Community Based Research with the HANA Center and Dr. Eujin Park

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Introduction

This research project is focused on building consciousness, awareness, and engagement with racial justice issues within the Korean-American (predominantly immigrant) community in the Chicago area, particularly by fostering intergenerational dialogue. Anti-Blackness, anti-Asian racism, and other topics around race are arguably not discussed frequently in the Korean American community, especially amongst first generation Korean Americans. However, this is not for a lack of viewpoints and beliefs to share, often differing from those held by second generation youth. As a first step, this joint project with the HANA Center aspired to bring both first and second generation perspectives out of hiding, and get members of the community talking openly about race. For some participants, this was their first time really engaging with questions about anti-Blackness, personal experiences with racism, and perspectives on other racial communities. For others, they had had some prior experiences talking about race within their church communities, or within their families.

The following part of this ongoing project was our analysis of the common themes that emerged from these conversations within the community. The themes are grouped into the following categories: Korean American experiences with racism, diverse attitudes toward other racial groups, interest in developing better understandings and relationships with other communities, and desire for intergenerational communication and understanding, rooted in mutual love and care. The analysis produced by Dr. Eujin Park and I over this summer is part of a larger report created first and foremost for the purposes of
the HANA Center to study and look back upon, as they continue their mission of raising racial consciousness and building towards racial justice in the Korean American Chicagoland community. This remains an ongoing project that will continue to develop under HANA Center’s leadership and care.

Then one of my personal research projects this summer was to create annotated bibliographies for two bodies of literature: Korean American intergenerational relationships, and Korean American interracial relationships. The literature review included in this final paper is based off of my research for those bibliographies.

Literature Review

Two background areas are most relevant to the project at hand: Korean American intergenerational relationships, and Korean American interracial relationships (with other racial groups). A literature review on intergenerational relationships scopes out areas of difficulty, tension, and strength that the community can build upon as it seeks higher understanding and deeper communication intergenerationally. Reviewing interracial relationships allows us to better understand historic tensions between Korean American and other minority communities, Korean American diverse attitudes toward other racial groups, and how the community wishes to improve upon these relationships.

I conducted my search mostly through Google Scholar, which suggested articles from databases such as JSTOR, the Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology, and Proquest. The search terms I used included: Korean-American intergenerational relationships, Korean-Black tensions, LA riots, and the Flatbush Boycott, among others. This literature review spans across over twenty articles, written across a broad range of time, from 1980
to 2020. Disciplines represented include psychology, gerontology, sociology, LGBT studies, and family relations. The limitations of this review, however, are that it does not look much into the Korean American personal experiences with racism. Nor is there much coverage of the community's visions for the future: how it wishes to improve upon flaws in both intergenerational and interracial relationships. This leaves the direction and the substance of future work up to the imaginations and desires of the Korean American community.

Firstly, three major themes emerged from a literature review on the nature of Korean American intergenerational relationships. The Confucian value of filial piety, obliging adult children to care for their elderly parents, continues to affect relationships between Korean American children and their parents today. Second, Korean American parents, similarly to other Asian American parents, adopt Confucian-inspired, gender-specific roles in the parenting of their children. Their choices in parenting often leave children wanting in affection and care, even leading to depressive symptoms in Korean American youth that average higher than those found in adolescents of other ethnic groups. Third, many studies report that intergenerational communication is lacking in depth or limited. Both elders and youth voice their desire for deeper, more substantive conversations between generations.

On the value of filial piety that continues to influence Korean American families today, it appears that each family, and its different generations, chooses to embrace the common Korean cultural value of filial piety to varying degrees (Ishii-Kuntz; Kang and Rafaelli). While some youth identify with the commonly accepted narrative of parental sacrifice and feel personally indebted to their parents, others feel distant from this collective Korean American narrative (Kauh). Most children, regardless of their degree of
identification with the value of filial piety, want to provide financial support and assistance for their parents in their older age. For their part, while a majority of elders depend or rely on their adult childrens' financial support, they do not expect it, perhaps as a concession to the fact that they are living in a new country, which holds different cultural values and practices (Ishii-Kuntz; Kauh).

