



Thank you for joining us for the 'Let's Talk About: What's in a Vote' Workshop

Good morning! We will begin shortly.



Let's Talk About: What's in a Vote

Facilitated by Mariko Rooks, KK Nodohara, and KC Mukai

The Young Buddhist Editorial: Social Justice Committee

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

We are on stolen land. We want to acknowledge the unceded, traditional, ancestral territory on which we are learning today.

Community Agreements

1. One Mic
2. Right Thought and Right View - Assume Positive Intent
3. Right Speech - Our words have power and can negatively impact others
4. Right Action - What is shared here stays here; what is learned here leaves here
5. Right Mindfulness - Take space, create space

Chat: What else do you need to ensure this is a safe space for everyone?

Voter Abstaining Acknowledgement

We respect and acknowledge the rights and power behind those who choose to abstain from voting for any reason.

Workshop Agenda

Time	Activity
10:00am-10:05am	Welcome: Introductions in the chat (5 min)
10:05am-10:20am	Part I: The History of Voting and Disenfranchisement (15 min)
10:20am-10:40am	Breakout Rooms: Part 1 Discussion (20 min)
10:40am-10:50am	Break (10 min)
10:50am-11:05	Part II: AAPI and Voting (15 min)
11:05am-11:25am	Breakout Rooms: Part 2 Discussion (20 min)
11:25am-11:30am	Closing (5 min)

Part 1:

The History of Voting & Disenfranchisement

A look at the history and
legislative process of voting and
political participation.

What is voting?

Why and how was it created?

What kinds of power does it enact, and why does that matter?

What is voting?

CRASH COURSE: OLD WHITE MEN CREATE VOTING

Voting is the **right** of a **citizen** in a **democratic state** to determine government policies

- + **Rights:**
 - + OG Liberalism: life, liberty, property
 - + Given to all humans **by God**
 - + Who is a human? What if you don't believe in God?
- + **Democratic state (liberal state):**
 - + Protects rights of *citizens* against those who might take them away
- + **Citizen:**
 - + Who gets to be "in" the state
 - + Defined by laws, borders, etc.
 - + No citizenship, no rights!



Voting is not the only method of collective decision making & never has been!

Why is this important, especially for BIPOC?

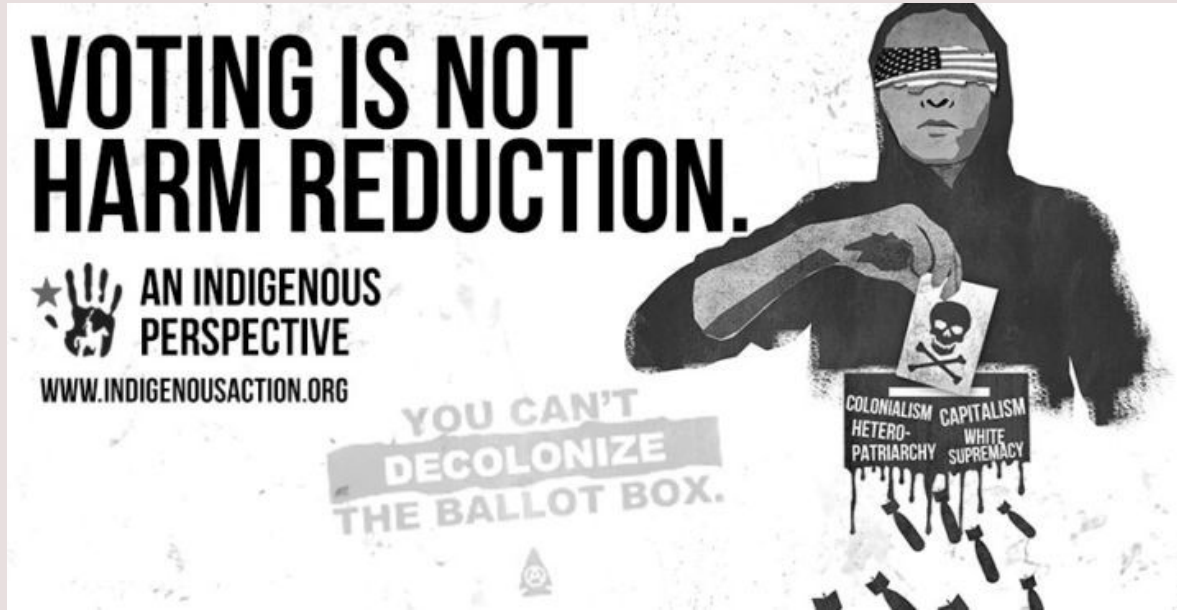


"universalizing concepts of reason, civilization, and freedom affect colonial divisions of humanity"
- Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (6)



