

X
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
X
WESTERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
"JUST US -- YOUNG PAN ASIAN FEMALES
AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM"

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Justice

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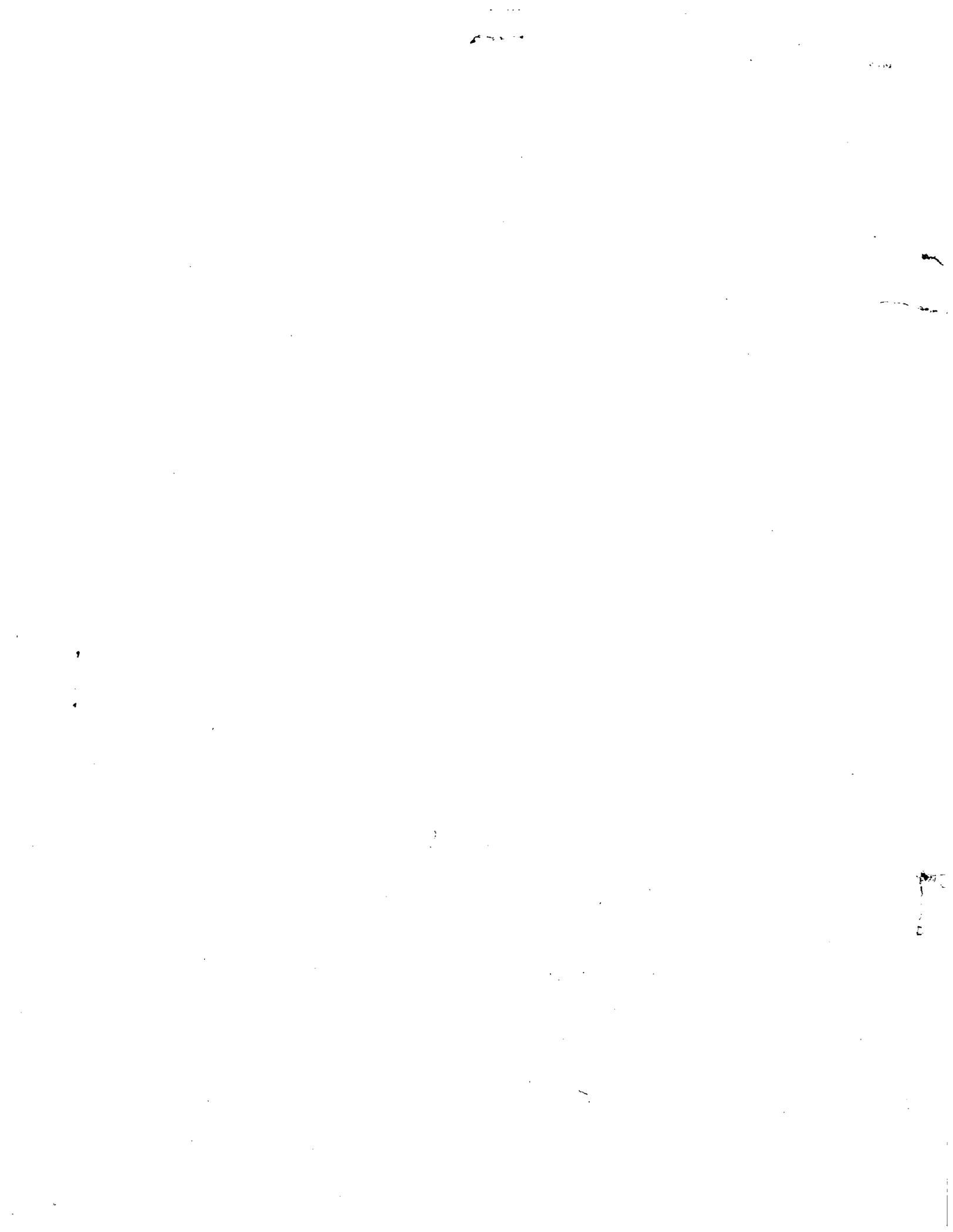
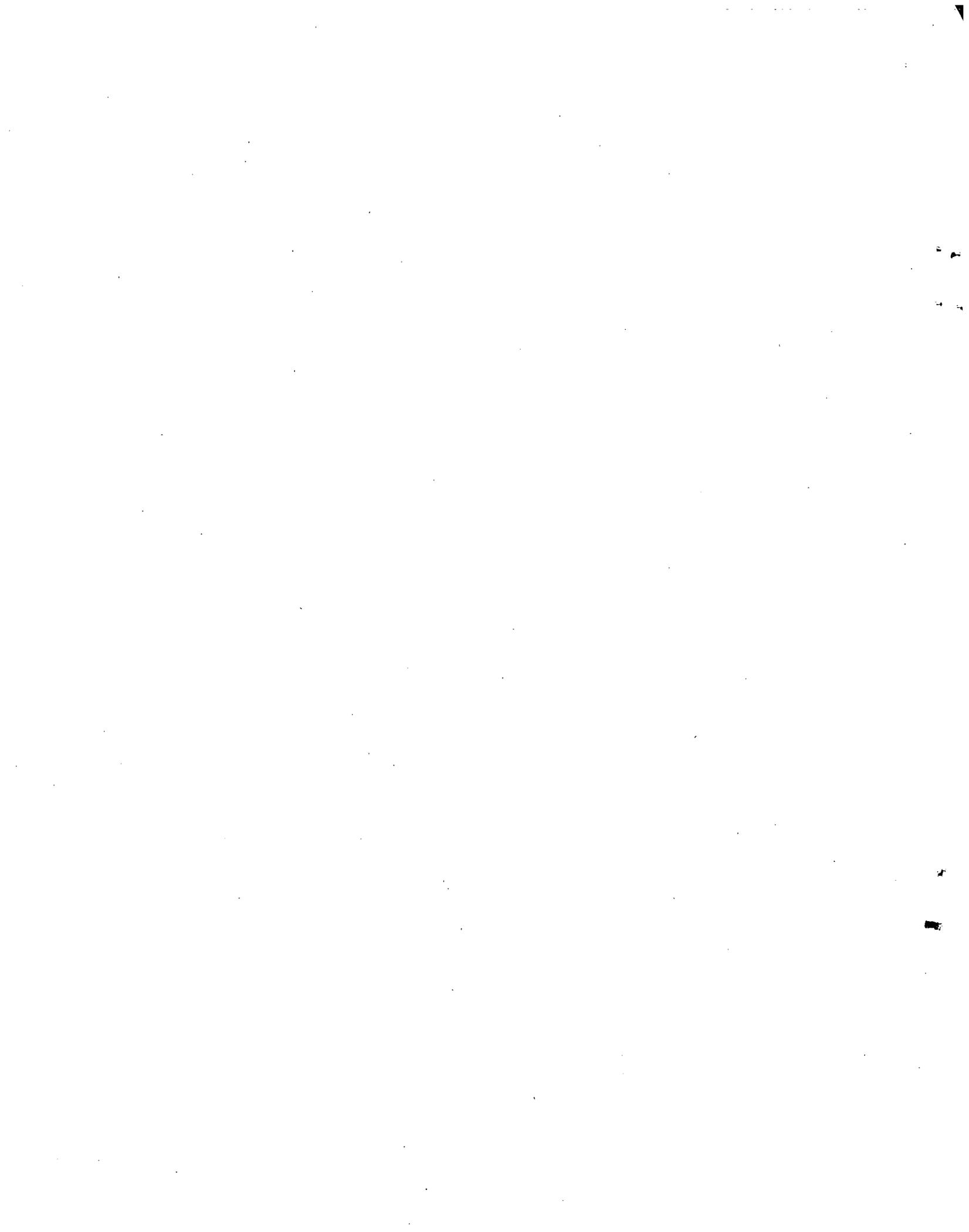


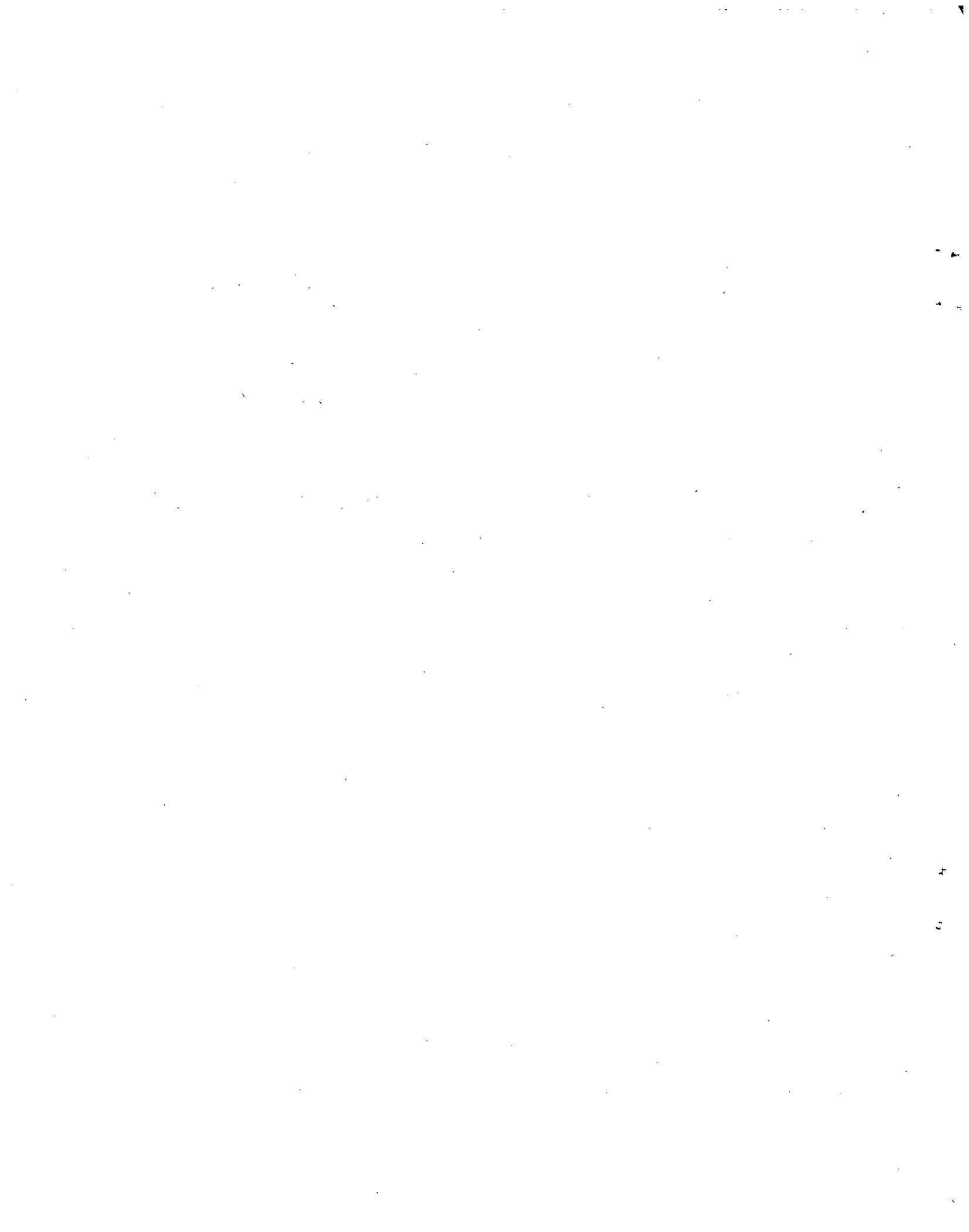
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FORWARD



FORWARD

The National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) received a grant from LEEA to conduct a project which would provide much needed insight into the growing problems of delinquency among teenage girls (12 to 17 years) and to develop a capacity building and advocacy program for the prevention and treatment of "high risk" females. Several agencies and organizations around the country participated in this project, including the Organization of Pan Asian American Women (Pan Asia).

Pan Asia, in accordance with the goals established in their proposal to the National YWCA -- "JUST US -- YOUNG PAN ASIAN FEMALES AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM," was committed to hold three conferences -- Arlington, Virginia; Seattle, Washington; and Washington, D.C. The last convergence was designed to draw from the participants of the two regional conferences.

