direction of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was a former naval officer. President Roosevelt ordered that several *goodwill* ships tour the world, in an effort to build visibility

and establish dominance as the new colonizer of several annexed countries—including the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawai'i, Guam, and Samoa. These exhibition voyages commonly became known as the *Great White Fleet* and were also tactics used to recruit navy personnel from the Philippines.

The first ship that was built and launched from the Brooklyn Navy Yard was the USS *Connecticut* in 1904; subsequent ships included the USS *Florida*, USS *New York*, USS *Arizona*, USS *New Mexico*, and USS *Tennessee*. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the workforce of the naval yard tripled, in an effort to produce more battleships for use in combat. Over four dozen battleships were manufactured in a span of 18 months.

Following World War I, the naval yard was steadily active in producing more ships; however, productivity exponentially increased after the start of World War II, in which employment increased to a peak of 75,000 people. At this time, the yard became known as *The Can-Do Shipyard* because it was the site where hundreds of ships could be manufactured and repaired efficiently in a very short time. Productivity of shipbuilding significantly decreased after World War II, and the site briefly became home to aircraft production during the Korean War in the 1950s. However, when the federal government moved toward hiring private shipbuilders, owing to their lower costs, the Brooklyn Navy Yard was officially closed as an official naval shipyard in 1966.

After its closing, the site was used for various purposes, both civic and commercial. Businesses ranged from restaurants to shops, and the Navy maintained a commissary.

The property was managed by both local government and private entities, and disputes and accusations of corrupt uses of the property continued for decades. In 2014, the entire property was listed as a historic district by the National Register of Historic Places, and several buildings were deemed New York City designated landmarks.

### **Filipino Americans and the Brooklyn Navy Yard**

The Brooklyn Navy Yard is significant to Filipino American history because a number of Filipino

seafarers and service people utilized the site as a port to and from the United States. Following the American colonization of the Philippines, President William McKinley signed an executive order in 1901 that allowed 500 men from the Philippines to enlist as personnel for the U.S. Navy. Accordingly, Filipino men were recruited in Manila to serve primarily as cooks and stewards. Many young men from all over the Philippines jumped at the opportunity, not just for the economic benefits but because of the opportunity to see the world. Further, the presence of these large naval ships in Manila, as ordered by President Roosevelt, attracted young Filipinos to the possibility of prosperity or wealth outside of the Philippines. Finally, because American colonization meant the introduction (and inundation) of the concept of an *American Dream*, many Filipinos joined the Navy in hopes of becoming naturalized U.S. citizens.

The earliest naval recruitment commenced when the *Great White Fleet* first landed in the Philippines in 1908; however, most of the Filipino seafarers who migrated to Brooklyn arrived en masse beginning in the 1920s. These sailors were often welcomed at the docks by other Filipinos who had already settled in the area; these established Filipino New York residents consisted of former sailors and navy men, as well as those who had undergone the immigration process at Ellis Island. Although Filipinos at the time were still a very small population compared with other immigrant groups in Brooklyn (and in New York City generally), they were notably overrepresented as cooks and stewards at the navy yards; in fact, some historians note that most mess hall stewards who worked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in the 1920s were Filipino.

Many Filipino seafarers found local housing in the neighborhood surrounding the Brooklyn Navy Yards, in an area that was known as the Navy Yard District. The most socially active street in the neighborhood for Filipinos was Sands Street—a city street that was just south of the Navy Yard. Once referred to as a *Barbary Coast* of New York, Sands Street boasted an array of businesses (e.g., shops, bars, and restaurants) that catered to both sailors and locals. The district was reported as being quiet during the daytime but loud and vibrant at night, particularly because of the bars and restaurants.

Within the Naval District, most Filipinos were known to reside near the intersection of Sands Street and Washington Avenue. Many of the locals referred to that particular area as *Manila Alley* because of the density of Filipino residents, as well as the myriad businesses and organizations that existed on both sides of the street. For example, in one building was a Filipino barbershop, and in another building was a space for Filipino VFWs (Veterans of Foreign Wars) to hold meetings and cultural events.

The most well-known building in Manila Alley was 47 Sands Street, which was also the home to Manila Karihan Restaurant. Having first been opened by proprietor E. G. Lopez as early as 1927, Manila Karihan is believed to be the oldest Filipino restaurant in New York and one of the oldest Filipino restaurants in the United States. According to an advertisement in the *Philippine Republic*, the restaurant's motto was: "Courtesy, Cleanliness, and Satisfaction." The restaurant was documented as serving an array of Filipino dishes including pork adobo, fish sinigang, beans, rice, and mangoes. At night, customers enjoyed dressing up in zoot suits; drinking; and dancing at the restaurant. Given that many Filipinos listed their resident address as 47 Sands Street, it is presumed that rooms upstairs were rented to migrant tenants.

Prior to the mass Filipino migration in the 1920s, Manila Alley and Sands Street were predominantly inhabited by Italian immigrants who had settled there decades before. With the scarcity of Filipina women at the time, many Filipino men dated and married local Italian women, which was legal because of the absence of anti-miscegenation laws in New York. Accordingly, several multiracial Filipino/Italian American children were born in the 1930s and 1940s.

### **Notable Residents of Manila Alley and Naval Yard District**

One of the most well-known residents of 47 Sands Street was Claudio Manela—a Filipino merchant sailor who first arrived on Ellis Island before moving to Brooklyn. After leaving the navy, Manela became a professional baseball player for the Cuban Stars in the United States Negro Leagues from 1921 to 1922. Initially presumed to be a

Cuban by the media and other players, Manela's Filipino identity was discovered and he was eventually known as a *Chino Manila*. While Manela found some success as a left-handed pitcher on various teams, he never made it to the major or minor leagues, because those leagues did not permit non-White players until 1947. In spite of this exclusion, Manela is credited as being the first Filipino American professional baseball player in the United States.

Two Filipino professional boxers were known to have resided in Brooklyn during the 1920s and 1930s—though it is unclear if they lived in the Navy Yard District among their fellow *kababayan* (countrymen). First, Pancho Villa (whose legal name was Francisco Guilledo) was a Filipino boxer who was best known for winning the World Flyweight Championship in 1923 at the Polo Grounds in New York City, becoming the first person of Asian descent to do so. Unfortunately, Villa died unexpectedly just weeks shy of his 24th birthday, as a result of a tooth infection that was aggravated by a recent match. Second, Cerefino Garcia was a Filipino boxer who was credited for first using, in American professional boxing, the *bolo punch*—a boxing technique used in the Philippines that mirrors indigenous martial arts. Garcia won the NYSAC World Middleweight Title at Madison Square Garden on October 2, 1939—becoming the only boxer from the Philippines to become world champion in the middleweight division.

Most of the Filipino residents of Sands Street were merchant sailors and other seafarers—many who were processed via Ellis Island and whose names are included on official passenger lists. Some were listed as cooks or mess boys; these included Bruno Abelita, Nicolas Adonis, Lorenzo Cerino, and Severino Espenosa. Others were listed generally as crew members; these included Pedro Abrico, Pedro Almeida, Joseph Adra, Lucrecio Advincula, Apolonio Blanco, and Pedro de Leon. The earliest known sailor to arrive via Ellis Island was Pedro Salono, a 21-year old, who arrived on May 7, 1899, via Liverpool, England, aboard the USS *Etruria*.

Further, there is historical documentation of *pensionados*, or students sponsored by the U.S. government, who lived on Sands Street. Based on a 1922 *Directory of Filipino Students in the*

*United States*, Sands Street residents included Vicente Mabakiao, who studied at City College; Pedro Mendoza, who studied at the National Aero Institute; and Joseph Grupo, who studied at Niagara University. Although many of these students attended colleges or universities outside of Brooklyn, many may have chosen to live in the Navy Yard District, as a way to be closer to family members or other Filipino Americans.

Pio Fernandez immigrated to the United States in the 1930s after joining the U.S. Army and serving directly as *houseboy* and personal valet to General Douglas MacArthur prior to World War II. Fernandez is noted as having traveled on 10 different ships before finally landing in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Though he eventually left the navy and moved from Brooklyn to Queens, New York, Fernandez was known to welcome all of the new sailor and crew members when they docked in Brooklyn. In 1964, when General MacArthur passed away, Fernandez was interviewed for many local newspapers, in which he shared his personal experiences working closely with the decorated general.

Many Filipino American organizations and businesses were first formed out of the Brooklyn Navy Yards. The Filipino Social Club of New York was founded in 1934 and had previously listed its headquarters as 554 Lafayette Avenue in Brooklyn—less than 2 miles south of the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Further, although Manila Karihan eventually went out of business, another Filipino American restaurant emerged. Florentino Cabarubias, a former merchant marine, opened the Philippine Bataan Restaurant in the late 1960s. The restaurant's address was 110 Flushing Avenue in Brooklyn, located just one block south of the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

### Present-Day Filipino Population in Brooklyn

In 1971, the *New York Times* reported there were a reported 3,000 Filipinos who lived or worked in the district, with many finding employment in the local restaurants, automobile body garages, or the Navy commissary. However, as fewer businesses became available over time, many former Filipino residents moved to other boroughs (e.g., Queens and Manhattan) and even to suburbs in New Jersey and Long Island.

Further, without the influx of incoming Filipino seafarers and naval officers, the overall Filipino population in Brooklyn began to dissipate as well. Although Brooklyn was once the New York City borough that housed the largest population of Filipinos in New York City, most Filipino Americans today reside in other ethnic enclaves in the New York metropolitan area, including Woodside, Queens; Jamaica, Queens; and Jersey City, New Jersey.

