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## **A Hidden Minority: Voicing Asian Americans in US History TEKS**

*Yenna Park and Lakia M. Scott*

**Abstract:** This study delves into the growing concern of Anti-Asian hate crimes, a pressing issue illuminated by the 9,000 reported incidents between March 2020 and June 2021, as documented by Stop AAPI Hate, and a 77% surge in similar hate crimes reported by the FBI in 2019-2020. This phenomenon, attributed to scapegoating Asian Americans for the pandemic's origins in China, underscores the need for a deeper understanding and acceptance of Asian Americans within American society. Notably, history and social studies educators play a pivotal role in shaping these perceptions. This research probes the responsibilities of Texas history and social studies educators in shaping students' global awareness and intercultural relationships. By examining their compliance with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum, which dictates the subjects taught in Texas public schools, this study aims to unravel the underpinnings of the perception of Asian Americans. Employing the AsianCrit framework, this study scrutinizes the representation of Asian Americans within the 2018 edition of the United States History Studies Since 1877 curriculum. Through this lens, the research not only advocates for increased Asian American inclusion in social studies curricula but also analyzes the implications of such representation on the broader Asian American educational experience. Ultimately, this study strives to shed light on the complex intersection of education, representation, and social dynamics within American society.

According to Stop AAPI Hate, there were about 9,000 reported incidents of Anti-Asian crimes from March 2020 to June 2021, and the FBI reported a 77% increase in similar hate crimes from 2019-2020 (The Associated Press, 2021; Community Relations Service, 2022). Reasons for

these attacks are widely assumed to be based on scapegoating Asian Americans as the proponent for the pandemic due to its genesis in China. Such displacement of blame emphasizes how poorly people have been educated in understanding and welcoming Asian Americans as part of

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American society. While this was a major concern for Asian Americans, it also sheds light on a social issue that has been swept underneath in America: where do Asian Americans stand in American society?

To understand how this perception of Asian Americans developed, one can look to history and social studies teachers, for they have the “pedagogical responsibility” to prepare students for global education and relationships with others (Noboa, 2012, p. 48). In this study, I will focus on the expectations Texas history and social studies educators must abide by to prepare students of the upcoming generation. For these educators, they must follow the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the curriculum that outlines what should be taught at each grade and subject in Texas public schools.

This study will apply AsianCrit to analyze the extent and implications of Asian Americans representation in the 2018 version of the United States History Studies Since 1877. Furthermore, the study will encourage curricular opportunities for Asian American inclusion in social studies classrooms. It will also analyze the representation of Asians and how this influences the Asian American experience in educational discourse.

## **Literature Review**

### ***A Lack of Representation of Curriculum***

Curriculum is an expected outline designed for what students should know before transitioning into the next grade. However, school curriculum, as shared by Apple (1996), “is never simply a neutral

assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation” but is instead a result of “a selective tradition, someone’s selection, and some group’s vision of legitimate knowledge” (p. 222). Apple’s description of curriculum highlights that the inclusion, exclusion, and representation of people of color are carefully selected to emphasize whose voice is heard or silenced. It sends a message to the silenced group that they are not an integral part of American society. For Texas, the United States history curricula center around the White, Christian, middle/upper-class while neglecting the full participation of other marginalized groups in the national culture (Brown & Au, 2014; Kymlicka, 1995; Yosso, 2002;). As a result, the curriculum speaks to students that the White majority is what shapes American history while disregarding the complexities and development of other groups’ contributions to America.

In addition, multiple studies have addressed the lack of accurate representation for Latin Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, and women (Alridge, 2016; An, 2016; Brown & Brown, 2010; Noboa, 2012). Textbooks focus on “noncontroversial histories and one-dimensional heroic figures” that display racist violence as “acts detached from larger structural and institutional issues” (An, 2020, p. 144). Filtering and selectively choosing what is expected in curriculum leads to a disconnect on how current social issues today are caused by systemic, racial issues that stemmed from long ago. The “lack of scope and breadth” of curriculum suggests that there is a “monopoly in relation to the canon of

knowledge” within the curricula (Arday et al., 2021, p. 299).

### ***Current Representation of Asian Americans***

When analyzing current trends for representation of Asian Americans, they too are underrepresented. Many have analyzed and concluded that Asian Americans are voiced only two times in curriculum across America: the enactment of Chinese exclusion in 1882 and the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II (Goodwin, 2010; Noboa, 2012; Rodriguez, 2018). Rodriguez (2018) also summarized how representation of Asian Americans was “the designation of Asians as ‘aliens ineligible to citizenship’” because of the limitations imposed on Asian American such as the Naturalization Act of 1870 (p. 529). In fact, Asian Americans are the only group where legislation was officially designed to block their entry into the United States through denial of naturalization (Rodriguez, 2019).

