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Scripps Professor Jane Mi Involved in Physical Altercation with BLM Protester

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Image is of the 1100 Block of El Centro Street in South Pasadena, where the incident occurred

Amelie Lee and Maddy Yardumian
Editors-in-Chief

Protester Zane Crumley claims that Scripps College professor Jane Mi and her husband, Michael Plough, attacked him while on the way to a protest earlier this year. [A video of the incident](#) recorded by a bystander shows Plough initiating a physical altercation with Crumley. However, Mi contests the account as testified by Crumley.

On Aug. 31, local newspaper [The South Pasadenan](#) reported that Mi and Plough called the police on a lone protester on their street for disturbing the peace. The article reports that before the police arrived, Plough and Mi confronted the protester while holding their child. The South Pasadenan reports that a physical altercation broke out soon afterwards.

The protester involved in the incident, Zane Crumley, later reached out to Scripps community members about the incident. According to Crumley, he was intending to meet up with some friends at the end point of the Vanessa Marquez Anniversary March on Aug. 30. The march was intended to honor the life of actor Vanessa Marquez, who was killed by South Pasadena police in her apartment last year. Crumley stated that on his way there, he used a shopping cart filled with speakers to play loud music to announce that the protest was taking place.

"I'm just a white guy with a shopping cart," Crumley said. "I know how to put events together and how to get people to respond... That day, I'm walking up the street, testing equipment, saying there's a protest. There are people coming out and waving, and kids are waving out the window, so I decide I'm going to keep playing music on the way there."

Crumley said that when he entered Mi's street, Mi repeatedly yelled at him, demanding that he turn the music off as her child was sleeping.

"I get to the library, and I see this lady yelling half a block away, yelling, 'Motherfucker, my kids need to sleep,'" Crumley said.

According to Crumley, he started to approach Mi and invited her to join the

"She yelled at me something like 'My kids are trying to take a nap,'" Crumley said. "And I responded with 'My friends are trying not to be harassed by the police for no reason, I'll be gone in a minute.' And she just snapped at me, she was yelling a bunch of stuff."

Crumley says that Mi went back into the house briefly, and returned with her husband, carrying her child. He stated that the situation escalated as the three continued yelling at one another.

"She just kept coming closer and closer," Crumley said. "She came up to me and she started saying how I can't do this, and I don't have the right, and she's tired of BLM and all this other shit, and her kids just trying to take a nap, and she's just tired and we need to stop."

Eventually, Crumley says that Mi pulled the wire from his shopping cart, causing the music to stop. [A video of the incident](#) corroborates this part of Crumley's account, showing the music stop suddenly.

"You hear in the video, the music stops, because she's standing right there, she puts her hand and rips the cables out," Crumley said. "And then, [in the video] you see me put my arm up, and I'm like, what the fuck, and then she backs away, and [Plough] comes up now, and she's yelling at [Plough.]"

The video also shows Mi grabbing a laptop out of Crumley's cart before Plough pushes Crumley to the ground. Crumley said that as Mi grabbed his laptop, she yelled to Plough that Crumley had hit her child, causing Plough to physically attack Crumley.

"At this point, [Plough] comes up now, and I start arguing with him, saying 'I'm not going to fight you,'" Crumley says. "Then she looks at him and yells, 'He hit our kid,'" and I'm like, 'What the fuck.' Then she comes around, grabs my laptop, and I grab my laptop back, and that's when the dude comes around and hits me."

According to Crumley, this started a physical altercation between Crumley and Plough. Crumley said that at some point when Crumley was on top of Plough, Mi kicked him in the head, causing a crack in a tooth and a filling to fall out.

"When I'm about to get him in a headlock, and grabbing his arms, she comes up, she kicks me in the fucking head, and says something along the lines of, 'Fuck

Soon thereafter, the South Pasadena police showed up, and according to Crumley, Mi began to yell loudly that Crumley had hit their child.

"I know how they treat youth," Crumley said, "I know how they're going to treat me, and I know how the DA is going to treat my case, and I start thinking about all that sh-t, while I'm looking at these two people lying to the cops."

Crumley said that the police officers took accounts from Mi and Plough, then speaking to Crumley and taking accounts from two other witnesses.

