

WHAT WE EXPERIENCE | NOW





Artist Reflection

Gabriella Ignacio

The theme of this issue is “What We Experience Now,” so I tried to implement that theme into the artwork. In today’s world, we are surrounded by many changes, such as the coronavirus, the Black Lives Matter Movement, and the 2020 election. Because of this, I wanted to be able to convey everything that has been happening within the art. This piece is meant to show that despite how messy or challenging this year has been, it is still something that we must go through.



Letter from the Founders

Dear reader,

Thank you for taking some time out of your day to indulge in our magazine. We are thrilled to share with you the first issue of What We Experience!

Our names are Jeenah Gwak and Hope Yu, and we are two high school juniors in the greater Seattle area. Our project began as one of our many ideas. As Asian adolescents living in American society, we have witnessed countless instances of discrimination, xenophobia, and social injustices against people of Asian descent within our communities. Despite living in a relatively Asian-dense region, we have been exposed to various forms of social injustice against Asian Americans, such as Asian representation in academic curricula and recent COVID-19 related events. These occurrences galvanized us to take action.

Taking into consideration our abilities, we decided that promoting awareness through written works would be the most appropriate for our course of action. In our magazine, we strive to share the untold stories of Asian-American experiences surrounding racism and societal pressures that are often overlooked in society. Through these publications, we hope to educate and inspire you to take action.

What We Experience, will be released on a quarterly basis covering the experiences of various Asian identities. This first issue focuses on the experiences of Asian Americans with recent events in mind. Upcoming publications will feature community submissions, so keep an eye out for these opportunities!

That being said, thank you for supporting us in our journey to advocate for the Asian-American community. We hope you enjoy our magazine, and feel inspired to share it with others.

Sincerely,
Jeenah Gwak and Hope Yu

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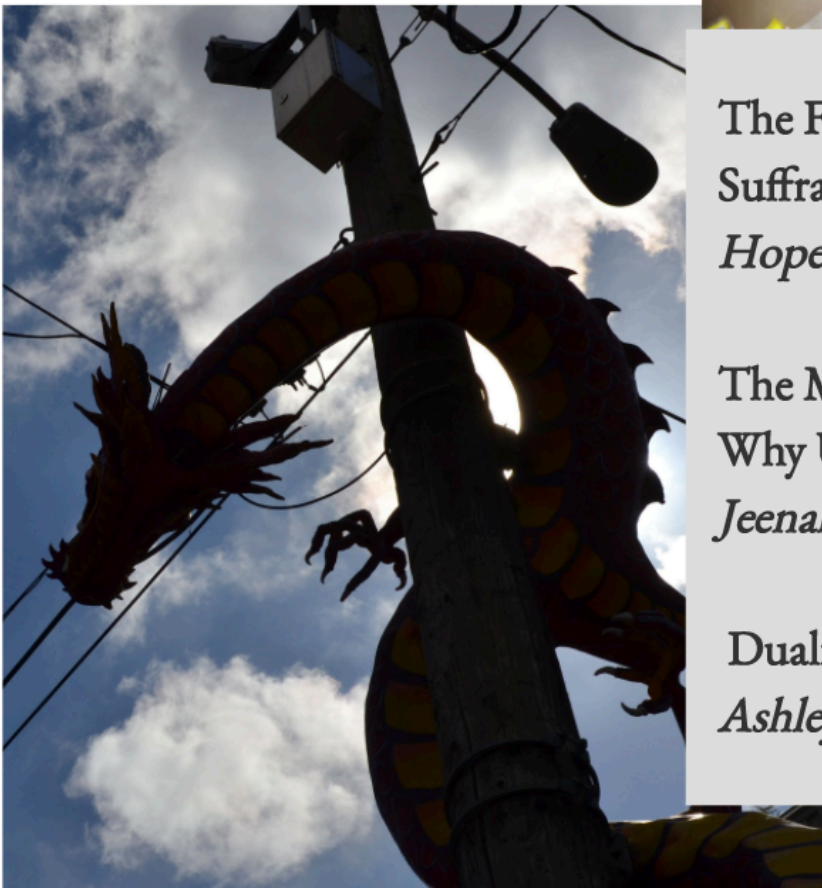
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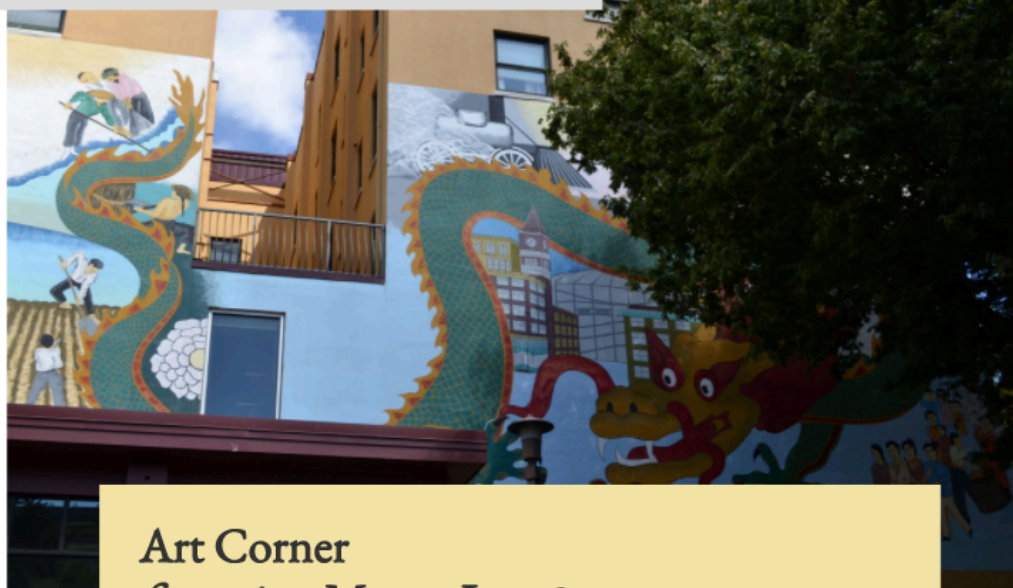


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Ethnic Enclaves and Their Significance

by Jeenah Gwak

You've probably walked past or driven by an area in your hometown or neighboring cities that consist of foreign stores and restaurants. Personally, as a person of Korean descent living in the states, I feel a fuzz of warmth whenever I see or pass by Korea towns that advertise Korean food and supermarkets. It reminds me of my home country and the culture I come from. The International District Chinatown in my area boasts great diversity with various Asian restaurants and supermarkets. These international communities, however, are not a recent development. In fact, some of these businesses have been operating for almost a hundred years.



Historic Chinatown Gate in Chinatown International District in Seattle, WA

Though ethnic enclaves (international communities) were found across the world and throughout history, they became pervasive in the 19th century with the first tides of industrialization. With new production techniques and technologies, major industrial cities that were in demand of increased labor forces attracted immigrants from around the world who sought economic opportunities and better living standards. People were able to move in vast numbers due to improved transportation technologies (steamships, for example) and most settled into their new homes without knowledge of American culture, language, and societal expectations. These immigrants remained within themselves and established their own ethnic neighborhood or chose to reside in already-existing communities of their nationality. As the immigrant population grew in the states, these ethnic enclaves developed into little versions of their homes.



Ping pong table in Chinatown International District in Seattle, WA

In the United States, ethnic enclaves flourished and became places of congregation for people of various nationalities during the 19th century, and many remain standing to this day. A common example is Little Italy in New York; Italian immigrants instituted Italian-style restaurants and markets, and even gathered to celebrate Italian holidays. Other international enclaves, such as Greek and Irish communities, could be found in places around the nation. However, few international communities have had greater significance and population than Chinatowns. While Americans recognized cultures of Europeans to some degree, Asian culture seemed inherently different. Due to this unfamiliarity, most Americans were prejudiced in their judgment of these foreigners. Chinatowns, as a result, became designated safe spaces for Chinese immigrants to live in, and also to work in, far from racial injustice that they would have undoubtedly faced in other places in society. Likewise, other Asian communities, like Koreatowns and Japanese towns, were home to immense immigrant populations.

Though some ethnic enclaves were founded by foreign communities to settle themselves around familiar surroundings, to work alongside people of same ethnic backgrounds, and to find appropriate and stable job opportunities, most were founded seeking protection from racial prejudice and discrimination by white Americans. They can be considered instances of willful self-segregation, as communities separated themselves from mainstream American culture, but this “voluntary self-segregation” leaves us to question how safe and welcome these immigrants felt in American society.



"Preserve the International District" wall art in Chinatown International District in Seattle, WA

Asian immigrants, of all Asian descent, experienced harsh discrimination; they were referred to as “yellow peril” as considered a “threat” to the United States, being “unclean and unfit” for American citizenship. In places like San Francisco, white nativists actively protested the Chinese, spreading xenophobic propaganda about “Chinese uncleanness” in the late 19th century. Shortly after, the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited all Chinese migration for ten years, was ratified. In February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order (Executive Order 9066) to incarcerate “people under suspicion” to internment camps; the majority of those incarcerated were Japanese.

So, considering the racism that Asians experienced throughout these years, was voluntary self-segregation really “voluntary”? Yes, the establishment of ethnic enclaves and settlement were both by choice, but did these immigrants feel like they had any other option?