I was first aware of Pan Asia and of the project when contacted about the Western Regional Conference. I was intrigued for a number of reasons. First, I had worked with Filipino American youths in a volunteer capacity for almost 25 years. Second, I was intrigued with the focus of the project -- Asian Pacific females between the ages of 12 to 17. In my dual capacity, as a community volunteer and as the female director of an Asian American agency which researched the needs/problems of various Asian communities, and as an advocate by developing and implementing programs to meet those needs, I was eager to become involved.

I felt that with the contacts I had developed over the past 20 or so years I would be able to bring together a group of youths, community practitioners and people in the juvenile justice system to discuss common concerns and methods to address these problems.

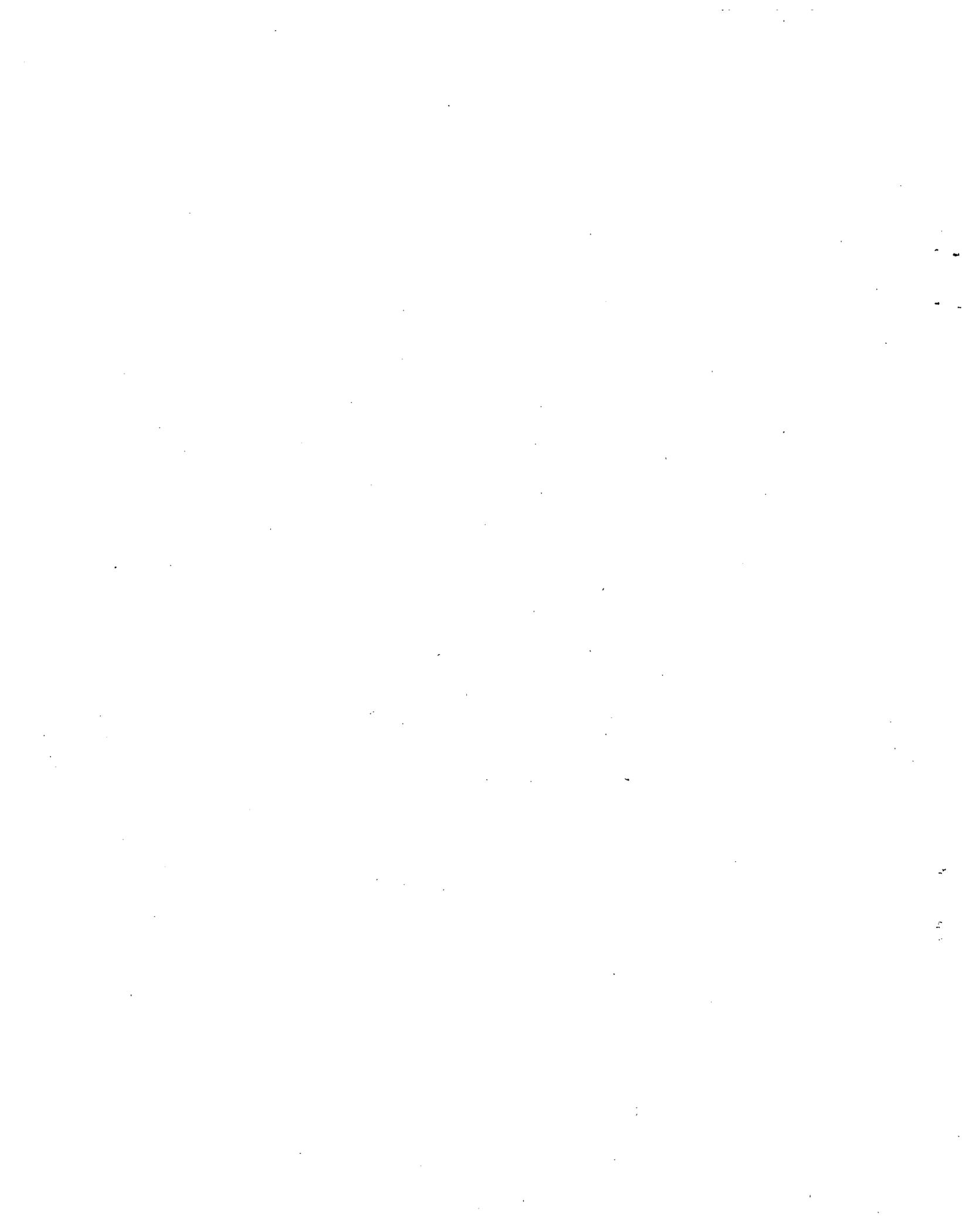
I was officially hired by Pan Asia in May to coordinate the Western Regional Conference and began the task of gathering a group of Asian/Pacific youths and agency directors, juvenile justice workers, and other interested people to serve as the Western Regional Advisory Committee. After two months of planning, the advisory committee developed an outline for a conference which would: 1) make Asian Pacific communities more aware of the juvenile justice system; 2) examine the causes and the existence of juvenile delinquency among Asian Pacific youth; 3) bring together agencies/organizations that are presently meeting the needs of youth; and 4) develop a network among Asian Pacific youth serving agencies/organizations and local juvenile justice groups.



The Western Regional Conference brought together youths and adults from San Francisco, Stockton, Los Angeles and vicinity, San Jose, Oakland and other parts of California; the State of Alaska; and Seattle and Tacoma in Washington state. They were joined by professionals in the juvenile justice system. It was generally conceded by all those who attended that there was a growing problem of delinquency among all Asian Pacific youths, especially, the males. It was also the consensus that there was little interfacing between the communities and the juvenile justice agencies.

This report of the Western Regional Conference will give the reader a sense of the problems, the frustrations, the attempts to meet the needs and the hopes those Asian Pacific youths and adults vocalized during the Seattle conference.

Dorothy L. Cordova
Western Regional Coordinator



BACKGROUND



BACKGROUND OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF PAN ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN, INC.

Project Overview

The Organization of Pan Asian American Women, Inc. (Pan Asia) is a young national organization, comprised of a diverse group of women of Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Hawaiian, and Pacific Island cultures. The group seeks to advance the participation of all Asian Pacific women in all aspects of American society. The organization's broad purpose is to educate its members and the general public regarding the multi-cultural differences among the various ethnic groups and to voice their mutual concerns.

Juvenile delinquency among Asian Pacific Americans continues to increase due to cultural conflicts between Eastern and Western values. A growing divorce rate, increasing incidences of broken homes, and the dissolution of the family are contributing factors. Because of diversities of language, religions, myths, stereotypes, and economic problems, the changing roles of men and women in America have triggered special problems within these ethnic groups.

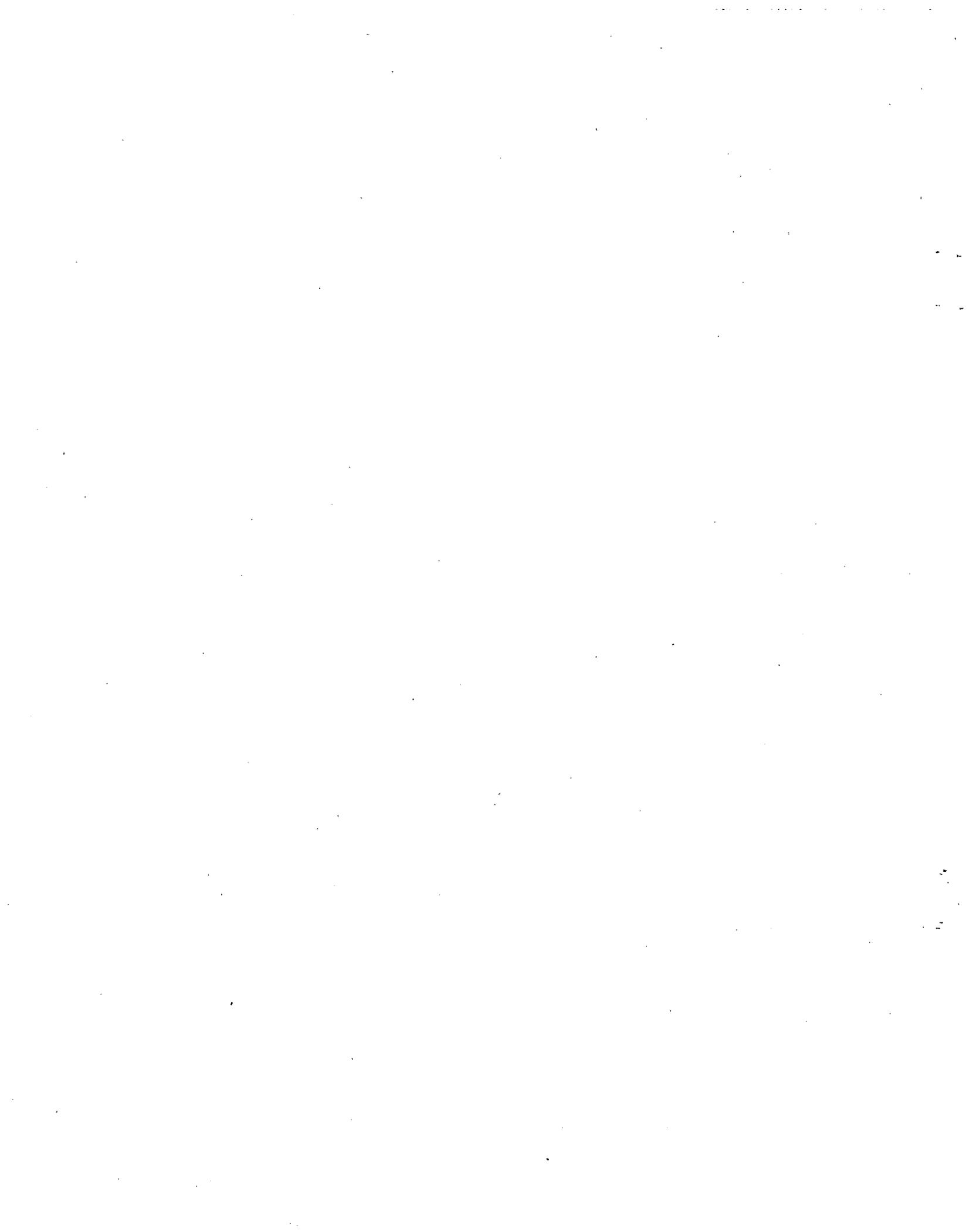
There is very little documentation about Asian Pacific youth and the juvenile justice system. The Asian Pacific American population will reach 3.5 to 4 million in the 1980's. Statistics show that about 44% of the refugee population will be under 18 years of age. With the rapid increase in juvenile and adult crime, a disturbing aspect of recent and current trends is the substantial over-representation of minorities. It is apparent that while minorities are over-represented as victims of delinquent acts and clients of the juvenile justice system, they are under-represented in the policy making area. This inconsistency tends to promote a situation where the people who design and run the system are unaware and insensitive to the culture, problems and feelings of those most affected by it.

These concerns led Pan Asia to participate in a project with the National Board YWCA that focuses on increasing the capacity of voluntary organizations to prevent and treat delinquency among girls. In its initial contacts with the National Board YWCA, Pan Asia accepted a limited advocacy role, of which objectives are to:

1. promote cultural awareness and pride among Asian Pacific female youth through cultural identity models, education and vocation.
2. serve as a national Asian Pacific resource group.
3. increase national awareness of the problems and needs of young Asian Pacific females.



Under their project, entitled "Just Us-Young Pan Asian Females and the Juvenile Justice System," Pan Asia convened two regional conferences, to bring together resources from all levels to assess the special needs and concerns of Asian Pacific youth with respect to the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency. The two conferences included an Eastern Regional Conference in Arlington, Virginia held on May 24, 1980 and a Western Regional Conference held in Seattle, Washington on October 17, 1980. These conferences provided a forum to identify priority needs, identify resources, and discuss ideas for the prevention of juvenile delinquency. With the Asian Pacific Community, Pan Asia hoped to develop awareness and sensitivity to the needs of Asian Pacific youth by involving youth representatives in all aspects of the project. With the momentum from the two regional conferences, Pan Asia will convene a national conference in Washington, D.C. in the Spring of 1981, at which time a model program will be developed. The national conference findings will be the basis for developing prevention and treatment models and advocacy programs for replication in Pan Asian communities throughout the nation.



