

Name: _____

Source Set A

Part I: Connect the Past and Present

How can studying the past help us understand the present?

Part I Instructions: Read the secondary source below two times. During your **first read**, circle any words or phrases you do not know. Clarify the words or phrases you do not know with your group or find out what they mean. During your **second read**, underline any historical examples referenced in the source and place a star next to passages that express the author's key points. Then answer the questions that follow. You will be responsible for sharing your findings with your classmates.

Erika Lee, "Anti-Asian Violence Isn't Un-American. It's a Racist Tradition That Goes Back Over 150 Years," *Densho*, 2021

Below is an excerpt. Full text is available at <<https://densho.org/catalyst/anti-asian-violence-isnt-un-american-its-a-racist-tradition-that-goes-back-over-150-years/>>.

About the author: Erika Lee, Ph.D., is one of the nation's leading immigration and Asian American historians. Lee is a professor of history at the University of Minnesota and the author of *The Making of Asian America: A History* (2015) and *America for Americans: A History of Xenophobia in the United States* (2019).

[T]here has been an alarming rise in anti-Asian racism and violence over the past year. Beginning in late January of 2020, Asian Americans reported being harassed, yelled at, attacked, and shunned in stores and restaurants; on city streets, buses, and subways; and in their own neighborhoods. A new report recently released by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism...found that hate crimes targeting Asian people rose by nearly 150 percent in sixteen of America's largest cities.... As shocking as these incidents are, it is vital to understand that they are not random acts perpetrated by deranged individuals. They are an expression of our country's long history of systemic racism and racial violence targeting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders....

The government of this country has not just ignored this problem. It has been part of the problem....

- In 1882, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, the first federal law to single out an entire group for immigration exclusion based on race and class. Initially passed as a temporary measure to bar Chinese laborers; it prohibited Chinese immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens ... [and made it harder for Chinese Americans] to enter and reenter the country, until the law was repealed in 1943.

- By the 1930s, Japanese, Korean, South Asians, and Filipinos were also barred from entering the US and from becoming naturalized citizens. Asian

immigration was not placed on equal footing with other immigrant groups until 1965.

- After President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 in February of 1942, the government initiated the forced relocation and mass incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans. Forced from their homes, they were sent to prison camps as “prisoners without trial” for the duration of the war. Two-thirds were American-born citizens.

This history is not often taught in our schools. Instead, many Americans believe the deceptive “model minority” stereotype portraying Asian Americans only as success stories. But these recent

acts of anti-Asian violence show that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders do indeed experience systemic racism and discrimination....

As the [COVID-19] virus has spread across the country, so has anti-Asian racism. This violence follows the racist tradition that has defined the Asian American experience in the US: despite long histories and deep roots in America, Asian Americans are still viewed as racial others, outsiders, and foreigners; as enemies rather than citizens. Many perpetrators blame China and all Chinese-appearing people for the virus and its spread within the United States....

Part I Questions

1. Who is the author of the secondary source? What evidence do you have that the author is a reliable source for explaining the connections between the past and present?
2. Which historical events does the author describe? List three.
3. Choose one or two of the historical events you listed above and briefly explain why you think the author uses them to describe connections between the past and the present.

Part II: Develop Historical Empathy

What can we learn from studying the personal experiences of people from the past?

Part II Instructions: Read the primary source below two times. During your **first read**, circle any words or phrases you do not know. Clarify the words or phrases you do not know with your group or find out what they mean. During your **second read**, place a star next to passages that reveal something important about the personal experiences covered in the source. Then answer the questions that follow. You will be responsible for sharing your findings with your classmates.

Testimony of the Rock Springs, Wyoming, Chinese Community (1885)

Source Introduction: On September 2, 1885, a group of white miners in Rock Springs, Wyoming, attacked the city's Chinese community. The white miners and their allies killed 28 Chinese residents, injured 15 more, and burned 78 homes to the ground. The white miners had been motivated by racial prejudice and economic resentment toward the Chinese, who they claimed were taking jobs that should have gone to white people instead. Dozens of other anti-Chinese attacks occurred in states like Oregon, Washington, and California in this era as well. The excerpt below was taken from a group testimony by Rock Springs's Chinese residents in 1885.

We, the [Chinese community], have been in Rock Springs, Wyoming Territory, for periods ranging from one to fifteen years, for the purpose of working on the railroads and in the coal mines....

Several times we had been approached by the white men and requested to join them in asking the companies for an increase in the wages of all, both Chinese and white men. We inquired of them what we should do if the companies refused to grant an increase. They answered that if the companies would not increase our wages we should all strike, then the companies would be obliged to increase our wages. To this we dissented, wherefore we excited their animosity against us.... About the month of August of this year notices were posted up, all the way from Evanston to Rock Springs, demanding the expulsion of the Chinese....

[On September 2], the squad [of white miners]...at the pump house fired the first shot.... The Chinese by name of Lor Sun Kit was the first person shot.... At that time the Chinese began to realize that the mob were bent on killing....