Perhaps this underlying reason for the creation of these ethnic communities explains our fondness for these international towns in our society. These places were where immigrants felt their culture and customs could thrive. These places were where people could safely share and enjoy food from their home countries. These places were where people could gather to celebrate holidays that they would’ve celebrated with their families back home. It was because of these places that many immigrants could survive in America.



Jeenah Gwak is a junior at Newport High School in Bellevue, WA. In her free time, she enjoys playing piano, reading, and spending time with her loved ones.



Editors' Pick: Harbor City Restaurant

Cuisine: Chinese, Hong-Kong style

Address: 707 S King St, Seattle, WA 98104

Phone Number: 206-621-2228

Menu: harborcityseattle.com

Dine-in, Takeout, and Delivery
Cash & Card

- All workers wore masks
- Limited seating options
- Food and environment were clean





Shu Mai (steamed pork dumplings) - This steamed pork dumpling is everything you can ask for in a pork dumpling. While it is a mouthful, it is juicy and has a nice texture, which makes the dish far more satisfying. The soup in the dumpling was incredibly savory and delicious, encouraging my stomach to consume more; these dumplings, however, were huge and filling. As it was my first time eating *Shu Mai*, I was pleasantly surprised with its taste and quality.



Har Gow (steamed shrimp dumplings) - I ordered my shrimp dumplings with chives, choosing from plain har gow, with chives, and with cilantro. These shrimp dumplings did not disappoint! They consisted of tender chunks of shrimp and chives inside, with soft and chewy wrapper on the outside. When my father (the family food critic) tried one of these dumplings, he was surprised to taste authentic Hong Kong style food. These received approval from him, which speaks volumes on the taste and quality.



Steamed BBQ Pork Buns - This was my personal favorite. Having had these before in other locations, I knew I had to order these. I, however, was honestly flabbergasted at my love for these. Perfectly bouncy and soft bread on the outside with flavor-blasting BBQ pork filling on the inside, these BBQ pork buns had me researching where I could buy them bulk to keep frozen in our freezer. If I am successful in my search, these would become my go-to snack.

Chinese Broccoli with garlic sauce - while the broccoli was well done, what made this dish come alive was the Garlic sauce. When I bit into the hard stalk of the vegetable, there was a pleasant hint of savory garlic that would be exempt in a usual piece of broccoli. The garlic flavor was much stronger in the head of the broccoli. Usually, the flavor of the head of Chinese broccoli gets forgotten and in turn, eaten in one bite. However, not in this case, the additional Garlic hints made me savor each bite of the head. All in all, the garlic was the real showstopper here.



Assorted Vegetables & Tofu over Steamed Rice - This is a bit of a comfort dish, something about the combination of rice, tofu, and vegetables with spices and savory sauces brings me back to pre-Covid school lunches and Sunday night dinners. Now the one thing that did surprise me was the addition of celery. Celery has a very peculiar taste that is hard to associate with a specific cuisine. I appreciated the addition of it to this dish as it gave it the dimension that made the dish to surpass my expectations.



Assorted Vegetable Chow Mein - Another favorite, this did not disappoint. I enjoyed the use of the actual Chow Mein noodles and not Lo Mein noodles like some other Chinese restaurants. The vegetables were cut pretty large and while that could be a con for some, it made me slow down and enjoy each individual piece. I brought some leftovers home and the Chow Mein was a hit with my younger siblings as the noodles were easy to separate from the vegetables.

Overall, I highly recommend this as a family dish.



Asian History in the American Education System

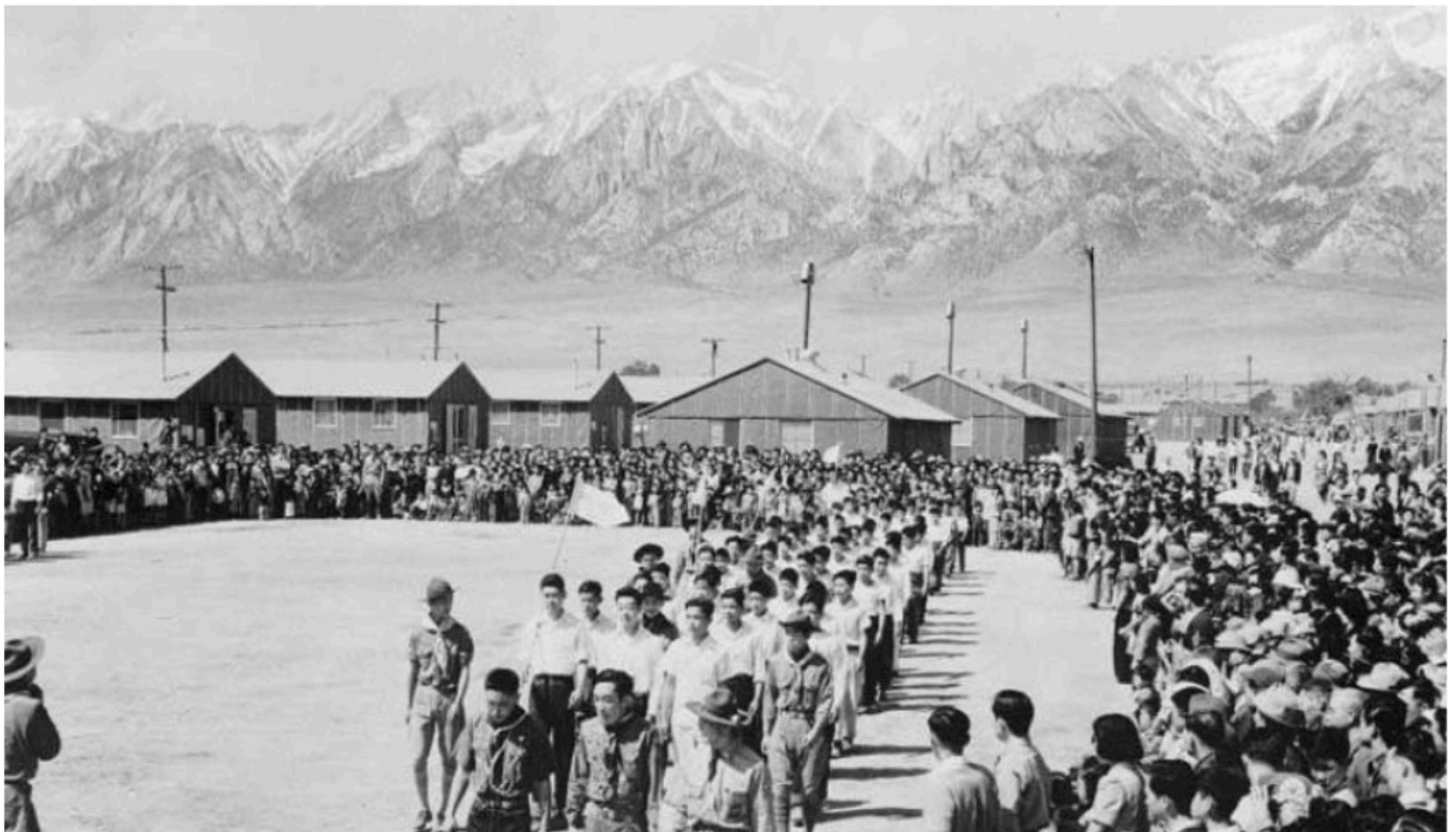
by Gabriella Ignacio

Ever since their arrival to the United States, Asian-Americans have faced countless attacks of discrimination and systematic oppression. Whether it be through federal laws, racist myths, or physical attacks, Asians are no stranger to racism in the US. Despite this, America's education curriculum greatly ignores the vast majority of their history in this country. While well-known topics such as the American Revolution and the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade are retaught in schools, the stories of Asian American struggles remain untold.

The beginnings of multicultural education started alongside many other civil rights movements of the 1960's. During this time, people of color challenged the discriminatory practices of educational institutions and other public organizations. They demanded that the curriculum be changed according to the growing racial diversity in the country, as well as eliminate oppressive ideals in schools. These protests occurred parallel to the Women's Rights Movement, and eventually women began to fight for more educational opportunities too. Schools took notice, and though they made slight adjustments to their curriculum, people were not satisfied. It was not until the 1980's that real change started. In the 80's, many education activists emerged, including one of the pioneers of multicultural education: James Banks.

He was an education activist and scholar who argued that educational equality was necessary, and that all aspects of school should be transformed to fit that ideal. Many other scholars and teachers quickly followed suit, and curriculums began to develop new ideas that were grounded in the belief of education equality. These foundations allowed students to engage in critical thinking, as well as widen their social awareness. Since then, inclusion of different minorities in schools has only gotten greater. Today, there is more minority representation than ever, and students are taught about many cultures and ideas. However, our school systems still lack fundamental parts of Asian history, and there is still a lot of room to improve.

I admit that Asian culture is somewhat represented in school, but even so, it is commonly shown in a very superficial way. Characters in movies, pictures in textbooks, or even cultural celebrations at school tend to be very stereotypical and inaccurate. Though the attempt of inclusion is appreciated, it simply isn't enough, and the history of Asian-Americans continues to be overlooked. Even if there is a segment of a lesson that is dedicated to Asian history, it is usually condensed into nothing more than a paragraph or phrase. In some cases, these phrases can even be untrue.



