ASIAN WOMEN
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I sometimes think about my position as an Asian woman in a society geared to the needs of whites and men, and it's pretty weird. I can say that now I am content, even a little proud, with myself. After years of wanting to be white and a boy, I am progressing.

I guess I should say right off the bat that I don't believe that Third World people will ever achieve full liberation until we get rid of capitalism and establish a socialist society where profit, the "freedom" to exploit others, and the worship of the individual won't get in the way. Because basically, although racism and male supremacy were around before capitalism, they've become institutionalized foundations of the system.

White Men
I guess that one of the most difficult things for me to understand is how to relate to my boyfriend who is white. Sometimes I flash back on all the ideas my parents taught me such as the idea that to marry a white man was to sort of degrade myself, and it's really hard to know how to deal with these kinds of feelings.

I once read this poem by an Asian woman where she said that after looking into blue eyes for so long she forgot hers were black. I really feel this, and it's hard to understand...
stand. I identify so strongly with this man I love and that's inevitably tied up somewhat to the way he looks, which conflicts with me and my background and the way I look.

So I look at him and all the feelings I have get mixed up and make me upset and dizzy—loving him, hating myself for loving a white man, hating him because he's white, hating white people in general, feeling underneath that I'm superior to white people, and even deeper underneath that I'm inferior to white people, especially men, feeling guilty for not having an Asian boy-friend, feeling that I'm taking unfair advantage of my social and sexual mobility racially when Asian men don't have that mobility, and being afraid of what other people think about my going with a white man—it's just really frightening.

**Asian Women and White Men**

It seems to me that there are three reasons why it is more acceptable for an Asian woman to be seen with a white man or marry one than it is for an Asian man to marry a white woman. First, in this country, people have become accustomed to seeing "war brides," and so the sight of an Asian woman with a white man is a little more familiar. Second, Asian women are rather "exotic" these days—you know us—combs float through our hair as we rinse with coconut oil in front of waterfalls every morning. Third; because this society puts the woman in the "lower" position of the marriage, it seems more acceptable for the "lower" race to be in the "lower" position rather than for the "lower" Asian male to be in the "higher" male position of the marriage. This is disgusting logic, but it sure causes problems!

Also, white men have always had the "privilege" in this country of getting their kicks using women in any way they can, whether that means using black slave women for pleasure and to breed more slaves to sell, being unfaithful but forbidding it for their wives, or going out with Third World women but ridiculing white women who go out with Third World men.

I have a Japanese man friend who was once beat up by some white boys for being on the street with a white girl. Actually, it was an unusual situation in the first place since many white women won't go out with Asian men because "I'm just not attracted to them." So, where Asian men are sort of "restricted" to Asian women—maybe even to their own nationality—Asian women are more or less free to go out with white men. As a result, Asian men resent Asian women who do take advantage of that freedom, and we Asian women don't know how to feel.

Problems like this are not new or unique to Asians. Men and women of oppressed groups have always been divided by values and pressures of the dominating group, not only sexual ones but pressures for money and status symbols, too.

**Sexual Standards**

We have such a hard time when the American media sets the standards for desirability. The sexy American male is tall, blonde, big muscles, hairy chest, etc. But the Asian male are short, dark, with wiry muscles and not much hair on their chests. So they're self conscious and we Asian women sometimes fall for the American stereotype while white women hardly ever think of Asian men as potential boyfriends or anything.

On the other hand, the typical sexy Asian women are fair, with long, slender legs, big eyes and big breasts while Asian women are dark, have short stocky legs, almond eyes and small breasts. The American ideal is ridiculous and sick for American women, but it's much harder when you're Asian and you'll never live up to that. When I was a little girl I thought that the epitome of beauty was blonde hair and blue eyes, a pretty common vision for little girls in America, I guess, but when I looked in the mirror, I just knew I was hopeless.

But the answer isn't to go back to the old Japanese or Chinese culture either. At my family reunions the women do all the cooking, serving, and all the cleaning up. The traditional Japanese family rejoiced when a son was born and was indifferent or resentful when a girl was born. Uh huh. We've got to make ourselves a new culture without any of that.

**Racism and Private Property**

We know that prejudice and hatred of different-looking races has been around since primitive times. But we also know that even then many peoples lived in peace together until competition for more goods, more money, and more power made the hatred something powerful, and led to the most obvious and most disgusting combination of racism and private property—slavery. Then racism was used as an excuse to keep slavery going: "Well, they're not really humans, so it's all right for them to be slaves."

Racism is now used to keep wars going: "Over 3/4 of a million Vietnamese have been killed by American bombs and guns, but so what? We've got to protect our interests in oil, agriculture, and
finances."And we even see a trickier kind of racism in the peace movement: "Over 3/4 of a million Vietnamese have been killed by American bombs and guns, but what really counts is that 50,000 AMERICAN boys have died, so we've got to end the war to bring our boys home."

Racism and sexism are two tools society uses to divide people who are getting the short end of the deal. The people who have all the money and power are more than happy to let the rest of us fight among ourselves instead of fighting them to get the share of this country's wealth we deserve.

White capitalistic values come between Asian men and women when we really need to get together for our liberation as Asians. I think our Asian brothers are realizing more that our struggle as women and men in society cannot be separated. And I think we are all understanding more participants when they respect each other as full people and love each other as full friends who have a common cause. And we Asian women have to help our white sisters, that relationships between women and men can be more joyful and fulfilling for both too. Since we and all Third World people have been oppressed as a people, perhaps we can understand more easily than they that our real enemy is not men, but a system geared to profit, and not the needs of all the people.

And if all of us who are put down and cheated by this system unite, we will fight a struggle that is, at last, truly our struggle—for we will be fighting for a society not divided by profit, race, or sex, but a society that belongs to the people.

JAN MASAOKA from San Mateo attended U.C. Santa Cruz, where she was head of the Free Breakfast Program for children and a member of AAPA.

Mitsu Yashima

Every day
in my hair
I see what I
ought to be
Like the rest
But my hair
After all these days
Is still soft and black
It grows and obeys me

FRANCES CHUNG