Rosie’s Comments

By Janice Wong

How can one describe Rosie O’Donnell these days?

Rosie... the Actor? The Comedian? The Talk show Host? The Activist? The Liberal?

Out of a sea of adjectives that define Rosie’s public persona, interestingly enough in recent months, only one aspect really does justice---Rosie the Hypocrite.

After filling a vacated position on “The View”, a daytime talk show aired by ABC, and previously held by Tufts Alum, Meredith Vieira, Rosie O’Donnell has certainly left an indelible black mark on the show’s history with a string of callous, insensitive, and hurtful remarks. One of these remarks is her short speech about Danny Devito’s drunken guest appearance on the view and how other countries, in this case China, would describe what happened. “The fact is that it’s news all over the world. That you know you can imagine in China it’s like: ‘Ching chong ching chong, Danny Devito, ching chong ching chong. Drunk. ‘The View.’ Ching chong,” said O’Donnell in an episode of “The View” in December.

Her remarks have justly sparked anger from the Asian American community and an Asian New York City Councilman, John C. Liu, has demanded that O’Donnell apologize for her comments. Indeed O’Donnell’s imitation of the Chinese language carries a history of hurt and subjugation; they are words that still have the capacity to wound. However, O’Donnell for days afterwards hides behind the excuses of the comedian; that she imitates languages and accents all the time, that she didn’t mean it to harm anyone, and that it was only a joke.

These responses are surprisingly reminiscent of Kelly Ripa’s comments to O’Donnell’s accusation that Ripa was homophobic when she forcefully pushed Clay Aiken’s hand away from her mouth during an episode of “Live with Regis and Kelly.” O’Donnell has repeatedly supported and defended the LGBT community, but when she, herself, makes insensitive comments toward a community that she does not have ties to, she believes it to be “acceptable.” This is hypocrisy at its best ladies and gentlemen.
Although O’Donnell does eventually “apologize” on “The View” she does it in such a joking manner that her apology incites mass laughter from the audiences. Seeing two women of Asian descent in the crowd, she quickly spotlights the two and claims that the Asian community “obviously” sees her remarks as humorous.

This series of events bring up important issues to think about. Where do we cross the line? When does a joke become something else entirely? When can we all take a stand and stop laughing along with everyone else? How can we foster a safe and tolerant society when the media continues to perpetuate hurtful examples of intolerance? I believe that Rosie O’Donnell should take responsibility for her words and be held accountable for her actions, and the first step is a true and sincere apology.

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**Survivor’s Battle of the Races**

*By Elise Von Dohlen*

Survivor has proven to be one of the most popular and groundbreaking reality television shows this past year. I personally never found the idea of being stranded on some deserted island very appealing but during the 13th season of Survivor, Cook Islands producers attempted to shock audiences by dividing the initial tribal members by race. There were initially four groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, and Whites. Throughout the season the show routinely stated that the contestants were split up by ethnicity. This highlights the lack of awareness amongst the show’s producers to the difference between race and ethnicity.

In our highly racialized society the producers knew that constructing the creation of tribes by race would create a highly charged issue in the media and with viewers.

One of the cast members stated perfectly when he said, “We are going to have to represent for our people.” The show’s producers forced each of the contestants to represent their race for better or worse.

When I first heard about the premise of this new series I admit that my interest was piqued. I hadn’t watched the show since its first season, so in a sense the producer’s drive to create controversy in order to attract a greater audience was partly successful. Yet, I was horribly offended by the show’s blatant attempt at creating controversy by forcing contestants to interact with their tribal members based solely on race. It is constructed like a battle of the races, which caused viewers to ask themselves, which race would prove to be supreme?

As a biracial woman I was left to wonder, where did multiethnic people fit into this show and dialogue about race?

With many misgivings I began to watch the show, mostly so that I could have ammo with which to vehemently attack it. I think that their use of race to create controversy was tacky and their attempts at dialogue about race were contrived. After a few episodes, the racial tribes were “blended” during which time one of the contestants responded, “We’re back to America. We’re a melting pot; I love it.” Another responded that she “didn’t see color; you see the heart of the individual.” Needless to say, at this point I was ready to shut the television off.