Whenever the mob met a Chinese they stopped him and, pointing a weapon at him... [then] searched his person, robbing him of his watch or any gold or silver that he might have about him.... Some of the rioters would let a Chinese go after depriving him of all his gold and silver, while another Chinese would be beaten with the butt ends of the weapons.... Some of the rioters, when they could not stop a Chinese, would shoot him dead on the spot, and then search and rob him.... Some, who took no part either in beating or robbing the Chinese, stood by, shouting loudly and laughing and clapping their hands.

There was a gang of [white] women that stood at the “Chinatown” end of the plank bridge and cheered; among the women, two...fired successive shots at the Chinese....

The Chinese who were the first to flee mostly dispersed themselves.... They were scattered far and near, high and low, in about one hundred places. Some were standing, or sitting, or lying hid on the grass, or stooping down on the low grounds. Every one of them was praying to Heaven or groaning with pain. They had been eyewitnesses to the shooting in “Chinatown,” and had seen the whites, male and female, old and young, searching houses for money, household effects, or gold, which were carried across to “Whitemen’s Town”....

[The Chinese] intended to come back to “Chinatown” when the riot was over, to dispose of the dead bodies and to take care of the wounded. But...all the houses were burned to ashes, and there was then no place of shelter for them....

On the ninth of September the United States government instructed...troops to escort the Chinese back to Rock Springs. When they arrived there they saw only a burnt tract of ground to mark the sites of their former habitations.... It was a sad and painful sight to see the son crying for the father, the brother for the brother, the uncle for the nephew, and friend for friend....

Part II Questions

1. Who authored this primary source? What personal experiences did they describe?
2. What do you think it was like for the Chinese community in Rock Springs to live through the 1885 mob attack? Use evidence from the source to support your answer.
3. Why do you think the Chinese community in Rock Springs gave this testimony about their experiences? What fears or hopes do you think they had when they testified publicly?

Part III: Inspire Activism

How can studying the past inspire us to act in the present?

Part III Instructions: Read the primary source below two times. During your **first read**, circle any words or phrases you do not know. Clarify the words or phrases you do not know with your group or find out what they mean. During your **second read**, place a star next to passages that reveal something important about how understanding the past can inspire activism in the present. Then answer the questions that follow. You will be responsible for sharing your findings with your classmates.

The Asian American Movement in the 1960s and 1970s

Source Introduction: In the 1960s and 1970s, many young people in the United States (and elsewhere) protested racism, sexism, poverty, the U.S. war in Vietnam, and the exploitation of people in the “Third World” (a Cold War-era term no longer used today for countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America). Asian American students and their allies formed the Asian American Movement (AAM) in the late 1960s, joining with African American, Latin American, and American Indian civil rights groups in the United States to take part in the global struggle to end racism. The AAM and other civil rights groups also called for the development of ethnic studies courses in schools and universities to better reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the United States and challenge racist perspectives within the U.S. education system. Below are excerpts from a 1968 speech by Richard Aoki, a University of California student activist in the Asian American Political Alliance, and a 1968 statement by the Philippine American Collegiate Endeavor, a Filipino student activist group at San Francisco State College.

Richard Aoki, speech at an Asian American Political Alliance rally, July 28, 1968

We Asian Americans believe that American society has been, and still is, fundamentally a racist society, and that historically we have accommodated ourselves to this society in order to survive....

We Asian Americans support all non-white liberation movements and believe that all minorities in order to be truly liberated must have complete control over the political, economic, and social institutions within their respective communities. We unconditionally support the struggles of the Afro-American people, the Chicanos [Mexican

Americans], and the American Indians to attain freedom, justice, and equality....

We Asian Americans oppose the imperialist policies being pursued by the American government.... We are unconditionally against the [U.S.] war in Vietnam....

[T]he Asian American Political Alliance...[is] an action-oriented group...[dedicated] to all issues that are of fundamental importance pertaining to the building of a new and better world.

Official Statement of the Philippine American Collegiate Endeavor, 1968-1969

We, the Filipino American students of San Francisco State College...have come to the realization, along with our Third World brothers, that the struggle for self-determination is the struggle of all Third World peoples; that the neutrality, a neutrality which for the most part kept our community from progressing in this racist society, can not be tolerated or practiced any longer. There have been too many situations in which our people have denied to themselves the rights and opportunities to determine their future....

[R]acism is not only levelled at our Black brother, but at us as well, when we consider the... small number of Filipinos in college, opportunities denied to Filipino professionals in this country, [and] exploitation of Filipino farm workers in Delano [a city in California] working for a few dollars a day....

WE DEMAND: 1. That there be established in the School of Ethnic Studies a Department of Filipino Studies....

Part III Questions

1. Who authored the primary sources? What groups or communities did the authors represent or support?
2. What personal or historical experiences did the authors describe as motivation for their activism?
3. What goals or objectives do you think the authors hoped to accomplish with their activism?