*These divisions include hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc - Gary Okihiko, *Third World Studies**

Indigenous Sovereignty: Is Voting A Right?



Indigenous nations & peoples have been forcibly and violently incorporated into the US

- 1830's: Andrew Jackson Court Cases
- 1887: Dawes Act
- 1924: Indian Citizenship Act

Voting in a settler colonial state cannot be decolonized, even if legislation/specific candidates provide material resources to Indigenous people

Disenfranchisement as Racial Oppression

Reconstruction-Era Black Congressmen



Voter Suppression

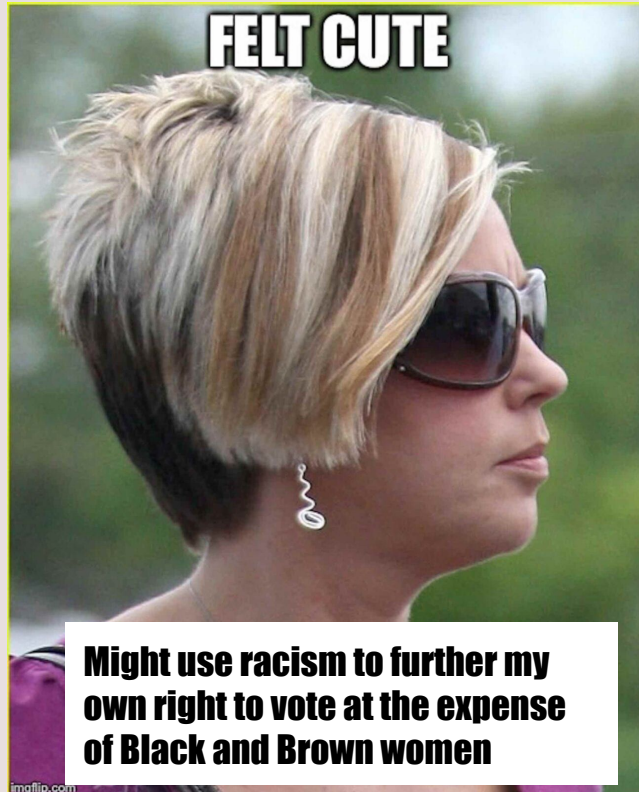
- physical violence & harassment
- Legislation: poll taxes, grandfather clause, literacy tests

13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments:
make Black folks citizens, Black
MEN are able to vote



Literacy Test Political Cartoon, 1879 Harper's Bazaar

Gender, Race, and Voting



"It is not fair that a plantation Negro who can neither read or write should be entrusted with the ballot."
- Frances E. Willard

Karen: White Suffragist Edition

Using (often sexist) constructs of white femininity (moral, domestic, etc) to argue for the right for white women to vote

Ida B. Wells, anti-lynching & suffrage advocate



Better Voting Stans



Fannie Lou Hamer giving Congressional testimony

Racialized Citizenship and Disenfranchisement



Image credits: AALDEF History

Who is still excluded?



Grassroots Organizing

Image Credit: MPower Change

Black & Native Reparations



Kendrick Lamar, "Alright," *To Pimp a Butterfly*, 2016

Image Credit: <http://picslyrics.net>

Acting Outside The Ballot

WHAT IS
MUTUAL AID?