A second recurring theme in the literature had to do with the gender-specific roles that parents often take on in the parenting of their children. The father tends to command authority by keeping a certain amount of emotional distance from his children, which he deems necessary to maintain his position as head of the household (Kauh; E. Kim). Meanwhile, the mother takes on the role of commandeering and steering her children in ways that she deems best fit, often neglecting the personal will or desires of her children. Both of these roles are influenced by ongoing Confucian ideology that remains present in Korean American households, as evidenced by the value of filial piety mentioned above. It would seem that mothers and fathers experience more conflict with their children on the gendered values for which they hold themselves accountable (E. Kim; Tsai-Chae and Nagata). Unfortunately, these parental choices are linked to intergenerational conflict and depressive symptoms within youth. In particular, Kim says that youth frequently desire more emotional closeness with their fathers, including more physical and verbal signs of affection, and more warmth on the part of their mothers.

However, it is equally important to consider that looking back, many youth describe a change in perception of their childhoods, from an overwhelmingly negative outlook to a more positive and understanding one. College-aged Korean American adults and older express gratitude, as well as increased awareness and empathy, for the unique struggles
that their parents went through as immigrants navigating a foreign land with financial hardships, putting extra strain on their relationships with their kids (Kang et al.; L. Kim et al.). Ultimately, they hold gratitude for their parents for walking before them and enabling them to be where they are today. At the same time, they acknowledge and wish to continue the coalitional work that remains to be done in the Korean American community to build strong relationships based on equity and inclusion with other cultures, races, and peoples.

The final theme that stretched across the existing literature was that intergenerational communication is lacking in depth. The substance of conversations is superficial, limited to schoolwork or to insignificant small talk (Kauh; Kang et al.). This could be connected to the oft present emotional distance between fathers and children described above, as well as to a history of conflict and tension in relevant families that may have hurt relationships in the long term. Another possible reason for unfulfilling conversation is that in Korean American families, children are often not encouraged or empowered to speak up for themselves and voice their own opinions, especially in contradiction of the parents’ beliefs (E. Kim; Lee). This significantly diminishes the chances of open and honest communication on both ends of a parent-child relationship. Lee describes in particular a method of “patriarchal bargaining” that certain Korean American daughters have employed in order to avoid directly refuting their parents’ opinions, while simultaneously following their true passions.

However, the potential reasons offered above for unmeaningful intergenerational communication are our own informed hypotheses based on the existing literature. Official studies on what exactly could be causing this superficial communication, so lacking and unfulfilling for both elders and youth, remain to be pursued. Our research findings will look
more in depth into intergenerational communication on the topics of race and racism, and study how parents and their children have managed to navigate these difficult, conflicting conversations together.

Also missing from the current literature are more recent updates on the relevance of Confucian values such as upholding filial piety within Korean American families. Many of the studies included in this literature review date back to the late 1990s; follow-up studies on intergenerational Korean American family dynamics revolving around filial piety as well as other Confucian values remain to be conducted.

Three major themes also emerged from a literature review on the nature of Korean American interracial relationships. First, Korean Americans find it easier to acknowledge, identify, and/or agree with the fact that Black people face racism in America, and harder to admit the same about Asian Americans, for various reasons. Second, Black-Korean tensions were initially born in the 1980s, when Korean American immigrants opened businesses in historically Black neighborhoods, selling goods and services largely to Black and Latinx residents. Third, white supremacy pits racial minorities against one another through various tools. This literature review in particular focuses on white supremacy's employment of the model minority myth, as well as ignorant media broadcasting that has historically left out Asian American voices in favor of white voices and interests, at the expense of instigating further conflict between Black and Korean American communities.

Firstly, Korean Americans more easily acknowledge the reality of anti-Black racism in the United States, in comparison to anti-Asian racism. In other words, Korean-Americans are more able to agree with the statement that Black people face racism than with the statement that they themselves experience racism (Dhingra; Merseth). Some
Korean-Americans believe that racism is only significant or “real” if it is in the shape and color of anti-Black racism, compounded by the forces of police brutality, mass incarceration, living in deep poverty, etc. (Dhingra). It is clear that some Korean Americans are filtering their ideas and understandings of what racism is through the narrow lens of anti-Black racism, and thus unaware of or reluctant to embrace the idea that Asian Americans, too, experience racism, albeit of a different mold.

