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Offering Buddha a Coke

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Offering Buddha a Coke

Alice Fletcher

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Through my own life experiences and also through observing those of others, I have become sensitive to the conflicts and transformations that occur when widely dissimilar cultures come into contact. Recently I have observed how the owners of Tom Ka Thai Restaurant*, where I have been working for about a year, have carved out a place for themselves -- a place to negotiate new identities and meanings, within the dominant, northeast Florida culture that surrounds them.

Tom Ka Thai Restaurant, located in Jacksonville, Florida, is owned and operated by a Southeast Asian couple. Located on the northeastern coast of Florida near the Georgia border, Jacksonville is southern city, steeped in traditional white Anglo-Saxon Protestant values. The area now called Jacksonville used to be named Cowford which points to its agrarian past. Now one of the nation's largest cities in land area (841 square miles), Jacksonville is a financial center of Florida, home to a major port, site of Navy bases, home of the NFL Jacksonville Jaguars, a Mayo Clinic medical center, a tourist destination because of its beaches and various waterways, and home to over 700,000 residents (www.coj.net/pub/history.htm). Despite the shift in economy from that of a plantation/agricultural society to that of an industrial city, it is still steeped in the ideological system set up by the former plantation period. "As in most southern cities in the United States, the social,

political, and economic relationships between Jacksonville's black and white communities were defined first by slavery and then by years of legal segregation" (JCCI 2: 1992). The shift of Jacksonville from that of an agricultural society to that of an industrial/technological society has not significantly affected the system of class stratification that has been pervasive for so many years.ⁱ "African-Americans will encounter discrimination 58 percent of the time they seek rental housing in Jacksonville, according to the draft report of a study conducted by Jacksonville Area Legal Aid" (Schoettler 1998). Income and achievement gaps between blacks and whites continue to widen. Poor white students outperform wealthier black students in most grades and some school board officials as well as teachers and administrators attribute this the fact that "the quality education and its components are in the predominantly white schools right now" (Mitchell 1997). Though the city formally desegregated its public spaces during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the city still maintains differential access to quality housing and educational opportunities, as well as remaining quite segregated in its mentality. Desegregation has not necessarily meant integration.

Desegregation permits the dominant culture to continue to prevail "as is". Those in the non-dominant culture are "included" to the extent that they are able to assimilate to the dominant culture. Those who are unwilling to assimilate are perceived as non-conforming and tend to be excluded from the mainstream....while the distinction between integration and desegregation is of the utmost significance to blacks, many whites

* All names in this paper are pseudonyms and were created to protect the privacy of the individuals and institutions involved.

in Jacksonville are unaware of the difference or its implications...The resulting miscommunication is puzzling to well-intentioned whites who believe that they live in an “integrated” society and fail to understand why blacks seem dissatisfied (JCCI 4: 1992).

In addition to strictly economic and political factors, a clear division of races and classes is still prevalent in Jacksonville partly because of this pervasive belief that we are an integrated society. This ongoing segregation and the pressure to assimilate are endured not only by the American black population, but are also experienced by the growing number of immigrants to Jacksonville. A study released by the Center for Immigration Studies in October 2001 indicated that there were 10,720 legal immigrants who intended to settle in the Jacksonville metropolitan area between FY’91-’98 (Jacksonville MSA Immigration Fact Sheet www.fairus.org). The Asian and Hispanic immigrant population alone accounts for 15.3% of the Duval County’s population increase between 1990-2000; apart from other ethnic immigrant groups that are moving into the city. The number of immigrants to Jacksonville is steadily rising. New cultural enclaves that did not exist in the early 90s are popping up around town. Places called Little Bosnia and Little India have appeared in the Old South. It is in the midst of this slowly changing city that the owners of Tom Ka Thai find themselves imbedded.

The wife (Ati) and husband (Loun) owners of Tom Ka Thai are originally from small agricultural villages along the Mekong River in Laos and Thailand. The agriculturally based villages that Ati and Loun came from were impinged upon by centralized states, and they are becoming increasingly affected by the world at large.