Japanese Internment Camps in California - World War II

For example, in regards to World War II, a textbook titled *American Government: Roots and Reform* mentions that “Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which led to the internment of over 130,000 Japanese Americans, Italian Americans, and German Americans, some of whom were Jewish refugees”. Though this statement is technically accurate (some German and Italian Americans were indeed arrested), it is extremely misleading. It blatantly covers up the fact that people of Japanese descent were the only ones who were taken in large numbers, and were the ones who suffered the most.

Because of this, most students do not truly learn about important events crucial to our country's history. They do not learn the truth about the Japanese internment camps of World War II, or the Chinese Massacre in LA. They do not learn about the laws placed in order to exclude Asian immigration, and how the Asian community still managed to survive. Most of all, students are prevented from getting the full picture of our nation's history.

Despite being far away from fully implementing a multicultural curriculum, many teachers are aiming for a change. One of these teachers is Athena Manalo-Jimenez, who teaches 8th grade social studies at Tillicum Middle School in Bellevue, Washington. Her lessons focus on the discovery of America as well as the American Revolution, and she had strong opinions about people of color during that time. Although it does not specifically apply to Asians, I think that her words surrounding this topic are still relevant. She believes that “Our history and country were built by all sorts of people, not just white men” and that she would love to “center Black and Indigenous voices, and teach US History from that lens”.

Because of this, she has started activities with her classes that focus on those perspectives, such a mock trial of whether or not Christopher Columbus was a good person. It encourages the students to look at that piece of history from the view of the indigenous people, which is something that is not often shown in traditional lessons. Regarding later immigrants, such as



Chinese Massacre of 1871

Asians and Latin Americans, she mentions that “It would be great to learn their experiences and perspectives as well, including how they were treated, abused, and how they flourished, because there were plenty of very successful nonwhite communities that were actually destroyed by white people in power and their policies”. Despite her lessons not centering around those ethnic groups, Mrs. Jimenez still believes that educators should shed light on their history. Personally, I think that teachers could learn from others like her. Steps toward a positive change in America’s education system is something that everyone, especially teachers, should strive to achieve.

Overall, there is no doubt that the discrimination of Asian-Americans is prevalent throughout the history of America. This history has been glossed over in the American education system for many years, and continues to be done today. However, this issue has been steadily improving, and educators across the country are aiming for a more inclusive curriculum. Many schools are beginning to implement Asian study courses, hire Asian-American speakers, and start cultural clubs. Though it may take time for nationwide change to happen, it is important to let students know that no matter their heritage, culture, or race, their stories are valid.

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Gabriella Ignacio is a sophomore at Newport High School in Bellevue, WA. Some of her interests include visual arts, reading, and science.

The False Narrative of Women's Suffrage

By Hope Yu

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE RIGHTS

NINETEENTH AMENDMENT

SECTION 1. The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

SECTION 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

The Amendment was adopted after a long campaign by its advocates who had largely despaired of attaining their goal through modification of individual state laws. Agitation in behalf of women's suffrage was recorded as early as the Jackson Administration but the initial results were meager. Beginning in 1838, Kentucky authorized women to vote in school elections and its action was later copied by a number of other States. Kansas in 1887 granted women unlimited rights to vote in municipal elections. Not until 1869, however, when the Wyoming Territory accorded women suffrage rights on an equal basis with men and continued the practice following admission to statehood, did these advocates register a notable victory. Progress continued to be distasteful to many of the original States having joined Wyoming by having failed,¹ and a vigorous campaign by the passage of a proposed Amendment and the ratifications.²

Following the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Amendment, the state courts which passed on the Amendment ruled that it did not confer the right to vote but only the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their sex in the setting of voting qualifications. This was a distinction to be sure but one which has no practical applications of the Amendment. In only one

On a Covid-19 afternoon in June, I found myself mindlessly scrolling through my instagram feed like any other teenager. There were an abnormally high number of infographics appearing on my friends' stories and mine, generally focused around politics, racism, and the recent BLM protests. After reading through many, one caught my eye. In eye-appealing pastel colors, it stated that Asian women in America were not granted suffrage until 1952. I was shocked.

As we celebrate the centennial anniversary of the 19th amendment, let us not forget those excluded and forgotten from history.

My grandparents would have been almost my age! Now, I take everything on Instagram with a grain of salt and decided to do some quick googling. Turns out it was mostly true.

All people of Asian descent weren't federally allowed to vote until 1952.

I have never been solely taught about Women's Suffrage. It has never been a unit in my History classes, I have never read a book about it in my English classes, and it is used in discussions as merely contextualization. Women's rights in countries other than the US during the suffrage era are not discussed. At least, this is the case in an AP World History class taught by a teacher who has put much more effort than other teachers into diversifying their curriculum. Due to this education - or lack thereof - I had made a lot of assumptions over the years regarding women's rights in the past 2 centuries. I thought the United States was one of the first countries to make large strides in equality on the basis of sex. I was wrong. China actually semi-enfranchised women (up to each province) before the U.S. - something that we could never admit. I thought the Suffrage movement was a short phenomenon, an event that occurred over a couple of decades. Most worryingly of all, I naively presumed that the 19th Amendment applied to all women residing in the United States. Not realizing that many were not legally allowed to be citizens.

Contrary to popular belief, there have always been people who believed in gender equality. Of course, the majority of society for the better part of all history has worked against such ideals. In the early 1800s, this began to change. The 1828 United State presidential election was the first instance of male suffrage that included non-landowning white males. With the passing of these laws, women en mass began to actively combat the gendered ideals surrounding their patriarchally determined place in society.

The 1848 NYC Seneca Falls convention led by abolitionist and activists, Elizabeth Cady Staton and Lucretia Mott, is now known as the first woman's rights convention.

The consensus: women should have the right to vote.

The movement garnered attention during the 1850s, though it lost steam during the Civil War. With the passing of the 15th amendment, "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude," questions were raised by proponents of women's rights.

The 1869 National Woman's Suffrage Association was created due to the split of the American Rights Association over women's support of the 15th Amendment. They refused to support the 15th amendment unless it included women's right to vote. They were more radical than their counterparts (the American Woman Suffrage Association supported the 15th Amendment) and additionally demanded reforms to education and divorce laws. The Suffrage movement continued to gain attention up until the first World War. While the movement lost momentum at that time, the War actually provided many ways for women to prove their capabilities (though they should not have had to), thus aiding the overall process. Post war, on August 18th, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified when on Nov 2nd, over 8 million women voted for the first time.



Now this seems like a success story, something that could be made into an inspirational period piece. Oh wait, it was ('Suffragette' a 2015 film). But there is critical information that is consistently left out. To understand it, you must know the history of the Anti-Asian laws that were established over the better part of a century. The first wave of large-scale Asian immigration to the US was between 1830 and 1917. Driven primarily by the demand for agricultural workers in Hawaii; providing a gateway to the West coast. In the 1860s and 70s, hostility towards Asians increased, the term Yellow Peril was a popular xenophobic term to stereotype Asians as an otherly being.

In 1875, the first immigration law was passed, named the Page Act and effectively barred many Asian workers and women from China. Then there was the historic Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which prevented almost all immigration from China and was the first law that excluded immigration based on race and place of origin. Furthermore, it prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming citizens of the United States.

From 1900-1943, only a small number of Asian Americans were let into the United States. Those who resided in the U.S. lived under harsh regulations and were not allowed citizenship. However, in the early 1900s, there were many BIPOC women in the suffrage movement.

One prominent woman was Dr. Mabel Ping-Hua Lee. Her parents were allowed immigration rights because they were teachers for the Baptist church. Lee was raised as a 'modern' woman which included not binding her feet and allowing her to receive an education. She was an outspoken supporter of the suffrage movement and a pioneer in women's rights.

At the age of sixteen, she was invited to ride in the honor guard in a massive New York suffrage parade. She worked with the likes of Ava Belmont and others to open dialogue between the Chinese population and White Americans. She went to Barnard College in New York and remained a large advocate for women and Asian rights. During her time there, she reportedly wrote essays as a part of the Chinese Students' Monthly and spoke to Chinese women, encouraging them to participate in the suffrage movement. In 1917, New York enfranchised women but she was not included in comparison to her White counterparts as she was still barred from becoming a U.S. citizen. Instead, she achieved a masters in educational administration and pursued a Ph.d program in economics at Columbia. Lee graduated as the first Chinese American woman to achieve a doctorate in economics in the United States.

From 1943 to 1952, federal anti-naturalization policies were lifted and by the end of 1952 the majority of Asian Americans were allowed to become US citizens. This, of course, meant that they could vote in federal elections. Now while they legally could, that doesn't mean society let them; the language barrier, lack of outreach, and the psychological effects of the Model Minority Myth are attributed to Asian American voter

suppression. In 1965 the Voting Rights Act becomes law to prohibit racial discrimination in voting. Finally, all U.S. citizens no matter their race could exercise their right to vote. Now many think this is where it ends, all are equal right?

Wrong.

It took until 1975 for the Congress to add section 203 that alleviates the language barrier. It took until 1992 for language translation to expand to places with over 1000+ non-English speakers.

In 2004 there was a Vietnamese candidate in Alabama that amassed a large amount of Asian American support. Apparently, "The losing incumbent says of them, '...if they couldn't speak good English, they possibly weren't American citizens."