Mutual Aid

& HOW YOU CAN DONATE TO
MUTUAL AID FUNDS THAT
COMBAT COVID-19 ON THE
NAVAJO NATION (DINÉTAH)

@K:NSALEHUES

@kinsalehues on Instagram, content and image

Community Care



Yellow Brotherhood

Image Credit: Brown University

Breakout Rooms 1:

Reflection & Imagination

- How do you feel about voting after learning this history? Did you learn anything new?
 - What might a BIPOC + Buddhist framework of decision-making look like?
-

Part 2:

AAPI and Voting

A closer look at the challenges, stereotypes, and potential to the Asian American Pacific Islander community and voting

What does AAPI mean?

Who does it include?

Who does it exclude?

What are the ramifications of this?

Asian American Complacency

What is the “Model Minority Myth?”

Please type in the chat any Asian stereotypes that have been projected onto you

Model Minority Myth

- Originally used in 1966 by sociologist William Peterson to describe the socioeconomic success of Japanese Americans
- A collection of Asian American stereotypes that present them as the “ideal minority group” *in the eyes of white supremacy*
 - Academic and financial success
 - Social and political meekness
 - Strong work ethic
 - Dominance in math and science
 - Strict parenting
- Contrasted to the “problem minorities”

Model Minority Myth

- Checking our privilege as a “model minority”
 - Upholds anti-BIPOC rhetoric and white adjacency
 - Undercuts other minority movements - “Asians can pull themselves out of oppression and assimilate to white supremacy, so why can’t they?”
 - Negatively impacts other minority groups
- Continuation of this myth creates animosity between Asians and other minority groups
 - “prevents Asian Americans and non-Asian people of color from recognizing and organizing around shared experiences of labor exploitation, lack of government representation, lack of pop culture representation, cultural appropriation, and much more.” -Ijeoma Oluo