Because of pressing economic reasons, Ati initially moved to Bangkok to work in a textile factory in order to raise money to send back to her family. Her village, like most villages in northeastern Thailand, is a rain-fed agricultural community that has increasingly been integrated into a global economy (Keyes 851). Keyes states that in northeast Thailand in 1980 “at least one-third of all villagers, male and female, over the age of twenty... have found supplementary temporary employment for several months to several years in Bangkok or other urban centers” (Keyes 852). According to Keyes, “[h]alf of all households in 1980 would have to be judged, according to World Bank standards, as having incomes below the poverty level” (Keyes 853). This has caused many villagers to leave their homes in pursuit of economic stability elsewhere.

It was in the early 1980s that Ati and Loun left their home villages. They decided, independent of one another, that earning a livelihood meant immigrating to the United States. Ati initially lived and worked in Texas with an aunt who sponsored her until she got her own work visa. Ati and Loun met one another in South Carolina where they were both working in a meat-processing factory. Their trajectory after this point remains vague to me, as they are both reluctant to divulge all of the details of their lives to me. I do know, however, that the quest for economic security has been the primary motivator behind all of their moves. I know that they ran an oriental foods store outside of Atlanta, GA for years. They supported their two children with the income made from this venture. Through a network of peers, however, they came to know about a more lucrative opportunity. A Thai restaurant in Jacksonville, Florida was up for sale. They sold their house and their store to Loun’s brother, and moved to Jacksonville with high hopes.

Now the owners of Tom Ka Thai, Ati and Loun spend seven days a week in the restaurant cooking, arguing, eating, dealing with various bureaucracies, making friends, and making money. They work to support the lifestyles of their American-born children and also to help their relatives back home. The service-oriented nature of their business forces Ati and Loun to interact with the dominant culture on a level that they were previously unaccustomed to -- unlike the way they interacted when they worked in a chicken-processing factory in South Carolina. To run a successful business, they have had to become familiar with the city and its cultural as well as economic workings. New commodities transform their consumer tastes, and mass media suggests to them a wide array of "possible" lives (Appadurai 193). They have increasingly learned the norms of the dominant society around them by virtue of the fact that their children are enrolled in the public school system, and by having to deal with phone companies, real estate agents, landlords, and others. They must strive to meet the "criteria of hypercompetence" that this new context demands in order to be successful (Appadurai 205).

On top of the influence that their dealings with various bureaucracies have had on their lives, another 'text' from which Ati, and Loun constantly derive new information is the clientele of their restaurant. Not only Americans of varied ethnic backgrounds and classes frequent their restaurant but also recent immigrants from many ethnic groups. The effects that the dominant society has had on Ati and Loun's family life are evidenced by the relationship that they have with their teenage daughter Misty. Misty once commented to me about a white, American family that came to eat at the restaurant.

Do you see how they eat together? (She points discreetly). American families are so loving. My mother never even says she loves me. She never even touches me or hugs me...I wish we could be like that. Like the Brady Bunch on T.V. you know?

Misty often complains about her parents' lack of understanding. Ati often complains about Misty's "American" ways.

"She [is] so messy. She [is] just like her father. Just throw clothes all over her room. She [is] more like a man than a woman...When I [was] her age, I take care of myself. I already a grown woman. I work in a factory and support my family. She not even take care of herself. She just play. She [is] not my daughter".

Ati's ideal of feminine is that of a demure, neat, and obedient girl. Ati and Loun also want Misty to be academically successful so that she can have "better lives than we have" and so that she can eventually take care of them when they are old. She, their American born daughter, wants to be a carefree teenager with the stereotypical and most often imaginary "American" family of the kind portrayed on television sitcoms. Instead, she has a scolding father and a physically non-affectionate mother, neither of whom she thinks really loves or understands her at all. Ironically this inter-generational conflict characterizes most American families. The child rearing practices of Ati and Loun are different from what Misty perceives as being typical of the "American way" she sees on television. They are more strict and disciplined, especially since she is their eldest child. These conflicting expectations have no doubt put a strain on Misty and her parents' relationship.

My employers' worldview has been influenced and informed by the dominant American culture around them. Place and geography played a large role in the traditional communal life of Ati and Loun. Place provides us with structure and the security of belonging. Place helps us to forget our separateness and the world's indifference to the plight of individuals (Tuan 28). However, what is the nature of locality, as a lived experience, in a globalized, deterritorialized world? (Appadurai 196). What serves as the stabilizing factor for Ati and Loun in their new transplanted locales?