OPENING SESSION

OPENING SESSION

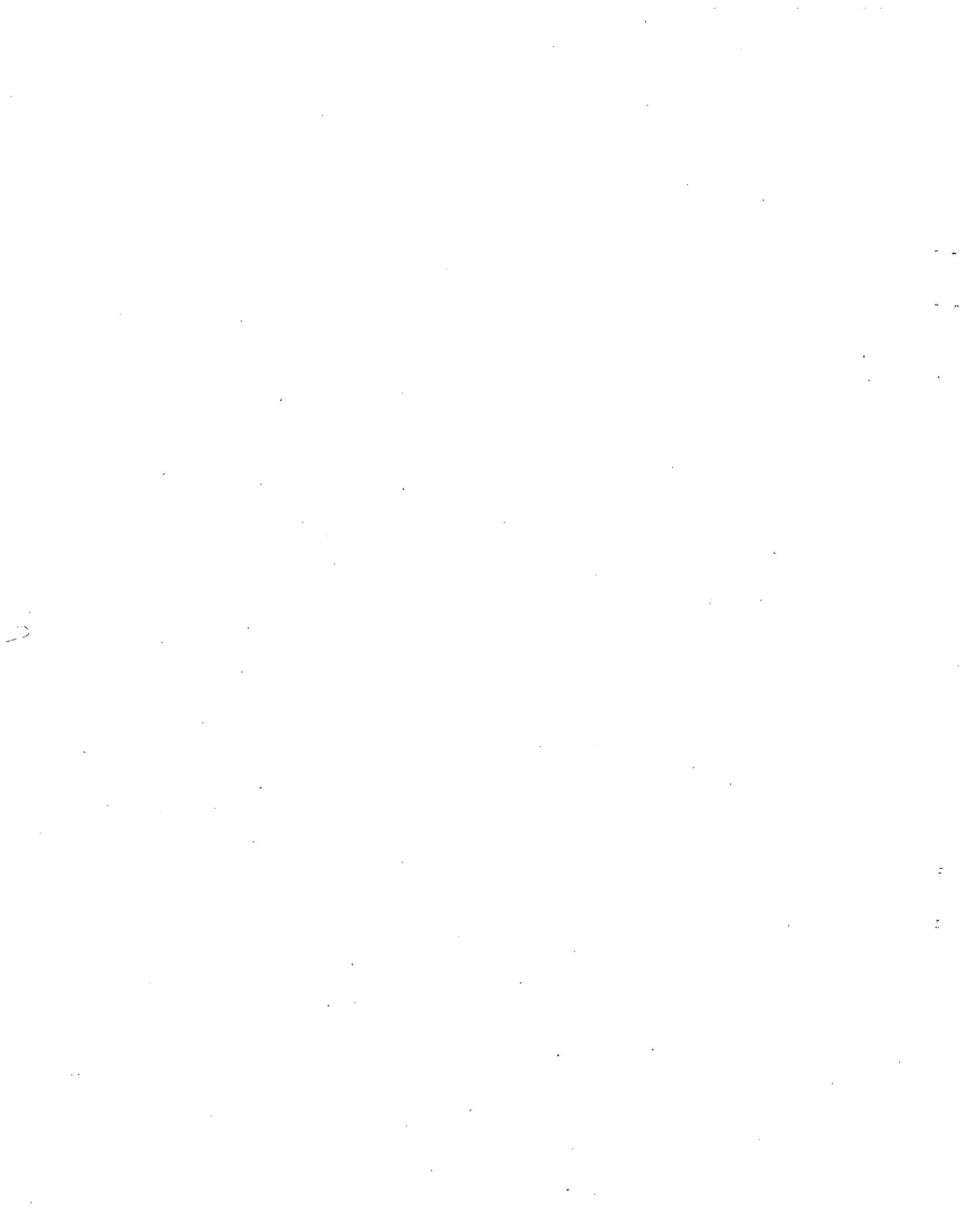
The Organization of Pan Asian American Women's (PAN ASIA) Juvenile Justice Project (JJP), "JUST US -- YOUNG PAN ASIAN FEMALES AND THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM" brought together Asian Pacific (APA) community agencies, juvenile justice practitioners, students, parents, educators and other interested people. The all-day conference was held at Seattle University's Champion Tower on October 18, 1980 -- the culmination of many hours of meetings and conferences with the Western Regional Advisory Committee.

Participants included adults and youths from the major Asian Pacific groups -- Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese, Vietnamese, and Guamanian. They came primarily from California and Washington with a few students from Guam, Hawaii and Alaska. They came prepared to discuss specific problems facing not only female youths but all APA youths. While presentors acknowledged certain limitations of the conference, due to the requirements of Pan Asia's contract with the National Board YWCA, they were able to prioritize the needs of young female youths between the ages of 12 to 17.

Besides members of Pan Asia and the National Board, YWCA, social welfare organizations represented at the conference included: Oakland Chinese Community Council; the Filipino Youth Activities of Seattle; Chinatown YWCA, San Francisco; West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Center, San Francisco; Central Continuation High School Service for Asian American Youth in Los Angeles; Korean Community Center, San Francisco; and Korean Youth Center, Los Angeles. Also, the Asian Counseling and Referral Service, Seattle; Seattle Bilingual and Desegregation Services; School District Association of Washington State/Community Youth Services; Seattle Police Department; City of Seattle Law and Justice Planning Office; Youth Accountability Program, Seattle; Center for Career Alternatives; South King County Multi-Service Center; Public Defender's Office; King County Department of Youth Services; and the Office of the Mayor of Seattle.

The conference began with the welcoming and explanatory comments given by Anne Uno, the national Juvenile Justice Project coordinator; Isobel Clark, the Juvenile Justice Project director for the National Board YWCA; Betty Lee, chairperson of the JJP Advisory Committee, Pan Asia; and Betty Wakiji, the Eastern Regional Conference coordinator.

It was stressed by both Uno and Clark that the intent of the regional conference was to discuss the extent of juvenile delinquency among Asian Pacific American females between the ages of 12 to 17. They urged the attendees to discuss specific problems within their own ethnic groups, or in their geographic locale, to join with other participants at the end of the day to focus on the most pressing needs, and to brainstorm for possible solutions and programs which would be



considered at Pan Asia's national JJP conference in April 1981. Lee described the objectives of Pan Asia, the first national Asian Pacific American women's organization in the United States, and its involvement with the National Board, YWCA's Juvenile Justice Project. Wakiji summarized the proceedings of the Eastern Regional Conference which was held in Virginia in April 1980.

The keynote speaker of the Western Regional Conference was Bernadette Agor-Matsuno, community organizer for the Seattle Police Department Crime Prevention Division. She set the tempo for the all-day conference by pointing out the lack of information about APA females who are juvenile offenders.

Ms. Agor-Matsuno's talk, "Asian Women: Delinquency and Prevention," is reprinted here.



ASIAN WOMEN
DELINQUENCY AND PREVENTION



ASIAN WOMEN: DELINQUENCY AND PREVENTION

Keynote Address

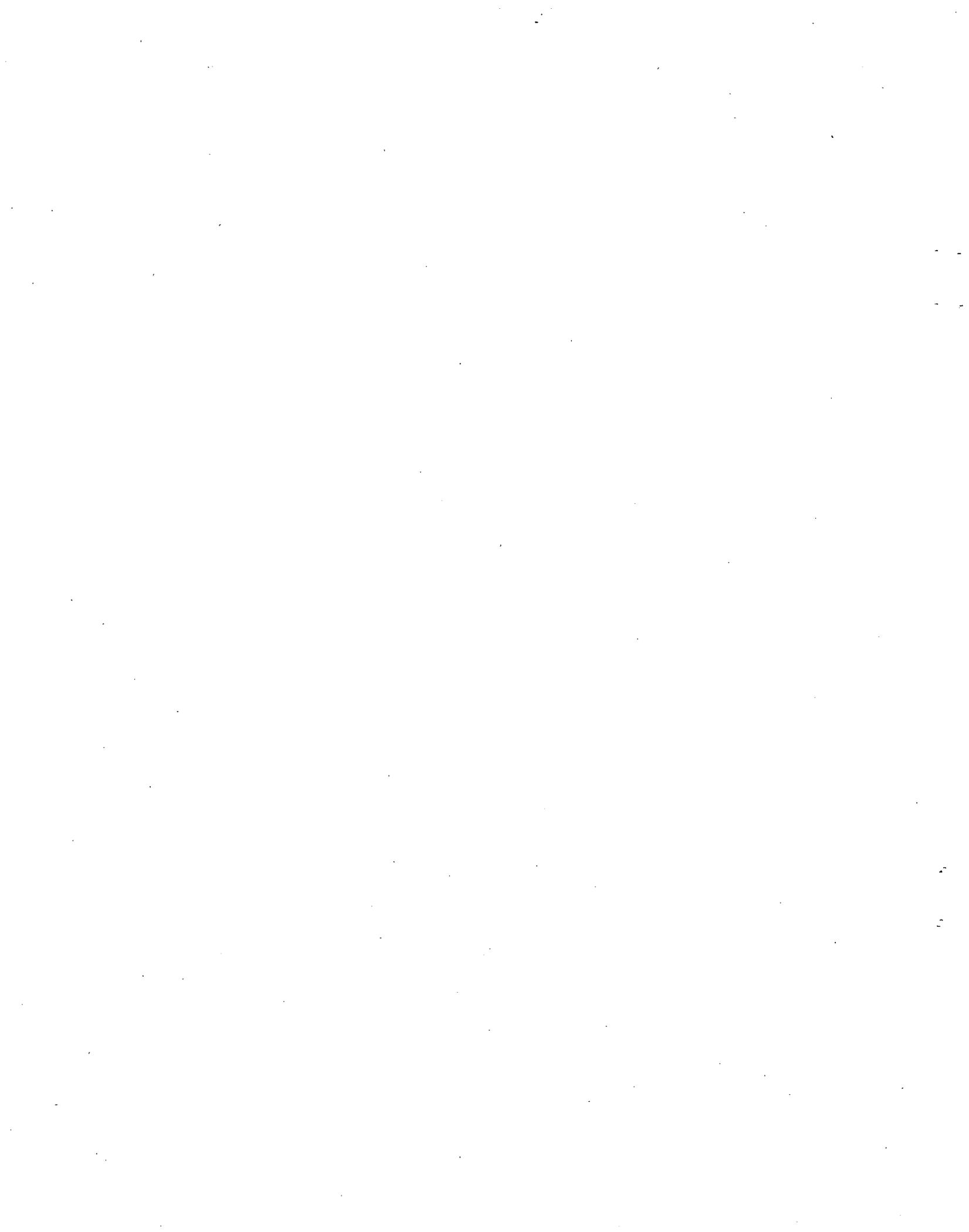
Bernadette Agor-Matsuno

I am flattered by the invitation to speak today, but besides being an ego booster for myself, this conference serves as a first of its kind ... one that addresses the issue of our Asian young people and the juvenile justice system. To those of you who are "old timers" in this field of work, I commend your perserverance; to the rookies ... we need the new blood and your energy that goes along with it and to those of you who thought you were getting out of this field but find yourself here today, I say welcome back.

When Dorothy Cordova invited me to speak, she said she wanted me to talk about the juvenile justice system. My initial reaction was "fantastic, I like general topics." She then added, "as it relates to Asian females between the ages of 12 and 17" at which point I knew I was in trouble.

Six years ago when I worked with the Juvenile Division of the Public Defender's office, I never worked on a case involving an Asian female offender. I never saw an Asian face behind the walls of the girls unit of the juvenile detention center. Granted, this may not be the most scientific method from which conclusions should be drawn, but there would be very little argument over my statement that young Asian women are not likely to be involved in "hard core" delinquent acts.

