

Revisiting 9/11, Betty Ong, and the Mystery of “Black Betty”

Description

Jonathan Revusky's website is: HeresyCentral.com

Dead Chinese flight attendants tell no tales. Or do they?

A couple of years ago, maybe in a fit of nostalgia, I recalled the fearless Chinese superwoman, Betty Ong, and was looking for information about her. She has a [Wikipedia page](#) with a short (very short, minimal) biographical blurb. Betty was born in San Francisco on 5 February 1956 and, after a rather uneventful life in which she never married or had children or, apparently, much of a social life, made a phone call from a hijacked plane, and then died.

Now, at this point in the exposition, I shall make no bones about the fact that I quickly developed great doubts regarding whether this Betty Ong is a real, flesh and blood person. As much as I looked, I could not find any description of this person that sounded like it was written by somebody who really knew her. The Wikipedia blurb is one thing, but the memorial website maintained by her ostensible family is another. It jumped out at me that whoever had written the [description of Betty](#) on that site, obviously never knew this person.

Now, from the point of view of 9/11 Truth investigations, the only important thing to establish regarding Betty Ong is whether the phone call she allegedly made is real. Whether Betty Ong herself is real hardly matters. The general view in the 9/11 Truth community is that all the phone calls allegedly made from hijacked airplanes on that day, including Betty's, are plainly fake.

My own view is that, while Betty Ong being a real person is not of any importance regarding 9/11 per se, the issue has a more general significance. If you can establish one case of an invented vicissim in a synthetic event, then there are surely other cases in other synthetic events and narratives. (And probably in the 9/11 narrative itself.)

The Elusive Betty Ong

[. . .]

Well, Betty's life history is rather sparse. One thing that she is alleged to have done is to have graduated from [George Washington High School in San Francisco](#) in 1974. This datum occurs in various places.

I got in touch with the school's alumni association, representing that I was an alumna from that time period, and was very interested in getting my hands on some old yearbooks.

“Oh, the memories...”

My contact there told me that there was a long waiting list to get any original yearbooks. However, she did add that there was a project afoot to digitize them all and put them up on the Internet. So there was little more for me to do on the yearbook front.

I also scoured social media looking for anybody who both claimed to have known Betty and, in particular, described this person in a way that it seemed like they really knew her. I could not find anything. I also discovered that there were very few photos of Betty available and what few there were all seemed to have been photoshopped.

One thing that I did learn meanwhile (from a correspondent in Colorado who had also taken an interest in our gal Betty) is that a site called sfgenealogy.org had all the George Washington High graduating class lists online. In fact, at the time Betty would have attended this school, there were two graduating classes per year: Spring and Fall. For example, the Spring and Fall of 1974 are available [here](#) and [here](#).

No sign of Betty Ong. My Colorado correspondent pointed this out to me but then a little while later wrote me a new message to tell me that Betty was indeed on the [Spring 1973 Graduating class list](#). Yes, there she was all right! Right in between Vivian Olsen and Jacki Ono! I have to admit that I was excited by this since it was the first somewhat official corroboration of any of Betty's meager life history. Of course, she allegedly graduated in 1974, but decades later, surely one could misremember 1973 as 1974. It's an easy mistake.

[. . .]

Betty, Betty, where are you?

Nearly two years passed, but I guess I never completely got over Betty. Not very long ago, I was idly typing Betty Ong related search strings into Google, not expecting anything new, but then, much to my surprise, I saw that the relevant yearbooks were now online! On a site called classmates.com. The site required me to sign up for an account which I duly did and I located the 1973 yearbook and eagerly looked for the Spring 1973 graduating class photos.

I assume you are on the edge of your seat by now, dear reader, and I will not keep you in suspense any longer. Here is the relevant yearbook page:

[George Washington High, Spring 1973 Graduating Class. No Betty Ong.](#)

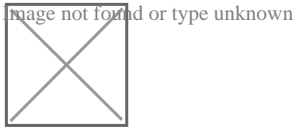
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George Washington High, Spring 1973 Graduating Class. No Betty Ong.

As I pointed out above, Betty Ong should be right between Vivian Olsen and Jacki Ono, in the right hand page, on the second row. [. . .]

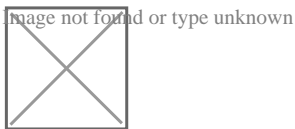
I was about ready to wrap up the Betty Ong high school yearbook investigation, when I did remember that there were two graduating classes in that year: Spring 1973 and Fall 1973. [. . .]