Holding awareness of anti-Black racism has not stopped Korean Americans from replicating it and viewing Black people through a white supremacist, racist lens. Tensions between the two racial groups have existed since the advent of Korean immigrants to America. The LA riots of 1992 and the 1990 Flatbush Boycott of Korean American stores in New York likely come to mind for members of both communities. The tenuous relationship between these two communities, historically marked by strife and bloody conflict, started when Korean American immigrants established their liquor stores and businesses in Black neighborhoods (N Kim; Min). Over time, cultural clashes, a perceived Asian economic takeover of the neighborhood, and prevalent anti-Blackness in the Korean-American community that manifested in rude, unpleasant encounters between Korean shopowners and Black customers led to growing misunderstandings, grievances, and even the deaths of members of both communities, before erupting in the riots in Los Angeles (Stewart; Min).

There is some disagreement over whether Black people were more angered by racial discrimination from Korean Americans, or by perceived economic exploitation carried out by Korean-American merchants, who were poor but making their profit off of the Black community. Most likely, it was a combination of both that turned Black people against Korean Americans.
However, it is important not to frame the cause of the riots solely as a Black-Korean issue. This brings us to the third and final theme we'll discuss today: that white supremacy encourages conflict between minorities in order to maintain its own power and privilege (C. Kim; Lang; Chang; Cheung). Leading up to the LA riots, the media focused almost entirely on tensions between Blacks and Koreans in the context of covering the Rodney King beating and subsequent trial, deliberately stoking tensions and shifting the blame away from the larger, responsible forces of police brutality, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy. Thus, any sense of accountability or acknowledgement of the true forces at play was conspicuously absent, as if the media hoped to deflect all the blame to minority communities, and make it their problem.

Another tool of white supremacy mentioned by several authors is the model minority myth. It suggests that Asian Americans' economic success relative to other racial minorities makes Asians superior to others, and purportedly proves that other racial groups are equally capable of overcoming racial discrimination to achieve the same degree of economic success. But this myth, which some Korean Americans have bought into, only perpetuates the idea of a racial hierarchy that views whiteness as superior, deems Asian as second best, and lumps everyone else together at the bottom (Cheung; N. Kim). Korean-Americans might believe that they benefit from their proximity to whiteness granted by the racial hierarchy as it stands today. But, in truth, it is only taking Korean Americans one step further from true equity and relationship building with other people of color. Korean Americans must be able to denounce their 'superior' positioning in the racial hierarchy, as well as the racial hierarchy itself, in order to embrace Black, Latinx, and all communities of color with love and respect.
Studies on both past and present efforts on coalition building between Korean Americans and other racial minorities remain to be explored. Although many scholars have focused on tensions between Black and Korean communities, particularly in the context of the infamous riots and boycotts, any evolution of the relationship between these two groups has not been studied to a significant extent. In addition, not much literature exists on Korean-Latinx relationships, as well as Korean American relationships with other ethnic Asians. Our research findings start to reveal Korean American attitudes and reflections on relationships with other ethnic Asian and Latino Americans, but there is more scholarship to be conducted in both fields.

**Methodology**

The methodological approach of this project has been two-fold. For the first part, which entailed mobilizing the community to have conversations about race, the HANA Center coordinated and held ten total listening sessions with members of the Korean American community in the Chicagoland area. These sessions brought together ten different groups of people, including suburban moms, ministers/pastors, and high school youth. The analysis that followed included coding, categorizing, and interpreting the notes that emerged from the listening sessions. (This part of the process is still in the works.) The HANA Center will be receiving a comprehensive report, which contains this analysis. The report will hopefully aid the center in reflecting on the work done so far, and how they wish to proceed.

**Results**
These were the preliminary themes that emerged from the listening sessions:

On personal experiences with anti-Asian racism, first generation participants were more likely to be uncertain whether something they experienced was racial discrimination or not. One participant recounted white people passing his family in a pickup truck and making squinty eyes. While their daughter knew this was racism and became angry, as parents “we didn't understand what was happening.”

It would be interesting to inquire further into this, and ask why youth are more likely to be able to identify racism. Perhaps it may be attributed to familiarity with what it looks like in America, having grown up here, rather than in Korea like many of their first generation parents.

Indeed, there were several comments made by parents that their children seemed to be learning the rules of the racial hierarchy and/or white supremacy from an early age, in both school environments with other kids, and in private, home environments. One parent participant said, “We’re in the US and it’s odd that my kids only hang out with Asian kids, I don’t think they’re learning to live harmoniously together with different racial groups.” Another participant observed that Korean American children don't play with white kids, but with other racial minorities only.

