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Practitioner's Essay

Employment Discrimination and Asian Americans

Stuart J. Ishimaru¹

Abstract

Despite the long history of Asian Americans of fighting for fundamental rights, Asian Americans appear to be less active in complaining about employment discrimination. For example, in 2003, Asian Americans filed proportionally fewer employment discrimination charges with the EEOC than other minority employees. This article examines the factors that create an atmosphere in which Asian Americans do not file as many charges of employment discrimination with the EEOC as one would expect. Also, it explores possible ways to motivate Asian American communities and individuals to engage in and recognize the community's investment in the equal employment opportunity process. Specifically, it proposes additional outreach and education to Asian Americans to be informed of their rights as well as areas for further research and additional data collection.

Introduction

Having now served over a year as a member of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, I often ask how well the Commission serves its various constituencies. Coming to the Commission in 2003, I followed in the footsteps of Paul Igasaki, who served with distinction as Vice Chair of the Commission from 1994-2002. Vice Chair Igasaki's fine work on the Commission has made my time at the Commission far easier than I had expected. He led the Commission to reform how it prioritizes the processing of complaints, and pushed the Commission to address the needs and concerns of Asian Americans and other underserved groups, such as Hispanics and Arab Americans. He left the Commission in much better shape than it had been before he arrived.

During my far more limited experience as a member of the Commission, I have been struck by that fact that Asian Americans

appear to be less active than one would expect in complaining about employment discrimination. In 2003, Asian Americans filed proportionally fewer employment discrimination charges with the EEOC than other minority employees.² This disparity flies in the face of the history of Asian Americans fighting for fundamental rights.

Contrary to common public perception, Asian Americans have had a long history of fighting for fairness and equality under the law through legal challenges in the United States. From 1885-1976, Asian Americans brought fourteen employment and education cases to the Supreme Court (Nash 1992). In the 1860s, Chinese railroad workers refused to work in order to obtain better wages, shorter work hours, and shorter shifts in the dangerous tunnels they were digging. During World War II, a number of legal challenges were initiated against the incarceration of Japanese Americans by the government. During the 1950s and 1960s, Asian Americans have long been involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Asian Americans have long been involved in bringing legal challenges to unfair immigration policies and practices. And following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Asian Americans were vocal opponents to the concept of possibly interning Arab, Muslims, and South Asians in America.

Despite this rich history in fighting for equal treatment, why are Asian Americans apparently reluctant to come forward with charges of employment discrimination? It is highly unlikely that Asian Americans do not face discrimination in the workplace, so what dissuades Asian Americans from coming forward to file charges with the EEOC? As Professor Frank H. Wu laments, it seems that Asian Americans do not know what do to about discrimination anymore (Wu 1999).³

Although Asian Americans are often lumped together, they are far from being homogeneous. The Asian communities in America include the recently immigrated Hmong in the Midwest and California to the long established Chinese and Japanese American communities on both the West and East Coasts of the country. Asian Americans come from many different countries and from various socioeconomic, educational, and political backgrounds. Asian Americans possess a multitude of different customs, religions, traditions, and value systems.

Perceptions also differ depending on how long the individual

has been in the United States and to what extent they have grown up immersed in this culture. Third- or fourth-generation Asian Americans have experiences and concerns different from newly immigrated Asian Americans. Experiences faced by Asian Americans also differ according to regional and local situations. In any event, there appears to be some factor, perhaps cultural, in Asian American communities that deters members from filing charges despite these differences. My challenge as a member of the EEOC is to see how we can get Asian American communities to exercise their rights when it comes to employment discrimination and to understand that it is the right thing to do.

This article begins with an exploration of the factors that create an atmosphere where Asian Americans do not file as many charges of employment discrimination with the EEOC as expected. It explores how Asian American communities and individuals can be motivated to engage in and recognize their investment in the equal employment opportunity process. Finally, the article proposes areas of research that are needed to better understand how to address the reluctance of Asian Americans to exercise their rights.