In 2005, here, in Washington state, one person decided to challenge the right to vote of 1500+ people of mainly Asian and Latin@ heritage based on the argument that their names had "No basis in the English language."

Texas, 2011. Plans for changing the districts in Texas to divide the 3rd largest Asian American country in the country just because they didn't want Asians voting as a bloc.

2013, United States Supreme Court, Shelby vs. Holder. The section of the VRA that acknowledges voter discrimination is gutted in a 5-4 ruling. (the 5 were: Scalia, Kennedy, Thomas, and Alito).

I bet you didn't learn that in history class.

This was not only a problem that affected the Asian American community. With the exclusion of Black men, any person who did not have full European heritage was not federally allowed to vote as of 1920. Moreover, Black men faced intense physical and emotional assault from White people for many years as this was the Jim Crow era. Native Americans were granted the right to vote in 1924 with the Snyder Act. Let's unpack that, people who were here before the European colonizers were not legally allowed to vote until less than 100 years ago. Latin@ people were not allowed to vote until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Those who make our textbooks and curriculums circumvent these facts (or have no idea and should not be tasked with writing out textbooks), the corporations and companies that push 100th centennial merchandise and ads to your instagram feeds are forgetting, at least that's what I hope.

The other option is much worse; they know and they purposely leave it out. Either way, we must find a way to celebrate the achievements of the 19th amendment while acknowledging that it was not as perfect as society may wish.

The 19th amendment did not address the state level laws that prohibited Black Americans from voting. This meant that in 1920, a minute number of Black women were able to vote, under heavy and often violent discrimination, in states such as California and New York, the majority were disenfranchised until 1965. From these few examples, it is obvious the information promoted about the 19th amendment is misinformation and should be addressed in academics, written works, and public media.

So take it into your own hands, learn more than what I just told you! Educate yourself on the Asian American experience of gaining citizenship in the United States and what that means. Teach yourself to understand media bias and misinformation from all news outlets. Listen and support Asian women because the time for our silence is over (and when I say Asian women, I mean ALL Asians who identify as a woman).

To the Western world, our cultures are mysterious and silent, they have internalized and subjugated this rhetoric onto our entire demographic in the U.S. However, our time for silence is coming to a close, we must exercise our freedom to vote while we still have it.

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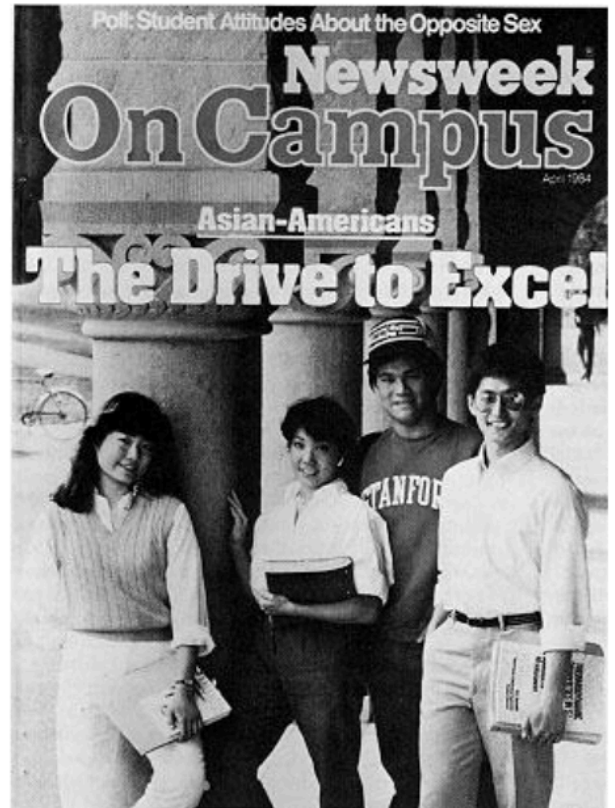
The Model Minority Myth: Why Us?

by Jeenah Gwak

More often than not, society attributes the success and intelligence of Asian people to their status as the “model minority,” directly associating race with strong will and intellectual capability. This phenomenon can be observed in various aspects of society. Asians are expected to be law-abiding and disciplined residents of the United States, never playing a part in political scandals, economic downturns, or social uprisings. Asians are defined as the “model minority,” as they supposedly possess innate talent and an extraordinary work ethic compared to people of other races. Asians are subject to harmful comments, like “you’re Asian, you should be smart,” – a familiar phrase to all Asian people, especially to middle and high school students of Asian descent across the nation. Teachers and peers of other ethnicities often comment on the intellectual abilities of these Asian students, expecting them to “be smarter” and “get better grades.” Employers assume all Asian employees to be sharp and diligent. While people might have not taken offense at these common remarks and expectations, their widespread usage demands a just explanation of its origins.

The origins of the “model minority myth” can be traced back to the mid-twentieth century. While the first Asian immigrants in the nineteenth century were known as low wage laborers, employed in jobs such as mining, laundering, and construction workers, many Asians managed to ascend the socioeconomic ladder. Continuously increasing numbers of Asian immigrants resulted in a prominent minority population. As the immigrant population grew, Asian groups were seen to have acquired greater educational and financial success relative to other immigrant groups. This phenomenon can be partially attributed to Asians’ notable focus on work ethic and family priority. The 1965 Immigration Act, moreover, resulted in a populous influx of highly educated professionals in various fields (scientists, engineers, doctors, etc), as the act prioritized bringing in professionals and scientists after immediate family members of those in the United States. The legislation overturned prior years of restricted immigration policies and lifted previous geographic regulations, leading to a growing minority population.

Although the term “model minority” can be applied to distinct groups by its criteria (according to its definition and logic), it most often designates Asian Americans, who, on the whole, achieve greater success than other racial groups. The term originated from the *New York Times* article titled “Success story: Japanese American style,” written by sociologist William Petersen in 1966. In his article, Petersen noted the harsh treatment of Japanese-Americans by Americans; he acknowledged the injustices faced by Japanese Americans as the “object[s] of color prejudice,” as well as “agent[s] of an overseas enemy” (referring to the Attack on Pearl Harbor), and the cruel nature of internment camps in World War 2. He emphasized that the Japanese Americans overcame discrimination against their group and rose to success by prioritizing family structure and having a cultural emphasis on hard work. Following Petersen’s publication, numerous press articles appeared, all describing the achievements of Asian American groups and analyzing their success. Many attempted to uncover reasons behind the seeming success of Asian Americans;

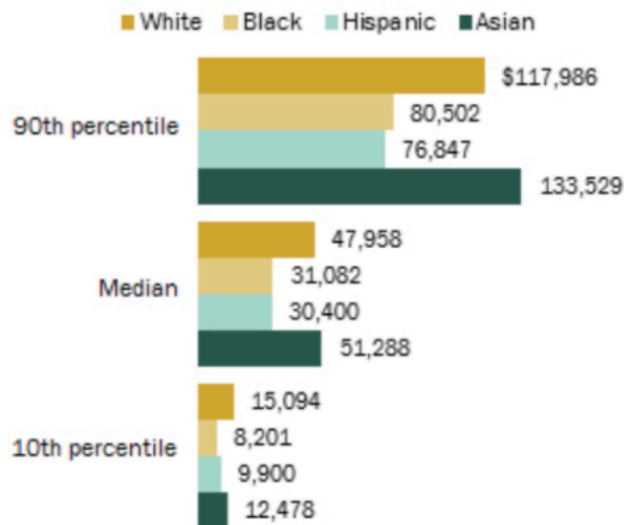


Newsweek On Campus (journal in the 1900s)

however, they all came to similar conclusions – that Asians were successful due to their focus on hard work and family priority.

Asians have the highest earnings, except among lower-income adults

Incomes at selected percentiles, by race and ethnicity, 2016



Note: Whites, blacks and Asians include only single-race non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Asians include Pacific Islanders. Income is adjusted for household size and expressed in 2016 dollars. See Methodology for details.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2016 American Community Survey (IPUMS).
"Income Inequality in the U.S. Is Rising Most Rapidly Among Asians"

Image Courtesy of Pew Research Center

So Asian-Americans are generally praised for their apparent success in academic, economic, and cultural domains as a "model minority." Why is it bad to be part of a group that is perceived as successful? On the surface, this label appears to be an accolade, as it recognizes Asians for their achievements. Despite this seemingly positive perception of the Asian community, the stereotype has nonetheless proved harmful. This generalization, for one, isn't entirely accurate. While it is true that Asian Americans have the highest median income of any racial group, they also have the largest income gap compared to other racial groups. As reported by the *New York Times* in August 2018, the top 10th percentile of Asian Americans earns 10.7 times more than the bottom 10th percentile, whereas for black, Hispanic, and white earners, the numbers are smaller (9.8, 7.8, and 7.8, respectively) as of 2016. In New York City, furthermore, Asians experience the highest rates of poverty of any immigrant group. These disparities in data cast doubt on the "model minority" stereotype; however, the fact that the wealthiest 10th percentile of Asian Americans earn more than that of any other racial group apparently renders these disparities insignificant.