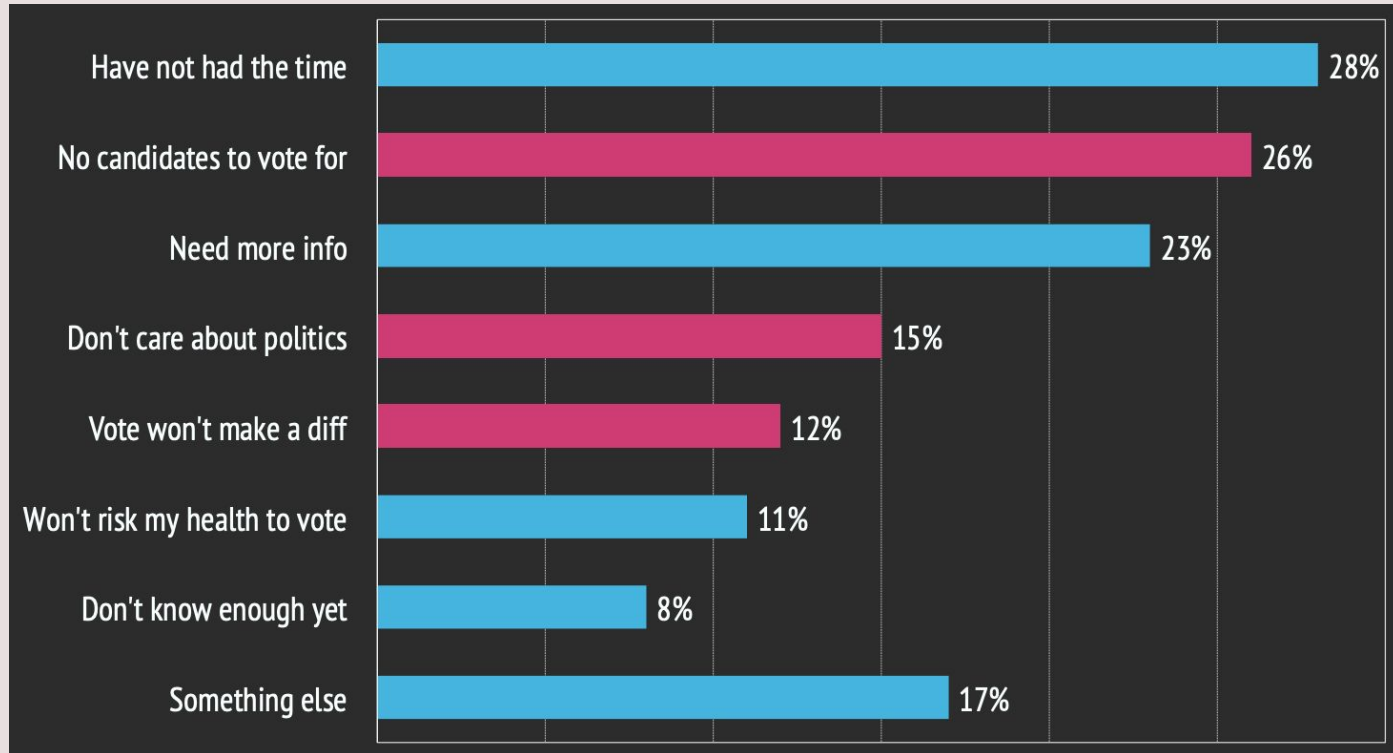
Conflicting Discourse

- Assumptions that AAPI political docility is due to restrictive subculture and supposed economic success when *these traits are not entirely applicable to all of AAPI political participation*

There are many other factors at play...

Current Challenges and Barriers for AAPI Voters

“There are many reasons why people are not registered to vote or have not updated their voter registration. Which of the following best describes your situation?”



only **41%**

of AAPI citizens aged 18-34 years old have
been contacted about voting/registering to vote

Problem:

Lack of access to in-language materials (i.e ballots, electoral information)



AAPI community prevented from fully understanding the electoral process and candidate platforms



Low AAPI Voter turnout

Solutions:

- Recruiting and training multilingual poll workers
- Provide in-language and accessible election materials
- Decreasing the minimum population threshold necessary to warrant translated materials



Outcome:

- A more informed and knowledgeable AAPI voter base that is motivated to participate
- Increased autonomy and democracy of the political process

Problem:

The AAPI experience and opinions is too broadly generalized despite the diverse range of socioeconomic statuses, languages, and cultural backgrounds encompassed by "AAPI".



Creates an incomplete picture of the unique needs of AAPI communities for government and political organizations to go off of and cater to while running.



Low AAPI Voter Turnout

Solutions:

- Collecting accurate and comprehensive federal data (The Census)
- Language access requirements in all jurisdictions



Outcome: Candidates and policy makers will have a better understanding of the needs of a diverse AAPI community, allowing them to better cater to AAPI communities and bring in voter participation.

More Problems:

Discriminatory “voter purging”: Removing voters from voter rolls because of inaccurate data, voter suspicion, or errors



Asian American names missing or taken out from voter rolls and therefore ineligible to vote.



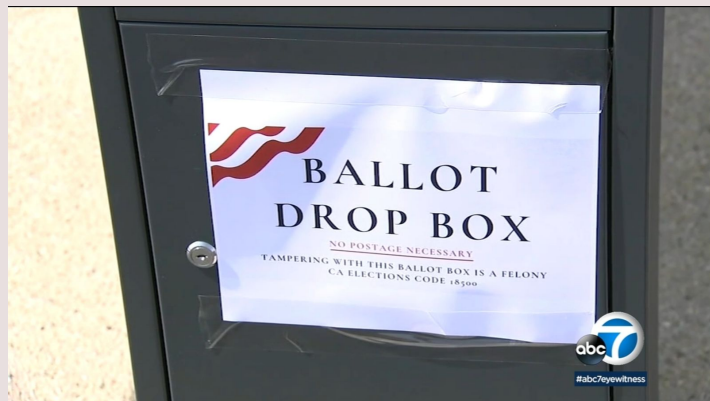
**Low AAPI
Voter
Turnout**



- Barriers to citizenship
- Voter Identification laws
- Disrupted polling and ballot submission sites.