In the equal employment opportunity process, there are burdens and barriers that apply to all employees who allege that their employers engage in illegal discriminatory practices. The entire process can be lengthy—the time from filing a charge with the EEOC to a final resolution, either in the courts or by other means, can take anywhere from one year or more. Once a charge is filed, the investigation probes in detail into the complainant's past employment background, which could be seen as invasive. Livelihoods and careers can be put at risk and the threat of retaliation by the employer constantly looms, even though retaliation is illegal. The process may also be financially costly if a complainant hires a private attorney, and there may be lost opportunity costs as well.⁴ It is also an adversarial process, which, by its nature, is emotionally draining.

Despite these barriers, in the end, this is the primary mechanism enacted by Congress for the enforcement of employment discrimination laws by the federal government. Despite its shortcomings, this process has provided protections and damages to victims of employment discrimination.

The EEOC is involved in litigation throughout the nation in order to enforce anti-discrimination laws in the courts. Outside of the courtroom, the EEOC is involved in outreach and education of

employers, managers, and employees about their equal employment rights and responsibilities.

Additional barriers affect Asian Americans. While recognizing that there is no monolithic Asian American identity or experience, there nonetheless appears to be a common reaction among the Asian American communities of suffering in silence when civil rights are affected.⁵ Regardless of ethnicity, length of residency in the United States, education, or class, there is something that prevents Asian Americans from believing that coming forward with charges of discrimination is the right thing to do and that it is both wrong and illegal for an employer to discriminate against them. Asian Americans often do not demand that justice be served for themselves and their communities. This culture is comprised of barriers that include stereotypes, ethnic cultural differences, a lack of community support and awareness, and a lack of understanding about the protections accorded them under the federal employment discrimination laws.

Discrimination and racism against Asian Americans can take many forms. Some forms appear innocuous, such as comments commending achievements in math and science. Other forms clearly malign, such as comments like “go back where you came from.” As opposed to overtly racist comments or concepts aimed at other minority groups, many people are not aware of or sensitive to the fact that certain stereotypes or perspectives about Asian Americans are negative and racist.

One of these more subtle forms of racism is the idea that Asian Americans are the “model minority.” The stereotype is that Asian Americans study hard, work hard, are submissive, and above all, succeed and even surpass the achievement of White Americans in school and in business. While the model minority myth may bear a kernel of truth—many Asian Americans have achieved success as a result of their hard work in school and puritan-like work ethic—the myth fails to recognize that those Asian Americans who have become successful did so in spite of persistent racism. Asian Americans have been the victims of hate-based crimes and have been denied basic civil rights throughout the history of the United States (Chew 1994).⁶

The model minority myth ignores that there are a fair number of Asian Americans who are impoverished and uneducated and who will not be able to overcome these barriers to equality. The

model minority concept is also controversial because it creates a hierarchy among minority Americans, placing Asians at the top of the hierarchy and thereby isolating them from other groups. This divide-and-conquer approach leads to resentment of Asian Americans by other minority Americans and heightens the tensions that already exist, where instead we could all be better served by a unified voice to combat discrimination.

In an employment context this model minority stereotype can greatly affect Asian Americans in the exercise of their civil rights. It is difficult for Asian Americans to shake the model minority stereotype in the workplace. Often employers and managers apply the stereotype to their Asian American employees, and view an Asian American employee's work product as a result of ethnicity rather than individual hard work and motivation. Comments from non-Asian colleagues are a constant reminder of what is expected of their "over-achieving, under-socialized" Asian co-workers. Asian Americans can also internalize this stereotype and assume that it is better to work hard and prove themselves. Some Asian Americans may believe that they can overcome racism and discrimination encountered in the workplace by working harder and better than their non-Asian colleagues, rather than object and stand up for their rights. This may be because there is a desire to assimilate and not call attention to one's "Asianness." Some Asian Americans may not think that the model minority myth is a negative stereotype. Some may internalize the stereotype and view it as recognition of Asian Americans' high-achieving principles. While other groups have learned that complaining and rocking the boat are the only ways to maintain civil rights, for many Asian Americans the strategy for getting ahead is to be the model minority.