It seems that a blanket statement for who Korean American children play with cannot be made since their experiences vary so widely (some only play with other Asian American kids, others play with other racial minorities but not with white kids, and others play exclusively with white kids).

But just within the sample of these listening sessions, it could be said that KA children are more likely to not play with white kids. The comments of the parent
participants mentioned above are really up to various interpretations. In the case of the first parent, they could be concerned about their kids being segregated from different ethnic minorities, including Black and Latinx kids. The second parent could be more concerned that white kids are already not mingling with kids from communities of color at an early age, so that kids are replicating or playing out the unmergeable gap between white adults and adults of color, a product of white supremacy.

For those participants, all first generation, who felt more confident in identifying incidents of racism, the most shared or common experiences of recounted racism had to do with COVID, childhood bullying based on stereotypes, and being seen as a perpetual foreigner constantly being asked the infamous question “where are you from?” and never quite feeling like they belonged in America. As one participant said, being in America as a Korean American means being lonely and isolated from those around you. Others voiced uncertainty on how to respond to racism. One person asked how much they should endure before speaking up and responding in some way. This might tie back to other participants who voiced that the Korean American community seems to suffer racism quietly without talking about it, and even to those who said that Asian American issues do not seem to be as prominent or talked about as Black issues.

Only one person out of all the listening sessions recounted an instance in which they actually spoke out against racism they witnessed (a white child making a racist comment to a Korean American child). This might have been because none of the listening session questions directly asked participants if they had ever intervened or responded directly to racism in their personal experience. But it could also have been a sign that not many participants had ever spoken out before. This participant said she was nervous
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because she was not confident about her English, but knew she needed to speak up
because “I felt we couldn't just let this pass.”

For her, it was clear that a line had been crossed, and she needed to be brave and do
something about it. What would that line be for other Korean Americans? What would it
take for Korean Americans to not bear racism silently anymore, and speak up, mobilize,
make their voice heard? Interestingly, this same participant said she realized that most
parents would refrain from not saying anything, even if racism was directly affecting their
own children. In that room were the parents of Jewish, Latinx, and Asian children. Perhaps
staying quiet about racism is not exclusively a Korean American problem. Perhaps many
people, regardless of their ethnicity or race, are reluctant to challenge racism when they
see it, out of fear perhaps, or a desire to keep the peace. It would be interesting to push
further on this, and ask why people choose not to say anything.

Some participants within the listening sessions did say that they regretted not
speaking up or doing more to defend either themselves or their family members. A few
cited specifically feeling hindered or unconfident in speaking up for themselves because of
their language barrier. “I felt very powerless,” one said about experiencing an incident of
racism, while another said, “I was very sad and frustrated more so because I couldn't speak
English well and didn't have ability to handle the situation.” One follow up question I have to
this is if these participants’ language barriers went away, they would indeed feel more
empowered to speak up, or if there would be more in the way that prevented them.

Moving on to relationships with other racial groups and the racial tensions between
them, many first generation participants acknowledged their own racism or the broader
Korean community’s racism towards Black people and other minorities. (In some cases, it
was the second generation speaking on their parents’ or elders’ anti-Blackness, but self-acknowledgement of racism from the first gen was quite prevalent.) A few pointed to the derogatory language that Korean Americans use to refer to Black people as poignant evidence of anti-Blackness. Another participant admitted that he and his wife would be uncomfortable with their daughter marrying a Black man, and attributed this to his own racism. A few spoke of “deep seeded” prejudices, “implicit biases” and stereotypes that they are holding onto about other minority communities, including Latinx and Chinese Americans. Prejudice towards Chinese people seemed to be amplified by COVID, which caused fear and anxiety within Korean Americans that they might fall victim to rising anti-Asian violence, and be mistaken as Chinese. Although not all participants explicitly linked their biases and stereotypes to racism, they did seem to know and imply that their biases were not positive or good ones to have.

In the same vein, some participants also acknowledged their privilege over Black people as Asian Americans. One said, “[We] have not felt as much racism as other people,” meaning other communities of color. There was an emphasis on the fact that all racial minorities face discrimination, but in different ways. This meant that Korean Americans might “miss out on” or not face the same discrimination that Black people face. “We might benefit in some ways,” said one participant. It was not clear if he meant benefiting from Black people’s supposed inferiority in the racial hierarchy, or benefiting by not experiencing the racial discrimination that Black people face. In general, there was often a vagueness, a lack of specificity in many of the comments made by participants that left things up to interpretation.
Negating the idea that Korean Americans have privilege over Black people, a couple people said that the Korean community experiences worse discrimination, because “it’s harder for us to raise our voice” or because Black people receive more benefits than discrimination. Although several people agreed that it is hard for Korean Americans to be heard, it was not a widely shared view that Koreans have it worse than Black people.