*Dolores Fernandez Alic and  
Kevin Leo Yabut Nadal*

*See also* East Coast, Filipina/x/o Americans on the; Ellis Island; New York City, Filipina/x/os in; U.S. Navy, Filipino Americans in

### Further Readings

- Berner, T. F. (1999). *The Brooklyn Navy Yard*. Arcadia Publishing.
- Hughes, C. J. (2018, October). Reinventing the Brooklyn Navy Yard. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/01/realestate/reinventing-the-brooklyn-navy-yard.html>
- Nadal, K. L. (2015). *Filipinos in New York City*. Arcadia Publishing.

---

## BROWN, HELEN AGCAOILI SUMMERS

---

Helen Agcaoili Summers Brown (1915–2011) was a teacher, social worker, community organizer, and the founder of the Filipino American Library (FAL) in Los Angeles. In 1989, “Auntie Helen” (as she was known in the Los Angeles FA community) received the Asian Pacific Women’s Network Lifetime Achievement Award. This entry focuses on Brown’s personal and professional life, with much of the information provided by her son, George Brown, based on their family records.

### Family History and Earlier Years

Helen Agcaoili Summers was born in Manila, Philippines, on May 16, 1915, to Trinidad Agcaoili and George Summers. Born to a Filipino mother and a White father, she had a distinguished

historical ancestry. Her grandfather, Don Julio Agcaoili, was a Katipunero who fought in the revolution against Spain; he would later become the governor of Ilocos Norte under the U.S. regime. Although this cooperation with another foreign occupying power sat uneasily with him, it became very personal when one of his daughters fell in love with her American teacher.

George Robert Summers (Helen's father) had arrived in the Philippines in 1901 along with the first batch of American educators sent to the Philippines to establish an American-style public education system (a cornerstone of General Douglas MacArthur's pacification campaign during the Philippine American War). Stationed in Laoag, Ilocos Norte, Summers met one of his students, Trinidad Agcaoili. The two fell in love and were married.

Summers's career advanced from that of teacher to principal to Superintendent of Education (which required a transfer to Manila). When Helen was born in 1915, she was educated in American-style public schools (from elementary school to high school). She spent summers in Laoag with her grandfather's family and cousins.

After graduating from Manila Central High School, Helen moved with her family to the United States. She first enrolled at Pasadena Junior College and then at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), where she earned a baccalaureate in education (1937) and a master's degree in social work (1939). She is believed to be the first Pinay to have graduated from UCLA.

In 1940, Helen met her future husband Bill Brown. A year later, when they wanted to get married, they could not obtain a license in California because state laws forbade intermarriages between Whites and those with non-White ancestry. So, they traveled to Nevada to get married, as that state did not have anti-miscegenation laws. She later recalled that her parents had been furious that she and Brown could not be married in California, but because she was so in love with him, she didn't care where they got married.

### **Career as a Teacher and Social Worker**

After completing her master's degree, Brown began teaching third grade, the beginning of

what would be a long career with the Los Angeles Unified School District. In the early 1950s, she changed jobs from classroom teacher to social worker and transferred to the school district's Child Welfare Attendance Branch. As a social worker, she realized that the school district was not sufficiently proactive in addressing the needs of immigrant children, especially Filipino immigrant children. This deficiency resonated with her, reminding her of her immigrant struggles to belong and establish her identity. She recalled, for example, that none of her classmates knew about the Philippines, so she would say she was from Hawai'i, because at least they knew where that was.

The knowledge Brown gained as a social worker pushed her toward activism and advocacy. One school board member who worked with Brown on school desegregation in the early 1970s remembers how a very agitated Helen Brown called her to complain that the school district was placing Tagalog-speaking children into Spanish bilingual classrooms, simply because they had Hispanic surnames. Soon, Helen was advocating for Tagalog bilingual classes for Filipino children and for the inclusion of culturally relevant material in the curriculum to reflect the increasing cultural diversity of children in the school district.

To really appreciate the advocacy that Helen undertook on behalf of Filipino immigrant children (as well as the leadership she provided for Filipino teachers in the school district), one must place Brown's activism in the context of U.S. race relations during the 1960s and 1970s. During this period, the color of one's skin generally determined one's choices and opportunities in life—much more so than they do today. Because Brown could pass as White, she used her privilege to advocate for Filipino immigrant children, while also organizing Filipino American teachers.

In the 1970s, Brown organized and led the Filipino American Educators Association (FAEA). The mission of FAEA was to serve as a support group for Filipino American teachers and to give them a voice within the Los Angeles School District. She also served as a commissioner with the Asian Pacific Education Commission—an oversight body of the Board of Education.

## Filipino American Library

After retiring from active teaching, Brown established the Pilipino American Reading Room and Library (PARRAL). It officially opened on October 13, 1985, using donated space in the basement of the Filipino Christian Church in Historic Filipinotown in Los Angeles. By providing resources about their culture and history, Helen envisioned that PARRAL would help Filipino American youth discover, and be proud of, their identities. She wanted the library to “open people’s hearts and minds to the beauty, the truth, and the honor of being Filipino or Filipino American.” She led staff development workshops at PARRAL, so teachers could learn about Filipino culture and Filipino American history, so as to better understand their students of Filipino ancestry.

In 1988, with the help of several others, Helen established the Pamana Foundation, a nonprofit educational foundation that took over the stewardship, preservation, and conservation of PARRAL’s collection. As the first Filipino American community library of its kind in the United States, PARRAL quickly gained recognition beyond Southern California. Graduate students and groups from all over came to PARRAL to interrogate its collection for their research.

As PARRAL’s fame spread, the collection grew, as did the need for space. In 2000, it was relocated to the Los Angeles office building of SIPA (Search to Involve Pilipino Americans). That same year, it was also renamed as the Filipino American Library (FAL). Similarly, Pamana Foundation was also renamed as the Filipino American Heritage Institute.

*Enrique de la Cruz*

*See also* Activism and Education; Historical Figures; Los Angeles, Filipina/x/os in; Social Work, Filipina/x/o Americans and

## Further Readings

- Ibañez, F. P., & Ibañez, R. E. (2009). *Filipinos in Carson and the South Bay*. Arcadia.
- Koerner, M. R. (2007). *Filipinos in Los Angeles*. Arcadia.
- Montoya, C. (2009). *Los Angeles’ historic Filipinotown*. Arcadia.

## BROWN ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT

The Brown Asian American Movement has its roots in the various 1960’s social movements for People of Color. Stokely Carmichael (aka Kwame Ture; 1941–1998) coined the term *Black Power* as the rallying cry of a younger, more radical generation of civil rights activists. The term resonated on national and global levels, amid African and Asian countries revolting against White European colonizers. Meanwhile, Chicano activists in this era began to refer to their movement as *Brown Power* while Asian American social movements began to be characterized as *Yellow Power*. In spite of this, brown Asians and brown Asian Americans have actively resisted this inaccurate umbrella term—since they have been historically excluded, and stereotyped with an inferior status, by *yellow* or East Asian Americans.

As of 2020, Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs) are the third largest Asian American group, with Chinese and Asian Indians being the second and third largest. Along with other U.S. Americans of Southeast Asian and South Asian ancestry, FAs comprise the brown Asian Americans—outnumbering the *yellow* or East Asian Americans. This entry examines the evolution of brown Asian Americans in the United States from color consciousness to potential political power. It highlights policy and statistical contexts as well as artistic representations in the 20th and 21st centuries.

## Color Consciousness

Geography is not always acknowledged in understanding the power hierarchy of the United States, or in what W. E. B. DuBois called the *color line*. Western European powers from the 15th century onward fought for domination not just across European empires but to conquer the world, especially to exploit the natural resources of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Vast portions of these continents are located in the global South and inhabited by People of Color. The extraction of natural resources from the rest of the world was followed by exploitation of the human capital of People of Color in their

motherlands. Through slavery, conquest, colonization, capitalism, and war, People of Color also became human capital in the global North, including the United States.

In the mid-20th century with the end of World War II and with revolutions occurring in colonized countries, social movement activists characterized this geopolitical reality as the First World (rich North American and European countries), the Second World (communist countries, namely the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People's Republic of China), and the Third World (poor, mainly global South and former colonies). Social movement activists in the 21st century have replaced *Third World* with Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (or BIPOC); this is sometimes even shortened to Black and Brown people.

Historically and currently, skin color is the measure of access to, or exclusion from, power. Gradations from light to dark were strictly noted with interracial children described as mestizo, mulatto, quadroon, octoroon, creole, high yellow, café au lait, half-breed, or blood, among others. Brown Asian Americans understand that this color consciousness did not originate in the United States but in Asia via historical hierarchies. In the Philippines, color distinctions are depicted, for example, in the paintings of artist Pacita Abad (1946–2004)—the Spanish light-skinned Maria Clara and the Negrita. In South Asia, the Hindu caste system places light-skinned Brahmins at the top and the dark-skinned Dalits (outcasts) at the bottom. The institution of Jim Crow in the United States was the major manifestation of racism after the Civil War (1861–1865). Formerly enslaved people became underpaid or excluded workers. Shortly after World War II, when non-White veterans had difficulty becoming employed, the Arkansas-born musician Big Bill Broonzy wrote and sang a famous labor song, “Black, Brown and White.” The refrain referred to White being all right, Brown sticking around, and Black stepping back in the employment line.