While Asian Americans are often viewed as the model minority, it does not carry over to all positions in the employment relationship. Other stereotypes exist (and are overshadowed by the model minority myth) that negatively impact Asian Americans in the workplace. A common stereotype is that Asian Americans, while good workers, are incapable or ineffective supervisors. Asian Americans are underrepresented in managerial and higher ranking positions across the nation. Yet, it is interesting to note that promotions are but the fourth ranked charge made to the EEOC by Asian Americans in 2003.⁷

Both recent immigrants as well as Asian Americans who

have been in the United States for generations are perceived as perpetual foreigners (Ancheta 1998).⁸ Asian Americans are viewed as incapable of assimilation. This extends to the employment context where regardless of socioeconomic status or education, Asian Americans are often perceived as disloyal, dishonest, unreliable, and as not being committed to or invested in American employers. In fact, Asian Americans' loyalties are often perceived as belonging to the country of our national origin, regardless of how long they may have been in the United States. This is true for Asian Americans with or without language barriers. Due to this fear of perpetually being perceived as outsiders, Asian Americans may be unwilling to come forward with complaints of disparate treatment.

Economic concerns also may prevent Asian American workers from coming forward with complaints of discrimination. Working-class Asian Americans may be more economically vulnerable due to the lack of a communal or familial economic support system, especially if they are recent immigrants or are without documentation. Undocumented workers are not afforded the safety net of unemployment insurance and welfare, and are subject to deportation.⁹ Therefore, the fears and concerns of retaliation or termination held by most employees may be even more heightened for Asian Americans, which may deter the filing of complaints. As such, a working-class Asian American employee may decide that it is not worth the risk of termination or retaliation to fight employment discrimination.

For recent immigrants, hard work, submitting to authority, and keeping a low profile may be ways to avoid drawing attention to their language limitations. If undocumented, they may not want their immigration status disclosed. If an employee is experiencing discrimination, she may even believe that by working harder, the discrimination may stop. Recent immigrants may be less inclined to report charges of discrimination because of a desire not to cause a conflict. Because many Asian American immigrants come to America for the purpose of finding employment, they may be reluctant to exercise their civil rights protections because doing so would be controversial or seem unappreciative of the employment opportunities. For an American-born working-class Asian American employee, it may be difficult to file a charge of discrimination with the EEOC because doing so highlights their "Asianness" in

an environment where acceptance by non-Asian co-workers may already be difficult.

The model minority myth also prevents Asian American professional employees from coming forward. Employers who believe in this stereotype may view Asian Americans as great assets. However, these same employers may take advantage of the perception that Asian American employees are submissive and less likely to complain if treated in a disparate manner than their non-Asian colleagues. Any outstanding achievements made by Asian American employees may be overlooked as “par for the course” because of the perception that they are hardworking as a result of ethnicity, rather than by individual hard work, drive, and motivation. There also may be considerably more pressure for Asian Americans in the professional ranks to assimilate and not challenge an employer’s actions as discriminatory.

There are generally fewer Asian Americans in professional positions, making it common for there to be one Asian American in an entire office. A person in this position may feel that even if she experienced discrimination in the workplace, it would be better not to complain because doing so would only highlight the fact that she is different from the other non-Asian American employees. The lack of community and of communal experiences to share and compare lead to a feeling of isolation. Employment discrimination can often take such subtle forms, from a comment with some racial component to a denial of certain benefits, that without the ability to share and compare experiences with other Asian Americans, an isolated individual will not necessarily feel that she has been discriminated against. Even Asian Americans who have been submerged in the American culture may not be confident enough to come forward with allegations. When these subtle racial incidents occur, an Asian American employee may think “it’s not happening just to me” or “it is not necessarily because of my race.”

Due to the diverse nature of the Asian American population, it is impossible in this article to categorize all the cultural barriers that exist for each distinct group of people. However, one common barrier is that in many Asian cultures, it is taboo to complain about authority figures. There is also a common belief that it is better not to cause controversy. The Japanese proverb, “The nail that stands up gets hammered down” exemplifies the belief that individual voices will be made to conform to the majority. This pressure to

assimilate and not call attention to oneself or one's family may prevent individuals from coming forward. Furthermore, it is commonly believed in many Asian communities that employment is more than just a means for money—it is a symbol of status.

