

Introduction

- Almost all Asian Americans have encountered racial microaggressions and/or racism directed at other Asian Americans (Alvarez et al., 2006)
- Dearth of literature on Asian Americans' reactions to covert or ambiguous racism and how that might be related to their levels of internalized racism (IR)
- May be difficult for Asian Americans to respond to covert/ambiguous racism since it comes at risk of being considered oversensitive (Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005)
- Higher levels of racial colorblindness have been found to be indirectly associated with decreased confidence in and likelihood of addressing prejudice (Yi et al., 2020)
- **Research question:** Do Asian Americans’ levels of internalized racism differ based on their reaction to covert anti-Asian American racism?
- **Hypothesis:** Participants (Ps) who did not think a covertly racist comment was a big deal and/or were otherwise unbothered by it have higher levels of internalized racism than Ps who did think the covert racism was a big deal and/or were otherwise bothered by the situation.

Method

- **Participants:** 236 Asian Americans aged 18–67 ($M = 30.44$, $SD = 8.17$) (male: 119, female: 115, unstated: 2)
- **Materials:**
 - AROS_M: computed by taking mean of each P's scores on Appropriated Racial Oppression Scale (AROS; Campón & Carter, 2015)
 - NOBIGDEAL variable:
 - NOBIGDEAL code: P thought that overall, covert racist comment was not a big deal or was unbothered by it
 - NOTNOBIGDEAL code: P thought that overall, comment was a big deal or was bothered by it
- **Procedure:**
 - Secondary data analysis from a study that recruited Asian Americans to complete a 30–45-minute online survey
 - Ps instructed to read through, imagine themselves in, and react to “Not Asian” vignette:
 - “You are walking down the street with a White friend. An Asian American person hands you a flier with an invitation to attend a gathering to celebrate ‘Asian American heritage month.’ After, your friend says, ‘That’s weird, I don’t really see you as Asian.’”
 - Ps answered follow-up questions to reflect on reactions to vignette
- **Analysis Plan:**
 - Conduct independent samples t-test to compare Appropriated Racial Oppression (AROS_M: i.e., mean of all of AROS item scores for each participant), in NOBIGDEAL and NOTNOBIGDEAL conditions
 - The code NOBIGDEAL indicates P responses to vignette indicating they did not perceive instance of covert anti-Asian American racism to be a big enough deal to be bothered by it
 - Similarly, NOTNOBIGDEAL indicates P responses not coded NOBIGDEAL (i.e., believed comment was a big enough deal that they were bothered by it)

