

Confronting Harmful Stereotypes Around Asians and Math

Kathleen Man & Leia Yongvanich
The Chapin School

Agenda

- The **Model Minority Myth** – Then and Now
- The **Reality** of Asians in America
- The **Consequences** in Education
- The **Action** We Must Take

Meet Kat

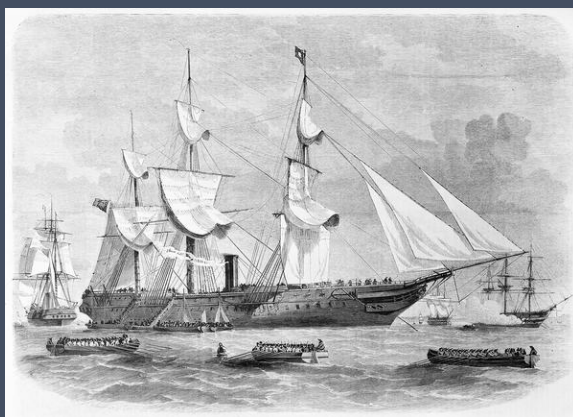
Meet Leia

Meet Someone New

TRIVIA

What year did Asians **first arrive** in the United States?

- a) 1495
- b) 1600
- c) 1750
- d) 1840



According to the 2017 census, people who identify as Asian or Asian American make up **what percent of the U.S. population?**

- a) 3.3%
- b) 6.3%
- c) 9.4 %
- d) 12%



Which lists the three **most populous** Asian ethnic groups in correct decreasing order?

- a) Chinese, Indian, Filipino
- b) Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese
- c) Chinese, Korean, Filipino
- d) Chinese, Indian, Korean

Approximately what percentage of **Mathematics Ph.Ds** are awarded to Asian Americans each year?

- a) 8
- b) 16
- c) 23
- d) 49



Of the 60 **Fields Medals** ever awarded, how many went to mathematicians of Asian descent?

- a) 1
- b) 8
- c) 16
- d) 23



Who is **Asian American**?

Agenda

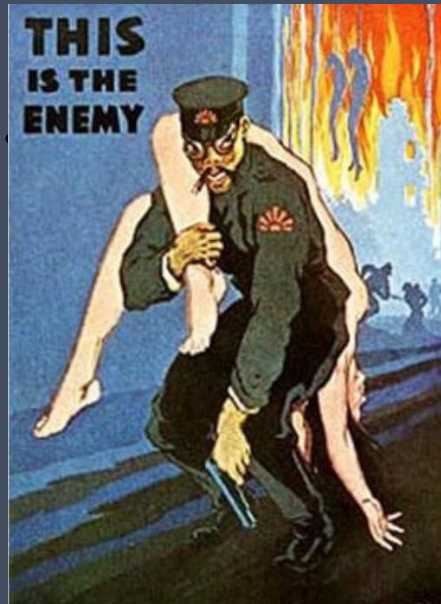
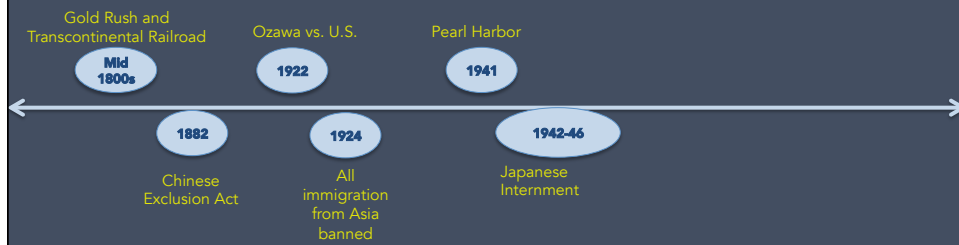
- The **Model Minority Myth** – Then and Now
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Origins of a **Myth**

Timeline – A Myth Created



Timeline – A Myth Created



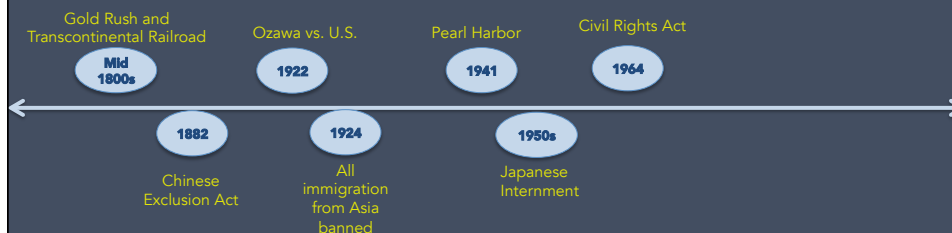
The Narrative Changes

On 27 April 1935, the *American Defender* argued that:

Whenever the Japanese have settled, their nests pollute the communities like the running sores of leprosy. They exist like the yellowed, smoldering discarded butts in an over-full ashtray vilifying the air with their loathsome smells, filling all who have misfortune to look upon them with a wholesome disgust and a desire to wash (quoted in Ogawa 1971, 13).