One element that serves as a stabilizing factor in lives of my bosses' is their integration into extended kin networks throughout the US. Not only do "[r]efugees and immigrants use social networks to make their passage from homeland to host society," as is evidenced by Ati's Aunt sponsoring her, but these same social networks are of central importance in the adaptation process (Hein 52). Ati and Loun are both part of a far-reaching expanse of relatives and friends who provide additional support and cultural know-how to those who need it. Ati's mother lives with the family and helps out around the restaurant. She is often in the kitchen washing dishes or taking care of Mikey, Ati and Loun's son. Loun, an incredibly social man, is often found at slow periods in the shift resting at his fax phone, beer in hand, gossiping on the phone with his brother, his mother, or an assortment of friends and relatives. Though he works seven days a week, he is still integrated into a network of friends via the telephone and through occasional visits.

In addition to their kin networks, another key element in the structuring of their identities is the foods that they prepare for themselves to eat. The types of vegetables and meats that they prepare to eat are reflections of the geography that they

come from. The Thai eggplant, watermelon, peanuts, and basil are consistently eaten and serve to fortify them (quite literally) with a sense of connection to the place from whence they came. Both Ati and Loun take extreme pride in the foods that they cook.

The fundamental element that constitutes the bedrock of my bosses' identities and informs their lives, however, is Buddhism. Their continued religious devotion here in the U.S. has played a critical role in their adaptive process. In their new, transplanted locales, villagers have attended more movies, seen more television, read more newspapers, and looked at more shop displays than they ever have while resident in the village (Keyes 856). Despite this exposure to new resources, and the partial adoption of tastes and desires induced by US mass culture, none of the new messages have produced a fundamental challenge to their basic Buddhist ontology. I find Buddhism to be central to the lives of the owners of Tom Ka Thai Restaurant, in faraway America. They wear Buddha icon necklaces and bracelets, and they have two small altars where they make offerings and observe Buddhist holidays. Whenever they go back to Thailand for their yearly visit, they make a point to consult Buddhist monks for their advice and for their prognostications for the future. In numerous conversations, they have informed me about such topics as reincarnation and asceticism. To further illustrate my bosses' dedication to Buddhism, Loun informed me that when and if the population of Thais and Laotians increases in Jacksonville, he would be the first in line to help them to build a temple.

The Buddhism of Thailand and Laosⁱⁱ teaches two basic forms of religious action: accumulation of merit through good deeds, mostly for laypersons, and attainment of wisdom (or enlightenment) through religious

practices such as meditation, mostly for priests and monks. The particular version of Buddhism to which my bosses subscribe is Theravada Buddhism. Theravada Buddhism does not view accumulation of wealth by the layperson as a hindrance to spiritual development. On the contrary, ownership of material goods is a sign of one's good karma from a past life. Also, being wealthy enables one to redistribute wealth back to his/her local village by making donations to the temple to support monks and to help the poor. This differs from a school of Buddhism such as Zen, which many Americans are familiar with, in that it does not especially promote spiritual enlightenment or "Buddha-hood" as a possible goal for all followers in this life time. Theravada is more concerned with moral precepts and right livelihood for the ordinary layperson.

How Buddhists realize the religious goals of merit making and detachment in accord with their own life situations and with reference to the variety of texts (movies, television, newspapers, shop displays, etc.) that they have read may differ, but all would still agree that these goals are fundamental to their lives (Keyes 857). The high value attached to meritorious deeds, for example, contributes to a distinctive Buddhist "work ethic", and this work ethic serves my employers well within the Protestant, capitalistic framework in which they find themselves in America – a place where there is a

human-capital assessment of citizens – weighing those who can pull themselves up by their bootstraps against those who make claims on the welfare state.

Increasingly citizenship is defined as the civic duty of individuals to

reduce their burden on society and build up their own human capital – to be entrepreneurs of themselves (Ong 739).

From firsthand experience, I see how, for Ati and Loun, their jobs are quintessential to the construction of their identity. In their restaurant, they not only demonstrate their ability to provide for their family (not only their nuclear family but also their extended kinship networks scattered throughout the U.S. and their families back in their home countries), but they have also literally become "entrepreneurs of themselves", generating a successful Thai image to the patrons of their restaurant.

The Thai image about which I speak is relayed to the customers in a very organized manner, exerting a similar power and authority over the customers' imagination as a museum layout would have over a patron to a museum. Their restaurant is an effective filter for their experience. The dynamics of their interaction with the dominant society around them is structured and is reflected directly in the actual physical layout of their restaurant.