Yet, I kept watching and at the end of the series for the first time an Asian American – Yul Kwon – was the survivor.

*See Yul, page 3*
There is some value in this season of Survivor as it allowed for the first time a large group of Asian Americans to be represented in the media at a time when the current representation of Asian American voice is nonexistent.

In an interview with the San Francisco Chronicle, Yul imparts his own experience: "I didn't see people like me on television when I was growing up. I wanted America to see Asian Americans as they truly are." Thus, one of his goals of going on Survivor was to "raise the profile of Asian American men." Yul has received much acclaim from his Survivor win, and was even named as one of People’s “Sexy Men”. With his earnings from Survivor, Yul has donated money to the Asian American donor program.

After seeing the whole season, I now see the value of dividing the contestants by race as it allowed a mainstream audience to begin to see the faces and lives of real Asian Americans. Yul was able to use this opportunity to talk about the representation of Asian Americans and to debunk Asian American stereotypes that reached a much greater mainstream audience than ever before.

**Asian American Justice Center Opposes New Immigration Proposal**

By Polina Zhong

On March 30, 2007, Asian American leaders and the Asian American Justice Center (AAJC) announced their strong opposition to the "set of principles" in an immigration reform draft created by a group of Republicans and supported by the Bush Administration.

AAJC and community leaders have dubbed the draft as “un-American” and “anti-family.” While the plan creates temporary visas for undocumented immigrants and new workers, the policy will create more restrictions on American citizens’ ability to bring family to the United States.

According to News America Media, 17,000 Chinese Americans obtained legal status in the U.S. through family sponsorship. As a result, the new reform policy could be as devastating for the Asian American community as the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), which was the first policy to restrict immigration on the basis of national origin.

In addition to the Chinese, Vietnam and India are also amongst the top ten countries whose immigrants arrive to the U.S. through family sponsorship.

The proposal also set up a merit-based point system for green cards in which immigrants would earn points by proof of employment, ability to pay for health insurance, home ownership, and even children’s achievement in school.

According to former U.S. Civil Rights Commissioner Yvonne Lee, “This cruel proposal would create a 21st Century version of ‘coolie labor’ – one in which immigrants are wanted for their hard work but not allowed to put down roots and build families and communities. Asian Americans still remember the painful legacies of our community’s bachelors’ societies created by such policies.”
Jeff Chang’s Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip Hop
By Lipou Laliemthavisay

Following his highly acclaimed book, Can’t Stop Won’t Stop, Jeff Chang took it a step further as a well-regarded Asian Pacific Islander in hip-hop’s public sphere by writing “Total Chaos.” Chang has set a precedent for other writers in the hip-hop world especially Asian Americans with the release of an award-winning “Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop,” which portrays hip-hop as a musical and cultural phenomenon. But Chang takes the study of hip-hop further in “Total Chaos” by explicating its manifestation through various components of culture. Some aspects affected by hip-hop include but are not limited to: film, poetry, and photography.

Chang does not take the usual route of writing in chronological order, but instead, he illustrates his points in terms of issues involving the movement of hip-hop. These issues incorporate sexuality, multiculturalism, globalization and other such issues. As if these issues are not sufficient for drawing readers’ interests, Chang goes above and beyond by traversing the States for discussions with hip-hop practitioners, interpreters, critics, and scholars in order to get in-depth analyses of hip-hop.

“Total Chaos is Jeff Chang at his best: fierce and unwavering in his commitment to document the hip-hop explosion. In beginning to define a hip-hop aesthetic, this gathering of artists, pioneers, and thinkers illuminates the special truth that hip-hop speaks to youth around the globe.” (Bakari Kitwana, author of The Hip-Hop Generation). Look out for the release of this book on February 28, 2007, which he will promote with a Total Chaos Hip-Hop Forum Series around the country.

Logooogling
By Sha Yan

Ever notice the witty Google logo designs on Google home page? Behind this growing internet search engine lies an unknown face that has caught the attention of millions of users. His name is Dennis Hwang, a 28-year-old Webmaster designer.