At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent to uplift Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese Americans are moving ahead on their own — with no help from anyone else . . . few Chinese-Americans are getting welfare handouts — or even want them . . . they don't sit around moaning. (*U.S. News*, Dec. 26, 1966)

Timeline – A Myth Created



HIST 33 R 6

SUCCESS STORY OF ONE MINORITY GROUP IN U.S.

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT Reprinted from U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, December 26, 1966.

At a time when Americans are awash in worry over the plight of racial minorities-- One such minority, the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans, is winning wealth and respect by dint of its own hard work.

In any Chinatown from San Francisco to New York, you discover youngsters at grips with their studies. Crime and delinquency are found to be rather minor in scope. Still being taught in Chinatown is the old idea that people should depend on their own efforts--not a welfare check--in order to reach America's "promised land."

Visit "Chinatown U.S.A." and you find an important racial minority pulling itself up from hardship and discrimination to become a model of self-respect and achievement in today's America.

At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent to uplift Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans are moving ahead on their own--with no help from anyone else.

Low rate of crime. In crime-ridden cities, Chinese districts turn up as islands of peace and stability.

Of 4.7 million arrests reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1965, only 1,293 involved persons of Chinese ancestry. A Protestant pastor in New York City's Chinatown said:

"This is the safest place in the city."

Few Chinese-Americans are getting welfare handouts--or even want them. With in a tight network of family and clan loyalties, relatives continue to help each other. Mrs. Jean Ma, publisher of a Chinese-language newspaper in Los Angeles, explained:

"We're a big family. If someone has trouble, usually it can be solved within the family. There is no need to bother someone else. And nobody will respect any member of the family who does not work and who just plays around."

Today, Chinese-American parents are worrying somewhat about their young people. Yet, in every city, delinquency in Chinatown is minor compared with what goes on around it.

Strict discipline. Even in the age of television and fast automobiles, Chinese-American children are expected to attend school faithfully, work hard at their studies--and stay out of trouble. Spanking is seldom used, but supervision and verbal discipline are strict.

A study of San Francisco's Chinatown noted that "if school performance is poor and the parents are told, there is an immediate improvement." And, in New York City, schoolteachers reportedly are competing for posts in schools with large numbers of Chinese-American children.

Recently Dr. Richard T. Sollenberger, professor of psychology at Mount Holyoke College, made a study of New York City's Chinatown and concluded:

"There's a strong incentive for young people to behave. As one informant said, When you walk around the streets of Chinatown, you have a hundred cousins watching you."

What you find, back of this remarkable group of Americans, is a story of adversity and prejudice that would shock those now complaining about the hardships endured by today's Negroes.

It was during California's gold rush that large numbers of Chinese began coming to America.

On the developing frontier, they worked in mines, on railroads and in other hard labor. Moving into cities, where the best occupations were closed to them, large numbers became laundries and cooks because of the shortage of women in the West.

Past handicaps. High value was placed on Chinese willingness to work long hours for low pay. Yet Congress, in 1882, passed an Exclusion Act denying naturalization to Chinese immigrants and forbidding further influx of laborers. A similar act in 1924, aimed primarily at the Japanese, pro-

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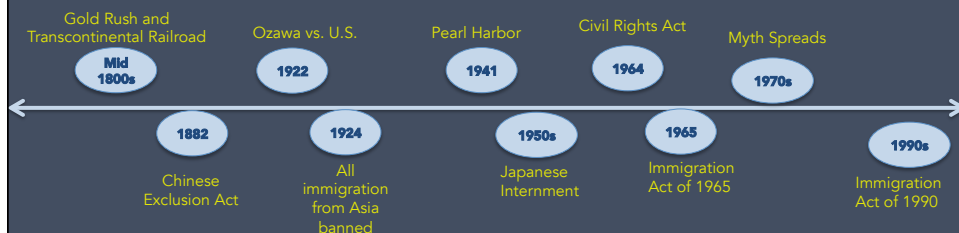
The Narrative Changes



The Narrative Changes



Timeline – A Myth Created



The Model Minority Myth
originated in Chinese and
Japanese communities
postwar as a means of
protection, and was coopted
during the Civil Rights era to
legitimize structural inequality
in the U.S.

It is as much the job of Asian
Americans as it is of White
Americans to reject this
falsehood!

Why does the myth
persist to this day?


Myth Reinforcement


BUSINESS INSIDER TECH FINANCE POLITICS STRATEGY LIFE ALL BI PRIME INTELLIGENCE

Chinese children crush Americans in math thanks to a mindset Americans only display in one place: sports

Libby Kane Sep. 7, 2017, 11:46 AM

- In international tests, Chinese children consistently outperform Americans.
- American Lenora Chu enrolled her young son in the Chinese public school system in Shanghai.
- In her book about the experience, "Little Soldiers," she explores how culture influences this academic achievement gap.