Though it is true that Asians are the wealthiest immigrant group, it is significant to consider distinct ethnicities within the Asian community. The aforementioned *New York Times* article also analyzes the median household income and education based on country of origin. Among the numerous Asian ethnicities, Indian Americans were found to have the highest median household income and education; in contrast, Burmese, Hmong, Laotian, and Cambodian Americans lagged behind other Asians on these indicators. Perhaps these variances and disparities within the Asian American group demonstrate where the model minority myth falls short.

Along with this, the model minority myth has additional consequences for the Asian population in the United States. Despite the results of social psychological experiments which have shown that "being stereotyped as smart may benefit Asian Americans in test-taking situations because positive stereotypes about one's group can boost performance," this stereotype does far more harm than good. Many Asian Americans feel the pressure to live up to unrealistic expectations – especially middle and high school students who are constantly reminded to be "the smartest" or "get straight A's," which, at a young age, can damage the mental well-being of Asian American youth. Perhaps more importantly, this stereotype diverts attention away from discrimination faced by Asians. Because racial discrimination against Asian Americans isn't acknowledged much in the media, its existence tends to be unknown or ignored. Those who do speak of discrimination against Asian Americans are portrayed as people who "complain" about something that does not exist or is not serious. Discrimination against Asian Americans exists just as discrimination against other racial groups exists. It just isn't spoken of.

To Viet Thanh Nguyen, who wrote the article "Asian Americans Are Still Caught in the Trap of the 'Model Minority' Stereotype. And It Creates Inequality for All" for the *Time* magazine, being part of a model minority meant "to be invisible in most circumstances because we are doing what we are supposed to be doing... until we become hyper visible because we are doing what we do too well." Perhaps it is this exact phrase that illustrates our perceived place in American society.

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Duality of Tears

Mental Health Piece by Ashley Chen

"I don't know."

This is how I answered my parents when they asked, "Why are you crying?" I spent countless nights in bed questioning myself, "What exactly triggered my tears?" In the beginning, I thought I was a crybaby. Even if he escalated his voice just a little, I would have gone through a box of tissues. There was something wrong with me, but I didn't know how to change it.

I tried to locate my source of tears, and I thought I found it. The way he always acted smarter than me, his demeaning and condescending tone, that always sounded like he was mocking me, the toxic phrase of "I love you" when it seemed apparent that the person he loved was not me, but the person he force me to be, and his pride that could not be contested by the people he hurt, they all directed my animosity towards one person, my dad.

But I continue to answer, "I don't know." These feelings and emotions are hard to put in words. It's even harder to say them out loud because criticizing him, asking him to change could backlash and hurt me instead. His omnipotent brain would compute a method to counter every criticism. As I try to build tolerance, built off a hope that he can change, I'm making myself stronger against someone I shouldn't have to shield myself from. "I don't know" doesn't mean I don't know what I'm feeling inside. I've spent years trying to describe my feelings so someone will understand. What I don't know is if it's valuable stumbling through words he's not receptive to, and then receive another mouthful of deprecating words.

Life has gotten better, not because he has toned-down on his rhetoric, but I have been making strides in mental health. I tell myself I am not the failure he makes me out to be, I am capable, strong, incredible, talented, and most of all, enough. It took a lot of convincing from my friends, who spent hours of talking me out of self-hate and giving me unconditional love. Most of the time, they support

me, not the actions of my dad, but me. What was missing from my hopeless heart was a validation of my own experiences.

This empowered me to start a blog, documenting the experiences of how I hurt and how I heal. It's a way I validate my own experiences. I have a newfound love for writing, a disapproved non-STEM activity.

My next step led me to finding therapy and counseling. Last summer, I knew it was something I needed. This toxic family relationship was tearing me apart from inside and I needed help. Unfortunately, it took about a year to find a suitable time to reach out as I secretly went against my parents' wishes to talk with someone outside our family. It took a while, but I finally sought the help I needed.

I had my reservations. School counselors come off as freakishly happy people whose jobs are to make you happy. They wouldn't be able to empathize with my experiences. When I contacted my counselor, I told her I wanted to seek out an Asian counselor because they would be able to relate. My first meeting wasn't with an Asian, but they were an immigrant.

Immigrant experiences are fairly similar. As a second-generation immigrant, my parents brought in a Chinese culture. I have been raised in a Chinese household. When I go to school, I am American. I am told that C is normal and perfect grades are near impossible. When I go home, straight A's are the expectation. There is one thing I should've listened to from my health teachers and counselors though, "You are not going through this alone."

The counselor I talked to was an immigrant. They talked about how they didn't have an incredible relationship with their parents. Sitting down with someone who understood was very comfortable. The solution is college. Escaping from the present realities

makes the source of the problems go away. I know this though. I've known it for a long time. What I seek now is coping mechanisms, how to survive these last two years of degrading and hurtful remarks. I tell myself that none of what he says is true, even if it's based in soundproof logic. None of his reasons, especially the ones that follow a certain train of thought, justify the way he treats me. That doesn't make me impervious to his temperament, but it's a good mindset to start with when it's clearly a path forward, not back.

When I am given an opportunity to vocalize my story, I'm in tears. When I write more than a thousand words on a blog post, I'm in tears. Tears are okay. Vulnerability is good. It's a validation that what I'm going through hurts me and that I'm trying my best. I'm not holding in secrets and convincing myself of a lie I will never believe, the lie that it's perfectly normal. A part of me thought that other people

wouldn't accept me for communicating everything I was going through. Social-distancing kind of helped. I didn't have to interact with strangers that might ostracize me, and my friends already accepted me for who I was, so putting it on a blog was no different. I'm extremely happy for the love and support I've gotten.

My Instagram feed is now filled with immigrant stories, self love quotes, and mental health resources. I tell myself that I can do this, I am better than him, and I will be an incredible person. I'm not sure how incredible, but I will be on the path to discover what I love to do and find who I am.

I've been told my stories are relatable, that's why people read them. For me, it's a therapeutic rant to release all my negative emotions. If others find them relatable, I'm glad. But if you find many details from my story matching up with yours, I recommend seeking out a mental health professional to find solace.

You are not alone.



Ashley Chen is a junior at Interlake High School in Bellevue, WA. Her passions include blogging and playing piano.



Change is coming to the International District.

The Discussion Needs an Interjection

Right now, in Washington - and likely anywhere else you may be - there is a discussion occurring with every interaction between a Black person and a White person. It is discussed when a Black man walks down the street and a White man crosses to the other side. It is discussed when someone who is Black and someone who is White want to start a relationship and the White person's parent begins a sentence with something along the lines of, 'honey i'm not racist but in this family we don't...' It is discussed when police and law enforcement murder Black people over and over again with no repercussions. It is discussed when teachers assign only white authors, when some neighborhoods are 'bad' and others are 'good', and when Instagram comments are filled with 'but what about' or 'my friend told me it's okay'. It's not okay.

I hope you notice that I wrote 'Black' and 'White' instead of Asian, Latinx, or Indigenous peoples. The truth of the matter is that this discussion between Black and White Americans has been going on for centuries and while improvements have been made, there is still a long way to go. The reason why this is important to us, as Asian Americans, is that we must acknowledge our participation in the support of White supremacy and address the history of intersectionality between Asian Americans and Black Americans that has been kicked to the sidelines. To understand this connection, one must understand how history works in favor of the oppressor and undermines the success of the suppressed.

The majority of Asian Americans worked as laborers during the 19th and early 20th century. They were subject to abhorrent, often violent discrimination and were vilified as other, monstrous creatures; known as 'Yellow Peril.' This characterization created sympathy in Black communities, prompting many to advocate for Asian rights. One prominent event that demonstrates this relationship was the internment of Japanese Americans during the second world war. At that time, cities on the West Coast, who heavily relied on Japanese workers, were experiencing a major production deficit as labor decreased. Their solution was to invite Black workers from the South to fill the vacant positions. While they welcomed the Black worker, they did not want their family.

While they welcomed the Black worker, they did not want their family.

They determined that these families could have the homes of the imprisoned Japanese. Though they themselves faced heavy racist behaviors and discrimination, many went out of their way to help the imprisoned Japanese. Some went to camps and brought them food and supplies, others kept in regular contact to provide hope. People along the likes of Hugh Macbeth, a Black attorney, were outspoken against internment. Newspapers such as the California Eagle called the, "persecution of the Japanese-American minority ... one of the disgraceful aspects of the nation's conduct of the People's War," and discontinued the use of a Japanese slur that is still controversial to this day.

During the 1960s, the complexity of relations increased as the terms 'Asian American' and 'Model Minority' were both coined in 1966 and 1968 respectively.

On one side of the equation, Asian Americans rallied alongside Black protestors as part of the Third World Liberation Front which led to equal education opportunities and the formulation of the ethnic studies program. Simultaneously, the Model Minority Myth was promoted to suppress the rise of Black power movements. Politicians speculated that if they touted the success of one racial community, it would quell the advancements of others. They would refer to the way Japanese Americans 'settled' and 'assimilated' into American culture after internment when comparing the Black and Asian American communities. What they failed to disclose was those who did speak out but were largely ignored and suppressed. To this day, we see how this message is perpetuated in literature, our education system, and the general acceptance of certain stereotypes. The anti-civil rights politicians of the 1960s managed to divide BIPOC communities for generations to come and redefine the racial hierarchy of the United States.