Hwang was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, but he moved to Korea when he was five years old. He attended public elementary and middle school in Korea. He moved backed to the U.S. with his family in 1993. Although his doodling attracted little attention, his logo design at Google, which were mostly inspired by his childhood doobles, has brought the praise of millions. He started a world movement called logooogling.

It was not unusual to discover that Hwang was an art major in college. When he went back to Knoxville in 2003, he was awarded the Appalachian Arts Fellow Award. Now he uses different design elements such as fire works, hearts,

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and goblins to manipulate the six-letter logo on special occasions such as international holidays and birth of famous persons that brings attentions to millions of users. The logo is then linked to a websites regarding the topic. The founder of Google, Larry Page and Sergey Brin requested Hwang to try the design for Fourth of July, 2000. Now Hwang has became a permanent member of Google industry.

Although Hwang only does the logo design as a part time job, he would often stay up all night to come up with brilliant design. Hwang stated that his favorite letter were “O” and “L” because they can easily be manipulated. Many users attracted by the clever designs and made curious search on the topic that brought an urge of visits on unknown websites. Hwang’s designs gain more popularity by the day. He often receives requests by different organization to be place on the logo. He once did a logo for the National Library Day, and he received so much praise by librarian that he received souvenir from different library.

Wanting to do computer programs and to express artistically, Hwang has found dream job at Google. Success at such a young age, the world will surely be seeing more of him, if not his designs on Google. And logoogling will live on.

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Students from Brown Campaign Against Discrimination in Admissions

*By Aileen Thai*

Two Brown University students, Neil Vangala and Jason Carr created *Asian Equality in Admissions (AEA)*, an organization that seeks to “investigate and identify possible sources of Asian and Asian American discrimination in the University’s admissions processes.” The establishment of this student group was inspired by Jian Li, a freshman at Yale University, who filed a civil rights complaint against Princeton University, claiming that he was discriminated based on his race during the admission process.

The founders’ motivations for starting AEA stemmed from a past history of discrimination of Asian Americans at Brown in addition to current evidence that suggests that students of Asian descents are often discriminated upon in the admission processes of numerous colleges. In a 2005 study by Princeton researchers, Thomas Espenshade and Chang Chung, reported that Asians had lower acceptance rates compared to other applicant groups. Additional studies conducted by researchers at John Hopkins University, Yale University, and University of California- Berkeley found that this low admission rate applies to Asians despite the applicant’s academic interests, declared major, or socio-economic status. As a result, one of AEA’s goals is to educate and inform the Brown community of discrimination against Asian and Asian Americans at Brown as well as other universities.

It is important to emphasize that AEA is a campaign against discrimination, not affirmative action. The mission of *Asian Equality in Admissions* is compatible with affirmative action's dual goals of achieving diversity and remedy past injustices. Given that the purpose of the organization is to conduct research, collect data, and understand the admission process in order to publish a report, conversations regarding affirmative action are not applicable to the group’s objectives.
The Asian Community at Tufts (ACT) raised a record amount at its fourth Annual Charity Service Auction last night. Despite having fewer services to auction off, the group took in $2,100, beating the average for the past year by over $500, according to senior Bic Leu, one of the event's organizers. The auction's proceeds will benefit the Asian Shelter and Advocacy Project (ASAP), a program run by the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK). "ATASK is really the only organization of its kind," Leu said. "Among its many other services, it offers multilingual support, legal and medical services and job training." According to Leu, about 40 students volunteered for the auction this year, 34 of them by agreeing to complete certain tasks for the highest bidder." Aside from student services, we auctioned performances ... [and] dance and guitar lessons, breakfast delivery, laundry services and more," she said.

The students that auctioned off services emphasized the desire to do a good deed as their motivating factor. Senior Julia Goldberg, along with a friend, will bake a dessert for one lucky student. "We thought we'd do it for charity," she said. Senior Matt Fiorello will be a personal bartender and masseur. He also said that charity "is the most important part" for him. The auction was Leu's brainchild during her freshman year, and she has organized it for three out of the four years since. President of ACT Chao Pan and ACT member Janice Wong also helped organize the auction this year. "In the past, proceeds have been donated to the American Heart Association, the UNICEF Tsunami Relief Fund and the Vietnamese Community Affected by Katrina," Leu said. "We try to pick organizations that are relevant to current events and to the Asian American community as a whole." According to Leu, the auction has raised about $4,000 overall during its three years in existence. She attributes this year's record profits to the atmosphere of the event and the choice of charity. "This year was different - it was more intimate than usual because a representative from ASAP also attended the auction, so people could have a clear idea of where their money is going."
Going Beyond the Master Narrative  
*By Sandy Tang & Polina Zhong*