### Policy and Statistical Contexts

Social movements tend to originate organically and politically; they are an accumulation of incidents with turning points for actual planned

resistance and disciplined strategies focused on the mission. Some are guided by nonviolence and the pursuit of equity (e.g., the civil rights movement led by Black Americans in the 1950s and 1960s and the farmworkers movement led by Filipinos and Chicanos in rural California in the 1960s and 1970s).

Various incidents leading to an Asian American movement span started with the colonization of the Philippines in 1899 to exclusionary immigration laws, denial of American citizenship, denial of property ownership, anti-miscegenation laws, internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, and the undeclared war in Southeast Asia.

The success of the civil rights movement and the call to Black Power, Brown Power, Red Power, and Yellow Power in communities of color is due to not just the recognition of White Supremacy but responses of resistance and resilience to challenge it. Legal and legislative decisions questioned these communities' rights to be treated as equal to Whites. Even as the Nisei response to Japanese American internment during World War II was to be quiet Americans *outwhiting the Whites*, they were still a minority although dubiously labeled the *model minority*.

Initially, Red Power was associated with Native Americans; Yellow Power with Asian Americans; and Brown Power with Chicanos/Latinos. FAs primarily on California college campuses and in agriculture fields objected to equating Yellow Power with Asian Americans as this stereotype limited Asian Americans to those who traced their ancestry to the Far East—namely, China, Japan, and Korea. As the *Latinos of Asia*, FAs have organic ties to other brown Americans, especially Hispanic/Latino Americans. Including all Asian Americans under Yellow Power masked glaring disparities between the Far East and Southeast Asians.

Census and other socioeconomic data describe a bimodal distribution of very well-off Japanese and Chinese/Taiwanese and not-so-well-off Southeast Asian Americans (viz, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Hmong). Comparatively, FAs and South Asians appear to have thrived economically, but this obfuscates the fact that FAs generally have larger households with more members working more hours to boost household income. Similarly, immigration of South Asians has disproportionately favored the highly educated and

marketable. The legacy and reality of Southeast Asian Americans is that they are poor refugees of the war perpetrated by the United States against Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia in the 1960s and 1970s.

Asian American participation in the Decennial Census of Population and Housing, starting with planning for the 1980 Census, complements the policy context of the Brown Asian American Movement. Through the 1970 Census, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino Americans composed the majority of Asian Americans, numbering fewer than 1.5 million nationally. The 1965 Immigration Act lifting quota restrictions precipitated tremendous growth in subsequent censuses. The April 30, 1975, end of the Vietnam War precipitated another increase, with Southeast Asian refugees added to the mix. The diversity and tremendous growth of the Asian American population within a short period was documented in every census since 1970 by disaggregated ethnic group data. The data also portrayed glaring socioeconomic disparities across this population.

The late 1960s and early 1970s student protests had already demonstrated that Black and Third World people, despite systematic discrimination against them, were critical to the future of the United States. Within Asian American Studies departments and student organizations, brown Asian Americans called out East Asian Americans for presuming to speak for all Asian Americans at various conferences. Newly formed national coalitions in the 1970s, such as the Pacific/Asian Coalition funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, advocated for equal power of Pacific Islanders and brown Asian Americans. Examples include placing *Pacific* before *Asian* in all brands and alternating Pacific Islanders and brown Asian Americans in leadership positions. The Racial and Ethnic/Advisory Committees for the Decennial Populations from 1980 through 2010 were also attuned to increasing Brown Power. The Association for Indians in America successfully lobbied to be removed from the White/Caucasian category to the Asian one in the 1980 Census.

### Artistic Representation

Artistic representation provides another dimension to a Brown Asian American Movement.

In literature, Carlos Bulosan's novel *America Is in the Heart* depicts the racism in early 20th-century agricultural America. For decades, this novel has introduced students of Ethnic Studies, American literature, and U.S. history to the disparate treatment of brown Asian Americans and their abilities to resist and organize. More recent works such as Janice Lobo Sapigao's *Microchips for Millions* gives voice to her Filipino mother and other Southeast Asian and South Asian Americans who toil in and enrich Silicon Valley. Among Southeast Asian Americans, Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer* unsparingly provides first-person witness to the victimization and resilience of Vietnamese in their homeland and the United States.

In film, Curtis Choy's classic 1983 documentary *The Fall of the I-Hotel* depicts the long eviction struggle led by the *manong* generation of Filipinos and their allies across different generations and races.

In the 1980s, with the dramatic growth of the population of FAs, other Southeast Asians, and South Asians, their children, foreign and U.S.-born, gained entry to higher education and professional careers. East Asian Americans had accessed these earlier in the post-World War II era. Younger brown Asian Americans were able to establish student organizations on campus and affinity groups at their workplaces. Many student groups were formed for socializing and cultural preservation. Such groups affirmed visibility and distinction from East Asian Americans. Specifically, they held Pilipino Cultural Nights, South Asian Cultural Nights, and Southeast Asian Cultural Nights.

### Contemporary Brown Asian American Movement

Today much of the Brown Asian American Movement is represented and articulated on campus via Asian American Studies or Ethnic Studies. Asian Americans talk among themselves about who is privileged; who is disadvantaged; and how to distribute equitable representation internally.

Furthermore, the movement is also affected by outside forces, including the increasing proportion of brown Asian Americans relative to East Asian Americans, the general browning of the United States, the growth of more interracial/multiracial

populations, and the changing dynamics of the United States and Asian nations.

In 2016, professors E. J. R. David, Kevin J. Nadal, and others advocated for the hashtag #BrownAsiansExist, in response to a *New York Times* video that had excluded FA and South Asian American voices. In a 2019 paper, Nadal describes the history of brown Asian Americans and the ways that they have been misrepresented and excluded from representations of Asian Americans—in general, Asian American Studies and in general Asian American community organizing. Nadal recommends inclusivity and coalition building, with open conversations about Asian American community dynamics, particularly related to issues of skin color, phenotype, religion, and language and to acknowledge the extensive history and contributions of the entire Asian American community and to be mindful when *Asian* or *Asian American* are used descriptively or statistically as umbrella terms.

### Potential Political Power

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a recent outgrowth of the civil rights movement for social, economic, and political powers. Black Americans have always fought for the right to vote as basic to achieving representation and power for all peoples. Growing generations of children of color identify with BLM. One powerful expression of this new movement is electoral participation highlighted in the 2020 presidential election. Two lessons emerged: (1) voters matter and (2) votes matter. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders were organized to get out the vote at local, regional, and national levels.

The historic election of Kamala Harris to the office of U.S. vice president, as a woman and as a person of Black and Asian descent (Jamaican and Indian), was considered a win for brown Asian representation. Yet, even with this representation, there are still many issues affecting different historically marginalized communities, including continued police violence against Black Americans; the unique legal status of Native American, or First Nation, people; and the role of religious discrimination and policies related to immigration, national security, human capital, and trade

policies. Nonetheless, solidarity in communities of color and greater acknowledgment of brown Asian Americans are undisputed.

The Brown Asian American Movement began in communities, was articulated in academia, and legitimized in federal statistical policies and electoral representation. The political construct of Asian and Pacific Islanders continues to hold over the course of decades, ensures the solidarity of not just yellow but a greater proportion of brown Asian Americans from the Asian Indian subcontinent to the Philippines and other Pacific archipelagos.

Juanita Tamayo Lott

See also Asian American Panethnicity; Asian American Studies; Colorism

### Further Readings

- David, E. J. R., Mattu, A., Kosi, R., Demillo, E., & Nadal, K. L. An open letter to the “New York Times” who told brown Asians they don’t matter. *Huffington Post*, 15. Retrieved October 2016 from [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/an-open-letter-to-the-new-york-times-who-told-brown\\_b\\_5801ac3fe4b0985f6d1570f1](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/an-open-letter-to-the-new-york-times-who-told-brown_b_5801ac3fe4b0985f6d1570f1)
- Lott, J. T. (1998). *Asian Americans: From racial category to multiple identities*. AltaMira Publishing.
- Nadal, K. L. (2019). The Brown Asian American Movement: Advocating for South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Filipino American Communities. *Asian American Policy Review*, 29, 1-11.
- Shankar, L. D., & Srikanth, R. (Eds.). (1998). *A part yet apart: South Asians in Asian America*. Temple University Press.

---

## BROWN SKIN, WHITE MINDS: FILIPINO-/AMERICAN POSTCOLONIAL PSYCHOLOGY

---

The book *Brown Skins, White Minds: Filipino-/American Postcolonial Psychology*, by E. J. R. David, examines and gives voice to the historical and contemporary effects of the Spanish and American colonization of the Philippines, and the psychological influence on Filipina/x/os (FAs).

The author integrates a critical lens and an interdisciplinary approach to psychology, which provides a depth of analysis to enable readers to better understand the lived experiences of FAs. Additionally, David brings in his lived experience and positionality as a Filipino American, thereby decentralizing the typically Western-based form of scholarship and facilitating a more global, intersectional, and multicultural perspective. This book has become an essential work for understanding the psychological and sociocultural context of FAs.

The book contains 12 chapters, which are further organized into three parts: the first part, “In The Beginning,” provides a foundational understanding of the indigenous peoples of the archipelago we now know as the Philippines, which then leads to the colonization by Spain and the United States and contextualizes the oppressive conditions arising from that colonial experience; the second part, “The Aftermath,” discusses the consequential *colonial mentality* or the internalized oppression, and psychological impact of colonization; the third part, “Decolonization in a Modern World,” presents and discusses clinical, nonclinical, and indigenous Filipino approaches to addressing the colonial mentality.