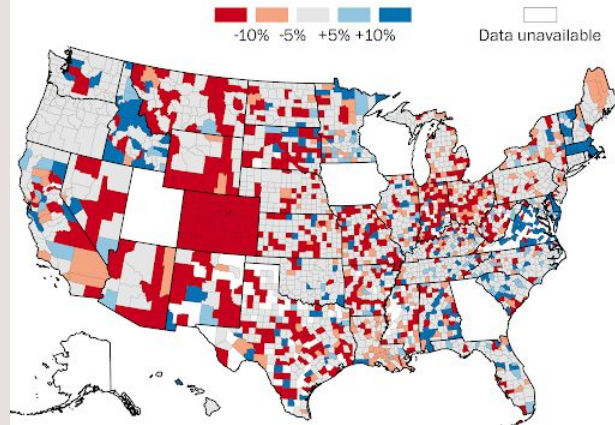


Low AAPI Voter Turnout



Poll closures

Percent change in number of physical polling locations reported to the Election Assistance Commission, 2012 to 2016



Source: 2012 and 2016 Election Administration and Voting Surveys THE WASHINGTON POST

The Point: When a community is denied **adequate resources** and **not empowered** to stand up and express their opinion, which is what has happened to the **AAPI** community, their **political power** is *not fully expressed* in an oppressive society that has always seen them as **foreign**.

Potential of the Asian American Vote

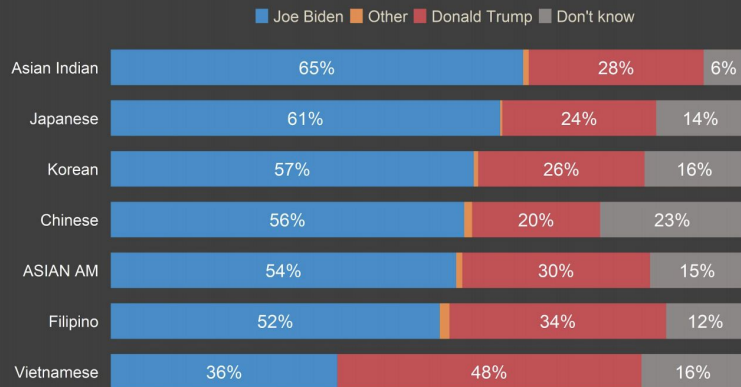
Demographics

- Asian Americans are the fastest growing group in America
 - # of eligible voters increases ~150,000 each year
- 2010 Census: 44% of AAPI are not registered to vote

- Our community has *strong potential to be a driving political force*
- Racial disparities in voter turnout *should not be the norm*

2020 Presidential Race Vote

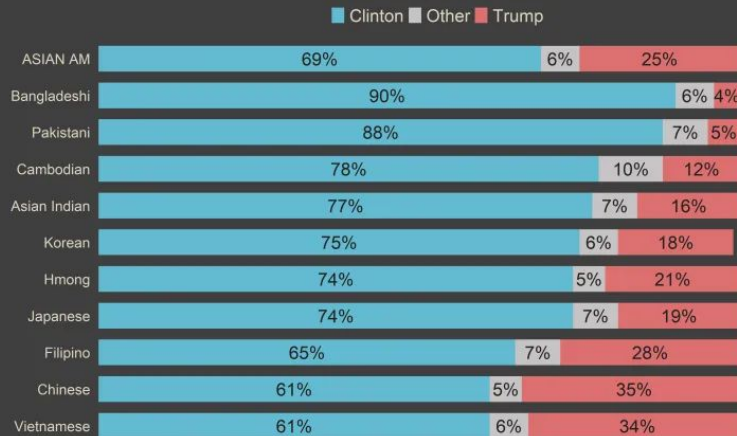
Thinking about the upcoming November election for President...If the election were being held today would you be inclined to vote for...?



Source: Asian American Voter Survey 2020

Presidential Vote Choice by Ethnicity, 2016

Thinking about the past November election for President, did you vote for Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, or some other candidate?



