Voter Representation and the Rise of Civic Engagement in Asian-American Communities Within the Context of Festering Racial Tensions
Why Asian-American constituents are generalized as apolitical
Statistics

- ~65% are citizens
- ~54% are registered to vote (5.9 million)
- ~43% are likely to vote
- Voter turnout has been historical low (%)
- 47% turn out during the 2016 Election
- Nonparticipants are 95% foreign born
The Majority of Asian-Americans are foreign born
- ~70% of Asian-Americans are foreign born
- Large influx of Asian-Americans began after the 1965 reforms to the Immigration and Naturalization Act.
- Immigrants coming from countries where civic duties were not commonplace
- English as a second or third or forth language
- More focused on survival
- Lack of awareness and understanding of American politics
Lack of civic outreach from DNC and GOP

- Language barriers on campaign ads
- Lack of volunteer recruitment efforts because
  - Asian-Americans are relative small, almost 5% of all registered voters
  - As an immigrant dominant population, there are a number of noncitizens and recent immigrants who cannot vote
- Nonpartisan and weak voting record
Difficulty in unified mobilization

- Asian-Americans include a variety of ethnicities that are culturally different.
- Group solidarity is more difficult to achieve because differing cultural values and language barriers.
- Finding issues that affect all of the ethnicities the same way and to have them support one platform is difficult.
- Asian-Americans typically identify themselves first as their ethnic-national origin.
### Table 5.5 Ethnic and Self-Identified Categories by Political Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Likely Voter</th>
<th>Political Contributor</th>
<th>Contact Government Officials</th>
<th>Protester</th>
<th>Community Activist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic American</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic group</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Authors’ compilation of data from the 2008 National Asian American Survey (Ramakrishnan et al. 2011).

*Note:* Rates are in percentages.
Political Participation tends to increase with each generation

- Newer generations are more likely to be politically involved
  - Higher citizenship rates
  - Stronger party identification
  - Greater convergence with other Asian ethnicities
    - From societal experiences felt by all Asian-Americans
- By 2040, there will be 12.2 million Asian-American registered voters
- Campaigns are beginning to incorporate diverse campaign tactics
Stop the overcrowding!
Stop taking over our sports fields!
Stop the McMansions!
Stop the multiple families living in the same house!
Stop wasting school holidays!
Stop the outsiders!
Let’s take back our Edison & our Schools
MAKE EDISON GREAT AGAIN

Stop Jerry Shi & Falguni Patel From taking over our School Board

The Chinese and Indians are taking over our town! Chinese school! Indian school! Cricket fields! Enough is Enough!!
Do you think that the recent racial tensions will positively or negatively impact the progress in civic engagement by the Asian-American community?
How can the Asian-American community combat the racism?
What should the Asian-Americans do to keep the momentum of political fervor?
How could they take it even further?
Much of the focus in increasing voter participation in the Asian-American community revolves around waiting for newer generations. Do you feel that this approach is discriminatory to the immigrants and earlier generations that are politically uninvolved? Should the community invest into increasing civic engagement with the older generation?