In 1982, Vincent Chin, a 27-year-old Chinese American was beaten to death with a bat following a confrontation in a Detroit bar. His murderers (Ron Ebens and Michael Nitz) were let off the hook with only $3000 fines, and never spent a day in jail. How could such an atrocity have come and gone without drawing the notice of the masses? We’ve all heard of Rodney King. But have you ever heard of Vincent Chin?

If not, you’re not alone. Far from it. Few students have ever heard of the litany of similar hate crimes that have victimized Asian Americans throughout their presence in this country. These stories and the accompanying history of oppression that Asian Americans, along with other minorities of color, have faced are not taught to students in the established formal educational system – whether they are in kindergarten, 12th grade, or, in most cases, even college.

To ignore the sufferings of an entire group of people is to erase them from our collective memory. By not teaching the racism they experienced, we in essence teach future generations that it did not exist, and that racism today, stripped of its historical context, does not actually exist either. The ultimate message conveyed is that nothing needs to be done now to counteract the harmful effects of racism. Who suffers the brunt of this illusion? Who decides what is important enough to be taught?

The exclusion of Asian Americans from American history enforces the conception of Asian Americans as “foreigners”, as not “true Americans” (to use the terminology of a radio DJ last year who attacked an Asian American running for political office) despite the fact that they have been here since the mid-1800s. It also indirectly lends credence to the “model minority myth” which depicts all Asian Americans as upper-middle-class, well-to-do, hardworking, quiet overachievers – essentially, a “model minority” that doesn’t get under anyone’s feet. There is no education to provide counterevidence of the Asian Americans that are struggling, lower-class, oppressed, and have again and again voiced their content, to this prevalent image that the media has most often preferred to portray.

This gap-filled education misleads Asian-Americans and non-Asian-Americans alike. Asian Americans growing up in this culture have this image ingrained in them, and learn to believe that this is the archetype to which they are or should aspire. Although the Asian American population is diverse and many do not resemble this idea of the “model minority”, many come to believe that they cannot claim the identity of being Asian American if their personalities do not fit the limited mold – it being the only model they have of an Asian who is mainstream and assimilated into American culture. Ultimately, education is an important way of dispelling these misconceptions.

Take a look into the typical American curriculum. What do you see? Chinese laborers building the continental railroad? Exclusion acts that implied “justice for all” applied to us? Chinatowns that weren’t born out of choice, but out of exclusion? Anti-miscegenation laws that strived to keep white blood pure? Deportation and detention? Vincent Chin gasping his last breaths in the name of mistaken stereotypes? None of the above?

At Tufts, Asian Americans hardly see themselves in the curriculum. The current master narrative that is ominous in our textbooks fails to include ethnic minorities. With rising Asian American enrollment in universities, the model minority myth becomes perpetuated. So, how do we break down barriers and shatter glass ceilings? With a diverse curriculum that includes the histories of all peoples, going beyond the black-white paradigm, students can broaden their comfort zones. Hate crimes stem from miseducation and ignorance. And with hate, comes fear. Race relations will never ease if we do not attempt to understand one another.

In an institution that prides itself on diversity and acceptance, we cannot afford to neglect entire groups of people. Unlike many leading universities of our country, Tufts has failed to recognize the need for an Asian American studies program. And no, it’s not the same as Asian studies.

The struggle at hand isn’t just about getting another professor or another class. What we’re asking for is the decency of a university to recognize a marginalized group as worthy of validated existence. We’re not asking the student body to stand behind us. We’re simply asking you all to stand beside us in this long, overdue battle of false hopes, uncooperative administration, and blatant neglect.
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) Exit Poll of 4,600 Asian American Voters Reveals Robust Support for Democratic Candidates in Key Congressional and State Races

76% of Asian Americans in Michigan Reject Anti-Affirmative Action Referendum

New York—Asian American voters in eight states continued a decade-long shift to support Democratic candidates, with 79% of those polled favoring Democrats in Tuesday's congressional and state elections. According to preliminary results of a nonpartisan, multilingual exit poll of over 4,600 Asian American voters, released today by the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF), Democratic candidates in closely-watched races in Virginia, New Jersey and other states were consistently buoyed by Asian American voter turnout.