Source: 2016 Post-Election National Asian American Survey

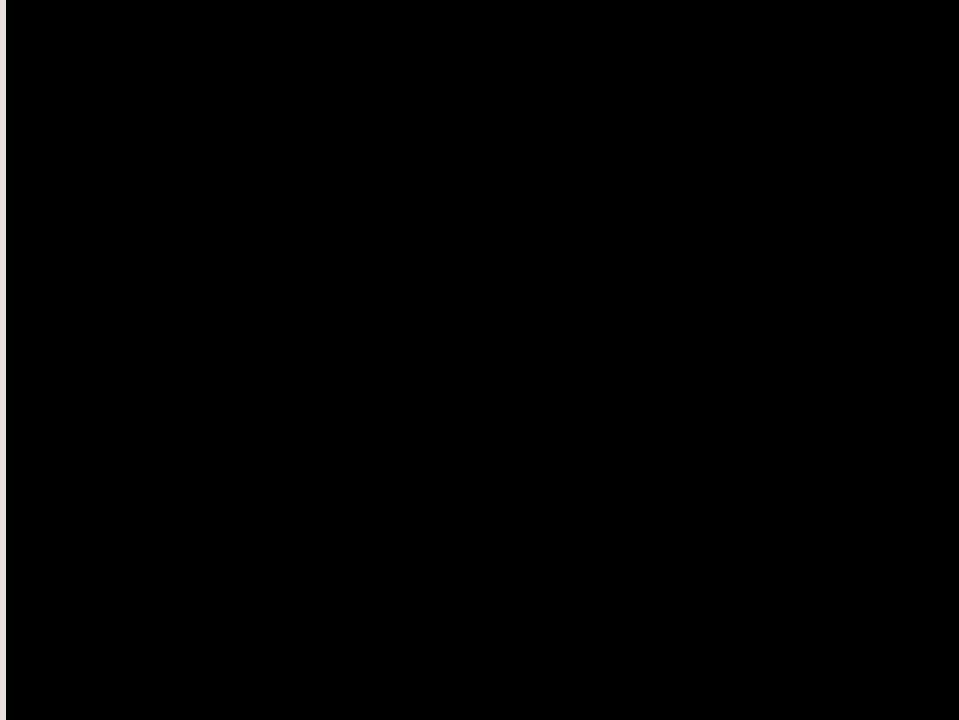
What issues are
important to you?



Issues We Care About

- Responding to COVID-19
- Gun Violence/Reform
- A Green New Deal
- Medicare for All
- Affordable Education
- Black Lives Matter
- Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Women's Reproductive Health
- #MeToo
- Criminal Justice Reform

#TheNew: Run AAPI



Part 3:

What is on the ballot?

Dissecting important props on CA
and WA 2020 election ballots.

Breakout Room 2:

Washington: Marissa Wong,
Allison Tanaka

California: John Mullins, Devon
Matsumoto, Tara Umemoto

Slides for CA and WA Propositions

➤ California

- <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kqfrir5zmoO1FSqDWv33rjdZAWFMgn20eS87LJPZJ60/edit?usp=sharing>

➤ Washington

- <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1WyHr9E9y3MtSMcLh277LLMAZne9bq2o4nOuvTzrrY3E/edit?usp=sharing>

Closing:

Moving Forward

What can we do now?

Where do we go
from here?

Resources and Actionable Items:

- Vote!
 - Last Day to Register to Vote in CALIFORNIA (online and mail-in): October 26th
 - CA: <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>
 - Last Day to Register to Vote in WASHINGTON (online and mail-in): October 19th
 - WA: <https://olvr.votewa.gov/>
- Be curious when researching what's on the ballot!
 - How does this initiative expand or contract systems of oppression and inequality?
 - Who will this initiative benefit the most?
 - How does this initiative address Buddhist values of compassion, equality, and interdependence?
- Slides and recording will be available on our website!

Resources Mentioned During Discussion

- #TheNew RUN AAPI Video
 - <https://vimeo.com/461690442>
- List of the top 10 contributors to committees that have accumulated over \$1 million and are primarily formed to support or oppose a state ballot measure or candidate
 - <http://fppc.ca.gov/transparency/top-contributors/nov-20-gen.html>
- *Yellow Brotherhood* by Tadashi Nakamura
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZclQhhacOc>

Keep in Touch with YBE

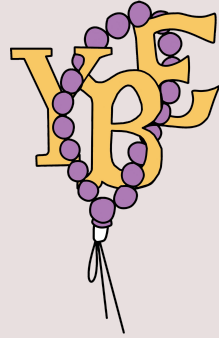
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Thank you for coming!