In an empirical study, An analyzed how frequently Asian American representation occurred across fifty states’ standards for K-12 and found that mainly Chinese exclusion and Japanese American internment are required for most states (An, 2022). Only 32 states mention Asian Americans specifically, and she calculated the standards showing Asian Americans as “oppressed people” (55%) or ‘new arrivals’ (26%) who have made little contribution to the country as ‘contributors’ (15%); only 4% of the standards show Asian Americans as ‘change agents’ through civil rights

activism” (An, 2022, p. 178). She argues that only having two events ignores the diversity among Asian Americans and perpetuates the model minority stereotype. Her study puts into perspective how education in America “mistreats” Asian Americans in the curriculum.

Curriculum ignores the struggles Asian Americans went through not only from national but also transnational contexts, where they were impacted by imperialism, the emergence of global economies, international war, and migration (An, 2016). By ignoring the transnational contexts, students do not get a deeper understanding of why Asian Americans decided to migrate to America and are ignorant of the struggles that they faced. While Texas is one of 32 states to include Asian Americans in curriculum, it is still important to consider the extent of how the TEKS shape the Asian American identity.

### ***Model Minority Myth***

In addition to painting Asian Americans as passive in history, it also perpetuates the model minority myth. The model minority was created in the 1960s as a socially constructed stereotype that “reify Asians as ‘super’ minorities” that seemingly needed no government assistance or support to “leap to the top of the class literally and figuratively” (Goodwin, 2010; Kim, 1999). It has been used to insinuate rivalries amongst other people of color, where others are expected to be “more like” Asians and become successful.

In addition, the model minority myth undermines the Asian American experience by erasing their history of oppression and resistance, denies

contemporary racism against them, and dismisses the diversity of the Asian American community (An, 2016). It disregards the reality that Asian Americans are challenged by academic, psychological, and social barriers including “a lack of second language support, the paucity of culturally relevant curriculum, the increase of anti-Asian hate crimes, and limited counseling services” (Goodwin, 2010; Gupta et al., 2011). Rather than look for support, they feel that they should not reach out for help and should “figure it out” on their own as expected of them (Abe-Kim et al., 2007).

Overall, the model minority myth has been pitted against Asians while pitting them against other people of color by “[negating] charges of racial injustice, [blaming] communities of color for their struggle, and [promoting] the myth of colorblindness and meritocracy, which ultimately serves the interests of Whites” (Lee, 2004). Its usage is a form of racism against Asian Americans, where they are expected to work within the status quo of a society that does not support them equitably while being ostracized as foreigners.

As Banks (1990) stated, “when [students] are forced to experience an education sponsored by the state that does not reflect their cultures and experiences, the message is sent that they are not an integral part of the state and national culture” (p.211). Banks emphasizes the point that a culture that is not supported in curriculum will translate to a negative message that the culture is not important and therefore are foreign to the country they live in.

## **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to analyze and evaluate questions regarding Asian American and Asian representation in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for §113.41. Using the 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 (2018) United States History Studies Since 1877, three questions will be addressed for this study:

- To what extent, if any, are Asian Americans represented in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 United States History Studies Since 1877?
- Where are opportunities for Asian American inclusion?
- Overall, how are Asians presented in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 United States History Studies Since 1877?

### ***Asian Critical Race Theory (AsianCrit)***

The theoretical framing of this study comes from AsianCrit, which is a component from Critical Race Theory, also known as CRT. The overall goal of CRT is to “develop a pedagogy, curriculum, and research agenda that accounts for the role of race and racism” while working to eliminate “all forms of subordination in education”, specifically racism (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 3). For this study, I utilize AsianCrit to analyze themes of systemic racism that are implemented through curriculum in Texas education.

AsianCrit originated after Robert S. Chang urged for representation of Asian Americans, where Chang argues that Asian Americans uniquely experienced racism through nativism and have different

experiences from the White/Black paradigm (Chang, 1993). Later, Museus and Iftikar created a framework of seven tenets to understand how White supremacy shapes the experiences of Asian Americans (Iftikar & Museus, 2018). In this study, I will focus on four of the tenets: (re)constructive history; transnational contexts; Asianization; and story, theory, and praxis. Story, theory, and praxis will later be explained when analyzing opportunities for inclusion in the TEKS.

### ***(Re)constructive History***

This tenet outlines how Asian Americans are invisible and voiceless in US history. Its goal is to “create a collective Asian American historical narrative and reanalyze existing histories” to build a cohesive and inclusive narrative (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 940).