I then did some research to find out if this had changed over the years. Having been in Graduate School and recalling the "Points to Remember" handout received in Research 501, I headed to the library to review the literature. I was not surprised to find the dearth of information on Asian females overwhelming. Reviewing the Seattle Police Department juvenile arrests report for 1979 brought a glimmer of hope. They at least kept records of racial breakdown, but only for Japanese and Chinese youngsters and not by sex. The best I could do in terms of getting a numbers count was through the King County Juvenile Court which received 87 referrals of Asian females in 1979. Sixty-eight or 78% of the young women were referred and charged with third degree theft -- shoplifting of goods less than \$250 in value. Three were charged with minor consumption and possession of alcohol, two for obstructing a public servant, five for termination of Diversion Agreement and one each for Offering and Agreeing to an act of prostitution and first degree burglary.



Based on this information and your experiences as practitioners in the juvenile justice field, can we still safely say that delinquency among Asian females remains relatively low? And if so, how much longer will this be the case? I tend to believe that we are fortunate to not have a crisis on our hands, but we cannot afford to be complacent and wait for matters to get worse before we take action. We should be concerned for a number of reasons:

1. The number of juveniles arrested for Part I offenses in Seattle has steadily increased over the past four years: 3,965 in 1976 to 4,796 in 1979. Among Asian youth a similar increase is seen, although not as great, for both Part I and Part II.
2. Not only is the arrest rate increasing, but juveniles are also being arrested for more serious offenses. In 1978, close to one-third of the juvenile arrests were for status offenses; however, the number of juveniles arrested for serious crimes comprised a significant proportion of the total arrests for serious crimes in Seattle. Fortunately, Asian young people are not being arrested for serious crime. In fact, only 26 of the 323 Asian youngsters referred to Juvenile Court in 1979 were arrested for serious crimes. However, 163 were referred for crimes which come close to being considered "serious," such as Larceny/Theft in the second and third degrees and Burglary in the second degree.
3. As the divorce rate among Asian families increases, along with the dissolution of the family unit we will see more young people in conflict. How many of you have worked with youngsters whose problems with the law began with difficulties in the home?

I am a strong advocate of prevention programs as I assume most of you are. In fact, most individuals in the field of juvenile justice would agree that our time and money would be better spent in keeping young people out of the system. However, when we examine delinquency prevention programs in the Seattle area, we find that the majority of services are only available after the youth has been arrested and referred to the court. Many residential treatment and counseling programs will only accept referrals made by juvenile court. Again, this means the youngster has to be inside the system before services are available.

Ironically, once inside the system, this doesn't always guarantee that a young person will receive the services he/she needs, as was the case with Sheryl, a 15 year-old who had been referred to the court on an Incurability petition.

Sheryl's (not her real name) parents were claiming that she was "beyond their control" and were asking the court to intervene. She was a runner, was out of school permanently after being expelled a number of times and was not getting along very well at home. Everyone (caseworker, judge, prosecuting attorney, defense attorney) agreed that a temporary placement outside of the home would help ease the tension between Sheryl and her parents and that eventually, with some assistance from the probation staff, parents and daughter would be able to resolve their differences. If any of you have been in courtroom for a disposition hearing, you can understand the relief and joy I experienced when all parties were in agreement.

Several residential programs in the Seattle area received a referral letter from Sheryl's caseworker, asking that she be considered for placement. The responses were disappointing! No one wanted a runner because she wouldn't stay around long enough to get help. Sheryl wasn't in school and there was no academic program within the facility; her emotional problems weren't serious enough; she was too old, she was too young ... the list goes on and on. To make a long story short, Sheryl returned home, ran away after five days and was arrested about three weeks later for prostitution. She finally did get placed outside of her home ... at Maple Lane, a facility operated by the State of Washington for delinquent girls.

Please do not misinterpret my motive for using Sheryl's experience with the juvenile justice system. I simply use her story to illustrate some of the deficiencies, as I see them, of existing prevention programs. Allow me to digress for a few minutes to make my point.

When I interviewed for my position with the Police Department, one of the questions asked was: Explain the difference between "proactive and reactive" approaches to crime prevention. I had to think about this one for a while, but I guess my answer was somewhat intelligent because I got the job. Traditionally, and this may still be true today in many departments, the role of the police officer is a reactionary one. A crime occurs and the officer is solely responsible for apprehending the suspect. The police become involved only after the commission of a crime. Within the crime prevention unit, the philosophy dictates that potential victims of crime be identified and taught how to reduce or to minimize their chances of becoming victims -- this, essentially, can be described as the "proactive" approach to crime prevention.

Although the terms reactive and proactive are used in reference to crime prevention activities, they are also applicable to delinquency prevention. Too many of our programs are reactive in that they provide services after a young person has established a pattern of having trouble with the law. In many instances, this is too late and results in ineffective treatment. The high recidivism rate among youthful offenders will attest to this. I suggest that we seriously



reconsider our approach to delinquency prevention and that we do it now by thinking "proactive."

I could go on and on about prevention programs .. what kinds, how they should be designed and operated, how to fund them, but you, as a group, have more brain power than I do and I want to insure that it gets put to work. However, I will leave you with some "food for thought." I quote Ed Good, former Director of Seattle's Community Crime Prevention Program:

"Operating a prevention program is like trying to have intercourse with an elephant:

Some of the main action has to occur at a rather high level.

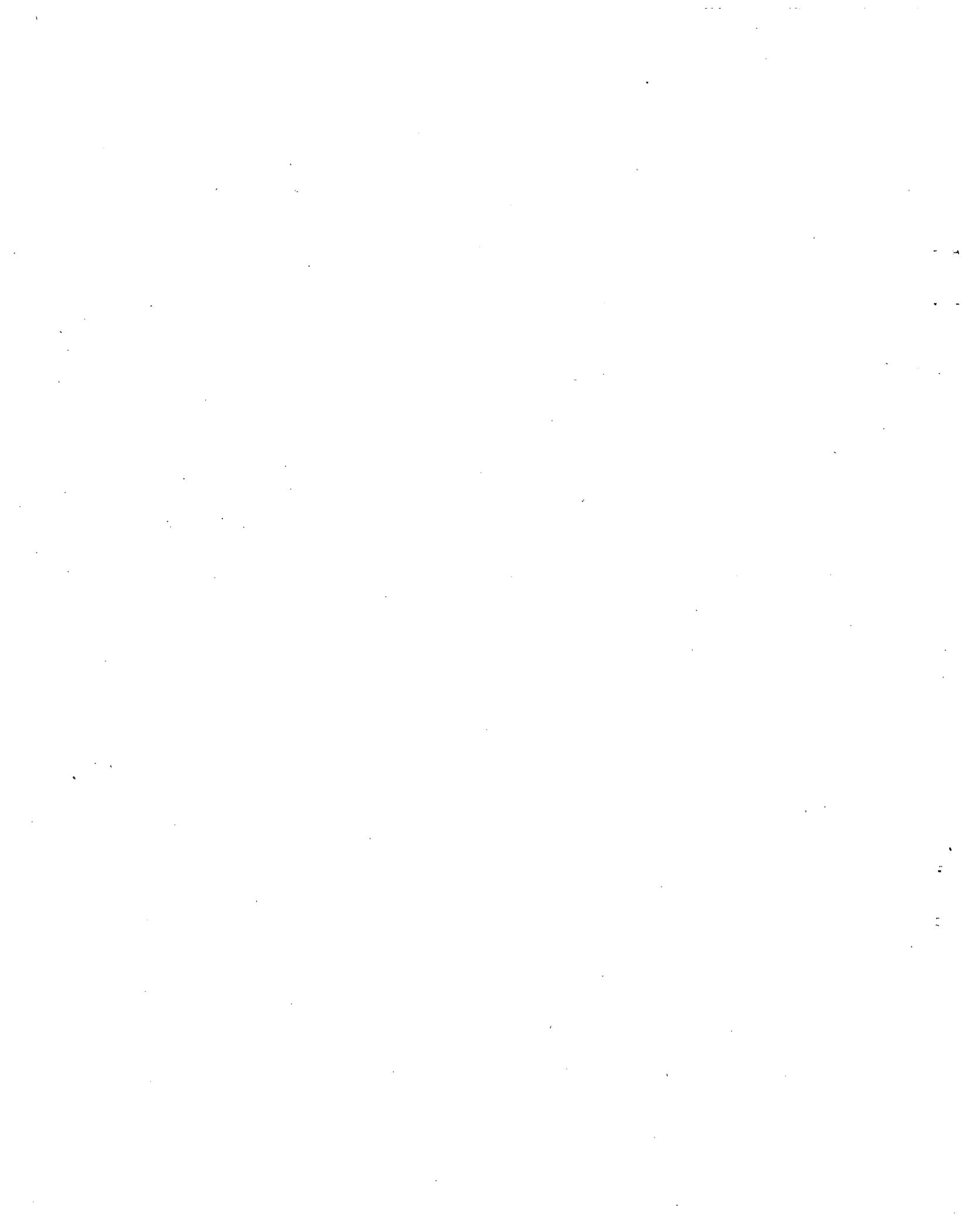
You have to wait two years to see any results.

You can get stomped on in the process."

I hope you see some results before phase three sets in! Thank you and have a good conference.



PROBLEMS OF ASIAN PACIFIC FEMALES
(MORNING WORKSHOPS)



Drugs, Gangs and the Schools

The establishment of a national communication network among Asian Pacific American groups was one of the objectives of Pan Asia's Juvenile Justice Project. Therefore, great pains were made to include as active conference workshop participants a number of APA agencies/organizations, especially those working with youths. The workshop on drugs, gangs and the schools was moderated by Ben Menor, the dean of students at Mountain View High School in Mountain View, California.

Tom Kim, director of the Korean Youth Center in San Francisco, told of Asian Pacific American (APA) gangs, which had existed on the West Coast for a number of years, and of killings committed but not brought to the attention of the general public by the media until non-Asian Americans and/or non-gang participants were among the victims. He spoke of white probation officers who eagerly used the services of bilingual/bicultural counselors because whites were not able to cope with nor deal with problems of Asian immigrant youth.

Drug problems of APA youth was the topic of Jane Kim, coordinator of the Korean Youth Center in Los Angeles. The apparent invisibility of problems stemmed from the fact that many cases, such as death by overdose, were handled discreetly by physicians or that apprehended APA drug abusers would be counseled by police who would return them to society. Very little documented information was another problem and only until the 70's when the Asian Movement began was factual material available. Culture played a vital role because Korean youths did not want to embarrass their families and Koreans take care of their own problems.

A 1974 report confirmed an increase in drug abuse among APA women between the ages of 15 to 25 years in Los Angeles. Drugs most frequently used are barbituates, pheno-barbitrol, uppers, heroin, cocaine, as well as paint and glue. The majority of APA drug users began when they were 13 years-old. Jane quoted a writing describing Asian female drug users:

"She's a yellow in a white world.
She's a woman in a man's world.
She's a drug user in a straight world."

According to the teaching of Confucius, women are subjects to their fathers before marriage, then to their husbands, and when widowed, to their oldest son. There is a conflict living in two cultures, therefore; although most can deal with this conflict, others cannot and turn to drugs to escape.



The growing conflict of values among APA youths was also the focus of Sandi Fujita's presentation. A high school counselor, she cited the many types of decisions teenagers in school have to make: whether or not to use drugs, and whether or not to have sex. The schools often have negative attitudes about students, especially if they are minorities and low achievers. They assume the student will do all the wrong things. Fujita felt the schools need to become more positive; they need to develop a support system for students that will prevent future problems and would raise the low esteem many students have of themselves. She feels many Asian students cannot cope with problems when the family and peer group values collide.

Chiyo Maniwa, a teacher in the Central Continuation High Service for Asian American Youth Branch in Los Angeles, spoke about her school which deals with the Asian high school dropout. These kids break the mold of the good Asian student. Most of the youngsters are immigrants who came to the United States when they were over 10 years old, already developed in the language and culture of their native land. These young people find it difficult to make the transition and to assimilate. The school system does not know how to cope with these students and their problems. Often they were allowed to remain out of school for a period of time before alerting parents of the situation.