Consulting the [Fall 1973 graduating class list](#), I saw that, if (contrary to fact) Betty Ong were there, she would have to be in between Wayne Ogawa and Betty Ow. So I located the appropriate page in the online yearbook and I discovered something absolutely extraordinary:



Yes, there was indeed an entry for Betty Ong in the appropriate page of the Fall 1973 graduating class! She's right there on the right-hand page, second row in the center. However, I had been looking for the Chinese flight attendant Betty Ong, but now I had my first encounter with Black Betty! The Chinese Betty Ong was intriguing enough, but I daresay that Black Betty is even more fascinating!

Here is a close-up:



No Shit, Sherlock

Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth. Sherlock Holmes, famous (fictional) English detective

[. . .]

Black Betty Found at Last?

Now, dear reader, I went the whole 9 yards on this investigation. I looked hard for Betty. Well, now, for either Betty, the Chinese one or the Black one. Aside from the page with Black Betty, there is no other Betty Ong — black, yellow or white — in the 1973 yearbook.

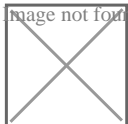
If our Betty Ong was there, she certainly kept a low profile. She did not play any varsity sports, no musical instrument. She did not sing in a choir. She was not in the Spanish club or the debate club... Well, there are a lot of people like that, who just do their course work and do not participate in any extra-curricular activities, but I felt it was still worth looking.

Betty, oh, Betty... where are you?

Finally, it occurred to me that if somebody was a senior in 1973, that person would be in their junior year in 1972 and would usually appear in the 1972 yearbook as a junior.

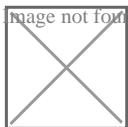
So I scanned the 1972 yearbook. It turns out that there is no Betty Ong at all there of any color of the rainbow. However, the two people who flank Black Betty in the 1973 yearbook photo, Wayne Ogawa and Betty Ow, both appear in the 1972 yearbook. Here is the relevant page:

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Here is a close-up of the relevant part of the page.

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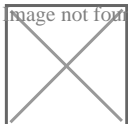


Note that there is an extra unaccounted for person, one “Oka, L.”, in between Wayne Ogawa (whose name contains a typo here) and Betty Ow. However, I finally did account for him. That is clearly Lawrence Oka, who, it turns out, graduated in **Spring** of 1973. He is **both** on the sfgenealogy.org list and in the 1973 yearbook as being part of the Spring 1973 class. I infer that, at this point, he was slated to graduate in **Fall** of 1973 but must have then assumed an extra heavy course load in order to graduate finally on time with the **Spring** 1973 class.

That is a little wrinkle, but Ogawa and Ow are exactly where one would expect, listed as being in the class of Fall 1973 in both the 1972 and 1973 yearbooks. But what about Black Betty?

Well, on the list of the **Spring** 1973 graduating class in the **1972** yearbook, there is a black girl listed as “Ole, V.”. Now, I would be the first to admit that these digitized photos are pretty grainy and it is certainly hard to swear that “Ole, V.” from the 1972 yearbook is the same person as the Black Betty Ong in the 1973 yearbook. However, I think finally it must be the same person. In the intervening year, she would have changed her hair and lost some baby fat in the face.

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Though I am not 100.0% certain, and it is not a sine qua non either, there are some strong indications. For one thing, “Ole, V.”, unlike the previous people, Ogawa, Oka and Ow, does not appear in the 1973 yearbook. Granted, she could have transferred to another school or dropped out entirely. Everything is possible. However, the simplest explanation is that she is in fact the black girl who is labeled as “Betty Ong” in the 1973 yearbook. Note that the surname “Ole” fits right between Ogawa and Ow and this seems like too neat to just be a coincidence.

By the way, I had never heard of the surname “Ole” before. It sounds vaguely Hispanic, but, in fact, it is a [moderately common surname in Kenya](#).

So, this concludes the investigation of Betty Ong’s high school career. In fact, it looks quite unlikely that there was any Chinese ethnic student by the name of Betty Ong at George Washington High School in the early seventies. The one mention of a Betty Ong corresponds to the photo of a black girl, who is probably “Ole, V.” from the 1972 yearbook. Betty Ong’s name does appear on this [Spring 1973 graduating list](#) but, as I point out above, the name is pretty clearly inserted.

[...]