### ***Transnational Contexts***

This tenet emphasizes recognizing Asian Americans and White supremacy within contexts, specifically in global economic, political, and social processes (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 940). For example, Asian Americans’ lives were shaped by imperialism, international war, migration, and the emergence of global economies (Takaki, 2012).

### ***Asianization***

The third tenet refers to the concept that White Supremacy and “pervasive nativistic racism” result in Asian Americans being racialized as a monolithic group devoid of diversity, “perpetual foreigners, threatening yellow perils, model and

deviant minorities, and sexually deviant emasculated men and hypersexualized women” (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 940). Because of these inappropriate perspectives, it dehumanizes and excludes Asian Americans while also influencing political and legal actions against Asians.

### **Method of Study**

The inquiry method is a qualitative and quantitative case study on archival data 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 (2018) United States History Studies Since 1877. It addresses the frequency and influence of direct and implicit references of Asian American references This specific subchapter and course were chosen because it incorporated the most recent history that involved Asian Americans, and all students are required to take this course starting in 10th grade for credit to graduate.

### ***Procedures***

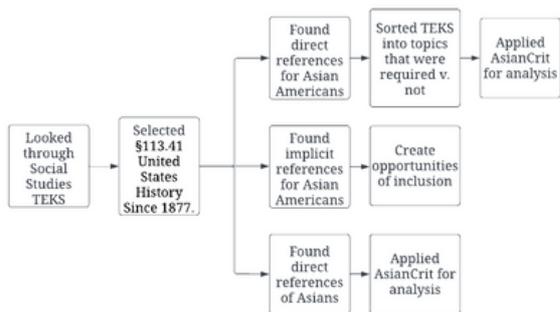
After picking the specific subchapter and course, I started by calculating the total number of TEKS to use as a reference point for comparison. To calculate the total number of TEKS in §113.41, I began from subsection (c) “Knowledge and skills” from (1) History to (25) Culture. In total, there are 108 TEKS that fall under subsection (c) in §113.41. “Science, technology, and society” or “Social studies skills” were not included since they were not related to history standards but rather skills to learn.

Next, I determined the frequency of direct and implicit references. Direct references include mentioning other countries from

Asia or events happening within Asia, such as the Vietnam War. Implicit references meant that events or people were not explicitly stated, but it could be possible due to the generality of certain topics required. Examples include requiring students to know examples of reform leaders, geography and migration, affirmative action, and civil rights movements.

After I found all direct and implicit references, I organized the data into three tables. Table 1 focuses on the TEKS that reference Asian Americans specifically. Table 2 focuses on the opportunities for inclusion, where all implicit references to Asian Americans are possible. Table 3 focuses on all other direct references to Asians in the TEKS. Figure 1 presents a visual of the procedures taken for this case study.

**Figure 1.**  
*Procedures*



**Findings and Discussion**

Findings of the study are presented as a response to each research question. These findings are supported by previous literature alongside the quantitative and qualitative data of this study. The discussion aims to cultivate conversation

and awareness of the issues regarding representation and what further steps should be initiated to foster change in teaching United States history for Texas students.

***Asian American Representation is Sparse***

Research question one asked to what extent, if any, are Asian Americans represented in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41. In total, out of the 108 TEKS, only two specifically reference the Asian American experience (see Table 1).

**Table 1.**  
*Direct References to Asian Americans in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 (2018)*

Direct Reference to Asian Americans in TEKS	Description/Analysis
(7) History. The student understands the domestic and international impact of U.S. participation in World War II. The student is expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C: analyze major issues of World War II, including the Holocaust, the internment of Japanese Americans as a result of Executive Order 9066, and the development of atomic weapons</li> </ul>	Asian Americans being controlled.
(15) Economics. The student understands domestic and foreign issues related to U.S. economic growth from the 1870s to 1920. The student is expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>C: explain how foreign policies affected economic issues such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the Open Door Policy, Dollar Diplomacy, and immigration quotas;</li> </ul>	Asian Americans being controlled.

Upon further analysis, only one event, the Japanese internment during WWII, is required. In §113.41 7.C, teachers need students to analyze major issues of WWII “including” the Japanese internment but had given suggestions on foreign policies affecting economic issues “such as” the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 in §113.41 15.C. This implies that teachers do not have to teach that specific event to students.

Furthermore, their mention in the TEKS is depicted in a negative light, where Asian Americans were restricted in their capacity and rights as an American. This aligns with previous research done on Asian

American representation in curriculum, where Asian Americans are rarely visible in state standards (An, 2016; Noboa, 2012; Rodríguez, 2019). Such limitations in actual representation of an Asian American experience ignore multiple aspects of proper representation, as the Asian American population as a whole is composed of more than 50 ethnic groups uniquely defined by its migration history, social class, language, and religion (Lee, 2004).