Central Continuation High School is located in the Asian community and began in 1974 as an agreement between the Los Angeles Unified School System and the APA community agency that provides the facility and whatever support staff it can afford. The school system pays for Maniwa's salary as a certified teacher and for some of the students' books. The school is existing on borrowed time and an operating budget of \$20,000 a year for approximately 50 students. They use community resources such as the East West Players who teach theater arts in order to supplement the single teacher arrangement of the school. Maniwa said that half of her students are on probation for theft or drugs. Some belong to gangs. The school has no recruitment but there is currently a waiting list of 20 APA youths. Students are encouraged to eventually return to regular schools.

PROBLEMS AMONG ASIAN PACIFIC FEMALE YOUTHS

Due to a mixup in scheduling, one of the speakers in the workshop on problems of Asian Pacific females was not able to show up. It was consolidated with the workshop on drugs, gangs, and schools and was facilitated by Mary Jean Buza-Sims, former staff with the Seattle Public Schools/Human Relations Task Force.

John Ragudos, executive administrator of the Filipino Youth Activities, has worked with Filipino American youths for over ten years, but among the many juvenile offenders he assisted, very few were females. The girls he worked with were either runaways, shoplifters, involved with drugs or apprehended for fights in school. On the other hand, he has seen the delinquency rate for Filipino males rise quite rapidly and some of those apprehended have committed rather serious crimes.

He contacted other Asian youth-serving agencies and reported they also had infrequent contacts with Asian females who were juvenile offenders. He pointed out that among Filipino families, it was the custom to watch the girls carefully and to restrict their actions outside of the homes. Brothers were instructed to "keep an eye on the sisters." Ragudos felt this double "whammy" was most effective in keeping the incidence of juvenile delinquency low among young Filipino females.

During the discussion period, a question was raised if it was a myth that Asian women were "model women." It was felt that there is a great deal of conflict among Asian females -- society tells them one thing while their own tradition demands another mode of behavior. Also, are parents in conflict about their own children. Another participant had strong feelings that each young person should be proud of their own culture and that this sense of pride in their own ethnicity should come before being Asian.

The moderator, Buza-Sims, pointed out that some Asian women are passive reactors, and may do things behind the scenes, i.e. "too slick to get caught." She also pointed out that our parents constantly tell us to be good students and never commit crimes. Mental health problems are increasing among Asian Americans, but the number of crimes committed are still not large enough to warrant sufficient attention.

Another discussant felt Asian men had problems if they were resentful of wives who want to become more independent and to utilize their skills. Many young Asian females see a conflict in the attitude of their parents and their need to become more like their peers in the majority society. Yet another participant felt that Asian Pacific females should be thankful they have strong family ties.

Immigrant Youth

Fu Sing Temple, EEO officer of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences in Washington, D.C., facilitated the workshop on the problems of immigrant youths.

Shirley Wong, information specialist for education research development for the Far West Laboratory in San Francisco, conducted a survey on immigrant youths in San Francisco's Chinatown in order to present some insight about the unique problems they may be facing in their new country. Her conclusion was that many immigrant youths are trying to find themselves and are influenced by peer pressure. Economic survival mandates that both parents work but limited job skills and educational resources often reduce the parents' opportunities for better paying jobs. Thus, not only is a child deprived of supervision by a parent during part of the day, but many of these youths cannot use their parents as role models. This often causes tension in the family. The parents have certain values for their children, but there is outside pressure to be accepted by peers whose values may sometimes conflict with those of the parents. Wong also felt there was overpublicity of gangs and that this publicity "obscured the real problems of immigrant youths who were made the scapegoats by the media."

James Do, a Vietnamese counselor with the Indochinese Re-Settlement Program in Seattle, spoke of the problems of Vietnamese youth. He felt these were usually based on language barriers and cultural differences. He found that many Vietnamese youths are assimilating behavioral patterns of their American schoolmates, thus causing tension at home with parents who prefer to have their children retain the old ways. Do feels parents worry about non-Vietnamese associates of their children. He also stated that many children are not accepted by American classmates because of their inability to speak English.

The Need of Family Support

David Ilumin, director of the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Corporation of San Francisco, moderated the workshop which addressed the importance of family support.

Lucia Cheong and Judy Chew of the Oakland Chinese Community Center shared their experiences of working with Chinese youths in the Bay area with the participants in their workshop. The center has 50 people on staff and is a multi-service agency which offers tutorial services to youth and utilizes non-traditional counseling based on family support. The two women pointed out that parents needed outside support to understand the differences between their value system and the Western system. The traditional values stress non-verbal communication, non-public display of sexuality, independence, aggressive and assertive behavior, control over their environment and materialism.

Although many of the immigrant youths they work with are bilingual, their parents do not have the training nor the understanding to express themselves verbally to their children. Thus, they are stymied in their attempts to communicate with their children.

Maribel Santos, of the Asian Counseling and Referral Service in Seattle, observed that family support is the provision of basic survival, emotional and spiritual needs of family members. Failure to provide anyone of those individual supports merely makes the achievement of family unity ineffective. Filipinos believe in the strength of the united family. Immigrant families, therefore, see a breakdown and a redefining of roles because often times the immigration process does not allow total family immigration, in most cases, consequently separation occurs. Since the father is the first to migrate, the physical absence of the breadwinner loosens the family structure because of the absence of the traditional strong figure role of the father in the family.

Furthermore, when the children come to the U.S., they are exposed to a new culture and environment that affect their traditional role in the family. Because parents are busy working they are not able to reinforce the traditional values and to prepare their children for new life situations. For example, parents expect their children to participate in providing the financial needs of the family, whereas, in the Philippines they only had to go to school. Santos feels this "mastering of economic independence creates disunity between parents and child" and this ultimately weakens family unity.

Further problems occur when Filipino parents neglect to become involved in PTA meetings, school activities, etc., because in the Philippines, parents believed teachers have sole responsibility for children in school. Thus, many youth see this non-participation as a lack of support from their parents. As the youth experience cultural changes they often feel he/she is not getting needed family support. Often times, the youth becomes vulnerable to the influences of drugs and alcohol. The grim results are drop-outs, abuse, delinquency, immoral activities and other forms of anti-social behavior. In relation to mental health, the child with a problem is singled out by the family who often fail to see that the problem is usually a symptom of existing family problems.

What Young People Think About:
Parents/School/Police/American Born vs. Immigrant Born/
Other Ethnic Groups/Inner City vs. Suburban Life/
Peer Group Pressure/ Drugs and Alcohol/
Sex, Birth Control, Abortion and Unwed Pregnancies

This workshop was designed to probe the thoughts of youth on a variety of problems. It was facilitated by Vivian Ichimura Miller who is on the staff of Family Therapy for the city of Sacramento and by Gloria Adams, a counselor at Meany Middle School in Seattle.

The presentors included Gloria Breiz, San Francisco; Mayumi Uno, Hawthorne, CA; Caroline Eclipse, Tacoma, WA; Elaine Lee, Seattle; Mui Truong, Seattle; Edie Garo, Redmond, WA; Virginia Guzman, Seattle and Guam; Pearl Ancheta, Alaska; and Beth Dayao, San Francisco. These young people spoke on topics which ranged from parents and schools to interracial dating. The opinions were strong and varied and most of the participants in the group wanted the discussion to continue in the afternoon.

One of the presentors talked about the confused and inferior feelings she had about herself during most of her secondary school years. These feelings of inferiority were reinforced by a school system which stated that important contributions to America were only made by people of European descent. Therefore, she had this futile feeling that as a Filipina, she would never be recognized as a worthwhile person. She was unable to convey her feelings to her mother who was still struggling herself to become acculturated into America's "mainstream" society. Her mother felt her daughter should also live up to all the traditional Filipino values. This participant felt it was important for her to develop a distinct identity based upon values and experiences encountered by herself.

Another young girl spoke about sex and the fact that despite our society's preoccupation with it, most Asians don't discuss it openly. Young Asian females are constantly exposed to some form of sex education through entertainment, advertisement, news media, friends and others; often much of it is negative or at the very least, inaccurate and confusing. For most Asians old country traditions and values still influence much of their daily lives; therefore, it is very difficult to talk to parents about sexual matters because it just isn't acceptable. So many young Asian females turn to friends for information. She felt sex education taught in school is basically about the use of contraceptives and the consequences of having sex. This panelist felt girls should also be taught the importance of caring and loving a person and about the responsibilities that go with having sex with another person.

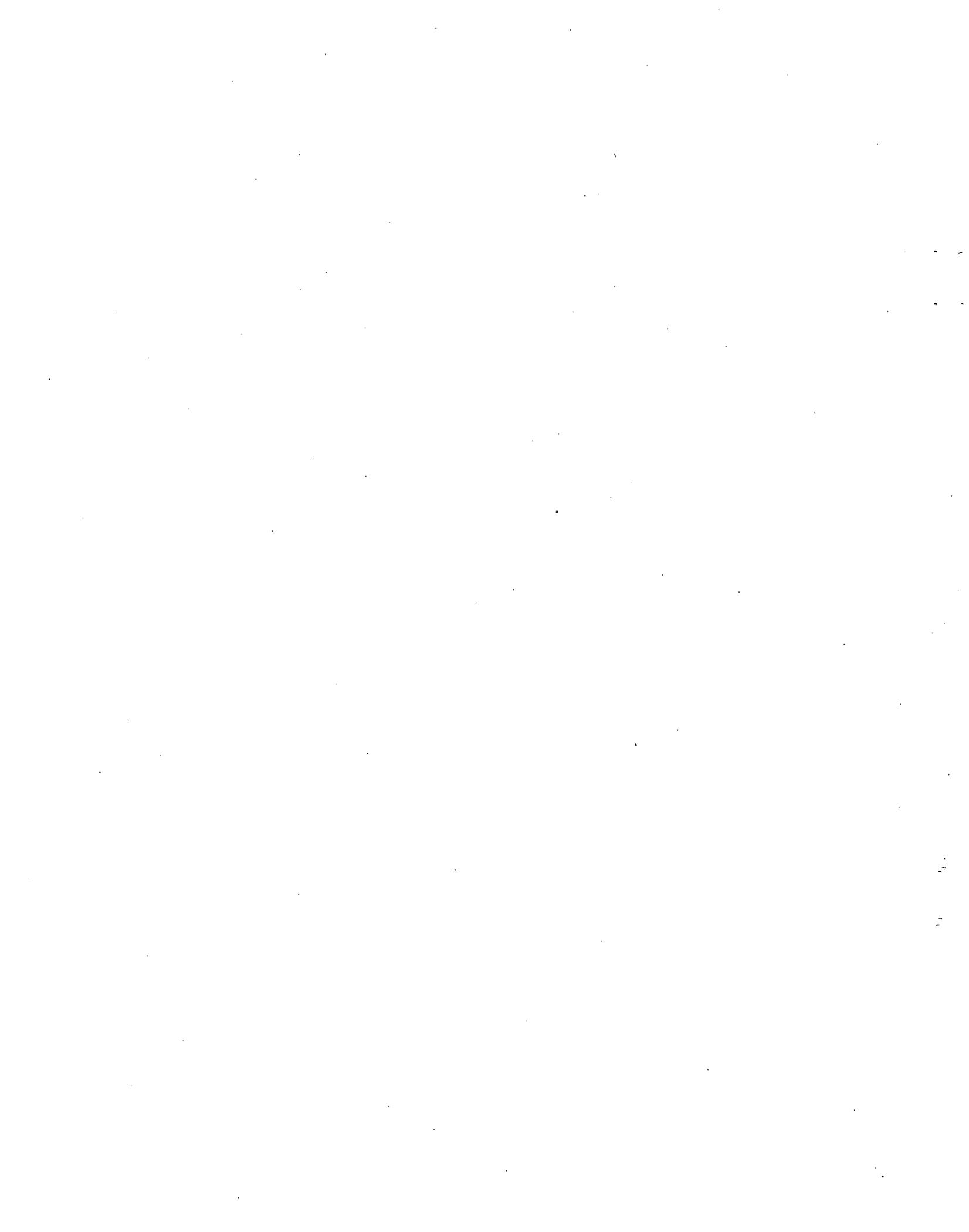
The subject of interracial dating brought to the surface some rather discriminatory attitudes some participants felt towards people of other races. These comments were quickly countered by more liberal and non-traditional Asian Americans. The question posed to the group was: Why are APA parents more apt to accept a white person as a date and/or marriage partner for their children? The discussion group agreed it was because parents perceived whites, rather than blacks or Hispanics, had more "power" and, therefore, were able to do more for their children.