In some Asian communities where the concept of “face” is important, it may not be an option to file a charge of discrimination because doing so would endanger one's livelihood and status in the community. Within Asian American communities where status is important, the pressure to maintain a certain social status can be very high. The loss of status could affect the individual's status in society as well as their family's status. It is also commonly believed that the needs of the company are larger than the needs of the individual employees. This communal belief is in contrast to the individualist principles of American society. The individualistic nature of enforcing our civil rights through complaint and litigation may also prevent Asian Americans from coming forward with charges. This reluctance may come from a belief that things of this nature should be solved communally rather than individually.

Asian Americans may not be filing charges of employment discrimination because Asian Americans, both as employees and employers, may not be aware of their rights and obligations under the law. It is critical that Asian American employers are aware of their obligations under the law not to discriminate against any individual based on their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or age. Asian American employers must also be aware that the employment system must be open to all qualified people or they run the risk of violating the anti-discrimination laws. The EEOC offers a range of training, resources, and assistance to employers.¹⁰

Asian Americans can and should learn from other groups about how to stay active in order to ensure that their rights are protected under the law. African American communities are similarly diverse in terms of culture, heritage, and socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. However, African Americans have a proportionally higher rate of filing charges of employment discrimination with the EEOC. This difference may be the result of a number of factors, but as a result of the Civil Rights Movement and the continued efforts to ensure that all people are protected under the law, there is an understanding in many African American communities that employment discrimination is wrong, illegal, and

should not be tolerated. There is support in the African American community to complain when incidents of employment discrimination occur. This culture of zero-tolerance for employment discrimination is also what enables the African American community to express outrage in a manner that makes the majority aware and even sympathetic to the idea that racial discrimination should not be tolerated in the workplace.

Asian American communities often do not have a similar history. There needs to be a change in thinking in Asian American communities that they, like others, are entitled to the full range of protection under the civil rights laws. When this happens, the community will be more likely to exercise its entitlements under the law. When victims of discrimination come forward and file charges with the EEOC and proceed to litigation, there should be an audible response from the Asian American community in support of the victim. Asian Americans need to build better connections and coalitions with other Americans in order to better understand each other. When employment discrimination does occur, then the community will be able to find a broader range of support.

One example of a successful campaign to inform America about an unjust situation occurred in the days following the attacks of September 11, 2001 when there was speculation that Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians might be interned, much like Japanese Americans were during World War II. There was a huge outcry from various communities across America in opposition to this idea, led in large part by the Asian American community. This was a result of the strong belief among many Americans that the internment of an entire race of people is unacceptable, which is a direct result of the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and subsequent efforts to achieve redress and an apology from the United States government.

So how can this culture of not filing charges of employment discrimination be changed? One method is outreach and education. By educating the Asian American community about their rights under the law and how the mechanism for enforcing the anti-discrimination law works, more Asian Americans will have access to the system. It is important for individual Asian Americans who believe that they have been discriminated against to know their rights and how to protect them. Through this individual knowledge, the community will be able to banish some of

the inhibitions based on stereotypes, fear of reprisal, and cultural misunderstandings.

Individuals also need to know that the employer is the one who has violated the law. The employee does not bear the blame, and therefore, should not be shamed or stigmatized when challenging employers' discriminatory practices. It is also not shameful or anti-American to file a charge of employment discrimination against an employer—in fact, it is truly an American thing to do.

Employment discrimination has a negative impact on society as a whole—its damage is not limited to the actual victim of discrimination. When raising allegations of employment discrimination, Asian Americans have an impact far beyond their immediate community. It harms the employment relationship for both employees and employers. Barring employment discrimination, employers would have a workforce comprised of the most capable individuals. The absence of discrimination would increase morale and productivity. Employees may feel that the workplace is a safe place where non-work related issues would not affect their employment. It is an act of loyalty to protest discrimination because it helps the company to be a better business. As the population of Asian Americans increases in the United States, it is imperative that Asian Americans file complaints of discrimination in the workplace. Unless the charges are filed, there is no way for the EEOC or other law enforcement agencies to identify and deal with issues that are specific to Asian Americans. As a result, these issues will continue to harm Asian American communities.