The concept of *Brown Skins, White Minds* describes the effect of more than 400 years of colonial rule by Spain and the United States, and the subsequent generational trauma on people of Philippine descent. This psychological construct, coined by Dr. David, refers to Filipino American postcolonial identity development, specifically the development of colonial mentality, or internalized oppression. Colonial mentality is a psychological lens that develops within the context of an individual’s experiences with colonization, its societal norms, structural and systemic oppression, cultural values, beliefs, and learned behaviors. Colonial mentality has been linked to various psychological, societal, and systemic conditions that can adversely impact FAs, with important clinical and community implications to consider when approaching this complex construct.

Colonization is a specific form of oppression that establishes power and privilege over a targeted group of people. The colonization process may be understood as a four-phase model, initially described by the French West Indian psychiatrist

and philosopher Frantz Fanon as (1) forcing entry into geographic territory to exploit resources and people, (2) imposing and recreating colonizer culture, (3) establishing superiority or power over colonized, and (4) establishing institutions of power. The colonization of Philippine culture and its people is evidenced by the extraction of Philippine archipelago natural resources; deeming indigenous individuals as wild/savage/uncivilized; and exploitation through human and sex trafficking as well as inexpensive labor. Further, the establishment of foreign religions, educational systems, foreign-dependent economic systems, and a reliance on hierarchical and exploitive leadership models have all led to a disintegration of indigenous Filipina/x/o culture.

These colonization practices, which still continue today, have resulted in a colonial mentality specific to Filipina/x/o people. It is characterized by the perception of ethnic and cultural inferiority resulting from centuries of colonization. Additionally, we may consider colonial mentality as the ongoing internalized oppression that results from intergenerational trauma (i.e., postcolonization impacts, attachment wounding) and posttraumatic immigration processes.

Colonial mentality can be identified as both overt and covert, and, according to David, has five categories of manifestations: (1) *internalized inferiority*, the tendency to feel inferior about one’s Filipino ethnicity and culture; (2) *cultural shame and embarrassment*, the tendency to feel ashamed and embarrassed of Filipino culture; (3) *physical characteristics*, the tendency to perceive Filipino physical traits as inferior to White people’s physical traits; (4) *within-group discrimination*, the tendency to discriminate against less-Westernized Filipinos; and (5) *colonial debt*, the tendency to feel fortunate for having been colonized and thus indebted to past colonizers. Specific mental health concerns associated with colonial mentality include acculturation difficulties, low self-esteem, depressive symptoms, social anxiety or phobias, and interpersonal disconnection from other Filipinos.

In Part 3, David introduces various approaches to addressing colonial mentality and the efforts that have begun in various FA communities. The decolonization process involves the critical consciousness theory, or *conscientization*, developed

by the Brazilian educator and theorist Paulo Freire. He also includes *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, or Filipino Indigenous Psychology, which addresses the decolonization process from a Filipina/x/o perspective. Developed by the social psychologist Virgilio Enriquez, who is often referred to as the father of Filipino psychology, Filipino Indigenous Psychology embodies a multidisciplinary approach to research and methodology in addressing colonial mentality. The indigenous psychology movement began in the 1970s as a response to the growing discontent with inaccuracy of the prevailing Western or American psychology approaches. This approach and movement are centered on the notion that indigenously driven and applied knowledge better contextualizes and understands indigenous people's psychological and cultural experiences. The decolonizing process invites Filipina/x/o people to move toward a more self-aware or insightful understanding of oneself in relation to other people—others with global, indigenous, and intersectional perspectives and experiences.

In an integrative approach, David describes the ways in which indigenous, global approaches, and conventional clinical approaches may facilitate the reduction of colonial mentality. David has suggested a number of Western therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive and dialectical forms of therapy, and community psychology approaches with interventions that are sociocultural-based and culturally specific. There are various potential healing and therapeutic approaches to address the impact of the intergenerational processes and transmission of colonial mentality. David also acknowledges existing themes identified by Leny Strobel on the decolonization process: (1) *naming* (identifying oppressors and effects of oppression), (2) *reflection* (building insight on the impact of colonialism on one's life); and (3) *action* (taking an active role in challenging oppression and assisting others in their decolonization process). The combination of these various approaches and efforts has been conceptualized as the Filipino American Decolonization Experience (FADE), in which David incorporates key approaches from decolonization and cognitive behavioral therapy.

In an ever-evolving world, opportunities to decolonize and address this condition of *Brown*

*Skins*, *White Minds* are plentiful—from educational approaches that specifically address consciousness-raising and identity development, to social activism and feminism. Fundamentally, there is ample opportunity to move toward a more global, indigenous, and intersectional approach in understanding and healing internalized oppression within the FA community.

Jean-Arellia Tolentino

See also Colonial Mentality; Colonialism; Decolonization; Filipina/x/o American Studies; Internalized Oppression; Psychology

### Further Readings

- David, E. J. R. (2013). *Brown skin, white minds: Filipino-/American postcolonial psychology*. Information Age Publishing.
- David, E. J. R. (Ed.). (2013). *Internalized oppression: The psychology of marginalized groups*. Springer Publishing.
- Enriquez, V. (1994). *From colonial to liberation psychology: The Philippine experience*. De La Salle University Press.
- Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed., M. B. Ramos, Trans.). Bloomsbury.
- Strobel, L. M. (2001). *Coming full circle: The process of decolonization among post-1965 Filipino Americans*. Center for Babayan Studies.

---

## BUCHHOLDT, THELMA GARCIA

---

Thelma Garcia Buchholdt was a community and civil rights activist, educator, politician, legislator, cultural worker, public speaker, historian, and author. Manang Thelma, as she was known to many, was the first Philippine-born woman legislator in the United States and first Asian American legislator in Alaska when she was elected in 1974. She was also the first Asian American president of the National Order of Women Legislators, the first woman president of the Filipino Community of Anchorage, Alaska, Inc., and the first three-term national president of the Filipino American National Historical Society.

Thelma was born in the Philippines in 1934, in a small fishing village on the north-central coast

of Luzon Island. Her maternal grandparents were Ilocano. Late in life, in 2000, she discovered that her paternal grandfather was Ibanag, from the highlands of Apayao.

Her mother, Dionisia de Leon, was the ninth child in her family and, by 1920, all eight of her mother's older siblings had moved to the United States. As the first grandchild born in the Philippines, Thelma was raised by her maternal grandmother, Petrona Alabanza. Her grandmother was a landowner, businesswoman, and a participant in local and regional politics. She actively trained Thelma to be a public speaker and to succeed in their traditional matriarchal society.

Thelma had no formal education during World War II. In the late 1930s, her grandmother had built a large home, which was occupied by Japanese military officers during the war. After the war, Thelma resumed her studies at the local Catholic school and graduated from high school at age 15. She prepared to attend college in the United States through the sponsorship of her maternal uncle Fermin de Leon. Her beloved uncle was an unmarried Manong who had arrived in California in 1917, and had obtained U.S. citizenship as a member of the U.S. Army's First Filipino Infantry Regiment at Camp Beale, CA. After his military service, he found success as a chef in the casino resorts of Las Vegas, Nevada.

From 1952 to 1957, Thelma lived and studied with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet at Mount St. Mary's College in Brentwood, CA. During the summer of 1956, while attending college classes in Las Vegas, she met her future husband, Jon Buchholdt, who was stationed with the U.S. Navy at nearby Lake Mead. They decided to marry in 1957 and were immediately faced with racial discrimination when they found no Catholic priest in California or Nevada willing to perform their marriage ceremony because he was of Irish-Swedish heritage and she was Filipina. They were married in a civil ceremony at the Los Angeles courthouse, but then found that no landlord would rent to them. After months of searching, they found a sympathetic Iranian American landlord who had faced the same rental discrimination when he had arrived in Los Angeles. They initially settled in the city's Westwood area. Seeking equal housing opportunity for all, Thelma and her husband became active members of a local civil rights

group, Catholics United for Racial Equality (C.U.R.E.).

Through her contacts at Mount St. Mary's College, Thelma obtained employment as a Catholic elementary school teacher while her husband attended Loyola University. When he graduated, they already had three small children. A series of positions with the U.S. Public Health Service brought the growing family to Anchorage, Alaska, in 1965, where Thelma discovered the newly incorporated Filipino Community of Anchorage, Alaska, Inc.

After the birth of her fourth child, Thelma became a stay-at-home mother for the first time. She continued her involvement in the civil rights movement and became an officer in the local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter. During this time, she also worked to establish the Boys and Girls Clubs of Alaska. After becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1967, she joined the League of Women Voters and became a volunteer fundraiser for several not-for-profit organizations.

In 1969, she and her husband became self-employed community planners, working together to serve the health, education, and social service needs of rural Alaska. They brought federal funding to the diverse, rural areas of western and northern Alaska, and later represented the interests of Alaska's indigenous population before the International Whaling Commission, working closely with Inuit leader and North Slope Borough mayor Eben Hopson.

Thelma was encouraged by Alaskan legislators and activists to become a candidate for public office. In 1972, she narrowly lost an initial bid to serve on the local school board. In 1974, she was asked to run for the Alaska State House of Representatives. It was a pivotal time when the state of Alaska was coming into large sums of money and experiencing a huge change in both population and social structure as a result of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline.