Unplanned pregnancies revealed a wide variance in attitudes and these were often based on the ethnicity of the participant. A student from Guam said abortion clinics did not exist there. So if a girl became pregnant she was sent away to have the baby and allowed to return to the family when the baby was given away. A Young Japanese girl volunteered that her group had become quite American and aborted unwanted/unplanned pregnancies. The Filipinas, on the other hand, could not accept abortion and wondered why families of young unwed girls could not accept the infants.

The discussion about American born and immigrants showed that most workshop participants had a tendency to stick with their own kind. American APAs found it hard to relate to recent immigrants because of differences in language and culture. This was especially true of young people in high school. If their own parents were immigrants this caused some disagreement within the family.

The fear that she will not be prepared with practical knowledge which will allow her to cope with the responsibility of college and adult life was the underlying theme of one of the presentors. She felt teachers often times do not seem to have time to help students who need extra help, because teachers seem preoccupied with a mountain of paper work. She questioned the priorities of the teachers -- whether they were to fill out forms or to teach the student.

Although the school she attends is well-integrated, she wonders about the effect forced busing has on young children who must spend long hours away from home. She asked the rhetorical question: "With the funds they are using to bus children, could they use the money to improve the quality of the schools and the schools' programs and to hire more qualified teachers?"



LUNCHEON AND AFTERNOON SPEAKERS

Cheryl Chow, principal of Sharples Junior High School in Seattle and one of the original members of the Chinese Drill Team, was the luncheon speaker. A witty, no-nonsense speaker, she told the audience that Asian females bear the brunt of a double standard of behavior. What is all right for their brothers is not always right for the girls. The females are expected to be dutiful daughters, do well in school, and never get into trouble. They are expected to follow a certain mode of behavior-- demure, quiet, studious, but they are surrounded by a society that allows females of other races the opportunity to bend the rules occasionally.

The Asian woman, said Chow, is the "scapegoat" for many things. In affirmative action she can be counted twice: first as a woman (thereby becoming a threat to both white and black women in hiring) and second as a minority (thereby insuring the closing of more doors to minority men).

According to Chow, many Asian women, especially young ones who have gone to college and have accomplished something of their own, are finding it difficult to be accepted by young men of their own ethnic group. The men view these relatively successful and more assertive women as a possible threat to their masculinity. However, these same men are not adverse to seeking the companionship of white women. Thus, we see many educated Asian Pacific women marrying outside of their own race.

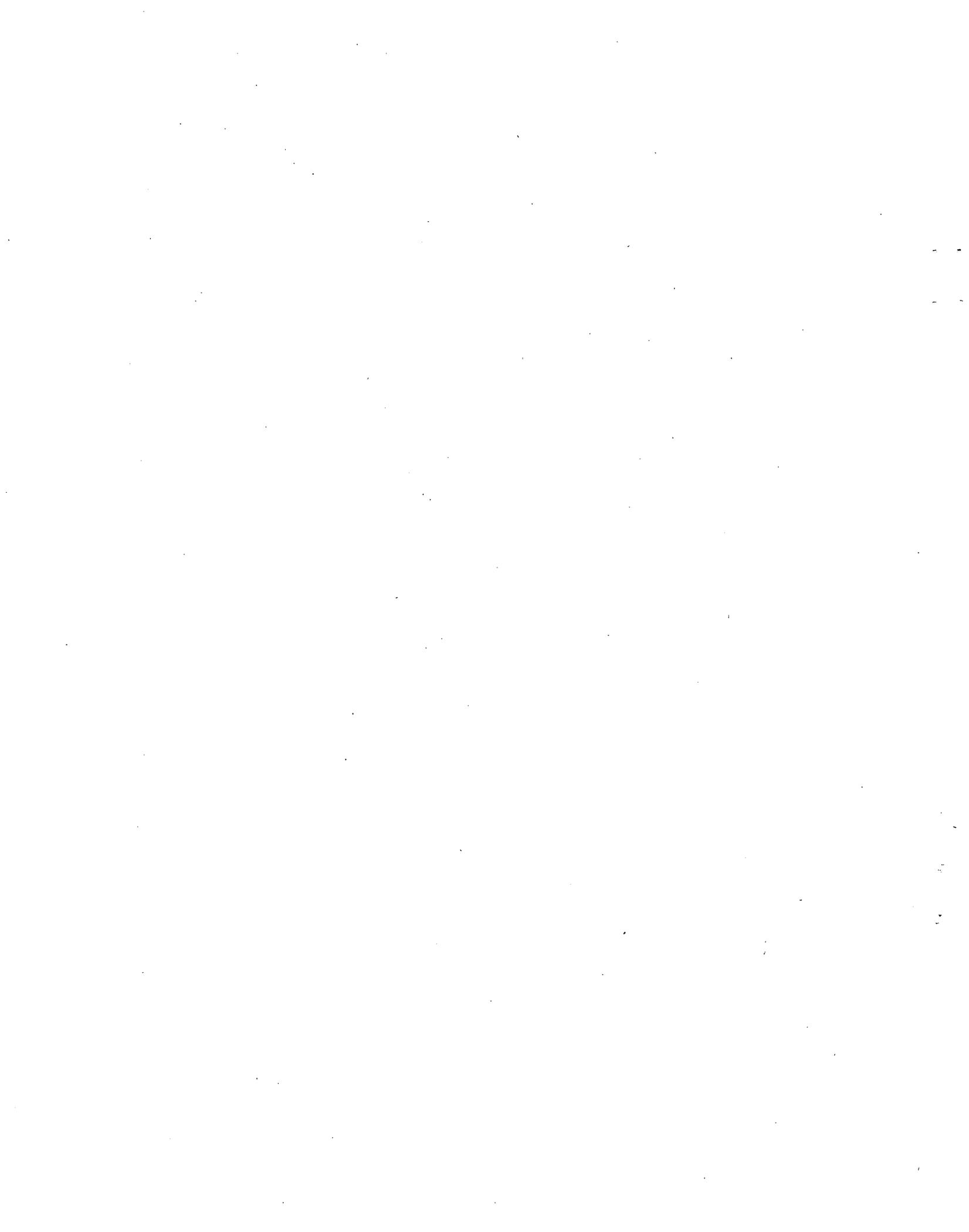
Afternoon Speaker

Josephine Gampon, a psychotherapist with the county of Santa Clara's North County Mental Health Community Center in Palo Alto, California was the afternoon speaker. She spoke of the basic differences between APA people and the majority society. For example, white middle-class people are motivated by guilt. Consequently, white therapists found it difficult to relate to APA patients because they could not understand where they were coming from. For example, lack of bilingual and clear communication between the therapist and APA patient resulted in the latter missing appointments for treatment and checkups. The whites also could not deal with cultural realities such as the extended family and disregarded the importance of this phenomenon.

She spoke about the feelings of being "different" in a white society that will not accept an American-born APA as being American, but rather views them as foreign and alien. This has caused many problems and has made many young Asian Pacific Americans ashamed of their own ethnicity.

Gampon spoke of a day treatment group she conducted which had many young people, some of whom were suicidal or just released from psychiatric treatment. A third general Japanese American 15 year-old told how it felt to be considered by his peers as different from them because of his physical appearance. He also talked of his American born parents, whose birth in this country did not prevent them from being sent to Manzanar during the Second World War. The effects of this incarceration weighed heavily on the young man. The group began to address this problem and only then were they able to deal with other problems facing them, such as what is it like to be Asian, and how can one deal with his/her own identity.

Another one of Gampon's patients had been a mildly successful lawyer in the Philippines, but was unable to find a position in his chosen profession in the United States. The mother, however, immediately found employment as a nurse. The 14 year-old American-born daughter brought her father in for treatment at the center and acted as his translator. In his depression, he could only communicate in his native language. Gampon saw a "role reversal" between father and daughter who not only translated for him but was also in charge of getting him to the clinic and giving him his medication. She was concerned that this young girl became the "culture carrier" for her family and was not given the freedom to tend to her own process of acculturation -- to deal with the reality of her own integration of what it is like to be a Filipina born in the U.S. and how to blend the two cultures.



SYSTEMS OF RESPONSE

Systems of Response/
The Juvenile Justice System -- The Role of the Police Department,
the Prosecuting Attorney, the Juvenile Court,
and the Public Defender

The afternoon workshops dealt with the systems of response to actual or potential juvenile delinquency. These included the juvenile justice system, community groups and other agencies (diversion alternatives) and the innovative prospectives of response.

Most of the participants in the first afternoon workshop were professionals in the field of law and justice. Dale Tiffany, director of the Law and Justice Division of the City of Seattle, served as the facilitator of this group. Because most of the information passed on by presentors was already known to those present, it was difficult to have an open and lively discussion. A panelist later expressed the need for the workshop to have the additional catalyst of outside people, such as educators, students and community people to make the discussion more meaningful. For example, it was agreed by everyone that it was important to create a viable linkage with the schools because many of the youths getting into trouble were still in school. Yet, there were no students and only one educator in this particular workshop.

The presentors included Bernadette Agor-Matsuno, community organizer of the Seattle Police Department Crime Prevention Division; Robley Yee, probation counselor, King County Department of Youth Services in Seattle; Alma Kimura, Public Defender's Office; and Robert Ryan, King County Prosecuting Attorney.

They spoke of the lack of professional Asian women in law and justice. In Seattle there were no Asian women who were police officers. White officers found it difficult to understand the cultural patterns and standards of immigrants. They found it hard to accept the fact that what constituted a crime in the U.S. did not necessarily constitute a crime in another culture. For example, in some instances stealing or theft in America would be considered "borrowing" in Samoa. A further complication is that the Juvenile Code differs according to locality. In Seattle the emphasis is on the act committed rather than on the history of the juvenile offender. In other parts of the country, the courts tend to be harder on youths who are poor and a minority, or who come from broken homes. Lawyers from the Public Defender's Office spoke of the philosophy of their organization which is to provide adequate defense to any youth who must go to Juvenile Court.

The groups spoke about the lack of hard data about APA females who are breaking the law. It was the consensus of the professionals and a school administrator that APA girls were often involved in delinquent



acts. But the group spoke of the double standard that allows girls to go home even if caught in illegal activities with boys. APA girls were often handled "informally" (even in the schools), i.e., the family was called and the girl released to the parents rather than have her go through the court system. This courtesy was not often extended to black or even white girls. This led to a discussion of whether or not all cases should be handled by the social system rather than by the legal system.

Systems of Response/The Community

The workshop on Alternative Systems of Response -- The Community -- brought together practitioners who have worked many years in their respective communities. While they ranged from paid to professionals to dedicated volunteers, their commitment to keep youth in their particular ethnic communities out of trouble was the common thread that ran through the presentations. Ben Menor, dean of students at Mountain View High School in California, was the facilitator of the workshop.

Craig Choy, director of youth services in the Chinatown YMCA of San Francisco, explained the function and focus of his organization which is part of the national YMCA network. The programs are preventive measures for youths between the ages of 5 to 13 years. They are designed to give a strong foundation to youth when they are young, to build leadership capabilities and to develop a sense of "give and take" among the youth. The Chinatown YMCA is coed and deals now with many of the children of the Indochinese Refugees. The services offered are bilingual and most staff speak Chinese or are at least bicultural. Funding comes from the private sector, and as part of a national network, it is easier for them to receive monies from businesses.