Utilizing the three chosen tenets of AsianCrit, I decided to label these two TEKS as Asian Americans “being controlled”. (Re)constructive history was placed at the forefront throughout this study because of its goal to create an inclusive narrative for education. However, the results show that there is an exclusive and inaccurate representation of Asian Americans in the curriculum already as seen in the lack of how frequent Asian Americans are specifically mentioned. Asian American histories conflict with the traditional narrative of American progress; however, it is hidden in curriculum to paint Asian Americans as successful stories contributing to the glorified idea of America as the land of opportunity. In addition, the tenet of (re)constructive history applies because of how only two major ethnic groups happen to define the entire diverse population and its struggles (Iftikar & Museus, 2018). Transnational contexts was used to further corroborate this label because it focuses on detailing Asian Americans and White supremacy within context. For example, the context of war does not mean that the Japanese Americans were passive during internment. Instead, they challenged the Supreme

Court through civic action, yet this passionate narrative is not included within the curriculum. Finally, Asianization was applied to showing Asian Americans as a monolithic group, and this is evident by the lack of diversity when referencing Asian Americans. Specifically, East Asians are referenced, yet there are other groups that fall under the umbrella of Asian American.

While it is not possible to include all Asian American groups, it is necessary to emphasize how Asian Americans encompass a wide diverse group of people rather than recounting stories of only specific ethnic groups. Furthermore, Asianization tackles the notion that Asian Americans are “perpetual foreigners” and not included in American society. This tenet carries the common pervasive image that Asian Americans are portrayed as a quiet and passive group that does little to contribute to history and instead pushed around with a “foreign” label and identity.

### ***Opportunities for Asian American Inclusion***

Research question two asked where opportunities for Asian American inclusion were. According to my results, there are twenty-five opportunities for teachers to include Asian Americans that will bolster their image opposite of the passive, restrictive narrative the TEKS impose (see Table 2). Specific individuals, organized groups, and events can highlight the Asian American experience. These opportunities were commonly outlined as broad categories for teachers to teach flexibly.

**Table 2.**

*Implicit References to Asian Americans in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 (2018)*

Implicit References to Asian Americans	Opportunities for Inclusion
<p>(3) History. The student understands the political, economic, and social changes in the United States from 1877 to 1898. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) analyze political issues such as Indian policies, the growth of political machines, and civil service reform;</li> <li>(B) analyze economic issues such as industrialization, the growth of railroads, the growth of labor unions, farm issues, the cattle industry boom, the growth of entrepreneurship, and the pros and cons of big business; and</li> <li>(C) analyze social issues affecting women, minorities, children, immigrants, and urbanization.</li> </ul> <p>(6) History. The student understands significant events, social issues, and individuals of the 1920s. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) analyze causes and effects of events and social issues such as immigration, Social Darwinism, the Scopes Trial, eugenics, race relations, nativism, the Red Scare, Prohibition, and the changing role of women; and</li> <li>(B) analyze the impact of significant individuals such as Henry Ford, Marcus Garvey, and Charles A. Lindbergh.</li> </ul> <p>(7) History. The student understands the domestic and international impact of U.S. participation in World War II. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(F) explain issues affecting the home front, including volunteerism, the purchase of war bonds, and Victory Gardens and opportunities and obstacles for women and ethnic minorities;</li> </ul> <p>(9) History. The student understands the impact of the American civil rights movement. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) trace the historical development of the civil rights movement from the late 1800s through the 21st century, including the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 19th amendments;</li> <li>(D) identify the roles of significant leaders who supported various rights movements, including Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Rosa Parks, and Betty Friedan.</li> <li>(G) describe presidential actions and congressional votes to address minority rights in the United States, including desegregation of the armed forces, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.</li> <li>(I) evaluate changes in the United States that have resulted from the civil rights movement, including increased participation of minorities in the political process;</li> </ul> <p>(11) History. The student understands the emerging political, economic, and social issues of the United States from the 1990s into the 21st century. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(B) identify significant social and political issues such as health care, immigration, and education from different viewpoints across the political spectrum;</li> </ul> <p>(13) Geography. The student understands the causes and effects of migration and immigration on American society. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) analyze the causes and effects of changing demographic patterns resulting from migration within the United States, including western expansion, rural to urban, the Great Migration, and the Rust Belt to the Sun Belt; and</li> <li>(B) analyze the causes and effects of changing demographic patterns resulting from immigration to the United States.</li> </ul>	<p>3A: Students can learn about political issues that affect Asian Americans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tape v. Hurley (1885)</li> </ul> <p>3B: Students can analyze economic issues (specifically the growth of railroads) and how this affected Asian Americans.</p> <p>3C: Students are expected to analyze social issues affecting minorities and immigrants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for inclusion             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rock Springs massacre                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28 Chinese miners dead from White immigrant miners due to racial prejudice</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>6A: Students can learn about events and social issues that affected Asian Americans in the 1920s.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immigration Act of 1924 (Oriental Exclusion Act)</li> <li>Stories of South Asian American communities like Bengali Muslims migration to New Orleans</li> <li>United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind (1923)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Asians were not considered naturalized citizens</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>6B: Students can analyze the impact of significant Asian American individuals if recorded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lum v. Rice where states possess the right to define a Chinese student as non-White for the purpose of segregating them in</li> </ul> <p>Students can explain opportunities and obstacles for Asian Americans specifically. Examples include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filipino resistance movement to fight Japanese invaders</li> <li>100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team</li> </ul> <p>Students also can recognize that minorities of all ethnic groups were impacted by these changes.</p> <p>9A: Students can trace the historical development of the civil rights movement for Asian Americans from the late 1800s.</p> <p>9D: Students can identify roles of significant Asian American leaders that supported various rights movements for American society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philip Vera Cruz: Filipino leader who advocated for social justice and unity in labor movements</li> </ul> <p>9G: Students can describe presidential actions and congressional votes to address minority rights for Asian Americans in the United States.</p> <p>9I: Students can evaluate changes from civil rights movements for Asian Americans, such as their participation in the political process.</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to explore significant issues that could impact Asian Americans from the 1990s into the 21st century.</p> <p>13A/B: Students can understand how Asian Americans' migration to the United States affected American society.</p>