Thelma served four consecutive terms as an Alaskan legislator, a Democrat from a working-class election district. She was highly respected and served her district effectively. Fewer than 0.1% of her constituents were Filipino American. Among her many accomplishments were the establishment of the Alaska Commission on the Status of

Women, funding of a bioacoustical study of the bowhead whale population to assess the effect of subsistence hunting, and a major expansion of the University of Alaska system. She served concurrently as vice-chair of the House Finance Committee and chair of the House Health, Education, and Welfare/Social Services Committee. In 1980, she also obtained funding and community support to establish the Asian Alaskan Cultural Center.

By the start of her fourth term, in 1980, Thelma Buchholdt had become the most powerful woman politician in the state of Alaska, and the Republican political establishment turned to an illegal gerrymander of her election district to prevent her reelection. The state courts overturned the gerrymander years later; by then, she had moved on to other pursuits.

Thelma Buchholdt graduated from the District of Columbia School of Law in 1991 and practiced law in Anchorage before serving as director of the State of Alaska's Office of Equal Opportunity. In 1996, she completed her book on the pre-statehood history of Filipinos in Alaska. She was a frequent public speaker and event organizer, both statewide and nationally, on Filipino Alaskan and Filipino American History.

She served for 30 years on the Alaska State Advisory Committee for the Commission on Civil Rights. In 2007, after a lengthy illness, she passed away at her home in Anchorage, Alaska.

*Titania Buchholdt*

*See Also* Alaskeros, Alaska Salmon Canneries, Filipina/x/os in Alaska; Government and Law, Filipina/x/o Americans in; Historical Figures

### Further Readings

Alaska Legislative Centennial Commission. (2013). 100 years of Alaska's Legislature. <http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/100years/bio.php?id=984>

Buchholdt, T. (1996). *Filipinos in Alaska, 1788–1958*. Aboriginal Press.

---

## BULOSAN, CARLOS

---

Since the inception of Ethnic Studies and Asian American studies programs in the late 1960s, Carlos Bulosan (1911–1956) has become an iconic

figure as author of the ethnobiographical novel *America Is in the Heart* (1946) and activist-intellectual—a representative voice of the *Manong* generation of migrant farmworkers of the Great Depression era. This entry highlights the significance of Bulosan for Filipina/x/o American (FA) studies; the connection between art and social justice in Bulosan's literary imagination; and Bulosan's continued relevance in the 21st century.

### Background

Born and raised as part of the Filipino peasantry in Binalonan, Pangasinan, Carlos Bulosan arrived in Seattle, Washington, in 1930 to join 150,000 Filipino migrant workers who toiled in the canneries of Alaska and the plantations of the West Coast and Hawai'i. Bulosan's peasant origins and working-class experiences were invaluable resources for his development as an author of novels, short stories, essays, and poems. The canonical status conferred upon *America Is in the Heart* tends to obscure Bulosan's complexity as writer and intellectual. For instance, author Susan Evangelista noted that Bulosan, who captured the attention of Harriet Monroe of *Poetry* magazine in the 1930s, viewed himself as primarily a poet. The lyricism of Bulosan's prose (from novels to letters) is attributed to his poetic roots as a writer. The scholarly work produced within the interstices of FA studies and Philippine studies sheds light on the global scope and intellectual depth of Bulosan's literary radicalism, which unfolded between the period of the Great Depression and the early cold war period in the United States, as well as the latter period of American colonial occupation and into the first decade of neocolonialism in the Philippines.

### Reclaiming Carlos Bulosan

Although celebrated in the United States during World War II as an essayist (e.g., "Freedom from Want," *Saturday Evening Post*, 1943), a poet (e.g., *The Voice of Bataan*, 1943), short story writer (e.g., *The Laughter of My Father*, 1944), and novelist, Bulosan found himself under FBI surveillance in the postwar period for his participation in the Filipino labor movement in the United States (beginning in the 1930s with Chris Mensalvas of

the UCAPAWA) and support for the national sovereignty movement in the Philippines. Alongside progressive intellectuals such as W. E. B. DuBois and Howard Fast, Bulosan publicly endorsed the publication of Filipino Huk leader Luis Taruc's *Born of the People* (1953)—a text that inspired his novel-in-progress, *The Cry and the Dedication* (also titled *The Power of the People*). Although cold war political repression did not dampen Bulosan's literary radicalism during the final chapter of his life, it effectively silenced (if not erased) his achievements from the literary landscapes of the United States and the Philippines.

Bulosan's posthumous rise to prominence within Ethnic Studies, Asian American studies, and Philippine studies is attributed to mass movements for social justice in the Philippines and the United States during the late 1960s and the 1970s, as well as to the indefatigable scholarship/advocacy of Filipino literary critic E. San Juan, Jr. (whom historian Michael Denning refers to as a leading New Left intellectual, alongside Angela Davis, Edward Said, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, and Raymond Williams). The movement for Philippine national sovereignty and the Asian American movement provided the conditions of possibility for the publication, distribution, and reception of Bulosan's body of work within and outside the academies of the United States and the Philippines. E. San Juan Jr.'s interdisciplinary scholarship made Bulosan's literary radicalism legible to scholars and activists beginning with *Carlos Bulosan and the Imagination of the Class Struggle*, published in 1972—the first book-length study of its kind that paved the way for the University of Washington's publication in 1973 of *America Is in the Heart*. San Juan introduced new dimensions of Bulosan's writings during the 1970s with *The Power of the People* (1977), *The Philippines Is in the Heart* (1978), and a special volume of Bulosan's writings for *Amerasia Journal* (1979). In the 1980s, San Juan edited several anthologies such as *Selected Works and Letters* (co-edited with Ninotchka Rosca, 1982) and *Bulosan: An Introduction with Selections* (1983). In 1995, San Juan edited *The Cry and the Dedication* and *On Becoming Filipino*—both of which provide detailed introductions to the aesthetics and politics of Bulosan's literary craft.

### Bulosan and Asian American Studies: Anticipating Filipino American Studies

Bulosan's position within the early stages of Asian American studies anticipates the necessity of FA studies. Although Bulosan occupies a central place in pioneering texts of the field (anthologized in 1974's *Aiiieeeee!* and examined in 1982's *Asian American Literature*, by Elaine Kim), the scope of his ethico-political literary vision was not fully grasped by early critics. Members of the *Flip* generation of writers (Oscar Peñaranda, Serafin Syquia, and Sam Tagatac in *Aiiieeeee!*) dismissed Bulosan's authenticity (due to his having been born in the Philippines) in their search to highlight a genuine FA literary tradition for a burgeoning Asian American literary community. While Elaine Kim admirably inventories Bulosan's progressive working-class politics, she ultimately categorizes Bulosan as an "Asian goodwill ambassador writer" who yearns for acceptance/integration (immigrant-assimilationist paradigm). These limitations are symptomatic of Bulosan's (and by extension the FA community's) contested relationship with the panethnic concept of Asian America and, as a result, suggest the need for FA studies that are attentive to the specificity and complexity of the FA experience.

San Juan's prolific scholarship on Bulosan suggests that the foundation of FA studies has been in development for several decades. San Juan's body of work on Bulosan proposes several key concepts that are unique to Bulosan's literary imagination, the FA experience, and the developing field of Filipino American studies. These include the notion of Filipino becoming (a tradition of anticolonial struggle that persists in the neocolonial period of U.S.–Philippines relations); the concept of a Filipino diaspora (more than 12 million Filipinos scattered across the planet); and a racial–national subordination (anti-Filipino racism as inextricably intertwined with U.S.–Philippines colonial/neocolonial relations).

Bulosan's posthumously published novel *The Cry and the Dedication* dramatizes the peasant-based Huk rebellion for Philippine national sovereignty during the cold war period (part of the process of becoming Filipino). In the novel, Dante, a member of a diasporic community of Filipino migrant workers, returns to the Philippines from

the United States to participate in the rebellion. Dante's homecoming functions as a response to the racial-national subordination of Filipinos—connecting racial violence against Filipinos in the United States with U.S. neocolonial control of Philippine society. Dante's experiences with the violence of systemic racism in the United States inform his participation in the movement for national sovereignty in the Philippines. *The Cry and the Dedication* (which functions as Bulosan's own homecoming) is an extension of the narrative of anticolonial Filipino struggle that undergirds *America Is in the Heart* (Felix Razon links the Tayug peasant uprising in the Philippines with militant labor activism in the United States)—a narrative that lies beneath (the text's alter/native Filipino unconscious) the dominant narrative of Popular Front Americanism against the rise of fascism (from the Spanish Civil War to the outbreak of World War II).

Another Bulosan contribution to FA studies is a unique approach to cultural production. In essays, letters, and sections of *America Is in the Heart*, Bulosan is explicit about his interest in a historical materialist approach to writing, which was nurtured through his friendship with progressive intellectuals and activists throughout his life. During the 1930s, Bulosan developed his literary craft within the labor movement. His editing *The New Tide* (1934)—a Filipino workers' literary magazine—connected him to a dynamic network that included Richard Wright, Sanora Babb, and William Saroyan. During Bulosan's convalescence in the Los Angeles County Hospital for tuberculosis (1936–1938), as E. San Juan notes, Sanora Babb with her sister Dorothy provided intellectual resources for the development of his radical literary imagination. Not unlike Wright, who sought to rearticulate Marxism through the collective aspirations and oral traditions of storytelling (racial wisdom) of African Americans oppressed/exploited by apartheid ("Blueprint for Negro Writing"), Bulosan expressed interest in rearticulating Marxism through the collective yearning of Filipinos for self-determination (see Bulosan's "The Writer as Worker"). As a result, Bulosan is firmly situated alongside artists of color of his time who reimagined proletarian art—such as Paul Robeson, Frida Kahlo, and Diego Rivera.