But access to the system alone will not necessarily change the reluctance of Asian Americans to come forward with charges of discrimination. There must be a fundamental change in how Asian Americans are dealt with by the federal government. While some recently immigrated Asian Americans may not trust the government due to experiences with corrupt or hostile governments in their countries of origin, these perceptions are not only the results of hostile governments in foreign countries. The recent experiences of Dr. Wen Ho Lee and Army Captain James Yee are reminders that even Asian American citizens are still not treated fairly by the government. A larger effort needs to be made by law enforcement agencies to improve the relationship with Asian American communities. This requires extensive outreach by law enforcement agencies. The EEOC needs to continue to make efforts to reach out to

and find a way to build a relationship of trust and understanding with the various Asian American communities. This approach requires an understanding of the different cultural and ethnic groups that comprise diverse Asian American communities.

We have seen examples where the Asian American community has changed this culture of enduring discrimination. It changed the culture of silence after September 11, 2001, when South Asian Americans filed more charges of national origin discrimination with the EEOC. Between September 11, 2001 and May 7, 2002, the EEOC received 488 charges alleging discharge and harassment from South Asian Americans. During this same time period, the EEOC received 497 charges on the basis of Muslim religion, an increase from the 193 charges filed during the comparable period one year earlier.

One of the differences during this time period was that the federal government and media were vocal in their opposition against backlash or retaliatory acts against South Asian Americans. President Bush condemned any acts of violence or retaliation against South Asian Americans. Americans generally were aware that discrimination of this nature was not acceptable. South Asian Americans understood that if they experienced any discrimination, federal law enforcement agencies would be sympathetic.

The EEOC became very active in its outreach to the various South Asian American communities. The South Asian American community came together as well, providing communal support for the victims of this backlash. As individuals realized that they were discriminated against because of their race, national origin, color, or religion, they were able to find support and knew where to go for assistance as well. This is the ideal type of response to discrimination against all Asian Americans. If only we could find a way to sustain this sense of outrage and gain support from the general community, we would make great strides toward equality.

In order to further change the culture of silence, Asian Americans have a responsibility to raise awareness and encourage the members of their communities to come forward with charges of employment discrimination. Asian American bar associations and law firms need to become involved in raising awareness and providing much needed legal services on employment discrimination issues to Asian American communities. There are few advocates working on employment discrimination issues specific to Asian

Americans, and more are needed to represent community members on employment and broader civil rights issues. Matched pair testing programs need to include Asian Americans as testers so that employment discrimination can be rooted out of the workplace.

The EEOC and other government agencies also need to ensure that they collect data that will allow them to accurately track the race and national origin of complainants, especially when it comes to the growing number of people who claim multiple backgrounds, as first allowed during the 2000 Census. For people who so choose to designate, their data should not be lost or devalued by placing it in a “multiracial” or “other” category.

In reality, this “culture of silence” is an overarching observation. It is a literary mechanism that I have employed to begin the discourse regarding why Asian Americans file disproportionately few charges of discrimination with the EEOC. There is no single culture that pervades Asian American societies, but there are common barriers that prevent Asian Americans from filing charges. To better identify the specific inhibitions of various Asian American communities in filing charges with the EEOC or any federal law enforcement agency, more research needs to be done. We need to know who in the Asian American communities is filing charges of discrimination with the EEOC. Does socioeconomic status, education, family status, or other issues affect who is filing charges and who is not?

Research has yet to be conducted on the differences in employment discrimination cases for recent or first-generation immigrants compared to Asian Americans who were raised in the United States and are well-versed in American culture. We also need to assess whether any differences exist in the discriminatory treatment of Asian Americans in various socioeconomic classes. Are working-class Asian Americans facing different barriers to filing charges than professional Asian Americans? If so, how do we overcome these differences in our attempt to rid our workplaces of discrimination? In various Asian American communities, what are the social and cultural aspects that prevent employees from coming forward with charges of discrimination? Do these factors differ based on the national origin of the community? For example, do Korean Americans face different internal cultural barriers than Afghan Americans?

When research is conducted on these questions and we have a better understanding of who in the Asian American communities are filing and can identify the reasons why individuals are not filing, we can better assess how to remove the barriers that inhibit Asian Americans from freely exercising their rights under the law. Through a combination of efforts by the EEOC and community, we can make the changes necessary to ensure that justice is fully available to the Asian American community.