Joan Cordova works with the youth in her church, Trinity Presbyterian Church in Stockton, California. Their programs provide youth the opportunity to participate as part of an extended family in a variety of activities. They try to develop leadership and to give their youth responsibilities for many of their programs. As part of a larger network -- the Presbyterian Church -- the young people have the opportunity to meet with young leaders from other churches and cities. Trinity Presbyterian has been a Filipino church but does not limit the congregation to that ethnic group: it is multi-racial. Chicanos, blacks and whites are members and active in all church activities. Participation in the religious activities of the church is not required.

Cheryl Chow has been active with the Chinese Girls' Drill Team in Seattle since its inception in 1950. She is the principle of Sharples Junior High School and was the first person of Chinese descent to hold this administrative post in Seattle. Chow is also active as a coach for the Seattle Chinese Athletic Association girls' basketball team. She felt athletic activities build camaraderie among girls because of the teamwork involved. She has seen a transformation of attitudes among the young women in her program and feels that being on a team has helped the girls overcome the stereotype of being quiet Asian girls. Chow felt there were some obstacles in trying to call attention, on a national scale, to the needs of Asian females.

Fred Cordova, manager of News Services at the University of Washington, defined culture as anything that is racial or ethnic. One of the founders of the Filipino Youth Activities of Seattle in 1957, he has been a volunteer ever since and was instrumental in beginning most of the programs that taught ethnic pride to the young Filipinos in the programs. Many of the youths served by FYA came from mixed marriages. He told the group of many young people who did not admit they were Filipinos and the struggle to give them something to be proud of. The results of low self-esteem and shame of what a person is often resulted in delinquent acts.

The high incidence of broken homes in the Filipino community contributed to the growing rate of juvenile offenders. He felt there was a spiritual vacuum among many of the young people of today. The FYA tried to go beyond folk dancing, camping, etc. It capitalized on the "extended family" phenomenon among Filipinos by giving to children who felt unwanted a sense of belonging and identification. Peer group influence was also utilized.

In 1959, Cordova began the FYA Princesa Drill Team, Cumbanchero Percussioners, and Mandayan Marchers. This unique marching and percussion group instilled great pride among the members and gave these young Filipinos the rare opportunity to compete with and become number one in competition with white, black and Asian groups. This activity raised the esprit de corps among the youths, built up discipline, gave them challenges, and allowed them to develop creative and innovative spin-off programs.

The success of the Drill Team and the other FYA activities made it possible for the FYA to eventually become a United Way agency. The FYA since 1957 has offered a variety of recreational educational and cultural activities to thousands of Filipino youths and their parents.

In the group discussion, some stated that communities without the resources of the four groups mentioned above should use the services of schools and other agencies.

Systems of Response/Diversion Alternatives

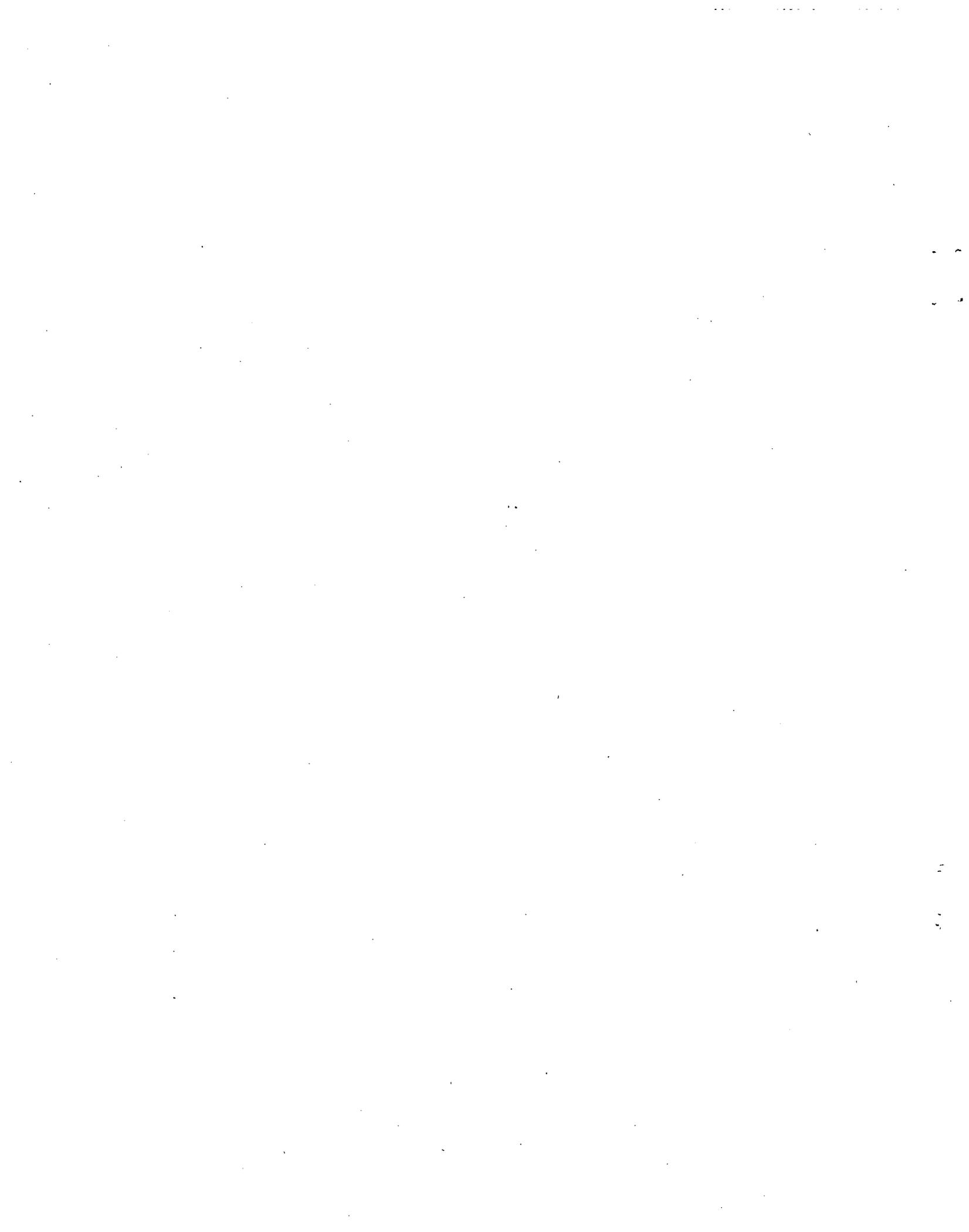
Diversion alternatives were explained by the next set of presentors, most of whom were professionals in the juvenile justice system. This group was facilitated by John Ragudos, executive administrator of the FYA, which is used as a diversion alternative for juvenile offenders in Seattle.

Lillian Tang is a social service coordinator for Southeast Youth Accountability and Service Bureau in Seattle. She told the group in this workshop that her agency has not been successful in reaching Asian youth. The accountability program provides an alternative to the juvenile delinquent who goes before a citizens' panel rather than the juvenile court. It provides communication within the community. She spoke of the attitudes Asians have about law enforcement, especially if they are immigrants. They feel that going to court is the ultimate disgrace, therefore it is important to let parents realize a specific alternative program would provide relief from this stigma.

Monina Makalalad is a youth employment counselor with the West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Corporation in San Francisco. She felt there were not enough opportunities for youths seeking employment, especially if they were minority. There is a need to develop a career work experience program for low income youths, especially those with limited English. More on-the-job training for out-of-school youths is necessary. Makalalad urged the creation of programs to prepare young Asian Pacific girls for the job market.

Roger Rosario, coordinator of youth volunteers in the Youth Service Bureau for the City of Tacoma, described the Youth Volunteer Program he has set up for youths in Tacoma. The program provides one-to-one contact with youths. Asian females who are delinquent account for less than 1% of the total delinquent population in that city. Another program he works with is Metamorphosis. Youths receive school credit for being involved in the program. It allows young people to become involved in something outside of classroom situations and allows for the constructive use of their time while learning valuable skills. It is a preventive program but also receives youths referred by juvenile court.

During the discussion period, a question was raised about the effectiveness of the Youth Accountability System. Tang felt it was quite effective because a first-time offender had to go through the citizen groups. The process of being chastized by the community rather than the courts was often penalty enough for the young person. It provided a more humanistic approach and was not so harsh to create severe psychological problems, but severe enough to divert further offenses.



Systems of Response/Innovative Prospectives

The workshop on innovative prospectives and approaches was the most esoteric of all the afternoon sessions. John Chen Beckwith, a lawyer and the former director of Law and Justice for the city of Seattle, served as the group facilitator.

Chez Norton, a lecturer in the school of social work at the University of Washington, described a program she designed and implemented for non-Asian juvenile offenders. She felt that any rehabilitative program for juvenile offenders should be as least restrictive as possible and also felt they should not be locked up in institutions. Norton also told the group of a study by the ACLU Juvenile Rights Project which cited two trends in the various states:

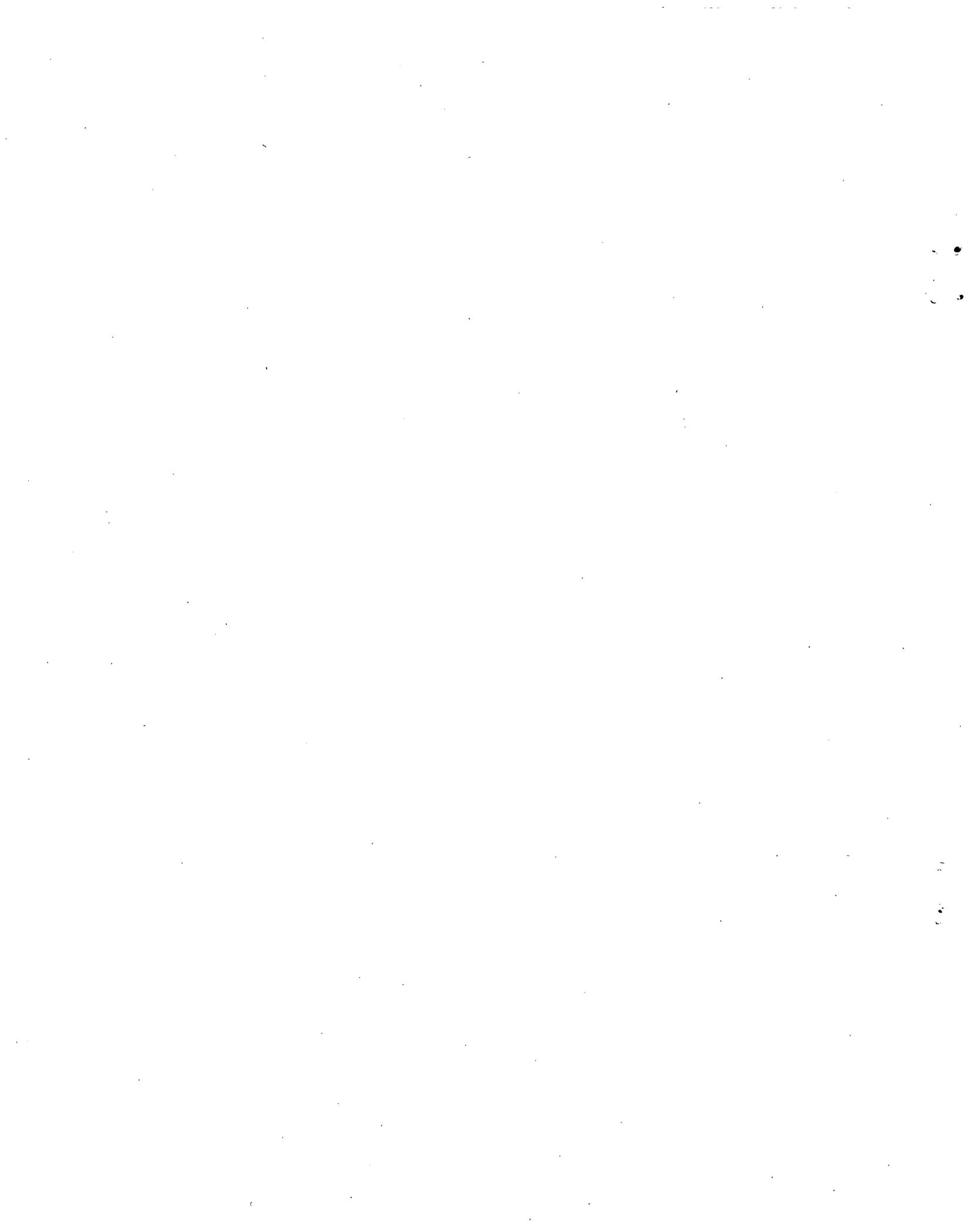
- 1) There is a reduction of the discretionary formula given to courts and agencies entrusted with the fate of juvenile offenders, and
- 2) Sentences should be based on the seriousness of the offense rather than on the age of the offender.