Appropriated Racial Oppression & Covert Anti-Asian American Racism

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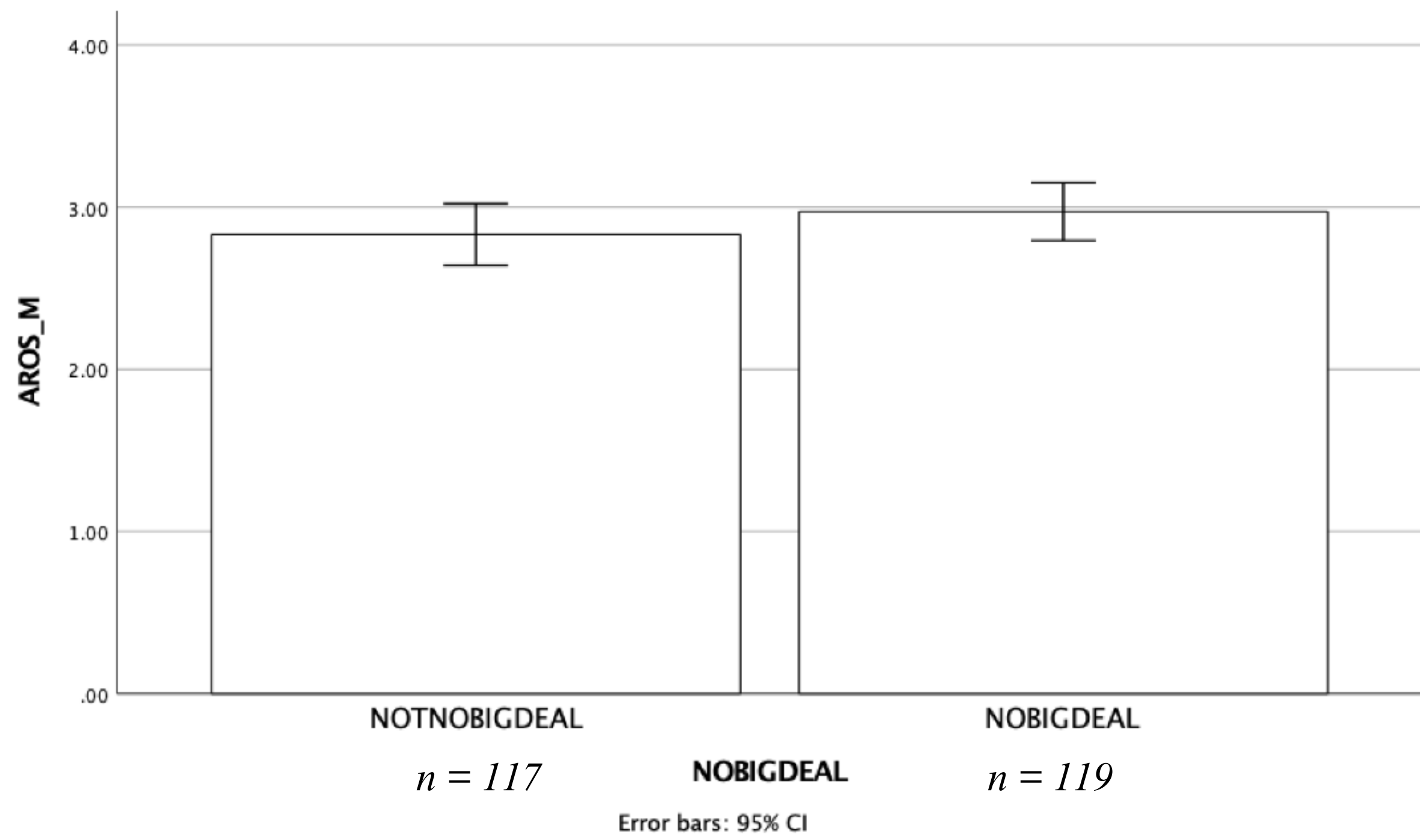
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Results

Primary Analysis

Figure 1

Bar chart of AROS_M (mean Appropriated Racial Oppression score) for participants who thought an instance of covert racism was a big deal vs. not a big deal



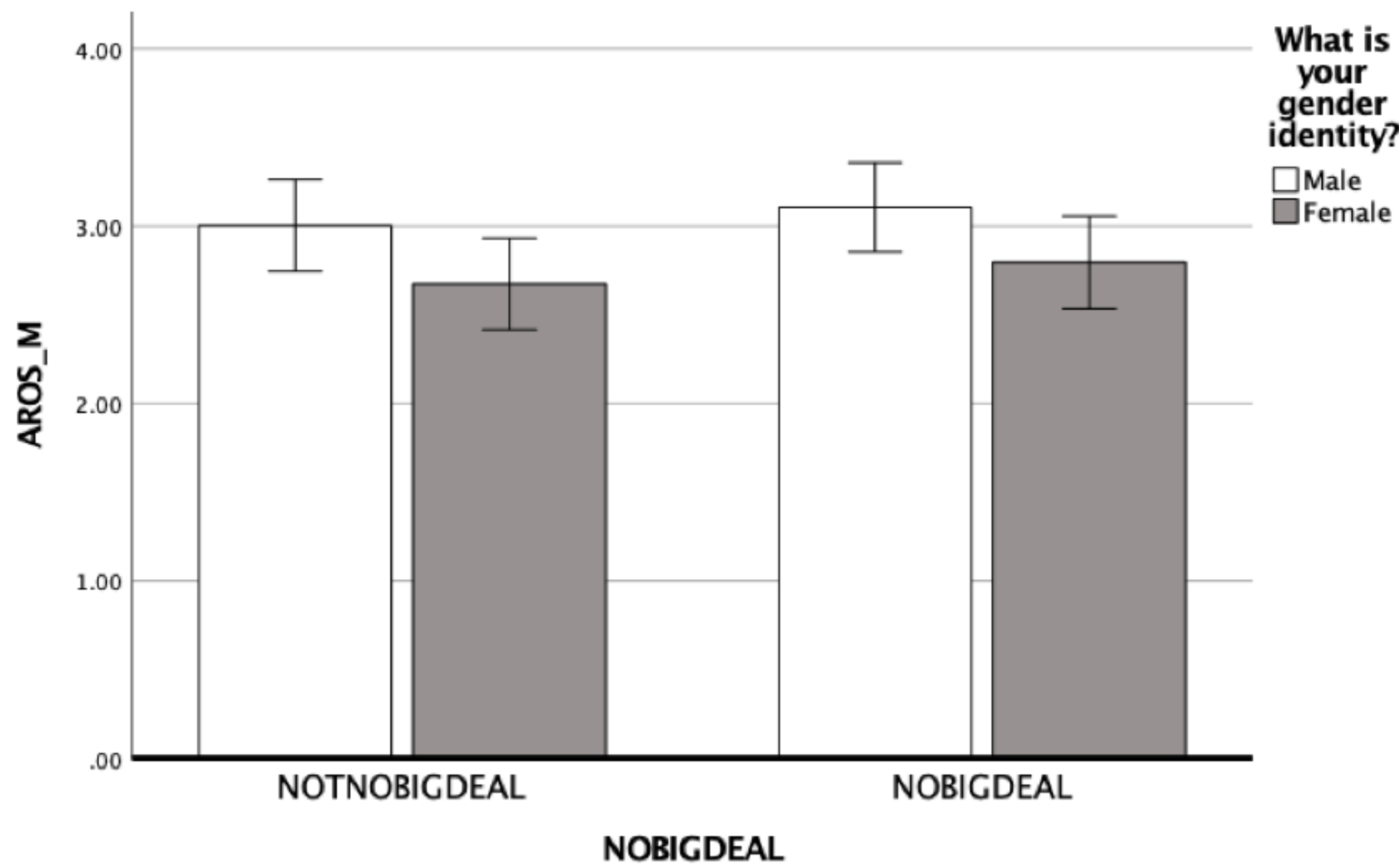
The independent sample t-test results showed no significant difference in AROS_M scores between the NOBIGDEAL ($M = 2.97$, $SD = .98$) and NOTNOBIGDEAL ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.04$) conditions; $t(234) = -1.06$, $p = .144$.

