

Transcript of Intergenerational-1882 Foundation Podcast Team

Beth Zhao: Hi everyone, my name is Beth and I just graduated from George Mason University, double majoring in Chinese and government. This summer Ted was like, ‘hey Beth, make some media things,’ and I was like, ‘ok, white people are super into podcasts these days. Let’s also jump on that train.’

[Audience laughter]

Beth: So, we made a podcast, and then Ted was like, ‘Wong Kim Ark,’ and I was like, ‘ok.’ So now I have a Wong Kim Ark podcast. I was really lucky to work with Abby, Jam, and Amy on this podcast. The goal was for everyone to research their own section of Wong Kim Ark, but tangentially to the case itself and create this general conversation. Because this isn’t just one thing that happened. Everyone sitting here today—especially if you’re of Asian descent and you were born in the US—Wong Kim Ark is the reason why you were able to get birthright citizenship, that you didn’t have to go through the naturalization process. So, our goal was to basically say, ‘hey, it’s a long-term thing, and this man was responsible for it.’

Abby was—you’re an art history major? Something of the sort? So, for Abby, her project was to look at the way we talk about immigrants through political cartoons, starting with Chinese-Americans and the way we talk about black and brown immigrants now, from shithole¹ countries. But then also memes, because no one really cares about political cartoons anymore. So Abby did that.

Jam did the public policy impact of Wong Kim Ark, basically why people like Steve King and Stephen Miller can’t just nope out of birthright citizenship because it’s the Constitution. [Murmurs] I don’t know, they probably only care when it’s the second amendment.

And then Amy talked about the inherent narratives of anchor babies because of birthright citizenship, because like it or not, Wong Kim Ark also did that and it’s not necessarily a bad thing. And so, we made this project as a conversation and our goal is that we continue this project and make it a series. But also we want to make this accessible to teachers and to educators who can use this as part of their curriculum so that it’s not just one teacher who never learned anything about Asian-American history and is teaching from state materials that were probably also written by white men. That’s why we made this podcast.

If we have a little bit of time I can do a snippet, maybe?

Ali Smith: Ok, sure.

¹ This is a reference to a comment made by President Trump on January 11, 2018 in which he questioned why the U. S. should permit more immigration from what he termed “shithole countries.” For more information, see:

<https://www.apnews.com/fdda2ff0b877416c8ae1c1a77a3cc425>

Beth: It's about 18 minutes. A little over.

Ali: Actually, the audio—

Beth: Do we not have audio? Never mind, we're not going to play it.

Ali: Sorry, it might not be loud enough.

Beth: No, it's ok.

Ali: Now you know where it is, and what it looks like.

Beth: So yeah, now that's what they will be—I guess like advertising this a little bit more later, because I think we just put this up two days ago. Thank you Jam for that, for editing this. So yeah, it's a podcast and we're hoping that it'll be a regular thing rather than a one-hit wonder. [Crosses fingers]

[Audience laughter]

Beth: Thanks for listening.