The outermost "layer" of the restaurant contains brightly colored paraphernalia, lush plants, and 'exotic' decor. This outer area serves as an attractive buffer to hold the attention of the patrons and serves as a shield behind which my bosses navigate. The inner, more utilitarian section of the restaurant is towards the rear of the restaurant where there is the cash register, the drink preparation area, the kitchen, the storage room, the restrooms, and a table at which employees sit and chat and eat. It is in the back where the Buddhist altars are. Though rather ornate and colorfully adorned, these altars are not for decorative purposes. They are a place to offer money, fruits, and drinks to Buddha.

Ati regularly changes out the water in cups on the altar, and keeps the altar clean. The altars are, therefore, not just static decorations on the wall. They are alive and are incorporated into the lives of Ati and Loun.

The heart of the entire restaurant, however, lies in the kitchen. This is where the crucial dynamics of the restaurant transpire. In the back of their restaurant the owners maintain their own set of rules concerning human relations and etiquette norms. The television set is constantly blaring Thai soap operas, the news, an assortment of comedy & variety shows, and concerts of Thai pop stars. Here the food prepared is much spicier than what is offered on the menu, and it uses a larger variety of vegetables and sauces. The Thai language is spoken assertively, and loud. Ati and Loun argue just as loud and as heartily as they laugh. They joke about each other's shortcomings as they cut vegetables, wrap the egg rolls, and stir the curry base. Whenever friends and relatives come to visit, it is not in the outer area where they sit and talk, but rather they all congregate in the kitchen. The further into the layers you go, the better you are able to see distinctions. Their perceived authentic self can find fuller expression in the back where there are no colorful decorations – just the people themselves. Their nuances and their differences are evident. They are no longer a collective “Thai” other, but rather a group of individuals, each with his own personality quirks, strengths, and flaws. The front area holds the customers' attention and satisfies their need for the exotic. In the back, however, things are genuinely different and more complex. The core of the culture resides in the people, not in the pillowed booths upon which the customers sit. As one gradually penetrates the layers of the restaurant and finally approaches Ati and Loun themselves, a clearer understanding of

them and thereby a part of Thai/Laotian culture begins to emerge.

Occupying this ideological as well as physical structure of the restaurant are waiters of Asian descent like me who run to and from the rear area to the outer seating area. My employers hire intermediaries like me who are able to relate to both the outside world of the clientele and the inside world of the kitchen where Asian television programs are received from a satellite, where foods are served that are not on the menu, where Thai and Laotian, not English, reign supreme, and where no compromises are made.

My bosses do not hire prospective employees solely on the basis of their Asian ancestry. They also assess the character of prospective employees. An example of a person possessing character traits that they seek is Mei, their star waitress, who has been working for them for almost since the time that they entered the restaurant business two years ago. Mei has been the prevailing image for their restaurant. She is an international student from Hong Kong who knows almost every customer by name and her image is agreeable to many of the customers. She exemplifies the “model minority” (Ong 741). She works, is soon to graduate from UNF, has a promising internship lined up with a local graphics design firm, loves to shop for brand name fashions, and has mastered formal American speech as well as slang and colloquialisms. “[H]uman capital, self-discipline, and consumer power are associated with whiteness, [and] these attributes are important criteria of nonwhite citizenship in Western democracies” (Ong 739). She is agreeable and at the same time possesses just the right amount of exotic “Otherness” as revealed in her accent, her point-of-view, and her accounts of her childhood experiences. Through the image she presents, Mei validates that this restaurant is authentically Asian, but at the same time she

also does not jeopardize the customers' "comfort level" and does not deviate beyond "permissible liberal norms" of behavior (Ong 740). It is she whom the customers know, and it is she who provides the image for our restaurant.

The bosses of the restaurant remain virtually unknown to the ordinary stream of customers, though it is they who actually run the restaurant. This does not mean that they stay just in their own comfortable little niche in the back of the restaurant, but they do not extend their hand to customers unless they are people that they have come to know and trust. Gaining the trust of the restaurant owners is a lengthy process. To those whom they do befriend, they are extremely generous, showering them with three course meals, and plenty to drink. They do not possess the same type of cultural capital (language skills, American norms of etiquette, etc.) that Mei has acquired, and so prefer to let her deal with the customers that they do not know.