Most exit poll respondents (87%) said that they had voted in a previous election, while 13% told AALDEF volunteers that they were first-time voters. Over 625 pro bono attorneys, law students, and community activists monitored polling places and surveyed Asian American voters in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

AALDEF Executive Director Margaret Fung said: "Asian American voters reacted to sharp ideological differences among the candidates and displayed their awareness of party labels. The decade-long trend of Asian American voters favoring Democratic candidates contributed to the dramatic shifts in political power that took place in Tuesday's midterm elections."

AALDEF Exit Poll Survey Highlights:

**Virginia Senate:** After maintaining a slim lead, Democratic candidate Jim Webb was declared the winner by 0.3% of the total vote (49.6%) beating Republican incumbent Sen. George Allen (49.3%), best known among Asian Americans for his derogatory "macaca" remark to a South Asian campaign worker. According to AALDEF’s exit poll of more than 250 Asian American voters, 76% voted for Jim Webb, 21% voted for Sen. Allen, and 3% voted for Glenda Parker.

**New Jersey Senate:** In this heated Senate race, among more than 370 Asian Americans polled, 77% voted for incumbent Sen. Robert Menendez, while 20% voted for Republican challenger Thomas Kean Jr.—a 57-point margin. 3% of Asian Americans polled voted for other candidates. Among all New Jersey voters, Menendez held his seat by an 8-point margin (53% to 45%).

**Maryland Senate:** In Maryland's open Senate seat, among over 200 Asian American voters polled, 73% chose Democrat Ben Cardin, with 24% for Republican Michael Steele, and 3% for Green Party candidate Kevin Zeese. Among the general electorate, 55% voted for Cardin, 44% for Steele, and 2% for Zeese.

**Pennsylvania Senate:** Among more than 200 Asian American voters polled in Philadelphia, 71% voted for Democratic candidate Bob Casey, while 29% voted for Republican incumbent Sen. Rick Santorum. Among all voters, 59% voted for Casey and 41% voted for Santorum.

**Massachusetts Governor:** Democratic candidate Deval Patrick, who became the nation's second African American elected governor, received support from 75% of more than 350 Asian American voters polled in Boston, Dorchester, Lowell and Quincy, with Kerry Healey receiving 21%. Statewide, 56% voted for Patrick, and 35% voted for Healey.

**Michigan Proposal 2:** Rejecting claims that Asian Americans are hurt by affirmative action programs, three in four Asian American voters voted No to Proposal 2, which seeks to end race-and gender-based affirmative action programs in education, hiring, contracting, and health initiatives. More than 300 Asian American voters—including Arab Americans—participated in AALDEF’s exit poll survey in Michigan. Proposal 2 passed by a wide margin, 58% to 42%.
**Illinois Governor:** Democratic incumbent Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich defeated his Republican opponent Judy Baar Topinka with a 10-point lead, 50% to 40%. In contrast, 99% of the 170 Asian Americans polled in Chicago **voted for Blagojevich**, with 1% for Topinka.

**New York Attorney General:** Of over 2,300 Asian American voters polled in New York City, 82% voted for Democratic candidate Andrew Cuomo. Republican contender Jeanine Pirro received 14% of the Asian American vote, with 4% voting for other candidates. Cuomo led Pirro 58% to 40% among all voters statewide.

The 2006 Elections mark the 19th year in which AALDEF has conducted a nonpartisan exit poll of Asian American voters. Additional information on Asian American ethnic groups and population growth data in the eight states surveyed is available upon request.