In 1991, Latasha Harlins was shot by a Korean woman, Soon Ja Du, in Los Angeles. She was 15 years old and was wrongly accused of stealing Orange juice. Instead of noticing the money in her hand, Du called Harlins a 'witch' and eventually shot her in the back. Tensions specifically between the Korean American community and Black community ignited.

Furthermore, this murder fueled the 1992 Los Angeles riots where 65% of the stores vandalized were Korean stores. In 2014, an NYPD officer named Peter Liang shot unarmed Akai Gurley. Liang claimed it was an accident but he did nothing to aid the situation after shooting. He was only sentenced to probation and community service.



Mural in Seattle's international District



Protestor holding sign - 'Asians for Black lives' (stock image)

Relationship improvements between the Asian Americans and Black population have occurred in recent years but there is still a long way to go. Due to the prominence and normalization of the Model Minority Myth in modern day America, many Asian immigrants choose not to follow recent events, stay within their own circles, and abstain from voting. While this needs to change, my hope lies with the current generation of Asian Americans. I believe they have the power to change the social dynamic between Asian Americans and other BIPOC groups through the abolishment of the Model Minority Myth, the active support of the BLM movement, and the education of older generations.

So now it is time for you to add your voice into the mix. I do not expect every single person to become a full blown activist overnight but I hope you begin to take steps to actively be anti-racist in every aspect of your life. This could look like setting up or advocating for an anti-racism committee within your church, donate some money once a week to Black organizations, and engage in conversation with family members. Understand that if you are of Asian descent and are not Black, your role in this movement is not the center. Your role is one of support and advocacy. Remember, Asian Americans have economic and social privilege that has driven a wedge between us and other BIPOC communities, we must be the ones to take the initiative to bridge that gap.

The model minority myth is the ideological manifestation of that wedge. As long as it exists, we will be told by the White people in this country that we are good at being second. They will continue to engrain bits and pieces of our culture into their daily lives without our consent. People will continue to copy our math work at school, all while pulling the corners of their eyes up in the hallways when we pass by. This stereotype characterizes Asian American children as, "...whiz kids or musical geniuses. Within the myth of the model minority, Tiger Moms force children to work harder and be better than everyone else, while nerdy, effeminate dads hold prestigious—but not leadership—positions in STEM industries like medicine and accounting." Aside from the detrimental effect this has within the Asian American community, this myth actively degrades any Latin@, Black, or Indigenous person. White culture has succeeded in dividing the American society based on stereotypes with deeply ingrained racism.

If we are to reach a moment of true justice, we cannot compare every single BIPOC person to one gold standard. Justice is possible only with the complete abolition of the Model Minority Myth.

I want you, the reader, to take one minute to reflect on what you have done to perpetuate or combat racism within your own community. Whatever your answer is, don't judge yourself, this is a learning opportunity. Take all that you have done and deeply examine it, find the times when you have hurt others and the times where you have lifted others up. From this analysis, identify where growth is needed. If you are a history teacher, look at your curriculum, how accurate do you think the narratives you teach are? What voices are missing from the equation? If you are a parent, what do your picture books teach your children? What do you tell them about others? If you are a teen trying to navigate the world of too much homework and not enough sleep, what's that homework telling you? What sort of artists do you support? Take these errors and holes in our 'American' culture and act upon them.

Silence, indifference, and ignorance are the rotten ends of leaves that whisper performative rhetoric to the animals that gnaw on the ends of the plant growing throughout the United States. Give the sprout sustenance and watch the flowers bloom.

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Covid-19: Spreading Asian Racism

by Ashley Chen

Part 1: It's not the "Chinese virus"

Back before the days of Covid-19, my main concern when walking by other people would be them snickering at me for being short and socially inept. Not that it ever happened, but I'm the type of person who fears judgement. Now if I walked down the street, I might be afraid of someone looking at me with disgust, thinking, "why is this Chinese girl walking in such a populous area spreading the 'Chinese virus?'" They would not say it out loud, but the little voice in my head would tell me that they are thinking it. Admittedly, I have not walked down many streets since the pandemic started.

This anecdote speaks to the experience of many Asian-Americans during Covid-19. Though I have not personally been the target of anti-Chinese and xenophobic rhetoric, it is necessary to put the events of the status quo into perspective.

For me, an article that put anti-Asian racism in perspective for me was one by the Human Rights Watch. It cites that government leaders and officials contribute to "hate crimes, racism, or xenophobia by using anti-Chinese rhetoric" in not only the US, but some European countries as well. Other examples of racism include "anti-immigrant, white supremacist, ultra-nationalist, anti-semitic, and xenophobic conspiracy theories that demonize refugees, foreigners, prominent individuals, and political leaders." It is quite the laundry list, but these are examples of what forms of racism have been exacerbated because of Covid-19.



Girl wearing a mask by Mason Luo

Many videos show verbal harassment against residents of non-white descent. They all have the same message: "Get out. You don't belong here. Go back to where you came from. This isn't your country; this is my country." Much of this speech involves expletives and results in a viral video. I say "non-white" because it is not just Asian people. People of all different races are harassed with this manner of language. The Torrance verbal assault offender exemplifies this language. In one video, she says something along the lines of, "I will get my family to beat you up" and "I don't care which Asian country you come from, go back." In another video, she says, "I'm not racist."

Listing out all these different hate crimes is tiresome. There is a NextShark article that is titled "Over 800 Anti-Asian Incidents Reported in the Last 3 Months Just in California, Report Says" which is unbelievable. It shocks me that there have been so many cases reported, yet minimal justice has been served. We then ask, why is it that so many cases have been reported yet law enforcement chooses to ignore it?



"Chinese are destroying Bay Ridge" - via Facebook

Law enforcement believes the stereotype that Asian people are quiet, obedient, and passive. Violence against Asian people can happen, and no one will do anything about it. The media has depicted Chinese people as unhygienic and the source of the virus. Much of these rumors come from ethnic enclaves, such as Chinatowns. Yet again, all Asian of different ethnicities, even if they are not Chinese, are exposed to hate for the "Chinese virus." This is not saying only Chinese people should be blamed for passing the virus because it only comes from Chinatowns. Both the rumors and generalizations of all Asians into one group must be dispelled.

In a TIME article, there is a story about a man named Rej Joo. A Latino man walked past him and muttered, "Chinese.... I was gonna put my mask on if you were Chinese." Joo responded that he is not Chinese and the man should wear a mask no matter what. Joo received an apology, which he accredits to working as a program manager at the Center for Anti-Violence Education.

The most important action Asians should be taking in these situations is standing up for themselves. There are many Asians that have started social justice projects, such as Stop AAPI Hate and #theycantburnusall. Historically, Asians were not sitting on the sidelines of the Civil Rights Movement. We must represent ourselves through movements, especially when no one expects us to.

Part 2: Setting people on fire is a hate crime

On July 14th, at 6:45 p.m., an 89-year-old Chinese American woman was set on fire in Brooklyn, New York. Two male suspects were caught on surveillance, approaching the woman as she just exited her home. The two men slapped her face and lit the back of her shirt on fire. Realizing her back was on fire, she rubbed her back against the wall to put out the flame.

The women and the two men had never met before. The two men did not steal her wallet or any of her possessions (NextShark).

The story is rather simple: two men lit an old Asian woman on fire. It is impossible to know what was going on in the minds of the two men when they decided to burn her and exactly what the motive was, but it is obvious that the result is a hate crime.

However, this incident has not been treated as a hate crime. Police say she was not specifically targeted, nor were there derogatory remarks made (NextShark). This simple explanation has not satisfied the community. Why did the two men pick on an old Asian woman? The only reasonable explanation for picking her was because she was Asian. There are many people who live in that neighborhood, but they picked on an Asian woman.



Woman set on fire in New York - Photo via NextShark

The police might believe this incident is an isolated instance. There are not many cases of racism against Asian people. As this article mentioned earlier, there are 800 cases in California. All of this racism, from anti-Asian posters in NYC about Covid-19 being due to Chinese immigration to the repeat Torrance racial verbal assault offender, and the lack of justice are what led up to two men believing it was not only okay, but justified to light an Asian woman on fire.

This story has sparked a movement called They Can't Burn Us All. For the long time, Asians have been quiet, never speaking out about injustices. Recently on social media, we have seen slogans such as "yellow peril for black power." It is a short phrase that simply represents how Asian Americans who face racism in the media stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter. The problem is that the only sign of Asian action against hate crimes and yellow peril has been on the internet, namely posting on social media. Asians have never been activated to take to the streets and march against the government's dismissive attitude towards hate crimes against Asian Americans. It has been the first time someone has started a movement for Asian Americans.

The mission of They Can't Burn Us All is to end hate crimes. It is a small movement right now, but all Asians should realize that they might face this type of racism someday, or maybe someone close to them will. It brings attention to Asian hate crimes that are typically dismissed by the government. Though the two "men" have recently been turned into the police, identified as two 13-year-old teens, the Asian community is still skeptical if this is a ploy to get the reward money.

For the people following the movement, arresting these teens is not enough. Prisons do not educate prisoners about their mistakes. Locking up people in cells does not reform them and convince them what they did was unethical. They have been charged with third degree assault, but not for hate crimes. TCBUA is a movement for justice, not just for Asians, but for everyone who has faced a hate crime or might face a hate crime. What TCBUA is seeking is an assurance that what happened to this woman never happens again. There are too many hate posters in New York.

