

Summary of May 2020 APA Justice Conference Call

0. Introduction

We welcomed three new speakers today in Sarina Neote, Liz OuYang and Daria Vaisman.

- a. [Sarina Neote](#), Science Policy Manager, [American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology](#), (o) 240.283.6621; (c) 317.650.6173; sneote@asbmb.org
- b. Elizabeth OuYang (<http://www.elizabethouyang.org/>), civil rights attorney, advocate, and educator
- c. Daria Vaisman, Program Director, [Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes](#), NYC Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice
- d. **New 04/27** [Tom Cotton on Chinese students and coronavirus \(video 0:20\)](#)
- e. **New 04/24 Politico:** [GOP memo urges anti-China assault over coronavirus](#)
- f. **New 04/24 Washington Post:** [Trump and Biden alike have stooped to demagoguery about China](#)
- g. **New** [APA Justice LinkedIn group](#) launched. Please join <https://bit.ly/2KwlhXL>

1. CAPAC updates

- a. NIH and FBI responses to [congressional requests](#) by 03/05?
- b. Position on items d-f above?

No CAPAC staff was on call.

2. Racial Profiling/Targeting updates

- a. Speaker: Sarina Neote, Science Policy Manager, ASBMB

The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) was founded in 1906 and has an international membership of over 11,000. Sarina reported on its recent activities related to ongoing issues related to foreign influences to research integrity, including a position statement.

The statement said in part, "In addition to the lack of transparency, there have been numerous cases of scientists being wrongfully accused of espionage or intellectual property theft. Fear within the scientific community of being targeted as a result of race or identify has proliferated. The NIH must be transparent about their actions and processes and offer guidelines to the scientific community to appease these fears."

ASBMB hosted a webinar titled "Protecting American Science - and the international collaborators critical to its success" on March 25. A video record and recap of the

webinar is available in its website. ASBMB has also reported on the congressional inquiry into the FBI and NIH research-integrity investigations.

Sarina provided her contact and invited interested parties to connect directly on these and related issues. After the call, Sarina also sent a position statement on the NIH funding being pulled from the EcoHealth Alliance grant on bat-human virus transmission. “Funding decisions at the NIH are not made by politicians or bureaucrats, but by independent peer-review panels made up of scientists. Those panels select projects for funding based on their scientific merit. Allowing politics to influence or override their decisions weaponizes research funding and causes scientists to lose faith in these long-standing institutions,” the statement said.

For additional background on the issue, visit 60 Minutes broadcast on May 10, 2020 on why it matters that the NIH canceled a coronavirus research grant with the byline that “Faulty allegations led to cutting \$3.7 million dollars to ecologists studying coronaviruses. The ramifications may be felt in future pandemics.”

Sarina welcomes connecting with any interested parties on these topics. Her contact information: (o) 240.283.6621; (c) 317.650.6173; sneote@asbmb.org. Please visit [Community Responses](#) and <https://www.asbmb.org/> for more information.

- b. Speaker: Frank Wu, President Designate, Queens College
New 04/30 Jewish Currents: [A New Cold War Threatens Chinese Americans Why You Need A Lawyer](#) and addendum

Frank Wu reported on an open letter he wrote to persons who believe they might be contacted by their employer, a funder, or government officials regarding their relationship to China. This includes, for example, university professors who have received grants to support their academic activities; researchers in STEM fields working in the private sector; civil servants; and even U.S. military personnel.

Frank was interviewed in the Jewish Currents article titled “A New Cold War Threatens Chinese Americans.” Drawing on the Jewish American experience and the current Chinese American situation, “history teaches that cold wars exact a terrible toll on those Americans whom other Americans associate with the enemy. They narrow definitions of national loyalty, sometimes almost overnight. And the Americans who fall outside those cramped definitions—like Weihong Tan—often see their lives destroyed.”

“If you go back five or ten years,” explains Frank H. Wu, the incoming president of Queens College, “every American university wanted a connection with a Chinese school.”

According to the article, “For every Xiaoxing Xi or Chunzai Wang who sees their lives wrecked because the FBI deems them disloyal, there are other Chinese Americans who avoid being targeted—but at a cost. They downplay their opposition to Washington’s cold war posture because their ethnicity makes them vulnerable to being labeled agents of Beijing.”

“But Chinese Americans deserve to do more than survive, or even economically prosper. They deserve to be able to assert their views about a geopolitical struggle that will shape the next era of American history and, if they so choose, to boldly challenge an American foreign policy course that has deep implications for their lives. That also means feeling free to speak out against the domestic racism that the geopolitical situation exacerbates.”

3. Coronavirus (COVID-19)

a. Speaker: Elizabeth OuYang, civil rights attorney, advocate, and educator

i. [Kaitlin's Story with Film Lab](#) (video 2:20)

[The Film Lab](#) is a 501c3 not-for-profit that has been dedicated to the promotion of gender and ethnic parity since 1998. It is featuring stories to air as PSA's in different media outlets of Asian Americans helping people impacted by the pandemic to counter the increased anti-Chinese sentiment among people who mistakenly blame people of Chinese descent for spreading or having the virus.

Elizabeth R. OuYang is a civil rights attorney for over 30 years. She also teaches at Columbia University and New York University. Her areas of specialty include combating hate crimes, media accountability, immigration, voting rights, and diversity and inclusion issues in the workforce. Ms. OuYang founded and has supervised OCA-NY's Hate Crimes Prevention Summer Art Project, now in its 14th successful year.