In conversation with The Scripps Voice, Mi said that Crumley's and The South Pasadenan's account of the incident was incorrect. Due to legal complications, she said she was unable to comment on what specific inaccuracies there were.

"The article is grossly inaccurate. And notably the article's author chose to remain anonymous," Mi said.

Crumley said that while he's currently unsure about his next course of action, he plans to pursue legal action to pay for the damage that Mi caused to the laptop and his teeth.

"There's some part of me that doesn't want to admit that I got beat up, you know, you don't want to admit that you're a victim," Crumley said. "And I didn't want to portray that. But in reality, this lady and her husband came up to me, assaulted and accosted me, broke my tooth, and lied to the cops about it. They were willing to put me in jail for lies."

Mi is currently the Assistant Professor of Media Studies at Scripps College and is currently teaching Introduction to Computational Media and the Core 3 class, Futuring. She was hired this year and previously taught at Pepperdine University.

Students who have previously worked with Mi at Pepperdine University, organizing through @blackatpepperdine, reached out to Scripps For Black Lives Matter to provide support for Mi, writing positively about Mi as a Black ally during her time at Pepperdine. The statement from @Blackatpepperdine has been included at the bottom of the article.

When asked about how she felt about the Black Lives Matter protests this year, Mi said that she supports the Black Lives Matter movement and highlighted her

"I support Black Lives Matter," Mi said. "I affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. We began protesting alongside Black Lives Matter Los Angeles in 2016 including, but not limited to the United Against Hate, Women's March, DAPL, and Free the People protests."

Mi also shared her history of working for anti-racist justice in her career and research.

"My work and research focuses on the occupation and militarization of the Pacific Ocean by the United States, as my livelihood as an ocean engineer would have reinforced the legacy of the American military complex," Mi said.

Additionally, Mi touched on her teaching experience and her commitment to building an anti-racist curriculum.

"Likewise, my work as a professor has always been about creating safe spaces for students of color, including starting a Women of Color lecture series while I was a visiting professor at Pepperdine," Mi said. "My teaching at Scripps is similar, my curriculum centers on BIPOC. I continue to support Black Lives Matter and anti-racism in my classes."

Several Scripps College organizations released a statement calling for Scripps administration to speak out on the issue. In a post on Sept. 19, the Instagram account @scrippsforblm **posted specific demands** for the Scripps administration to address the incident, written by Scripps for Black Lives Matter, Watu Weusi, and the Asian American Student Union.

"While many of the details are murky at the moment, Mi's reported behavior is neither representative of nor acceptable to the Scripps community, especially at this time of heightened awareness of violence against the Black community," the post read. "This is not another incident for the Administration to be silent on."

In response, Dean of Faculty Amy Marcus-Newhall released a statement.

"Scripps College has not taken a position or action regarding the incident involving Professor Mi, as the investigation by law enforcement authorities is ongoing. Professor Mi disputes the description of the situation as presented in the media and repeated in your email," Marcus-Newhall said.

"Based on the information currently available, the incident does not meet the criteria for initiation of disciplinary processes or intervention by the College," Newhall said.

However, she notes, "Scripps College believes that Black lives matter, supports the end of racism and racial violence, and encourages the members of our community to engage in dialogue and inquiry as we confront current political, social, and economic challenges within and beyond the Scripps community."

The same statement was sent to The Scripps Voice after a request to Scripps administration for comment.

Crumley said that incident has impacted him heavily. He stated he's facing medical bills from a trip to the ER after the incident, expenses related to his laptop, and struggling with his feelings about Mi's role as an educator.

"The thing that scares me is the way she was able to look those cops in the eye and tell them 'he hit my kid,' when she knows for a fact that nobody hit her kid," Crumley said.

Crumley said that he has been having trouble figuring out how to feel about the situation.

"What? She's an anti-racist educator?" Crumley said. "Yeah that should concern everyone, that should concern the people paying for the class... I don't know, maybe she was just having a bad day. For the longest time, I wanted to give her leisure... But this lady, she hasn't hit me up. She broke my tooth and kicked me in the head and she said 'f--- your protesting and f--- you.' I just want to see her get treated the same way she's trying to treat people."