Through the employment of people with whom they can establish rapport and exchange and discuss ideas, they are able to acquire "cultural capital" and therefore competence in their dealings with American people and institutions. The importance of employees like Mei and me can be seen in the few confrontations that my bosses have had with customers. What usually happens is that a customer will complain to my bosses directly about a certain type of food. My bosses resolutely tell them that they will not exchange the dish or give back the customer's money. In their minds they think that a stranger does not have the right to criticize their food and should not be allowed to cheat them. They do not operate on the same 'return policy' that you find almost everywhere in the US. They take "returns" personally and perceive such demands as a questioning of their competence. These confrontations are

obviously not good for business, so the owners leave such situations to my fellow waiters and me to resolve. Waiters like me are the go-betweens who bring back accounts of what we see and interpret the facts of what is going on in the outside section of the restaurant. We help them to mediate or manage situations of conflict within the microcosm of the restaurant. Within the domain of their own kitchen the owners can assess what is being related to them by their waiters, and then make a decision. In this restaurant, the waiters have assumed the unofficial role of cultural translator.

Transfer of information occurs in other places besides the kitchen area. Each shift has a communal meal during which bosses, kitchen help, and waitresses come together to eat and talk about the state of things in their lives. During the meal a wide range of topics is discussed, such as hopes, funny things that happened, the news, gossip about each other, gossip about customers, the practicalities of getting visas, driver licenses, savings bonds, etc. At this time institutional navigation techniques are shared. This is where information is shared, discussed, offered, refuted, and reorganized.

As well as being a means of gaining information, Ati and Loun's restaurant serves as a forum by which they can partly control their own image and expression of themselves. It is a place where they can gain cultural capital, but it also allows them to provide a certain type of information to others. Much like a museum, Tom Ka Thai preserves and promotes certain ideologies. The museum as well as the ethnic restaurant both presents opportunities for the individual to be educated. The authority and authenticity of both enterprises are not usually questioned. Audiences believe in the authority of museums as adequate relaters of the subject matter exhibited (Anderson 163). A museum, then, is an institution of power.

How things are spatially arranged within a museum, and the point of view from which a photograph is shot guide the audience understands of reality. In much the same way, the customers of the restaurant believe in the authenticity of what they see around them, because they have nothing to contradict their experience. The non-Thai customers of the restaurant, by virtue of the fact that most of them have not been regularly exposed to Thai people or their culture, cannot make a distinction between that which is static, and merely for decorative purposes, and that which is actually alive. The customer accepts the whole package. Like the museum layout, Tom Ka Thai restaurant has the ability to influence the patron's sense of reality and promote a certain version of Thai culture.

In the eyes of the dominant society around them, Ati and Loun seem to be a successful couple running a beautifully decorated restaurant with wonderful Thai cuisine. Their restaurant was even chosen above all the other Thai restaurants in town to be featured in Jacksonville Magazine. Through the institution of the ethnic restaurant, Ati and Loun demonstrate their economic viability as American citizens. They are successful economically, as is evidenced by the fact that within the last year, they have purchased a brand new SUV, a Lexus, and a house in a suburban neighborhood. Ati regularly shows up with new jewelry of real gold, diamonds, and jade. They are doing financially better than they ever have been, and have been able to send generous amounts of money back to their home villages, sometimes even supporting extremely distant relatives. I remember one instance in which they sent money to a second cousin who they never even met.

Though an effective mechanism, the restaurant's filtration method is also indicative of the problems that my bosses'

encounter with the society around them. Ati and Loun do not want to interact with most of the clientele. In working there I have had to endure all manner of ethnocentrism. One way in which this underlying fear of the foreign is exposed is when people ask questions about the ingredients of the food, and how the food is prepared. On more than one occasion, people accuse us of putting strange ingredients in their food.

I don't want any dog in my food,
you hear?

As well as outright racism, there is just plain ignorance on the part of the customers. An example of this is found when people order Thai dishes and asks for deletion of many of the key ingredients that make it Thai cooking in the first place. Some of the dishes cannot be made without curry, Thai eggplant, basil, or hot peppers. Also, many people do not even know where Thailand is and oftentimes expect us to serve Chinese food. Many times people think Tom Ka Thai serves Taiwanese food, because of the phonetic similarities of *Thailand* and *Taiwan*.