Exploratory Analysis

Do Asian Americans’ AROS_M scores differ based on their reaction to covert anti-Asian American racism (NOBIGDEAL, NOTNOBIGDEAL) and gender (female, male)?

Figure 2

Bar chart of mean AROS_M by gender within NOBIGDEAL



The two-way ANOVA results showed that there was no significant interaction between gender and the NOBIGDEAL variable ($p = .942$). There was a significant main effect of Gender on AROS_M ($F(1, 230) = 6.04$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p^2 = .026$).

References

Alvarez, A. N., Juang, L., & Liang, C. T. H. (2006). Asian Americans and racism: When bad things happen to "model minorities." *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 12(3), 477–492. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.12.3.477>

Bryant-Davis, T., & Ocampo, C. (2005). The Trauma of Racism: Implications for Counseling, Research, and Education. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 33(4), 574–578. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000005276581>

Campón, R. R., & Carter, R. T. (2015). The Appropriated Racial Oppression Scale: Development and preliminary validation. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 21(4), 497–506. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000037>

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Discussion

- Our initial findings were not significant — Ps who were not bothered by comment did not have significantly different level of Appropriated Racial Oppression (ARO) than Ps who did not perceive comment to be a big deal (or otherwise seemed unbothered by it).
 - Might have been difficult for some Ps to identify covert racist comment due to its subtle nature
 - Some Ps have learned to not react to such instances of racism, perhaps thought that taking comment too seriously would be overreacting
- Exploratory analysis results suggest: among Asian Americans, men have higher ARO levels than women
- **Limitations:**
 - NOBIGDEAL was a binary variable — grouping 236 responses into just two groups perhaps meant loss of nuance
 - Researcher bias: risk of misinterpreting P responses — we might not be able to accurately discern tone of or intentions behind P's response without hearing their voice or observing nonverbal cues (e.g., sarcasm might be difficult to detect in written responses)
- **Future research:**
 - e.g., Do Asian Americans’ levels of ARO differ based on their reaction to overt anti-Asian American racism?
 - e.g., Do Asian Americans' scores on each AROS subscale (Emotional Response, American Standards of Beauty, Devaluation of Own Group, and Patterns of Thinking) differ by gender?
- **Research may contribute to:**
 - Learning more about how Asian Americans' mental health and identity might be affected by racism, including IR (e.g., ARO, Model Minority Myth, Perpetual Foreigner Stereotype)
 - Better understanding of trauma of racist experiences — field must adapt to incorporate this new information to improve clinical diagnosis and treatment for Asian Americans
 - Learning more about how Asian Americans perceive and respond to racism, and different ways in which IR can manifest in one's daily life
 - Encouraging more Asian American history and material created by Asian Americans to be incorporated into education curriculum