Implicit References to Asian Americans	Opportunities for Inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) describe how the economic impact of the Transcontinental Railroad and the Homestead Act contributed to the close of the frontier in the late 19th century;</li> </ul> <p>(17) Economics. The student understands the economic effects of government policies from World War II through the present. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) describe the economic effects of World War II on the home front such as mobilization, the end of the Great Depression, rationing, and increased opportunity for women and minority employment.</li> <li>(D) identify the actions and outcomes of government policies intended to create economic opportunities for citizens such as the Great Society, affirmative action, and Title IX;</li> </ul> <p>(20) Government. The student understands the impact of constitutional issues on American society. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) analyze the effects of landmark U.S. Supreme Court decisions, including Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education, Hernandez v. Texas, Tinker v. Des Moines, and Wisconsin v. Yoder; and</li> </ul> <p>(22) Citizenship. The student understands the promises of the Declaration of Independence and the protections of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) identify and analyze methods of expanding the right to participate in the democratic process, including lobbying, non-violent protesting, litigation, and amendments to the U.S. Constitution;</li> <li>(B) evaluate various means of achieving equality of political rights, including the 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments and congressional acts such as the American Indian Citizenship Act of 1924;</li> <li>(C) explain how participation in the democratic process reflects our national identity, patriotism, and civic responsibility;</li> </ul> <p>(23) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of effective leadership in a constitutional republic. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) evaluate the contributions of significant political and social leaders in the United States such as Andrew Carnegie, Thurgood Marshall, Billy Graham, Sandra Day O'Connor, and Hillary Clinton;</li> </ul> <p>(24) Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) describe how the characteristics of and issues in U.S. history have been reflected in various genres of art, music, film, and literature;</li> </ul> <p>(25) Culture. The student understands how people from various groups contribute to our national identity. The student is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) explain actions taken by people to expand economic opportunities and political rights for racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups in American society;</li> <li>(C) explain how the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, gender, and religious groups shape American culture; and</li> <li>(D) identify the contributions of women such as Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Sonia Sotomayor to American society.</li> </ul>	<p>17A: Students can take the time to explore "increased opportunity for women and minority employment" for Asian Americans.</p> <p>17D: Students can understand the reasoning behind affirmative action and Title IX.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Title IX co-writer is an Asian American named Patsy Mink.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Title IX was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act in 2002.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Students have an opportunity to analyze court cases that impacted Asian Americans.</p> <p>22A: Students have the opportunity to evaluate how Asian Americans participate in democratic processes, specifically non-violent protesting.</p> <p>22B: Students can evaluate various means of achieving equality of political rights for Asian Americans through court cases.</p> <p>22C: Students can explain how anyone in the United States participating in the democratic process reflects their national identity, which combats the idea that Asian Americans are seen as "foreign" or "others" from American society.</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to understand the contributions of significant political and social Asian American leaders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patsy Mink</li> </ul> <p>Students have the opportunity to explore works created by Asian Americans that reflect issues or victories that they have faced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Evening Prayer" by Vandana Khanna, an Indian American</li> </ul> <p>25A/C/D: This is a major opportunity to highlight important individuals/organized groups that advocate for Asian Americans.</p>