Statement from @blackatpepperdine:

"To whom this may concern:

Hello,

We hope this email finds you well amidst the current times. We are BlackAtPepperdine, an instagram account dedicated to providing a platform for Black voices at Pepperdine University to share their experiences safely and anonymously. Students submit their experiences to our anonymous form and we post them. Our intent is to shine light on and expose the darkest parts of the

an impact on our immediate Pepperdine community and our local community as well.

The reason we are reaching out to you today is that we have been made aware of an instance that has recently occurred with a former professor, Jane Chang Mi. The University was contacted, and in turn, we were contacted. Furthermore, we were also made aware that Scripps was contacted and that your organizations were concerned—as she is a new professor. We understand how this situation seems to threaten your sense of safety and community on campus. We know these aspects are of utmost importance at a university, so we felt it necessary to reach out and share our experience with you and our perspective on the situation to hopefully ease your minds.

As you may know, Pepperdine is a primarily white institution with few faculty, staff, and administrators of color and even fewer that are Black. Being Black, you become familiar with these few faces. Jane Mi was one that we were very familiar with. Of all the professors within the Pepperdine community, she was the only one that vocally advocated for people of color. She encouraged her students and continuously advocated for them. Her classes were the most formative classes we have taken at Pepperdine. They were a safe space on campus. Countless students have been deeply impacted by her teachings. She even started an artist talk series on campus where only female artists of color were invited to speak. She was an integral part of our growth as not only students, but individuals. So much so, she is the main influence as to why this account even started. Her classes were the catalyst to our social activism. She is a true ally.

As an Asian woman of color, Professor Mi's work is centered around advocacy and justice for people of color—primarily indigenous people of color in the pacific islands and Hawai'i. (If you Google her name you can see all of her work. Some of it is in direct support of protest.) Her classes were even focused on social justice, activism, and allyship. While we don't think it is ever appropriate to explain why or how a person "qualifies" as an ally, we thought it was important for context in regards to this situation.

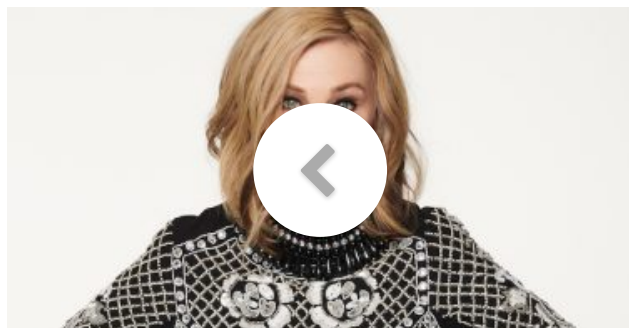
From the articles and facebook posts we have been sent, it seems that the narrative is one sided. From what we have been sent, people are comparing her actions to those of white supremacists—which Mi is far from. We would implore you to look into the veracity, credibility, and context of the articles and individuals speaking out before making any judgments of her. We were also made aware that the Student Life Paper may write something in regards to the

We believe Mi is a tremendous asset and a great resource. Your campus is so lucky to have her. While you are free to make judgements for yourselves, we wanted it to be made known that Mi can and will have a beneficial impact on your campus if you allow her. We felt it necessary to reassure you and express that you can and will feel safe with her on campus. Professor Mi was so transformative for the Pepperdine community and we hope she is just as transformative if not more on your campus.

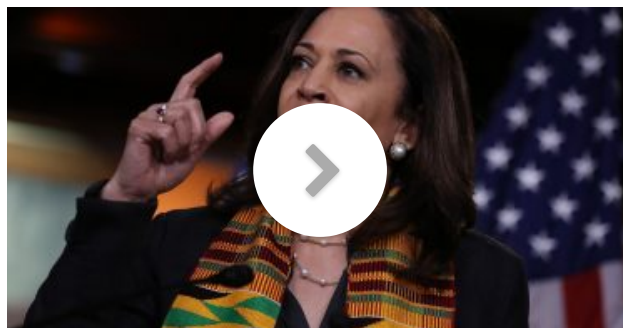
Thank you so much for taking the time to listen and we hope this eases some of your minds. Please feel free to reach back out to us.

*Warmly,
BlackatPepperdine
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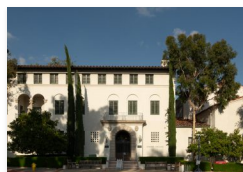
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