### Bulosan: A Portrait of Commitment and Resilience

Bulosan's Filipino Marxist commitment sustained him through the political repression of McCarthyism in the 1950s. Augusto Espiritu speculates that a plagiarism charge by Guido D'Agostino—a charge based on similarities between Bulosan's "The End of War" (1944) and D'Agostino's "The Dream of Angelo Zara" (1942) that was settled out of court and subsequently dismissed by *The New Yorker*—might have impacted his ability to sustain a publication record in the postwar period. However, the work of Lane Ryo Hirabayashi and Marilyn C. Alquizola on Bulosan's FBI files and activism during the cold war period reveals a different portrait. While past the peak of literary celebrity within the publishing world, Bulosan did not succumb to the trauma of public embarrassment (dismissed charge of plagiarism), the pressures of redbaiting/blacklisting tactics of cold war political repression (in the United States and the Philippines), or the pain associated with devastating bouts of illness. Bulosan continued to write—letters, essays, a novel-in-progress—and simultaneously participate in campaigns of the Filipino working class in the United States and the Filipino subaltern struggle in the Philippines until his death in 1956 due to pneumonia.

An achievement of this period is his editing of the 1952 *Yearbook, ILWU Local 37* for his long-time friend Chris Mensalvas in Seattle—a project in which Bulosan voices support for imprisoned Filipino poet, journalist, and activist Amado V. Hernandez and criticism of U.S.-sponsored fascist violence in the Philippines. Not unlike *America Is in the Heart* and *The Cry and the Dedication*, the 1952 *Yearbook, ILWU Local 37* functions as a bridge between Filipino working-class struggles in the United States and the Philippines.

### Reading Bulosan in the 21st Century

In the first two decades of the 2000s, Bulosan occupied a central role in the expansion of the boundaries of Filipino American studies. Augusto Fauni Espiritu's *Five Faces of Exile* develops a Filipino postcolonial approach to reading Bulosan alongside figures such as Carlos P. Romulo and Bienvenido Santos. Martin Joseph Ponce's

*Beyond the Nation* develops a Filipino queer studies approach to reading Bulosan, alongside figures such as Jose Garcia Villa and Jessica Hagedorn. In *Carlos Bulosan: Revolutionary Writer in the United States*, E. San Juan, Jr., reflects upon the canonical status of Bulosan after nearly five decades since the publication of *Carlos Bulosan and the Imagination of the Class Struggle* and provides suggestions for advancing the diasporic Filipino working-class protest consciousness at the heart of Bulosan's literary imagination. San Juan reassesses the Bulosan cannon by decentering *America Is in the Heart* with *The Cry and the Dedication*, published in 2017. This approach dislodges an immigrant-assimilationist paradigm that silences the centrality of Filipino becoming (or Filipino self-determination) within Bulosan's body of work. San Juan also provides suggestions for additional research to confirm the authorship of *All the Conspirators*, which editors Caroline S. Hau and Benedict Anderson have attributed to Bulosan. (Dunstan Peyton is listed as the author on the manuscript filed in the Bulosan archives.) San Juan's 2017 publication is part of a resurgence of interest in Bulosan in the Philippines (see the special *Kritika Kultura* volume on Carlos Bulosan, 2014) and the United States (see the *Writer in Exile/Writer in Revolt: Critical Perspectives on Carlos Bulosan*, 2016; Penguin Classics edition of *America Is in the Heart*, 2019).

The impact of Carlos Bulosan's life and work is seen within and without the academy—from the Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies at the University of California, Davis to Eliseo Art Silva's mural *Gintong Kasaysayan, Gintong Pamana* (Filipino Americans: A Glorious History, A Golden Legacy) in Los Angeles Filipinotown where Bulosan is featured alongside other iconic figures such as Philip Vera Cruz and Larry Itliong. In 2002, the Ma-Yi Theater Company staged the Obie-award winning *The Romance of Magno Rubio* by Lonnie Carter—a play based on a short story by Bulosan. In 2006, The Library of Congress held a daylong symposium, *America Is in the Heart for the 21st Century*. Inspired by Bulosan's life and work, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center launched *I Want the Wide American Earth: An Asian Pacific American Story* in 2013. The courageous activism of journalist Jose Antonio Vargas on the plight of undocumented

immigrants builds upon Bulosan's legacy as a Filipino writer-activist for the 21st century.

Jeffrey Arellano Cabusao

See also *America Is in the Heart*; Anti-martial Law Movement; Arts and Humanities; Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies; Farmworkers, Filipino American; Historical Figures

### Further Readings

- Cabusao, J. A. (Ed.). (2016). *Writer in exile/Writer in revolt: Critical perspectives on Carlos Bulosan*. University Press of America.
- Evangelista, S. (1985). *Carlos Bulosan and his poetry: A biography and anthology*. Ateneo de Manila Press.
- Mabalon, D. B. (2013). *Little Manila is in the heart: The making of Filipina/o American community in Stockton, California*. Duke University Press.
- San Juan, Jr., E. (1996). *The Philippine temptation: Dialectics of Philippines-U.S. literary relations*. Temple University Press.
- San Juan, Jr., E. (2017). *Carlos Bulosan—Revolutionary Filipino writer in the United States: A critical appraisal*. Peter Lang.
- Wright, R. (1994). Blueprint for Negro Writing. In A. Mitchell (Ed.), *Within the circle: African American literary criticism from the Harlem Renaissance to the present*. (Originally published 1937). Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822399889-010>

---

## BULOSAN CENTER FOR FILIPINO STUDIES

---

The Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies is one of the first grassroots, scholar-activist, Filipino Studies research centers established in the United States. The center educates, addresses, and informs on the social justice platforms, research, and history of Filipina/x/o people in the United States. Although the center is a recent milestone achievement in Filipino American Studies and Critical Filipino Studies, its development has deep roots in Asian American history, education, and activism. This history of the Bulosan Center unpacks the collaborative efforts of graduate students, undergraduate students, staff, faculty, and community support that made its founding possible.

## The Center's Beginnings

The Bulosan Center for Filipino Studies is a research center that advocates scholar-activist and grassroots platforms to uplift Filipina/x/os and other marginalized communities and create impactful change through the use of history, archiving, research, education, and community engagement. Founded in the summer of 2018 by Dr. Robyn Magalit Rodriguez alongside a team of community organizers, graduate, and undergraduate students, the center quickly grew beyond its place of origin, the campus of the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). Its network continues to grow and reach many activists and communities throughout the Filipina/x/o diaspora.

Rodriguez's vision for the center coalesced over many years. At its core was the need to address the social justice needs of Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs) through student- and community-engaged scholarship, mentorship, and the uplifting of Critical Filipino Studies. The center's roots are grounded in its founders' scholar-activism, which is influenced by the labor organizing work of the center's namesake, author Carlos Bulosan. Like Bulosan, whose activism and labor organizing emphasized preserving an equitable future for Filipina/o/x people both in the United States and in the homeland, the center prioritizes the Filipina/x/o community's health and humanity by serving as a space for learning, collaboration, and social justice.

The center was also inspired by City College of San Francisco's Philippines Studies Department and the University of Hawaii Manoa Center for Philippines Studies. Other Filipina/x/o scholar-activists and trailblazers who shaped the center's mission and vision include Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales, Martin Manalansan, and the late Pinay historian, Dawn Mabalon, among many others whose works reflect Bulosan's efforts to make equitable spaces for Filipina/x/o representation.

The first step toward creating the Bulosan Center was the Welga Digital Project (2013), a public and digital archive of FA primary sources narrating the roles of Filipina/x/o farm laborers during the Farm Labor Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. This project, led by Rodriguez, archivist Allan Jason Sarmiento, documentarian Glenn Aquino, Greg Morozumi of East Side Arts

Alliance, and many other community members and students, was the initial step in addressing the collective erasure of Filipina/x/o people in America. The Welga archive was co-launched for the 50th anniversary of the Grape Strike with the Filipino American National Historical Society, Delano chapter (FANHS-Delano) and continues to provide an online space for historians, community organizers, students, and the general community to view primary source material like photographs, interview transcripts, and other resources on FA farm labor history. This archive became the first building block of the Center's physical and digital foundation.

## Formation and Achievements

Five years later, Rodriguez began exploring what it would take to create an official research center for Filipino Studies. She and the graduate students who would eventually become the Center's cofounders and executive committee members began asking questions such as "What would our dream center for Filipino Studies look like?" Their answer was that the center needed to empower the community through academic representation and research projects that raise awareness of Filipina/x/o issues. The committee agreed that all aspects of programming, projects, research, and vision would center on the community's needs, passions, and vision.

These exploratory summer meetings led to the center's official launch in September 2018. The center's first official events included the Filipinx Policy Symposium, led by Katherine Nasol, and the Benefit Dinner launch, led by Wayne Jopanda. The symposium brought together community partners and organizations from all around California to discuss pertinent issues and policies impacting the Filipina/x/o community. The Benefit Dinner showcased cultural performances and honored the achievements and history of the FA community. The event raised more than \$30,000 of funds through grassroots community donations and was another victory for the community at large.