For example, a TEKS that could foster opportunities for Asian American

inclusion is §113.41 17.D:

(17) Economics. The student understands the economic effects of government policies from World War II through the present. The student is expected to:

(D) identify the actions and outcomes of government policies intended to create economic opportunities for citizens such as the Great Society, affirmative action, and Title IX;

In this situation, three examples are suggestions for teachers to teach: the Great Society, affirmative action, and Title IX. Here, teachers have a clear opportunity to include experiences and contributions that Asian Americans made to government policies. Title IX is a federal civil rights law specifically states that no one shall be excluded or discriminated against “on the basis of sex” for “any education program” (Title IX and Sex Discrimination.) An opportunity for Asian American inclusion is evident by looking at the history and development of Title IX. Teachers can discuss the co-writer of Title IX, Patsy Mink, who was a third-generation Japanese American that also was the first woman of color elected to Congress (MINK, Patsy Takemoto, n.d.). While the TEKS do not explicitly state her name, teachers can research contributions that Asian Americans have made in political actions that impact how students receive education today. These examples of individuals highlight how Asian Americans are opposite of the passive image that is normally perceived by the rest of society. Rather, Asian Americans have made significant contributions to American

society for years that have instead been silenced and unaware to the public.

Other opportunities for inclusion are listed with events and individuals of different Asian American ethnicities including Tape v. Hurley (1885), the Immigration Act of 1924 (the Oriental Exclusion Act), and the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team (see Table 2). Table 2 lists some examples of topics that could be introduced for teachers to look into; however, resources are shared to further support teachers’ initiative to discover these stories themselves. It is important to note that opportunities for inclusion should involve discrimination and opposition to said discrimination. For example, sharing political actions that barred Asian Americans from owning property is necessary to highlight attempts to control

Asian Americans. Asian Americans have a long history of fighting for civil rights and equality, challenging exploitation in the workplace, and advocating against unjust immigration and naturalization laws to name a few (An, 2016). By including a broad spectrum of different events, Asian Americans can be accurately depicted within historical context for students to learn and appreciate.

Through these opportunities for inclusion, all students benefit from hearing and seeing representation. Thomas S. Dee and Emily K. Penner (2007) collaborated to find qualitative evidence on whether “culturally relevant pedagogy” was effective; they discovered that CRP can improve outcomes for academically at-risk students of all different backgrounds. Furthermore, the implemented CRP

improved Asian students and their academic accolades like GPA and attendance, implying that having representation does make a difference for Asian American students and their peers. In addition, taking advantage of these opportunities for inclusion shows students that their identity in history is valid. When focusing only on the dominant Eurocentric canon, the omission of other narratives, such as black and ethnic minority students, denies their identity and history (Leonardo, 2002).

While analyzing these opportunities for inclusion, another tenet of AsianCrit can be applied to offer a source of hope and challenge the weak narratives enforced by the curriculum. Story, theory, and praxis is the tenet that emphasizes the Asian American voice as an “empowering epistemological perspective” to “challenge dominant, White, European epistemology” (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 941). This tenet encourages people to listen to the Asian American story, which will cultivate transformation in education discourse. The three are interconnected where “stories inform theory and practice, theory guides practice, and practice can excavate stories and utilize theory for positive transformative purposes” (Iftikar & Museus, 2018, p. 941).

Specifically, these transformative purposes include voicing Asian Americans and recognizing them in contrast to a dominating voice that shouts false images about them. The tenet is an extension from the original CRT tenet storytelling, where the stories shared by “oppressed and exploited people ” offer knowledge that would otherwise be unheard of (Chon,

1995; Delgado, 1989). As explained by Delgado (1989), stories bring forth changes as they are “the oldest, most primordial meeting ground in the human experience” that unite people to overcome differences (p. 2438). Furthermore, listening to these stories “avoid intellectual apartheid” and “overcome ethnocentrism” from the dominant group (Delgado, 1989, p. 2440). Therefore, this tenet captures the capability of fostering change for Asian Americans if we choose to listen to their stories.

Ultimately, it is evident that while there is very limited explicit Asian American representation, there are opportunities for inclusion, but teachers must research and advocate for representation. Finding and sharing stories of the Asian American experience is already a step in the right direction for students to empathetically understand and see history through a clearer lens.