AALDEF volunteers—the majority of whom spoke one of 15 Asian languages or dialects—conducted the **multilingual survey, which was translated into nine languages: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Khmer, Bengali, Arabic, Punjabi, Urdu, and Gujarati**. AALDEF’s multilingual exit polls reveal vital information about Asian American voting patterns regularly overlooked in mainstream voter surveys and provide a snapshot of Asian American voter preferences on candidates, political parties, language needs, and other issues of vital importance to their communities. More detailed results from AALDEF’s exit poll will be released in the coming weeks. AALDEF’s Election Protection 2006 efforts were made possible by many groups that mobilized volunteer attorneys, law students, college students and community activists.

A Final Goodbye
by Chao Pan

It has been my pleasure to serve as President of the Asian Community at Tufts (ACT) for the 2006-2007 academic year. Specifically, I am honored to have been able to work with the executive board to bring some great events to Tufts.

Our first large event of the year, the annual “Voices” concert, was held in Brow and Brew in November. We were able to secure acts from a wide range of backgrounds. We featured Kevin So, an R&B artist based in New York; Manisha Shahane, a folk music artist from North Carolina; and Paul “PK” Kim, a comedian from California. The event drew a diverse crowd that packed the Brown and Brew coffee shop that evening, despite the torrential downpour.

During the first semester ACT also sponsored a screening of the film “Sentenced Home,” bringing to light the plight of a group of Cambodians born in Cambodia but raised in the United States. Despite having no substantive connection to their country of birth and speaking only English, many of them are being sent back to Cambodia because of crimes committed years ago. This is happening even though many had already served time in prison for these crimes and are now productive members of the community. We were honored to have one of the film’s subjects, Manny, to be with us to discuss the ramifications of America’s immigration policy and the work he has since done for his community.

The second semester started off with a bang with the fourth annual ACT Charity Service Auction. This year, over 60 undergraduates volunteered services ranging from bubble tea runs to dance lessons to private acapella concerts. We were able to raise a record $2,100 for the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK). I want to take this time again to thank everyone who donated services or bought services, as well as the multitude of groups who co-sponsored us by offering services for this great event.

In addition to these larger events, we also had a full calendar of other events, including screenings of films such as “Saving Face” (done in conjunction with the LGBT Center) and “The Grace Lee Project” (done in conjunction with the TCU Senate) and our annual Student-Faculty Luncheon, which will take place in the next two weeks.

Our annual spoken word night, “FUSION,” will take place on April 18th at 9:45PM at Dewick. It will feature a slew of performers, including Native Guns, Paper Sky, and others. Admission is free and I hope to see everyone there!

I hope everyone who was able to make it out to these events found them entertaining and stimulating. They were not easy events to coordinate, and I want to thank the executive board again for taking the initiative and running these projects. Finally, if you are interested in joining the board of ACT next year, please come to our elections on Sunday, April 22nd, at 6PM in the Chinese House (Latin Way A220s). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at chao.pan@tufts.edu.

Thank you all again for a great year with which to remember Tufts. As I head out in the real world *shudder* being a part of ACT will have been one of my fondest memories.
Asian American Quiz
How well do you know your Asian American history?

Questions:

1. When is national Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage month?
2. What is the first act that excluded immigrants based on national origin?
3. Name three cities where you can find [a] Chinatown.
4. What is the driving force behind the Yellow Power Movement in the 1960’s?
5. Who is the first Asian American astronaut in space?
6. What’s a “picture bride”?
7. Who is the first Asian American elected as governor on U.S. mainland?

Answers:

1. May!
2. Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
3. New York, Boston, San Francisco, Washington DC, Chicago
5. A picture bride is an Asian woman who agrees to an arranged marriage through the exchange of photographs.
6. The Yellow Power Movement was inspired, in part, by the Black Power Movement of the 1960s. The driving forces behind the movement were second-generation students who refuted the idea of the “passive Oriental” and established a new Asian American identity.
2007 FUSION concert!

ROCK w/ papersky
HIP HOP w/ NATIVE GUNS

SPEAK w/ a special guest spoken word artist

wed april 18th/ 10 pm
Dewick MacPhie Hall, Tufts University
FREE event: college id only
Qs? contact tufts.fusion@gmail.com

Hosted by the Asian Community at Tufts and ONYX
w/ generous support from Thai Club, FCS, HKSA, TASA, PAA, VSC, CSA