The mission of They Can't Burn Us All is to end hate crimes. It is a small movement right now, but all Asians should realize that they might face this type of racism someday, or maybe someone close to them will. It brings attention to Asian hate crimes that are typically dismissed by the This movement is completely grassroots. If you would like to support the movement, please donate to the GoFundMe or join the protests. For more information, visit @theycantburnusall on Instagram. The most recent march was in San Francisco on September 26th.

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REPORT A HATE CRIME:

asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/stop-aapi-hate

RESOURCES:

Coping:

youtube.com/watch?v=gUZNAvFjGsl

#theycantburnusall:

linktr.ee/theycantburnusall

gofundme.com/f/tcbua-fighting-against-asian-hate-crimes

instagram.com/theycantburnusall

youtube.com/watch?v=70JmylGtt1g

THEY CAN'T BURN US ALL

**UNITY RALLY AND MARCH
AGAINST HATE CRIMES AND RACISM**

SAN FRANCISCO

SEP 26. 2020 / SAT

WEAR A MASK

1PM RALLY AT STEPS OF SF CITY HALL
1 DR CARLTON B GOODLETT PL, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102

2PM MARCH TO CHINATOWN

3PM FINALE RALLY

Hosted By
China Mac &
Will Lex Ham

@TheyCantBurnUsAll
#TheyCantBurnUsAll
#ProudAFToBeAsian

"They Can't Burn Us All" - a Poster from San Francisco

Hate Crimes:

nextshark.com/bay-ridge-xenophobic-anti-chinese-posters
nextshark.com/asian-hate-800-incidents-california

Torrance:

nextshark.com/torrance-filipino-american-woman-exercising
facebook.com/SamiWami3/posts/10104664030182988



Ashley Chen is a junior at Interlake High School. Her passions include blogging and playing piano.

Seoul Over Stereotypes

Ashley Lee

When you think of your typical Asian girl, do
not envision me.

You see, in my house, my mother always
cooks rice.

I hate rice.

I once told my mother I preferred
cheeseburgers over kimchi

I did not survive.

My friends say that I am their favorite Mulan.
I am Korean.

Don't ask me to answer your misconceptions
of who I am,

I don't need to add or subtract my identity to
please you,
that's your problem to solve.

My mother did not sign me up to play tennis
like the other kids,

I can't even hold an instrument

but I can beat you with an argument.

I can see perfectly fine,

my vision is 20/20

And when I get my license, don't look at me
funny.

I'm living proof that I contradict your version
of me ,

You see, I am not your typical Asian girl.

I don't have the best grades, but my intellect
surpasses your standardized testing

Leaving no mistakes.

God painted me with all the right shades,
perfected my being with every imperfection it
takes.

You, you expect me to get the best grades?

Be a walking stereotype?

Judge me when you're perfect,

Because these hands are made for something
more.

I am weak, I am strong.

And I don't need your saving anymore.

Girls like me are treated like queens back
home,

Respect given with no hesitation

wait for me to start eating

before their meal devastation

But you tell me, I am just your average girl.

So average, I can move mountains with my
words.

So average, I speak every tongue known to
man

So average, I make you dance to every song

See I am not your average Asian girl.

I am so much more than your stereotype.

I refuse to be silenced
by drowning in your words
drowning in your ignorance
drowning in your average perception of me.

You say I am too weak
to lift your man roles,
But my hands can carry your weaknesses out
the door
I can carry your suitcase filled with sharp
words, too, watch me drag it.
And set you in a place where you can find
forgiveness

Because I am not your average asian girl.

Your words are still churning in my soul and I
can't escape
You tell me that I am not good enough to do
the things that you can,
You say I am weak, both physically and
mentally,
Am I your only source of amusement?
You throw words at me, thinking it would erupt
my veins and cut my circulation, leaving me
gasping for air.

You judge me because of my appearance,
But my skin color does not dictate my thoughts
I am proud of my race, my culture, and gender,
and you cannot strip them away from me.

I am a writer
Healer
Producer
Film maker
Doctor
Musician
Engineer
Lawyer
Artist
Athlete
Actress
Director
Astronaut
Model
Soldier
Activist
President

I am what I want to be and so much more.
And that is not your average Asian girl.



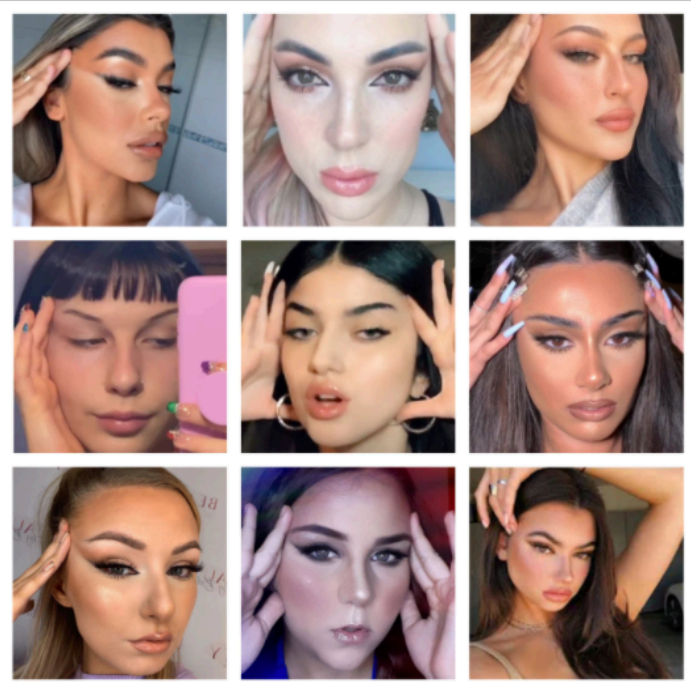
Ashley Lee is a 9th grader at Orange Lutheran High School in California. She is a youth activist and partakes in speech and debate.

"I wrote this poem from a place of confusion, when I was unsure of who I was. I had grown up and attended a predominately Asian elementary and middle school, so before entering high school, I never had experienced any form of racism in my education. When I started becoming more independent after middle school, walking the streets, and going outside was harder for me. I started catching people's looks, how my family was pushed to the back of lines, and strangers yelling derogatory terms at me. The bubble I was once in no longer existed. I didn't know how to express myself any other way, and this poem was my proof."

Controversy Surrounding the “Fox Eyes” Trend

by Jeenah Gwak

Racism surrounding the “fox eyes” make-up trend has recently appeared as a point of contention on various social media platforms. This beauty trend, where one applies make-up in a certain fashion and pulls on the sides of one’s face to make the eyes and brows appear slanted upward, mimics the size and shape of Asian people’s eyes. Countless make-up tutorials on this trend have been posted on YouTube and TikTok, and influential figures like actress Megan Fox, supermodel Bella Hadid, and celebrity Kendall Jenner are widely recognized for popularizing the trend. Though defenders of this trend claim that “it does no harm” and “it’s just a beauty trend,” many people have actively protested this form of cultural appropriation of Asian features.



The “fox eyes” make-up look is typically achieved by shaving off the tail of your eyebrows, drawing on a brow that is straighter, then using brown or black eyeshadow to create a “sharp, cat-eye flick up” towards the temple, and finally, adding a touch of eyeliner and shadow to the inner corners of your eyes that points towards the bridge of your nose. There are supposedly various “methods” to mimic this look, but all ultimately create a more slanted eye shape. Though its origins are unclear, celebrities have promoted this look for years. Just recently, in early 2020, the trend began go viral on TikTok with the hashtag #foxyeye, amassing millions of views. While this trend has increased only recently, its beginnings can be traced back to the mid 20th century.

Following World War 2, exceptions to immigration policies imposed by the Immigration Act of 1924 were enacted by Congress to support American soldiers who had met their fiancés and spouses while serving in the military overseas. Referred to as the War Brides Act of 1954, this act was

ratified to expedite the admission of “alien” spouses and children as citizens of the United States. The United States saw large numbers of Asian war brides over the next two decades, mostly from countries like Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines. These Asian brides came to America, leaving behind their lives in their home countries. When they arrived here, most women naturally desired to maintain their cultural practices, but many were forced to abandon their culture and assimilate into American culture. Though plenty experienced successful assimilation and developed complex identities that intertwined their Asian heritage and American culture, not all war brides were so fortunate in adjusting to life in the United States.

Asian military brides were eventually considered both cultural and racial threats to the United States. Their clothes, for one, were looked upon as exotic. Their cultures were too unfamiliar and foreign for Westerners to accept. Their eyes were “too small” and “almond-shaped” for the Western world. These deviations from the norm resulted in even greater efforts to assimilate more successfully into American society; for example, during the 1950s, many Asian women surgically altered the shape of their eyes, making the Asian brides “less racially threatening.”

The “fox eyes” look can be better achieved by pulling at your temples, further elongating the eyes. This action can be found in posts of social media influencers, such as Bryce Hall and Emma Chamberlain. Though Chamberlain has later issued an apology saying “sorry to those who were hurt by it” and that it “was NOT [her] intention,” critics of this trend have nevertheless continued to bash her ignorance.