She commented that this information made her uneasy because a greater emphasis was placed on the legal rather than the treating of the youth who comes before the court.

Naomi Fujimoto, community service manager for King County Department of Youth Services in Seattle, has a budget of several million dollars a year. She allows her staff to plan innovative programs which would be funded through her department. One of the programs currently being implemented gives the juvenile offender the opportunity to work off his/her time doing community service in social service agencies. This keeps youth offenders out of the penal institutions while giving them the idea that some restitution must be made for breaking the law.



RECOMMENDATIONS



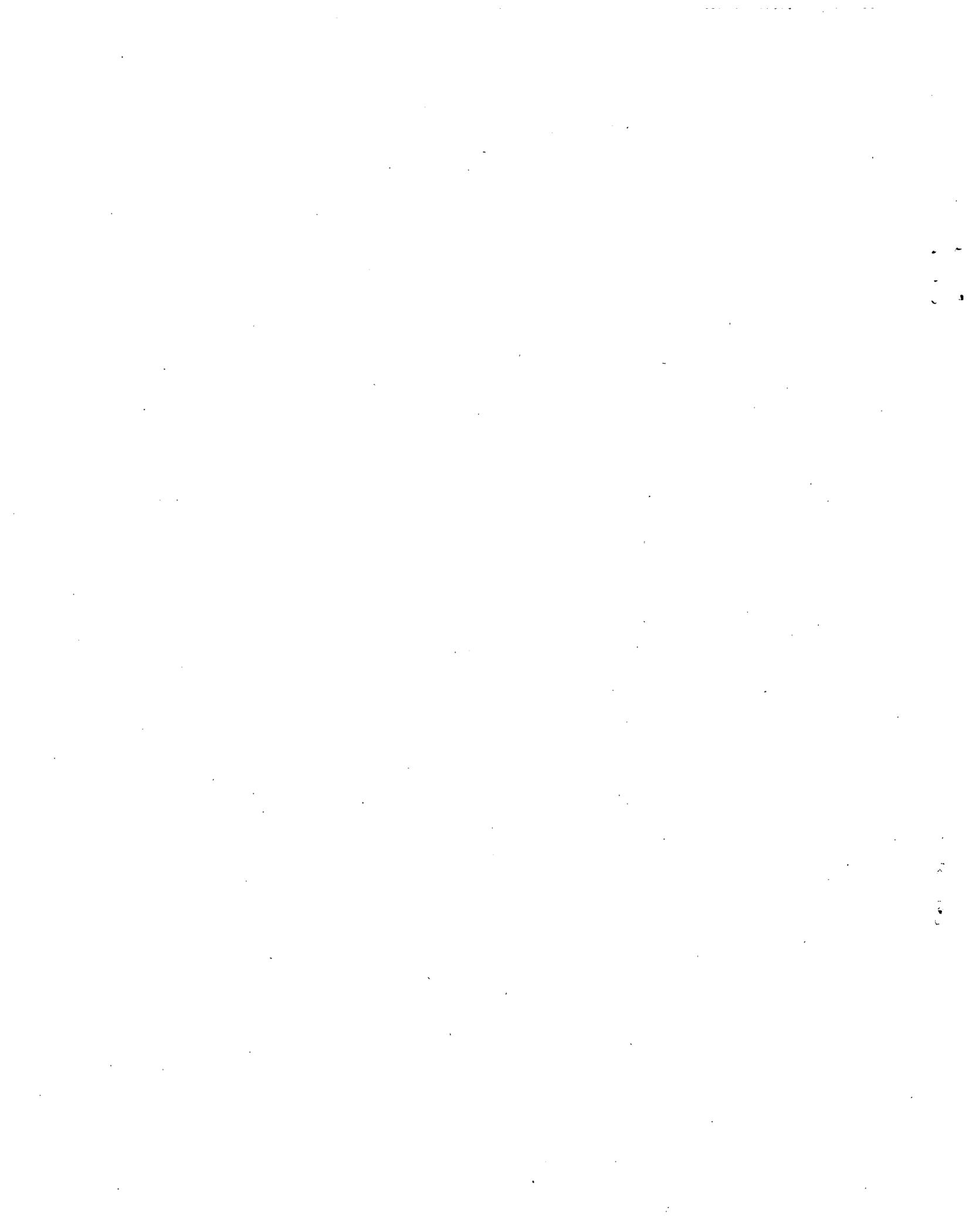
Recommendations

The brainstorming session with four groups debating priority needs of young Asian Pacific females was loud and lively. Morning and afternoon workshops made it apparent there were definite problems among the youth, but outside of some Asian community groups/agencies, very little was being done to alleviate problems. Priorities that surfaced varied according to the race, ethnicity, place of birth, and profession of the discussant. However, several issues were repeated several times in all groups and were generally agreed to be the issues the Washington, D.C. conference should address.

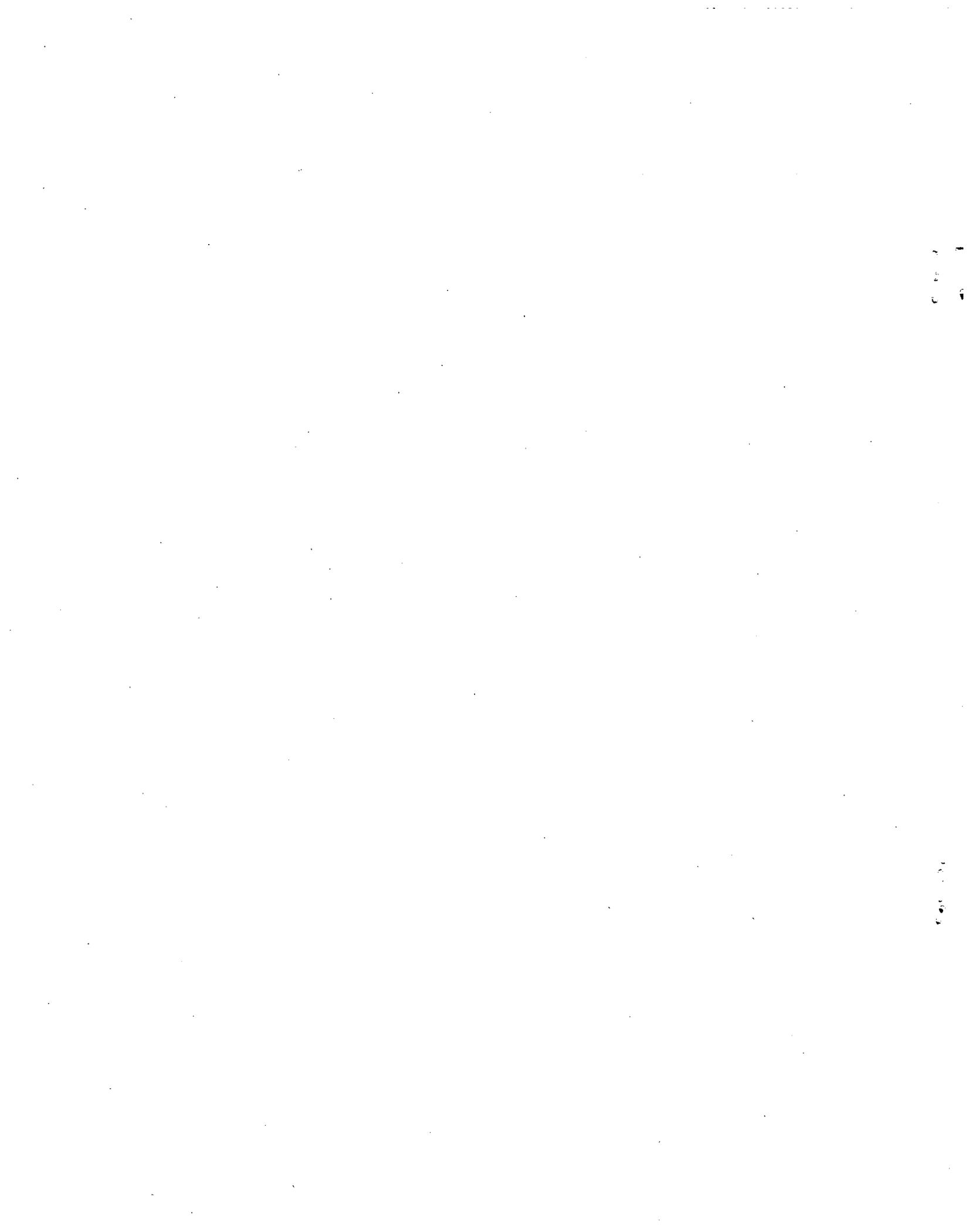
The conferees came from different parts of California, Washington State, and even included students from Guam and Alaska. Some of the participants came from old and established Asian families while others were either recent immigrants or refugees. They represented every Asian Pacific group and many of them felt some frustration with the existing system which seemed to diminish the problems facing the youths of Asian Pacific descent.

After intense discussion they came up with the following recommendations:

1. There should be more bilingual/bicultural Asian Pacific American counselors in the schools.
2. Sensitivity training for public agencies (police, social, service centers, courts, etc.), as well as more human relations training in schools was mandatory.
3. Programs are needed to develop leadership capabilities in the youth and efforts should be increased to give Asian Pacific females more visible female role models.
4. More programs should be developed to provide employment for youths and to provide them with cultural and athletic activities.
5. Develop a networking of youths and parents which would increase dialogues between the two groups and would help sensitize parents to the American values of their children.
6. Educate the majority population about Asian Pacific American.
7. Create visual aids about the needs of APA female delinquents.
8. Develop a data base on female APA juvenile offenders.
9. Hold more conferences.



COMMUNITY AND AGENCY RESOURCES,



Organizations or agencies were represented at the Western Regional Conference. Besides Pan Asia, the National YWCA Board and DPAA, these included:

- * Oakland Chinese Community Council
- * Filipino Youth Activities/Seattle
- * Chinatown YMCA/San Francisco
- * West Bay Pilipino Multi-Service Center/San Francisco
- * Central Continuation High School Service for Asian-American Youth/Los Angeles
- * Korean Community Center/San Francisco
- * Korean Youth Center/Los Angeles
- * Asian Counseling and Referral Service/Seattle
- * Seattle School District/Bilingual and Desegregation Service
- * Association of Washington State Community Youth Services
- * Youth Accountability Program/Seattle
- * Public Defender's Office/Seattle
- * King County Department of Youth Services
- * Seattle Police Department
- * City of Seattle/Law and Justice Planning Office
- * Office of the Mayor of Seattle
- * Filipino Presbyterian Church/Stockton
- * Family Therapy/City of Sacramento
- * Indochinese Resettlement Program/Seattle
- * Youth Service Bureau/Tacoma

In addition more than 12 educational institutions were represented:

- * University of Washington/School of Social Work
- * Seattle University/Office of Minority Affairs
- * Cleveland High School/Seattle
- * Franklin High School/Seattle
- * Sealth High School/Seattle
- * Lincoln High School/Seattle
- * Garfield High School/Seattle
- * Immaculate High School/Seattle
- * Mountain View High School/ Mountain View, CA
- * Meany Middle School/Seattle
- * Sharples Junior High/Seattle

Youths from other junior and senior high schools in Tacoma and parts of California also attended the conference.