Ms. OuYang's talk briefly began with the continued portrayal of Asian Americans and immigrants as the perpetual foreigner during this COVID-19 crisis. To counter these negative stereotypes, Ms. OuYang focused on the need to document and publicize the contributions of Asian Americans and immigrants helping to address the needs arising out of the pandemic and ways we can foster meaningful integration of different races. Since mainstream media concentrates primarily on "conflict" to attract viewers, human interest stories often go unreported. To counter the negative stereotypes of casting Asian Americans and immigrants as the perpetual foreigner, we need to elevate stories

of Asian Americans and immigrants as an integral part of what makes America great, particularly during the pandemic crisis, and continue to educate others, particularly youth in an integrated setting on effective ways to prevent hate crimes.

Ms. OuYang discussed efforts she is embarking on is to tell the stories of Asian American contributions during this pandemic, in short and long form and disseminating these stories widely. An example of a short version is "Kaitlin's story," a two minute PSA of a Chinese American college student's service project over spring break to raise money for food for a homeless shelter. This PSA was produced by Kaitlin and Film Lab, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the promotion of gender and ethnic parity since 1998.

Trained by the Oral History Summer Project, Ms. OuYang is looking to collaborate on telling oral histories of Asian Americans and immigrants helping to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 to be used as training materials for discussions on combating hate crimes.

To promote and foster integrated and cross-racial exchanges, Ms. OuYang introduced OCA-NY's Hate Crimes Prevention Summer Art Project, now in its 14th successful year. This project brings together racially and ethnically diverse teenagers from youth groups. The project trains the youth on what a hate crime is and how to use art as an advocacy tool to prevent hate crimes. Using hate crimes statistics by the New York Police Department, Ms. OuYang described how OCA-NY is using these statistics as an opportunity for restorative justice. Because of the need to still practice social distancing rules, OCA-NY will conduct the initial training online and intends to offer the Project as an alternative to penal punishment for teenagers, 19 and under who have been charged with a hate crime. The U.S. Justice Department's Community Relations Service, NYPD Hate Crimes, and New York City's Office of Hate Crimes Prevention have indicated interest in participating in OCA-NY's training this summer.

b. Daria Vaisman, Program Director, NYC Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes

- [Reporting Anti-Asian Hate Crimes and Activities](#)
- [Webinar/Training/Forums](#)
- AAJ|AAJC: [Bystander Intervention to Stop Anti-Asian/American and Xenophobic Harassment](#)

Daria reported on the New York City Human Rights Commission bias incidents and hate crimes reporting virtual town hall meeting on April 30.

Bias attacks against Asian Americans are on the rise according to the NYPD's crimes report. Police counted 14 hate crimes last month, 15 Asian American victims and 11 arrests -- all seemingly related to COVID-19.

4. Sherry Chen Case

- a. Speaker: Steve Simon: "[Victim of Gross Injustice](#)"
- b. [CAPAC press conference](#) on the dismissal of the Sherry Chen criminal case was held on Capitol Hill 5 years ago on 2015/05/21, which led to the creation of the APA Justice Task Force.

Steve Simon reported that last month marked the 2-year anniversary of Judge Schroeder's 135-page decision (4/23/18) in Sherry Chen's Merit Systems Protection Board case. The judge ruled the Department of Commerce did not have cause to fire Sherry and blasted the agency for its scandalous conduct surrounding Sherry's arrest in 2014 and termination in 2016. The agency regrettably filed an appeal that has languished before the MSPB Board in DC, which has lacked a quorum since January 2017. A decision may not come until 2021 or later. We hope the agency will stop the delay tactics and just drop the appeal altogether.

5. 2020 Census

- a. End of self-response phase postponed from July 31 to October 31, 2020.
- b. [Census Bureau COVID-19 Site](#): new interactive tool providing state and local data relevant to pandemic-related demographic and economic analysis

6. Catch-up on all developments: www.apajustice.org and [LinkedIn Group](#)

- a. A new APA Justice LinkedIn group was launched in April. Please join to get timely information and discussions. <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12395028/>

7. Upcoming Events

- a. May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
- b. **New** 05/11-12 PBS: [Asian Americans](#). (i) Breaking Ground/A Question of Loyalty, (ii) Good Americans/Generation Rising, (iii) Breaking Through
- c. 06/24-27 United Chinese Americans Convention, Las Vegas, NV (**postponed**)
- d. 06/25-27 OCA National Convention, Las Vegas, NV (**postponed to July 2021**)

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. There will be many activities. Jeremy Wu highlighted the PBS 5-part series on "Asian Americans" on 5/11-12. Please set aside time to make sure you watch it to support our community and PBS.

Comments and feedback:

Chuck Ng and Teri Wang are working on a set of petitions addressing the anti-Asian / anti-Chinese racism. One petition of Chuck's will involve a number of Ivy league graduates and academics, another is linked to national organizations like APAPA. Teri is also mentoring young students to write a petition from their perspective. Chuck and Teri are both interested in developing a media platform or clearinghouse to consolidate Asian American stories. This could be as simple as a APA Justice Media Facebook group for us to share information, make requests, and connect people to storytellers and journalists. Please send other suggestions on how we can connect with various forms of media. Thanks!

Julie Tam reported on recent developments regarding discovery in EEOC, request for summary judgment, and apparent xenophobic attitude of administrative judges.

8. Next Call

- a. Next Call: 2020/06/01
- b. Reminder: Post your messages and comments to apajustice@googlegroups.com

Email Jeremy Wu at Jeremy.S.Wu@gmail.com or Vincent Wang at wang177@gmail.com to submit agenda items. Thank you.