Since its founding, the center's executive committee has consisted of UC Davis Filipina/x/o graduate students led by its visionary director, Robyn Rodriguez. Pinay historian and author

Stacey Anne Salinas was designated the role of director of historical research. Labor organizing scholar-activist Katherine Nasol and data analyst and researcher Roy Taggug took on the roles of director of policy and director of research, respectively. Early Americanist historian Nicholas Garcia was chosen as senior editor. Allan Jason Sarmiento was designated as the center's lead archivist. Scholar-activist and youth organizer Wayne Jopanda serves as the center's associate director and director of internships. The core staff was supported by the founding advisory board of community leaders and scholar-activists who helped guide the center's mission and vision. The advisory board consists of Carlos Bulosan's niece Laveta Gentile, Cynthia Bonta, California attorney general Rob Bonta, Alex Magsano from Migrant International, Sacramento Filipinx LGBTQIA's Daniel Domaguin, former Davis mayor Ruth Asmundson, Dawn Mabalon's husband Jesse Gonzales, Filipino Advocates for Justice's Geraldine Alcid, Filipino American Educators Association of California's Tracie Noriega, LEAD Filipino's Angelica Cortez, Filipino American National Historical Society's Nickie Tuthill-Delute, and Hewlett Foundation U.S. Democracy Fellow Carla Bernal. During the center's first year as a grassroots Filipino research center (the first of its kind), it grew and developed in vast and unique ways, not only because of its consistent community support but also due to the diverse backgrounds and interdisciplinary training of its core committee members. As it expanded, the center formed four main programmatic arms: Research, Education, History, and Policy.

The Research arm, led by Taggug, initiated the timely Filipinx Public Health Survey centering on the COVID-19 pandemic. The Filipinx health survey collected over 3,000 survey responses from Filipina/x/o-identified Californians regarding their access to and experiences with health resources. Nasol led the Policy and Community Engagement arm, which forms partnerships across FA community organizations and advocates solidarity via a unified collective voice for a Californian FA community. Their efforts led to the first Filipinx Advocacy Day in Sacramento and the formation of the FIERCE (Filipinx Igniting Engagement for Reimagining Collective Em[POWER]ment) Coalition. Sarmiento and Salinas led the center's history and

archival and exhibit projects, including "Profits Enslave the World: Philip Vera Cruz" and "Collecting HERstory: Honoring Pinays in Women's History."

Wayne Jopanda founded the Bulosan Internship program, which provides a pathway for undergraduate students to build meaningful relationships with community partners while having access to FA research, advocacy, and community-building opportunities. The center's internship program began with 13 undergraduate UC Davis interns in the Winter of 2019, quickly expanding to 150 virtual interns from around the world in Fall 2020. The internship program hosts a variety of activist scholars, community organizers, artists, performers, healers, and community educators who share their craft and journey as mentors to the Bulosan intern community.

Two of the center's larger landmark events, such as Filipinx Advocacy Day and the Bulosan Filipino Studies Research Conference, marked the end of the first year as a center. The Bulosan Filipino Studies Research Conference was the first event to bring together more than 25 experts from throughout the field of Filipino Studies to moderate panels, workshops, and talks given by FA community organizers, graduate students, and undergraduate students from across the nation. The keynote speaker who kicked off the event was Martin Manalansan. The conference and logistics were led by dedicated Bulosan undergraduate interns, including Catherine DeGuzman, Aika Miranda, Chelsea Soriano, Angela Alejandro, Leo Asican, and their staffer Wayne Jopanda. The combined efforts of graduate and undergraduate students, community members, activists, and professors resonated with the Center's mission for community collaboration, solidarity, and ultimately the uplifting of Filipina/x/o issues and topics across the diaspora housed in one space: the Bulosan Center.

The center's second year aimed for even higher hopes and achievements. Through meetings with several policy makers alongside FA community organizations and advocates under the leadership of Rodriguez and Nasol, the center planted the seeds for future California state-allocated funding. With assemblymember Rob Bonta's help and advice, the initial proposal for state funding for the center came about during

its first Filipinx Advocacy Day held in Sacramento. For the next few months, the executive committee, Bulosan interns, graduate students, affiliates, and community members continued to advocate for FA community needs by promoting the proposal for state-level funding to the center. Bulosan staff and interns constantly visited the state capital to rally for \$1 million, meeting with assembly members, all the while continuing its projects, internships, and research at the center's home base, UC Davis. In the autumn of 2019, with the continuous grassroots support of community members, the center was granted \$1 million. With this major victory, the center's programming further developed, its staff grew, and the center's reach in supporting the FA community expanded.

Within the second year, new programming and opportunities appeared. The Bulosan Center partnered with the Filipino American Educators Association of California to host their 2019 conference, "Equity Through Ethnic Studies: 50 Years of Fighting for Educational Justice." The center also established their Affiliates Program, welcoming scholars, activists, artists, and community leaders whose work align with the center's mission. Affiliates support the center by providing community workshops and talks and leading Bulosan intern teams on projects throughout the year. The center continued to expand its programming arms by welcoming Jason Magabo Perez as the first ever Arts and Humanities Fellow, to help lead community projects in the creative arts and humanities field. Additionally, the center added documentarian Glenn Aquino of the Welga Project to the team to guide its film and creative works platform. Finally, the center also partnered with the FANHS Museum of Stockton to help collaborate on FA labor history projects.

The center's second year also included the creation of its own Filipina/o/x Studies journal, titled *Alon: Journal for Filipinx American and Diasporic Studies*. Its board is staffed by several major scholars in the field, including Drs. Robyn Rodriguez, Rick Bonus, Theo Gonzalves, and Antonio Tiongson. They are assisted by the center's senior editor, Nicholas Garcia, who serves as associate managing editor of *Alon*. Other founding members of the *Alon* board include such scholars as Edward Nadurata and Joseph Allen Ruanto-Ramirez.

As an extension of the center's vision, *Alon* provides an online forum for publishing original essays, artwork, reviews, and moderated reflections that critically engage with Filipino American and Filipina/x/o Diasporic Studies. Its mission is to promote ground-breaking scholarship and other means of expression that center worldviews, systems of understanding, and creative imaginings of FAs and Filipina/x/o diasporic subjects. Designed to be a journal more open to contributions from the community compared with other academic publications, *Alon* encourages scholarship from knowledgeable community members, undergraduates, and graduate students that provocatively and productively explores FAs and their relation to the local and global, academia and activism, culture and political economy, and nation and migration.

### Education and Outreach

The fourth branch of operation, Education, is the most interdisciplinary, creative, and prime example of the organization's mission to uplift the FA community. The center's educational programming draws from the training and backgrounds of its core team members and sister organizations to provide workshops on topics related to achieving social justice for FA communities and beyond. The center's workshops, public events, conferences, journal, curriculum lesson plans, internships, and lectures engage with methods and disciplines like the archival method, critical race theory, queer studies, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) feminist and *peminist* theory, community-engaged scholarship, quantitative research, historical method, cultural studies, and education sciences. This interdisciplinary background supported many of the center's early community projects, especially in public education. For example, in 2019, the center's historians helped develop a Filipino Farm Labor History curriculum for California public schools. For this project, Salinas and Sarmiento collected early FA community histories and transformed archival sources into guided lesson plans and public history platforms alongside affiliate organizations such as the Filipino American Educators Association of California (FAEAC) and the California History Social Science Project.

University for Justice and Liberation (UJL) was another educational series the center helped organize in the summer of 2020 alongside the People's Collective of Justice and Liberation (founded by Gregory Cendana and DJ Kuttin Kandi), the California Nurses Association (represented by Edgar Wong-Chen), the Asian American Studies Department of UC Davis, and many more. The virtually held education series, overseen by the center's policy director (K. Nasol), drew from the interdisciplinary and creative nature of the center and its affiliates to produce a learning space where history, education, and the humanities and arts converge to teach APIA (Asian Pacific Islander American) cultural narratives within an interactive format allowing for all ages and backgrounds to practice social justice. UJL taught students about history and activism via presentations highlighting FA scholar-activist coalitions within the broader Asian American community and beyond. Through its commitment to these educational community projects, the center fostered a new understanding of what Critical Filipino Studies is as a discipline. In the process of "education as outreach," the center's education branch addressed the long-standing social justice issues FAs face, and what FA scholar-activist coalitions are doing within the broader Asian American community to challenge racial injustice.

### Conclusion: The Center's Vision for the Future

The Carlos Bulosan Center's branches, affiliates, and growing network of interns embody the spirit of collaboration that is grounded in Filipina/x/o activism and its dedication to serving its community. The center focuses on building a space where FAs and other marginalized communities take pride in their history and culture. The center promotes liberatory research and education practices so that all Filipina/x/o people can take control of their full potential to advocate for equitable public policies and build power through community organizing. The center's vision therefore continues the legacy of advancing Carlos Bulosan's ideals and principles for justice, solidarity, and collective liberation for all.

Stacey Anne Baterina Salinas and  
Wayne Silao Jopanda

See also Academia, Filipino Americans in; Activism and Education; *America Is in the Heart*; Arts and Asian American Studies; Bulosan, Carlos; Filipino American National Historical Society; Mabalon, Dawn Bohulano; Pin@y Educational Partnerships (PEP)

### Further Readings

- Bonus, R. (2020). *The ocean in the school: Pacific Islander students transforming their university*. Duke University Press.
- Buenavista, T. L., Jayakumar, U. M., & Misa-Escalante, K. (2009). Contextualizing Asian American education through critical race theory: An example of U.S. Pilipino college student experiences. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 142, 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir/297>
- Center for Philippines Studies, University of Hawai'i at Manoa. (n.d.). History. Last Modified November 2020. <http://www.hawaii.edu/cps/about/history/>
- City College of San Francisco Philippines Studies Department. (2020, November). History of the Philippines Studies. <https://www.ccsf.edu/academics/schools/social-sciences-behavioral-sciences-ethnic-studies-social-justice/philippine-studies>
- Maramba, D. C., & Bonus, R. (Eds.). (2013). *The "other" students: Filipino Americans, education, and power*. Information Age Publishing.