A natural followup to participants' self-reflection on their privileges and biases is that some participants spoke of the necessity of doing the internal work to dismantle racism in their own hearts and minds first. One participant said, “People always look external, but are you changing from within? I think that's really hard and that's where I get stuck at.” This statement got to the heart of the matter, as he admitted where he is on his own journey to dismantling racism within, and encouraged others to look within as well. Building upon that, another participant said, “I think our internal prejudice or biases translate into systematic injustice,” theorizing why prejudice and racism exists on a wider, systemic scale.

However, not all participants acknowledged that they or the Korean community might hold racist views. One participant on the far end of the spectrum said, “I don't believe Koreans are discriminatory or racist to Blacks.” But this was definitely an outlier, a lone voice. Most seemed to acknowledge anti-Blackness in the Korean community.

There were also some voices who mentioned that it might go both ways: that Black people were/are discriminatory to Koreans. “Blacks have discriminated us by saying how we don't speak English and how we need to go back to our country where monkeys fly around.” Another participant described: “[Black folks] looked at me and called me Bruce Lee.” He wondered or suspected if this Black prejudice against Asians stems from the fact
that “they also have some stereotypical ideas about us or because they sense KAs’ sentiment toward them.” Overall, several participants recounted negative experiences with Black and Latinx people: lots of conflict, arguing, and even incidents of harassment/assault.

Relevant to troubled relationships between Korean Americans and other racial minorities, another theme that emerged from the listening sessions was perceived Korean superiority or “supremacy” over other racial minorities. In almost every case, this “supremacy” was confessed or acknowledged by first generation folks.

Participants found various possible reasons. One said, “I think the stress and oppression that comes from white supremacy is being reflected as ‘I’m better than you’ towards Black communities.” Perhaps she was suggesting that Koreans have come to replicate white supremacy in their own relations with other minorities, by maintaining a sense of superiority over them. Another suggested that Korean Americans don’t actually want change to the racial hierarchy, because they know they benefit from their ‘superiority’. A couple people brought up Asian Americans’ “proximity to whiteness,” which Asians tend to lean into by distancing themselves from Black people and getting as close to whiteness as they can, through their lifestyles, careers, and beliefs. All of this pointed to an awareness of the racial hierarchy that places white people at the top, followed by Asian Americans, with Black and Brown people at the bottom.

Equipped with this awareness, some participants did call for a change to the status quo, not explicitly citing their privilege over other minorities, but agreeing on the need to band together, to unite against the common enemy of the “majority”, or white supremacy, instead of harming other racial minorities at the expense of Koreans’ own benefit.
However, not everyone echoed this call for change. Given that there were voices on both ends of the spectrum, it would be interesting to know how many of the participants currently have an interest in maintaining the hierarchical social order as it stands for the perceived power that it affords them, and how many believe that coalitions and interpersonal relationships based in equality and justice with the Black, Latinx and other minority communities must be built moving forwards.

Having touched a bit on Korean Americans’ racism and superiority towards other communities of color, I’d like to hone in on Korean American perspectives on the Black community, more specifically on BLM and looting, both of which were discussed at length. Many participants expressed their support and affirmation for BLM, wondering how they could be the best possible allies, articulating that they believed BLM advanced racial justice for Asian Americans too (in line with the above notion that all racial minorities must fight with and for each other against white supremacy), and feeling welcomed by the movement when they joined in on protests.

But there was some comparison too, namely that Asian American issues are not given the same level of regard or importance in sociopolitical discourse as Black racial justice issues. Several participants mentioned that Black people have been able to garner more visibility and prominence through mobilizing in great numbers through movements like BLM, and in contrast, Korean Americans hardly have any voice or presence in the public sphere.

On looting, it was clear that this was a sore topic for many participants, perhaps because of the painful memory of the 1992 riots that destroyed many Korean shops. Many said that they were hurt that Black people looted Korean shopowners, and to some, it
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seemed as though Black people were letting out their frustrations with facing systemic racism from white people on Korean Americans because KAs served as weaker targets than white people. Perhaps participants who said that Black people let out their frustrations on Korean people omitted talking about Korean prejudice towards Black people that could have influenced the looting of Korean stores because of a lack of awareness of KA prejudices, or feeling that KA prejudices did not merit the looting, or because they felt that the “real” problem was between Black and white people. This could be a good followup question to ask.

