

DePaul University Critical Ethnic Studies Statement to #StopAsianHate

March 19, 2021

DePaul University's Critical Ethnic Studies Program stands in grief and solidarity with Georgia's Asian American community in "condemning misogyny, systemic violence, and white supremacy against our communities in all of its forms." We encourage you to read [Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Atlanta's statement](#) for a community-centered response after six Asian American women in spas in the Atlanta, Georgia area were murdered, along with two other people, on March 16th, 2021.

We share the grief and anger that our Asian American communities feel at these brutal acts and stand with the families of the victims and their communities in this moment of mourning. We do so by fully acknowledging the tragedy in the loss of these 7 women and 1 man, who deserved safety in their workplaces and recognition of their human dignity, and recommit ourselves to addressing the conditions that brought about this horrific loss of life.

These people were sought out and targeted because of how they choose to make a living and where their families come from. This violent manifestation of anti-Asian and misogynistic hate is all too familiar to us and is a sharp reminder that the rhetoric and hate of the last four years were not an aberration, but an inflection point to which we have been driven by our nation's history. Just as we have failed to reckon with a history of anti-blackness in our government and society, so too have we failed to confront the corresponding anti-Asian biases in our nation's history.

We are outraged at how the invisibility of Asian American women has been revealed and compounded by the way in which the police authorities treated this killing spree. After the 21-year old white man involved in this massacre was taken into custody without violence, Cherokee County Sheriff's Captain Jay Baker stated of the self-confessed gunman that March 16th was "a really bad day for him," thus downplaying the racist and sexist violence in this loss of life, and giving implicit sanction to the systemic anti-Asian prejudice both in society and embedded in U.S. policing.

We understand that this killing spree was driven by a range of societal factors in America, both historical and contemporary, which have shaped the views and treatment of Asian American women. Historically, this has included popular misperceptions of Asian immigrants as being “perpetual foreigners” and second class citizens, historically subjected to immigration exclusion or outright incarceration. Such views of the “yellow peril” were exacerbated by three major wars in East and Southeast Asia that shaped views of Asian women and their bodies as being hypersexualized as the “spoils of war” or for “rest and recreation,” but also as expendable as belonging to the perceived “enemy.” The continued U.S. military base presence in Asia, combined with stereotypical depictions of Asian American women in popular media have ensured that such attitudes continue to persist.

These perceptions of Asian Americans continue to resonate today, and have been worsened by former President Trump’s statements blaming China for COVID-19 and stoking fears about the rise of China, which have encouraged hate crimes and everyday microaggressions against Asian Americans in the context of the global pandemic. Hate crimes against Asian Americans have continued to spike since the onset of the global pandemic, and have been seen in the brutal killing of 84-year-old Vicha Ratanapakdee in San Francisco, and other high profile attacks on Asian and Asian Americans around the country.

The disregarding of the sanctity of Asian American women’s lives parallels the urgent and long overdue recognition sought in the Black Lives Matter and #SayHerName Movements, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) Movement, as well as in the movement to support the human rights of immigrants and their families at the southern border. In this regard, the outrage felt by the Asian American and larger people of color communities at this killing spree is part of a long overdue societal reckoning with the legacy of white supremacy, misogyny, and racism in this country as it impacts the lives of everyday civilians, who simply seek to live in peace, free from harm.

We call for an end to racist hatred and these ongoing attacks on Asian Americans. We call for an end to violence against women. We call for increased ethnic studies courses and curriculum to be taught nationally as a way to recognize the historical roots of this violence. We recognize that this gendered and racialized violence is both specific to Asian Americans and also at the same time a part of the wider and longer story of unbridled violence that constitutes whiteness in America. As Critical Ethnic Studies scholars we call on everyone – and on ourselves – to learn more about the histories and present conditions of Asian American lives here in the U.S. and across Asia and the Pacific, to listen to the voices of leaders, activists, and artists in Asian American communities, and to take action to build justice.

Here are some ways to do that:

REPORT

StopAAPIHate.com

StandAgainstHatred.org

SIGN ON

Stand in solidarity with Atlanta's Asian Americans Advancing Justice

"Community-Centered Response to Violence Against Asian American Communities"

bit.ly/aaajcommunitystatement

DONATE

to support the victims and their families bit.ly/DonateToGeorgiaAAPICommunity

FOLLOW:

@StopAAPIHate

@AAAjalc

@advancing_justice_atl

MENTAL HEALTH:

@asianmentalhealthcollective

EDUCATE

[*Me and White Supremacy*](#) by Layla F. Saad

MORE RESOURCES:

Anti-AsianViolenceResources.carrd.co

SHARE RESOURCES

bit.ly/georgiaAAPIcommunitycare

In Solidarity,

DePaul Critical Ethnic Studies Students

Jonathan Dudley, CES MA Student

Sahel Ebrahimi, CES MA Student

Katy Komarchuk, CES MA Student

Dorothy McCullough, CES MA Student

Nicole Murayama Nir, CES MA Student

Rebekah Otto, CES MA Student

Joseline Perez, CES MA Student

Justin Phu, CES MA Student

Critical Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee and Affiliated Faculty

Laura Kina, Vincent de Paul Professor The Art School and Director Critical Ethnic Studies

Luisela Alvaray, Associate Professor, College of Communication

Beth S. Catlett, Associate Professor, Women's & Gender Studies

Kaveh Ehsani, Assistant Professor of International Studies

Laila Farah, Associate Professor Women's & Gender Studies

Maria J. Ferrera, Associate Professor, Department of Social Work & Co-Director, Center for Community Health Equity

Dustin Goltz, Vincent de Paul Professor Communication and Performance Studies

Horace Hall, Vincent de Paul Associate Professor The College of Education, Critical Ethnic Studies, & The African and Black Diaspora Department

Valerie C. Johnson, Associate Professor, Political Science

Bill Johnson González, Associate Professor, English; Director, Center for Latino Research

Amor Kohli, Associate Professor and Chair, African and Black Diaspora Studies

Martha Martinez-Firestone, Associate Professor Sociology and Director of Undergraduate Program (Sociology)

Julie Moody-Freeman, Director, Center for Black Diaspora and Associate Professor, African and Black Diaspora Studies

Anne Mitchell, Lecturer Women's & Gender Studies, African & Black Diaspora, Critical Ethnic Studies

Jesse Mumm, Professional Lecturer Latin American and Latino Studies, Community Service Studies

Heidi J Nast, Professor, International Studies

Francesca T.Royster, Professor, English

Ann Russo, Women's and Gender Studies, Vincent de Paul Professor, Women's Center

Shailja Sharma, Professor, International Studies

Carolina Sternberg, Associate Professor and Chair Latin American and Latino Studies

Lourdes Torres, Vincent de Paul Professor Latin American and Latino Studies and Critical Ethnic Studies

Ryan Yokota, Adjunct Faculty Critical Ethnic Studies and History

Go.depaul.edu/ces

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#): @CESdePaul