### ***The Portrayal of Asians and its Influence on the Images of Asian Americans***

Research question three asked how Asians overall are presented in the TEKS and how this influences Asian American representation. Nine TEKS involve Asians; however, these nine mainly focus on defining Asians as a foreign nation where the United States became involved either politically or diplomatically (see Table 3).

While this does not fully depict the Asian American experience, it does push the notion that Asian Americans are not fully American and can be grouped with these events. In contrast to the two Asian American references, Asians are placed

within a box that claim all their contributions to American history involve political developments, most of which stemmed from war or hostility. Furthermore, Asian Americans’ limited representation is confined to a smaller box as a politically passive and quiet group of people. As a result, the concept of the model minority myth is upheld in a curriculum that keeps them silenced into a “false and constructed identity” that focuses on “silencing and segregating them” (Goodwin, 2010). Once again, this aligns back to the tenet of Asianization, where they are silenced due to the model minority myth and not seen as active fighters against social injustice. Furthermore, AsianCrit’s transnational context is applied because they are forced to carry a limited image as a foreign nation.

**Table 3.**  
*Direct References to Asians in 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41 (2018)*

Direct Reference to Asians in TEKS	Description/Analysis
(4) History. The student understands the emergence of the United States as a world power between 1898 and 1920. The student is expected to: B: evaluate American expansionism, including acquisitions such as <b>Guam</b> , Hawaii, the <b>Philippines</b> , and Puerto Rico	Asians being controlled. • 4B: U.S. Colonialism
(7) History. The student understands the domestic and international impact of U.S. participation in World War II. The student is expected to: • A: identify reasons for U.S. involvement in World War II, including the aggression of Italian, German, and <b>Japanese dictatorships</b> , especially the attack on Pearl Harbor; • D: analyze major military events of World War II, including fighting the war on multiple fronts, the <b>Bataan Death March</b> , the U.S. military advancement through the Pacific Islands, the Battle of Midway, the invasion of Normandy, and the liberation of concentration camps;	Asians seen as “other”/outside • 7A: Foreign Enemy • 7D: Foreign Enemy
(8) History. The student understands the impact of significant national and international decisions and conflicts in the Cold War on the United States. The student is expected to: • C: explain reasons and outcomes for U.S. involvement in the <b>Korean War</b> and its relationship to the containment policy; • D: explain reasons and outcomes for U.S. involvement in foreign countries and their relationship to the Domino Theory, including the <b>Vietnam War</b> • E: analyze the major events of the <b>Vietnam War</b> , including the escalation of forces, the Tet Offensive, Vietnamization, and the fall of Saigon;	Asians seen as “other”/outside • 8C: Diplomatic Relationship • 8D: Diplomatic Relationship • 8E: Diplomatic Relationship
(10) History. The student understands the impact of political, economic, and social factors in the U.S. from the 1970s through 1990. The student is expected to: • A: describe Richard M. Nixon’s leadership in the normalization of relations with <b>China</b> and the policy of détente; • (C) describe U.S. involvement in the <b>Middle East</b> such as support for Israel, the Camp David Accords, the Iran Hostage Crisis, Marines in Lebanon, and the Iran-Contra Affair;	Asians seen as “other”/outside • 10A: Foreign Enemy • 10C: Foreign Enemy
(19) Government. The student understands the changing relationships among the three branches of the federal government. The student is expected to: • A: describe the impact of events such as the <b>Gulf of Tonkin Resolution</b> and the War Powers Act on the relationship between the legislative and executive branches of government; and	Asians seen as other/outside • 19A: Foreign Enemy

When looking at the nine TEKS that reference Asians, I decided to create three labels describing their implications. The first is that Asians are “being controlled”, which aligns with one TEKS, §113.41 4.B. This specific reference of “being controlled” is where Asians were controlled through U.S. colonialism. Next is Asians “seen as other/outside”, whether it be as a “foreign enemy” or a “diplomatic relationship”. These account for eight of the TEKS that reference Asians, where five fall under the “foreign enemy” while three follow the “diplomatic relationship”.

While AsianCrit is an analytical framework meant to examine the Asian American experience, I decided to apply the tenets to show how bringing in these references of Asians can influence and hinder the appropriate representation of Asian Americans. (Re)constructive history helped design the theme of Asians being “other/outside” because the curriculum emphasizes them as foreigners. While this is true that these TEKS refer to political affairs with Asia, it is necessary to contrast this with the limited teachings about Asian Americans. Furthermore, assumptions about Asians trickle down to label Asian Americans as excluded people involved with America in affairs they are not affiliated with.