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Notes

This article was written by Mr. Ishimaru in his personal capacity. The views expressed in this article do not necessarily represent the views of the agency or the United States.

1. Commissioner, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The author extends his thanks to Megumi Fujita and Jacinta Ma of the Commission for their assistance in writing this article.
2. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is a federal agency charged with the enforcement of federal employment discrimination laws. As such, the EEOC processes all employment discrimination charges filed against employers in the private sector. Based on statistical information, we found several ways to analyze whether Asian Americans have low reporting of employment discrimination charges. First, we compared the percentage of employed Asian Americans to the percentage of all employment discrimination charges filed by Asian Americans with the EEOC. Although Asian Americans in 2003 were 4.2 percent of the people employed, they only filed 2.7 percent of employment discrimination charges with the EEOC. (Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Household Data Annual Averages, Table 10. Employed persons by occupation, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex)). The data on charges may not correspond to other EEOC data because we did not include charges filed by individuals who were in the

“Other” race category.

We also compared the percentage of race and national origin discrimination charges filed by Asian Americans to the percentage of Asian Americans as a part of the people of color population (defined as African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders). In 2003, Asian Americans constituted 11 percent of people of color, but filed only 5.2 percent of race and national origin charges with the EEOC.

3. Professor Wu is currently the Dean of the Wayne State University Law School in Detroit, Michigan.
4. Filing a charge with the EEOC does not require hiring a private attorney. The EEOC will investigate the complaint and, if warranted, litigate the case in court. Complainants always have the option of hiring private counsel if they so desire.
5. Similarly, Asian Americans are the least likely to report to the police violent crimes committed against them among all the major minority groups in the United States. See Timothy C. Hart, U.S. Department of Justice, *Reporting Crime to the Police, 1992-2001* (2003).
6. For a detailed history of crimes committed against Asian Americans see “Asian Americans: The Reticent History and Their Paradoxes,” Pat K. Chew, *William & Mary Law Review* 36(1): 9-24 (October 1994).
7. In 2003, the five most common incidents of discrimination filed by Asian Americans were discharge (47.3 percent), terms and conditions (27.9 percent), harassment (22.3 percent), promotions (10.4 percent), and discipline (10.2 percent).
8. In 2001, the Committee of 100 commissioned a national study to gauge American attitudes towards Chinese Americans and Asian Americans. The study found that “one of four Americans hold ‘strong negative attitudes’ towards Chinese Americans; 23 percent would be uncomfortable voting for an Asian American to be President of the United States; 24 percent would disapprove of intermarriage with an Asian American; and 32 percent feel Chinese Americans were more loyal to China than the U.S.” <<http://www.committee100.org/Published/C100survey.pdf>>.
9. Importantly, the EEOC does not examine the immigration status of victims of employment discrimination. EEOC policy guidance issued in 2002 stated “undocumented workers are covered by the federal employment discrimination statutes and that it is as illegal for employers to discriminate against them as it is to discriminate against individuals authorized to work. When enforcing these laws, EEOC will not, on its own initiative, inquire into a worker’s immigration status. Nor will EEOC consider an individual’s immigration status when examining the underlying merits of a charge. The Commission will continue vigorously to pursue charges filed by

- any worker covered by the federal employment discrimination laws, including charges brought by undocumented workers, and will seek appropriate relief. . . " Available at <<http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/undocrescind.html>>.
10. The EEOC website, <<http://www.eeoc.gov>>, contains information about training assistance that is available for employers from the agency.

Stuart J. Ishimaru was sworn in on November 17, 2003, as a Commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Ishimaru previously served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice between 1999 and 2001, where he served as a principal advisor to the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, advising on management, policy, and political issues involving the Civil Rights Division. He supervised more than 100 attorneys in high-profile litigation, including employment discrimination cases, fair housing and fair lending cases, criminal police misconduct, hate crime and slavery prosecutions, and enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Prior to this, as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General in the Civil Rights Division for five years, Ishimaru provided advice on a broad range of issues, including legislative affairs, politics and strategies. From 1984-1993, he served on the professional staffs of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights and two House Armed Services Subcommittees of the U.S. Congress. Ishimaru, a native of San Jose, California, received his A.B. in Political Science and in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley, and his J.D. from the George Washington University.