As well as being a site of contention between the host society (Jacksonville, FL) and the foreigner (Ati and Loun), Tom Ka Thai has also served, in a few rare instances, as a platform for positive exchange and meaningful dialogue between the two different parties. It is at this sensitive juncture point wherein Ati, Loun, and the host society have the opportunity to learn about each other. At certain points in time, I have seen Ati and Loun befriend customers and ask them to come and dine and talk with them in the kitchen. It is from these friends that they learn the best place to fish, or buy luggage, or just in general get to know Jacksonville better. At the same time, I have seen some customers walk away from their dining experience at Tom Ka Thai armed

with new information that they got by talking to Ati behind the cash register, or talking with Mei when she served them food. At certain times, both parties are engaged in meaningful cross-cultural dialogue. The very fact that Tom Ka Thai is a point of conflict that exposes both parties' lack of understanding about one another means that it can also be a powerful locale wherein meaningful transformations of understanding can occur.

Generally, however, Ati and Loun do not go out of their way to interact with customer. Their feelings of alienation are most often expressed in outbursts of anger. They explode when other waitresses and I bring back accounts of what a certain customer said or did. One day after enduring a story of some disgruntled and picky customer, Loun screamed within hearing range of the customer,

If you ever see [them] again,
you tell them to GO HOME!!!!

They do not feel that they would be understood or accepted by most American clientele. They also feel shunned by American institutions. For example, when Ati and Loun's house got broken into by thieves, they called the police and the police never even responded to their call. They attributed this to the fact that they are Asian. As mentioned earlier in the paper, they prefer to let their employees interact with the customers. They are very dependent on their workers to provide them with information and help. They increasingly use their daughter as a mediator between themselves and the bureaucratic world and the world of their restaurant clientele.

Though they are gaining financially, Ati and Loun are losing emotionally. This is evidenced by the fact that within the period that I have been working on this paper (about two years), Ati and Loun's daughter

dropped out of school and attempted suicide. Meanwhile, Ati and Loun have just recently gotten divorced. Upon closer inspection, their lives are fragmented to the point of falling apart.

While the restaurant serves to situate Ati and Loun and define the parameters of their lives, providing them with useful information and "resources – economic, social, and cultural – that dilute the stress of living in an alien environment," they still feel profound frustration and a lack of competence in their lives due mainly to the fact that they have very few English speaking skills (Stoller 673). This contributes greatly to a sense of low self-esteem for Ati and Loun, and even further isolates them from the dominant society around them.

As is evidenced by my research over a two-year period, financial achievement is not the only decisive factor in how well an immigrant family adjusts to an alien environment. This does much to debunk the concept of the "American Dream" and makes us question Ong's criterion for "citizenship" quoted earlier in this paper. In tandem with the ability to make money, the immigrant must also be competent in dealing with the host society. In a foreign environment, "the key to psychological well-being may well be the ability to develop and maintain competence in both cultures. The more a person maintains active and functional relationships by alternating between cultures, the less difficult acquiring and maintaining competency in both cultures will be" (Damji, Clement, and Noels 494). Ati and Loun's failure to integrate into the dominant society around them is, therefore, due not only to the host society's general ignorance about minority and foreign groups, but also to the lack of competence that Ati and Loun have in their new locales. While their restaurant was a key device and strategy for their adaptation

process, in this case, it did not prove to be enough for successful establishment of a new life in a foreign culture. Without reforms in public policy, Jacksonville will continue to have a narrow scope of inclusion, thereby making the lives of future immigrants to the city that much harder.

Postnote

Antagonism towards that which is “foreign” is not only common to Jacksonville however. Growing up half Japanese/half white American, I myself have been the target of racism throughout the various places that I have lived in the United States. Examples include being called Ching-Chong in Tennessee or while living in Massachusetts, getting beaten up in second grade by a fifth grader while I was walking home. He accused me of “bombing Pearl Harbor” as he pummeled me and threw me into the snow.

ⁱ For further information on this matter, I suggest reading “An Introduction to the History of Jacksonville Race Relations” by James B. Crooks which I found at (www.jcci.org/racehistory.htm).

ⁱⁱ For further information on this subject, read “Continuity and Change in the Economic Ethics of Buddhism: Evidence From the History of Buddhism in India, China, and Japan” by Gregory K. Ornatowski. This article was found at (www.ccdev.lets.net/materials/ethicsofbuddhism.html).