The tenet of transnational contexts was implemented to design the theme of Asians being “controlled” and seen as “other/outside” as a foreign enemy or diplomatic relationship. It is clear through the TEKS chosen that they involved transnational contexts regarding imperialism, war, diplomacy, and migration. While these contexts are

important and shaped American history in grand ways, it is important to draw the line and teach about how these events brought changes for Asian Americans at that time. For example, it is necessary to include relations with Asian countries during World War II to understand Japanese internment in context; however, it does not excuse the notion of silencing and restricting the Japanese American narrative.

Finally, Asianization was used to support the label of Asians represented as “other/outside”. Like (re)constructive history, the teachings of Asians in the TEKS showcase them as a foreign nation that involved America in wars or had America aid in diplomatic mediators. As a result, it paints Asian Americans as “perpetual foreigners” since they are grouped with these Asian nations.

By utilizing these tenets of AsianCrit, I created these themes to encompass representation of Asian Americans in the 19 Tex. Admin. Code §113.41. These themes helped answer the following questions I had regarding the representation of Asian Americans and the intended effects on how they are seen by others based on their contributions to American history.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent Asians and Asian Americans were included in Texas Administrative Code §113.41 and where opportunities for inclusion were. From my analysis, Asian American representation is limited to two events out of over one

hundred TEKS. Despite this, there are multiple opportunities for inclusion that educators should take advantage of to advocate for representation within their classroom. By educating teachers on these opportunities, they can become the advocate for Asian American students to feel heard and represented in history for America.

Curriculum is not just what students must know in school. Rather, it embodies a much deeper message that affects society’s social and cultural mindset. As shared by A. Lin Goodwin (2010):

Curriculum embodies a society’s implicit consensus around what is worth knowing and what is worthwhile; it shapes and defines students’ learning experiences, speaks to or ignores who they are, and ultimately influences their vocational choices and options. (p. 3111)

Right now, Asian Americans are facing racial injustice due to inappropriate scapegoating and blame. However, their racial injustices have been a battle continuously fought in silence through other means like curriculum and education. A change must be made, and this starts with education for children. For in such racially violent times, “decolonizing” curriculum may bring “fundamental epistemological change” that can help people learn to accept and listen to voices unheard in history before (Arday et al., 2021, p. 301).

## **Recommendations and Further Research**

For the field of curriculum research, this

study supplements the growing need of diversifying and including minority groups in curriculum.

It drives discussions of racial issues specific to Asian Americans in the context of education, where educators and stakeholders should grapple with and acknowledge the concerning lack of representation. This study should serve as another reminder for educators and curriculum developers to assess and evaluate the extent of how much inclusion they are accounting for and what steps should be taken to keep moving it forward. For example, the National Council for the Social Studies can benefit from recognizing the need for diversity, equity, and inclusion of Asian Americans. Their scope of influence is one way for transformation that can influence curriculum across America. In addition, organizations such as the Asian American Education Project, Make Us Visible, the Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago, and Yuri Education Project work to advocate and advance the Asian American narrative within classrooms through curriculum support for teachers.

Furthermore, these problems on representation in curriculum can be addressed in the teacher preparation programs. Rather than focusing on educational theory and pedagogical practices, preservice teachers should learn about critical historical inquiry and how to teach difficult histories (Salinas & Alarcón, 2016). Preservice teachers should also engage in methods on how to include representation when the curriculum can be vague and/or implicit in what can be taught in their own future classrooms. It is

ultimately up to the teacher to make these decisions; therefore, teaching teachers how to maximize their historical content knowledge with multiple perspectives and voices can transfer to the students, allowing a better and more equal education for them. Teachers must be capable of questioning standards and texts that are not inclusive or silent of minority groups, especially the Asian American community, and how to support these voices.

Through my research, it is necessary that there needs to be a transformation in the way curriculum is created to encompass all students and their identities. While it is difficult to incorporate all ethnic groups into a year's worth of curriculum, the education that is taught should be flexible and able to provide opportunities for inclusion. Curriculum specialists and those in the state that manage and vote on TEKS should become educated in the way the TEKS are presented currently and what steps are necessary to ensure representation is enacted appropriately. Furthermore, education stakeholders, especially teachers, should be aware of the importance of representation and how to research inclusion when teaching history to their students. Educators can and should go beyond the Black/White binary to represent a more inclusive and diverse educational experience for their students to take part in and learn from. Educators should also be prepared to “reveal histories” that may be “wholly unknown to students” and even to themselves if never learned in a formal school setting (Rodríguez, 2019, p. 226).

It is important to note, however, that while we encourage the diversification of what

has already been implemented in the curriculum, it should not undermine or eliminate other minority groups' stories and experiences. Curriculum in Texas still has a long way to go; therefore, it is necessary to advocate for the representation of all ethnic minority groups while also highlighting the damaging image that Asian Americans are depicted as right now within education standards.

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