Bryce Hall via Instagram @brycehall



Emma Chamberlain via Instagram @emmachamberlain

The size and shape of our eyes has just become “a common go-to-jab for people to make towards Asians,” Kaila Karns, an Asian-American model living in Los Angeles, asserted. “I’ve had a past agent once even go up behind me in a shoot to pull my eyes back, claiming, ‘You look even more exotic if you do this, hold them back.’” When she declined, her own agent at the time was irked, claiming that she was being “too serious” and wasn’t being a model that could just “go with the flow.” Thinking back, Karns reflected, “With that statement alone, it shows how a lot of people feel about Asian racial problems: people are quick to dismiss and invalidate those who have experienced things like this, either because ‘well, my Asian friend said it’s fine and doesn’t bother her!’ or because they just

don’t care and don’t want to have to backtrack and accept their ignorance.” Many other Asians report being subject to offensive comments about the size and shape of their eyes; strangers have pointedly commented and mimicked their appearances. Even young children have experienced being put down for their eyes by their classmates; they’re used to being asked, “Why are your eyes so small?” So why are people imitating an Asian feature that has long been used to put down Asian people in America? Why has the look of a denigrated facial feature become a beauty trend?

This can be traced back to when the “Yellow Peril” (a term used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, referring to Western fears that Asians would invade and disrupt Western values) narrative was being heavily pushed. In the mid-19th century, the increasing numbers of Asian immigrants unnerved Americans due to labor tensions, xenophobia, and cultural differences. European immigrants and working-class Americans constantly worried that Asian immigrants (specifically the Chinese) would take their jobs by working for lower wages. Others were “uncomfortable” with traditional Asian clothing, gender roles (for example, Asian men performed roles commonly delegated to women, like doing laundry and cooking), and religious practices. All this led to the ratification of discriminatory legislation, including the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and Immigration Act of 1924. While none of this legislation is in effect today, disregarding this history would be perpetuating the ignorant mindset which harms the Asian-American community.

Considering the prevalence of discrimination against Asian immigrants and their cultures, one would ridicule “yellowface,” a term coined from similar acts of “blackface” to describe Hollywood’s long history of casting white actors and actresses in Asian roles. Dating back to its first forms of minstrelsy, this phenomenon encompassed ethnically white actors using makeup and skin-darkening pigments, as well as various prosthetics, costumes, and stereotypical clothing to appear Asian. Actors, such as Katherine Hepburn, playing a



"The film 'Dragon Seed,' featuring Katherine Hepburn"
(Credit: Bettmann Archive/Getty Images)

Chinese character named Jade in the film *Dragon Seed*, even altered the shapes of their eyes using makeshift contraptions of tape and rubber bands to “fit into” Asian roles. Even in modern-day cinema, Hollywood casts white actors, like Scarlett Johansson in *Ghost in the Shell*, in Asian roles. *Ghost in the Shell* originated as a manga series written by Masamune Shirow beginning in 1989, influencing television shows, video games, and animated films. This live action movie serves as a modern retelling of the story, featuring Johansson as Motoko Kusanagi, the main character. Initially, Dreamworks and Paramount had considered post-production visual effects that would make Johansson appear more Asian; however, with backlash from critics, Paramount denied the accusation, arguing that the test was done for a specific actor in a background scene. Further examples - Tilda Swinton playing the Ancient One (generally illustrated in comics as an Asian man) in *Doctor Strange* in 2016 and Emma Stone playing a half-Asian character in *Aloha* in 2015 - confirm the continuation of this practice. In a few instances, instead of Asian roles being given to white actors, white actors have headlined IN stories that originated in or took place in Asia. Undeniably, these castings have all brought much controversy. Though critics may disagree, perhaps the roots of our controversial “fox eyes trend” can be traced back to yellowface in cinema.



"My eyes are not a trend" by Gabriella Ignacio

Followers and defenders of the trend say that it is “just makeup” and that it “isn’t intended to be offensive.” While it might not be people’s intent to be racist, and while they might be unaware of the seemingly negative connotation of the beauty trend, hastily dismissing the opinions of those hurt by it simply depicts their ignorance. Like other critics of this trend, Karns notes those just “sound like excuse[s] to avoid being held accountable.” She added, “the makeup itself is basically treating Asian features as a costume, to wear the face without the discrimination that comes with it,” implying that though achieving the look makes the person’s eyes seem Asian-like, they don’t hear racist remarks being made towards them for the shape and size of their eyes. Others claim that Asians are being “too sensitive” because “it is what it is.” These comments have undoubtedly perpetuated the ignorant mindset which prejudices the Asian-American community.

To those Asian people who grew up with their classmates poking fun at the size and shape of their eyes, this isn't okay. To those Asian people who have been called "chinks" for their eye shape, this isn't okay. To those Asian people who felt obliged by society to obtain blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery to make eyes appear larger and wider), this isn't okay. While this might be okay to those who aren't harmed by it, it isn't okay to those who are.

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Jeenah Gwak is a junior at Newport High School in Bellevue, WA. In her free time, she enjoys playing piano, reading, and spending time with her loved ones.

Art Corner

A Taste Of Both

Creative piece
in colored
pencil

by
Mason Luo



Description:

The art piece depicts a bottle of sriracha with a ketchup Heinz sticker stamped on the bottle. The artwork is a cultural identity piece that highlights my Asian roots and ethnicity fusing with the Western culture that I grew up in. Food has been an important aspect of my life. The dual heritage represented through the iconic brands amplifies its significance of my identity.

Mason Luo is a sophomore at VCU in Richmond, Virginia. You can find him on Instagram @masonluoart and visit his website at <https://masonluo007.wixsite.com/alquimista007>.

"In the past, I have always tried to capture the subject and illustrate in a realistic fashion. However, I wanted to try something different. When it came to conceptualizing, 'Taste of both,' I wanted to highlight my ethnic and national identity and what it means to be like an Asian American through a realistic illustration. The

illustration depicts a metaphoric imagery of a Taiwanese bun with an American hot dog with sauce that's about to be covered with a Sriracha that has an iconic American ketchup logo. Each of these objects drawn represent a side of my ethnicity or nationality. In addition to my conceptualizing process, I wanted to consider my experience with the oversight of Asian Americans and Asians in the mainstream media and how the Asian community was very overshadowed. Whether it'd be Hollywood, news, or even crimes in the Asian American community, I would either see it be overlooked or just not very prominent relative to other peers of different races. And so, when I thought of the piece, I not only wanted to capture my self-identity, but I also wanted to represent the Asian American community and draw it with a clever take on the name. I wanted my piece to be an opening conversation to the viewers about how in the nation we can address some of the concerns that our Asian American peers would have to say."



Power

"As the first piece in my series, I wanted to bring in the dragon since it is an important symbol of my ethnicity- Chinese. I wanted to highlight how strong Asian women are despite the constant stereotypes put on us."

Delicacy

"People tend to stereotype Asians as soft and delicate, but fail to notice that our ethnicity doesn't define our characteristics. These expectations may seem innocent at first, but it furthers these controlling images that anyone that doesn't fit this look isn't normal."



Exotic

"This piece was inspired by people having a fetish towards Asian Americans because they see us as "exotic" and "different" from other girls. I also wanted to showcase a darker-skinned Asian because I feel as if people tend to forget that they are Asians too!"

"As a continuation of the Asian Pacific American series, I wanted to showcase Asian womxn in our community that may be overlooked due to their ethnicity. This was a piece featuring Yoon Young Bae which talks about the strength that all of us Asian Pacific Womxn have in our community."



"This piece showcases Pooja Mor. I wanted to highlight these words because from personal experience - growing up as Asian was tough mainly due to all of the stereotypes. However, over time, I've learned to love my culture and everything about being an Asian woman! I am proud to be Asian."



"Sharina Gutierrez was the inspiration behind this piece. With this piece I wanted to let everyone know that no matter who you are and what you identify as - you are worthy. Mental health isn't much of a conversation in the Asian Community, but it is still important."



Murielle Danant-Fung, who goes by artsymuri on Instagram, focuses on featuring womxn of all shapes and skin-tones while promoting causes that she's passionate about. A few of these causes include social justice, climate change, and feminism above all. She also includes the idea of growth throughout her pieces by adding in nature in some sort of form. Murielle believes in growth both in her skills as an artist, but also as a way of life where changes are necessary for a bigger change.

MEET THE TEAM!



Jeenah Gwak
Co-Founder / Editor-in-Chief

Jeenah is a junior at Newport High School in Bellevue, WA. Some of her hobbies include performing piano, reading new novels, and spending time with her family and friends. She founded this magazine in hopes of spreading awareness about the experiences of Asian peoples living in American society.



Hope Yu
Co-Founder / Editor-in-Chief

Hope is a junior at Garfield High School in Seattle, WA. Some of her hobbies include reading, painting, and swimming. She helped to found this magazine because of the lack of Asian representation throughout all forms of media and politics in the U.S.



Ashley Chen
Content Manager

Ashley Chen is a junior at Interlake High School in Bellevue, WA. Her passions include running her own blog and playing piano. In her free time, she likes to watch Chinese dramas and talk with her friends. Her favorite topics to write about are Asian American mental health and the history of Asian American racism.



Gabriella Ignacio
Art Manager

Gabriella Ignacio is a sophomore at Newport Highschool in Bellevue, Washington. Her interests include visual arts, such as drawing, and learning about science. She is passionate about their cause because Asian heritage is a big part of her identity.



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