Some participants connected the looting directly to BLM, and said they could not support BLM because of the damage caused by looting. Still others said that Koreans should not be so quick to associate BLM with looting, and let it discourage support for BLM. Most agreed that looting was not acceptable, no matter the motive, that there were better alternatives to expressing their anger.

Korean Americans also had interesting perspectives to share on white people. It was clear that many participants had an awareness of white supremacy, having been exposed to it in the workplace, in universities and school settings, and in recreational settings such as the shopping mall and the golf course. One participant said, “At a fundamental level, whites look down on us,” while another said similarly that whites fundamentally look down on anyone who is not white like them. In fact, most perspectives shared about white people were negative in nature. Several people claimed that Black people are kinder to Asian Americans than white people.

To end with perspectives on the Korean American community itself, participants disagreed on whether there is help and support to be found in other members of the
community. Some people said that they felt very supported during hard times such as the pandemic, while others said there was not really anyone to turn to. Several people mentioned that the church was a significant hub/gathering place of Korean community, even to the point where it would be hard to find KA community outside of church. Overall, the general consensus was that community is not necessarily easy to find, but can be found if you look for it. I wonder in what ways participants envision a stronger KA community, and what that would look like.

Finally, on intergenerational conversations about race within the KA community, many participants said that it was uncomfortable or difficult to talk intergenerationally for various reasons. A common theme was that 1st and 2nd gen KAs see things very differently and can be polarized on opinions. These differences in opinion have the potential to cause tensions that affect parent/child or otherwise elder/youth relationships negatively. One youth participant mentioned that there are heavier implications for youth that remain financially dependent on their parents. In several cases, participants cited learning to stay away from the topic of race, or BLM, around their family members in order not to cause further upset and conflict. More participants definitely found it harder to talk about race, or claimed not to talk about it at all, than those who said that they talked about it freely with family members. Despite this, many participants voiced a desire to talk more about race across differences in opinion, and if not desire, a recognition of the importance of talking about race.
Discussion

The result findings above demonstrate an awareness of the racial hierarchy and white supremacy, as well as awareness of troubled relations with other racial minorities. Accompanying this awareness is a desire to improve relations both intergenerationally, and with other minorities. Many also desire to do the internal work, to eradicate racism by starting within.

Of course, there was a lot of variance in opinion in the community. On almost every topic, people shared contrasting or contradictory views. Since these listening sessions grouped people separately, in clearly divided, separate categories such as the ajussi group, the suburban moms group, the feminist book club group, and the high school youth group, it would be a prudent next step for HANA to mix separate groups of people together in one session, so that there are more diverse gatherings and opportunities for engagement on these topics amongst gender, class, and generational differences. I would argue that it is unhelpful and unconducive to HANA’s goals to keep women and men, as well as first and second generation community members apart in discussions. To bring people together across these differences, despite the potential for greater conflict, misunderstandings, and initial discomfort, aligns with the very nature of the racially just future premised on acceptance and inclusion of differences that HANA is building towards. Especially since one of HANA’s outlined goals is to foster deeper, more loving intergenerational communication, it would be lovely to have all generations of Korean Americans in one room talking about race together.

Another possible direction and/or opportunity for HANA is to eventually facilitate interracial conversations on race, merging with other communities of color. This might not
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be the right step to take so soon, but as some community members already pointed out, it is necessary for healing divides and old wounds, coalition building, and true racial justice for Korean Americans, which hinges upon seeking racial justice for all minorities. These suggestions are not meant to distract from the fact that the work done so far has been tremendous and inspiring. Not many other community centers or spaces meant for and organized by Korean American people have delved into this essential work of unpacking experiences with racism and internal racism, among other things. I hope that HANA's model of conducting listening sessions spreads to other pockets of Korean American community across the country. The focus on cultivating intergenerational communication and seeking to improve interracial relationships is also a huge strength that I hope HANA continues to center in its work.

I am personally grateful for having had the opportunity this summer to learn and grow my own racial consciousness with the Korean American Chicagoland community. Thank you to HANA, Eujin, the CCSRE Department, and everyone involved who made this possible!