---

## BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, FILIPINA/X/O AMERICANS IN

---

Without a doubt, Filipina/x/o Americans (FAs) have significantly engaged in various forms of business and entrepreneurship since they first formed communities in the United States. From grocery stores to restaurants to retail shops, FAs throughout the country have significantly contributed to the economies on local, state, and federal levels. Although business and entrepreneurship are concepts that are strongly associated with capitalism and Western colonialism, many FA businesses and entrepreneurs are working toward having a decolonial approach in their work. To this end, this entry focuses on some modern examples of FA businesses and entrepreneurs who are striving to integrate the seemingly paradoxical

and irreconcilable notions of decoloniality and entrepreneurship.

### Decolonizing Business

What does it mean to decolonize business when one operates within a capitalist framework? Amid the global pandemic that began in 2020 and the call for racial and social justice that heightened during this time, this is one question that many young FA entrepreneurs have started to ask themselves, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Bay Area is home to Silicon Valley, venture capitalists, and big tech. It is also home to some of the biggest wealth disparities within the United States with an estimated 830,000 people living in poverty. Entrepreneurship represents one pathway to financial independence, freedom, and self-empowerment for anyone with access to ideas, capital, connections, and resources.

For many entrepreneurs, navigating how to start a business and deciding what values one wants to embody when creating a business structure and company culture are challenging and complex tasks. Entrepreneurs need to figure out their business plan, corporate entity structure, company culture, branding, marketing, employee and staff structure, human resources, business values, products, target market, and customer service standards. The amount of responsibility in starting a new business can be daunting. On top of that, entrepreneurs must pay bills and payroll expenses and earn money.

For many entrepreneurs of color (EOCs)—FAs included—the challenge of starting a business can be even more daunting, due to a lack of access to capital or connections to just get started. Often, when EOCs do get their business up and running, they may experience the feeling of impostor syndrome—the state of doubting one's abilities and experiences as well as the feeling of not belonging. On top of that, capitalism encourages the pressure of competing with other EOCs by making the most money, striving to be the first, the best, and the most successful in one's respective fields.

Many EOCs have begun to describe how they can approach building a business outside the capitalist framework through the concept of

decolonizing business. To decolonize in business, some believe EOCs must deconstruct the practices of capitalism that they were taught in the United States and separate themselves from these power dynamics and capitalistic beliefs that can be rooted in fear, power, and White supremacy. EOCs often feel syndrome because they do not feel they belong in entrepreneurship spaces, due to the lack of visibility of other entrepreneurs who look like them (i.e., other EOCs). Some contend that the phenomenon is a product of systemic oppression and that EOCs have been historically prevented from starting businesses or owning property, and many must navigate other obstacles due to inequities based on class, gender, and other identities. In other words, as systems continue to make it harder for EOCs and entrepreneurs of marginalized groups to start businesses, phenomenon among EOCs persists. To decolonize business means to dismantle the idea that EOCs do not deserve a seat at these tables; instead, decolonizing business focuses on inspiring EOCs to build their own table where they are not only welcome but are encouraged to thrive.

After going through decolonizing work and business coaching, many EOCs start to find that the capitalist framework is not only unnecessary when building a business, but it can also be harmful and detrimental to their health and well-being as entrepreneurs (as well as to the employees they support and the communities that they serve). Capitalist frameworks may encourage entrepreneurs to lead with fear, follow the money, and often take EOCs away from their shared sense of *kapwa* (community connectedness).

Capitalism and greed are also sources of trauma within the FA community. Historically, capitalism led to the colonization of the Philippines, the mistreatment of laborers (e.g., farmworkers along the West Coast, sugarcane plantation workers in Hawai'i, cannery workers in the Pacific Northwest), and even the violence experienced by FAs in the early 1900s who were accused of stealing jobs from White people. Some link present-day capitalism to the mistreatment of domestic workers; financial stressors within families; and even the continued oppression of the people of the Philippines.

## Hustle Culture

Along with capitalism comes the concept of *hustle culture*—which encourages people to work as many hours as possible to increase their output (and gain more profit and income). Toxic hustle culture celebrates long days, working weekends, no vacations, and working through lunch. The number of hours people work equals their work ethic in this type of culture; the harder people work, the more success they can achieve. Decolonizing business asks people to unlearn the unhealthy practices of toxic hustle culture and to redefine what businesses (and lives) could look like.

Perhaps FA entrepreneurs and other EOCs can imagine creating a business or creative hustle where their employees and community are supported and encouraged to thrive, where everyone has a stake in the business' success, and everyone can reap the business's rewards. Perhaps they can imagine earning just enough money to be comfortable and taken care of, and to support their employees so that they can take proper lunch breaks, vacations, and practice self-care along the way. Instead of equating the number of hours worked or amount of money made with success, perhaps EOCs can imagine measuring success in happiness, individual satisfaction, and joy. Perhaps FA entrepreneurs and other EOCs can imagine seeing other people in our field as collaborators and allies, instead of as competitors while running their businesses through a lens of abundance mentality.

## Resources

Most EOCs struggle with finding the connections, resources, people, money, and business frameworks that will help them realize their business and creative visions. The mere existence and proliferation of FA organizations and companies, such as Pinayista, Kultivate Labs, PapaLoDown Agency, UNDISCOVERED SF, Kollektive Hustle, Entrepinayship, One Down, Let's Get Hella Rich, and Next Day Better, show that there is a great demand to help FA entrepreneurs bridge this gap between FA entrepreneurs and the resources and knowledge they need. FA individuals such as Hey Berna, Irene Duller, Nadia De Ala, Anthem

Salgado, Jennifer Navarro-Marroquin, Desi Danganan, Gelaine Santiago, and Alison Carpio are doing critical work in business and marketing consulting, financial advising, and negotiation for EOCs. Additionally, FA healers and wellness practitioners such as Chanel Durley, Surrendered Healing, Jana Lynne Umipig, Dr. Therapinay, Go Fit Jo, Community Well, and Jenna Pascual, just to name a few, run their own businesses and programs catered to helping EOCs find healing, peace, and community while they build their businesses.

Capitalism may teach entrepreneurs that they need to protect themselves as business owners at all costs. However, entrepreneurs need not create their business values out of fear. In fact, to develop a healing and thriving business, many EOCs are choosing to lead with trust and love—creating practices that celebrate their employees as whole people as opposed to just workers. Policies such as unlimited sick days, quarterly vacation days, and unlimited paid time off are examples of ways that EOCs can start to deconstruct unhealthy hustle culture practices within traditional business models that society has learned to accept as normal.

The business community has begun to develop these structures too. The emergence of corporate business structures such as the B-Corporation provides an alternate way of thinking about the social and environmental impact and transparency of corporations. Companies are beginning to align their business goals with social issues, creating businesses that achieve their financial goals and support their personal values. More importantly, many consumers are aligning their purchases with their values—boycotting companies that lack diversity or have unethical employment practices, and putting their money into local, EOC-owned businesses.

While many businesses suffered immense loss during the COVID-19 pandemic (and many even closed), many FA businesses demonstrated their ability to survive and even thrive. In places such as California and New York, FA restaurateurs donated food to frontline workers, recognizing the benefit of mutual aid and community sustainability. Outdoor spaces provided opportunities for FA businesses to conduct their businesses, while also gathering community members

together in physically distanced ways. FA entrepreneurs also vocalized their support for racial justice and the movement for Black lives, demonstrating that there are ways to advocate for justice while still maintaining successful businesses.

Giving EOCs the freedom to design their business frameworks within their values is revolutionary. Many FA entrepreneurs are working hard to redefine hustle culture, decolonize their businesses, and equate their value not with their output, but with their impact. Thus, in time, as FA entrepreneurs continue to make waves in their respective industries, they also serve as leaders in changing how people do business and entrepreneurship altogether.

*Gina Mariko Rosales*

*See also* Colonial Mentality; Community Development; Decolonization; Food Filipina/x/o American; Impostor Phenomenon; Sociology and Social Issues

### Further Readings

- Magdalena, F. V. (1982). Portrait of the Filipino Entrepreneurs in America. *Philippine Sociological Review*, 93–99.
- Makalintal, B. (2020, October). New York City is in the middle of a Filipino Pop-Up renaissance. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/5dpmvn/new-york-city-is-in-the-middle-of-a-filipino-food-pop-up-renaissance>
- Neville, F., Forrester, J. K., O’Toole, J., & Riding, A. (2018). Why even bother trying? Examining discouragement among racial-minority entrepreneurs. *Journal of Management Studies*, 55(3), 424–456. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12319>
- Ocampo, A. (2021, May). Filipino-led micro-businesses blossom in the pandemic at L.A.’s Manila District. KCET. Retrieved from <https://www.kcet.org/shows/the-migrant-kitchen/manila-district>
- Vazquez, J. (2020). Love letter to Filipino-American entrepreneurs. *Venture for America*. <https://ventureforamerica.org/2020/10/love-letter-to-filipino-american-entrepreneurs-joel-vazquez/>

Do not copy, post, or distribute