 Luckily, we can change. Guang Niu/Getty Images

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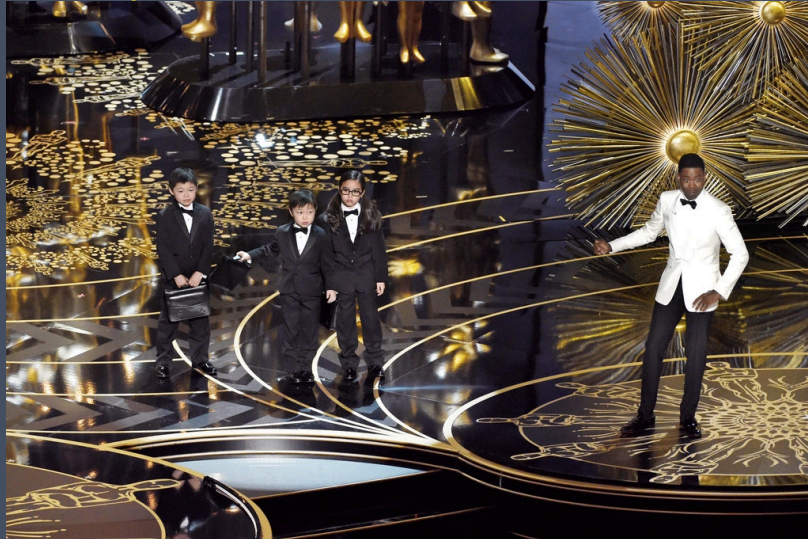
Myth Reinforcement



Pop Culture Reinforcement



Pop Culture Reinforcement



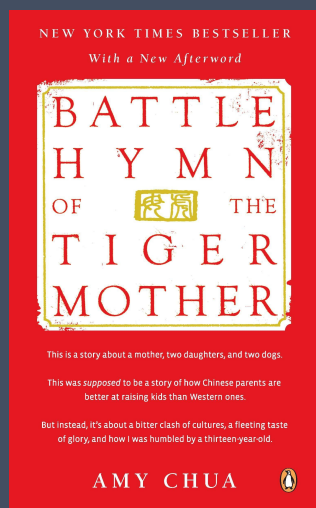
Pop Culture Reinforcement



Confirmation Bias

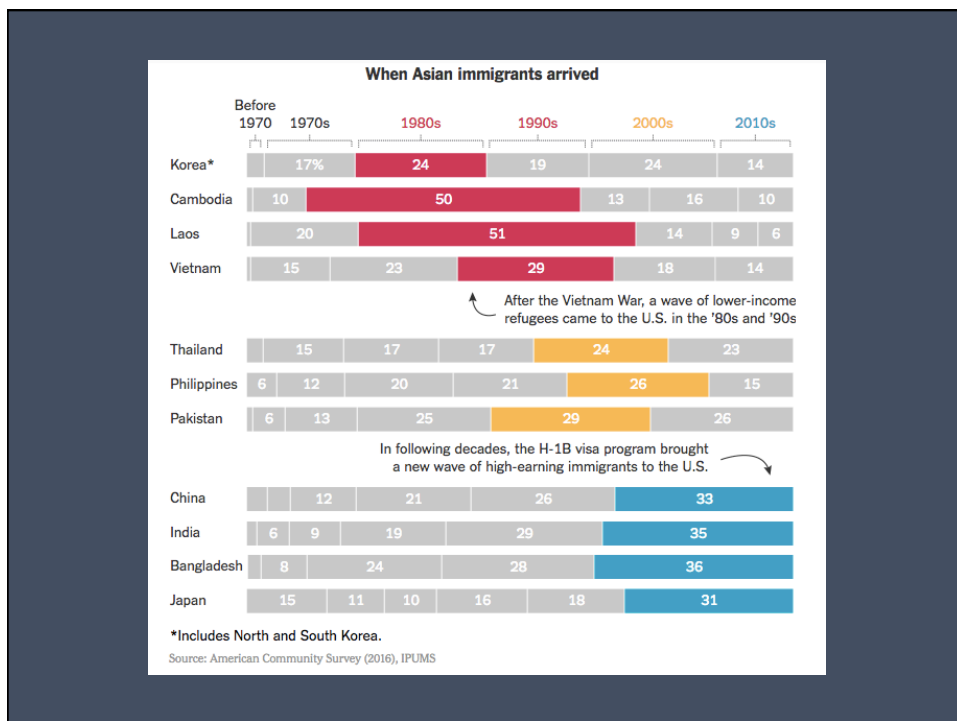
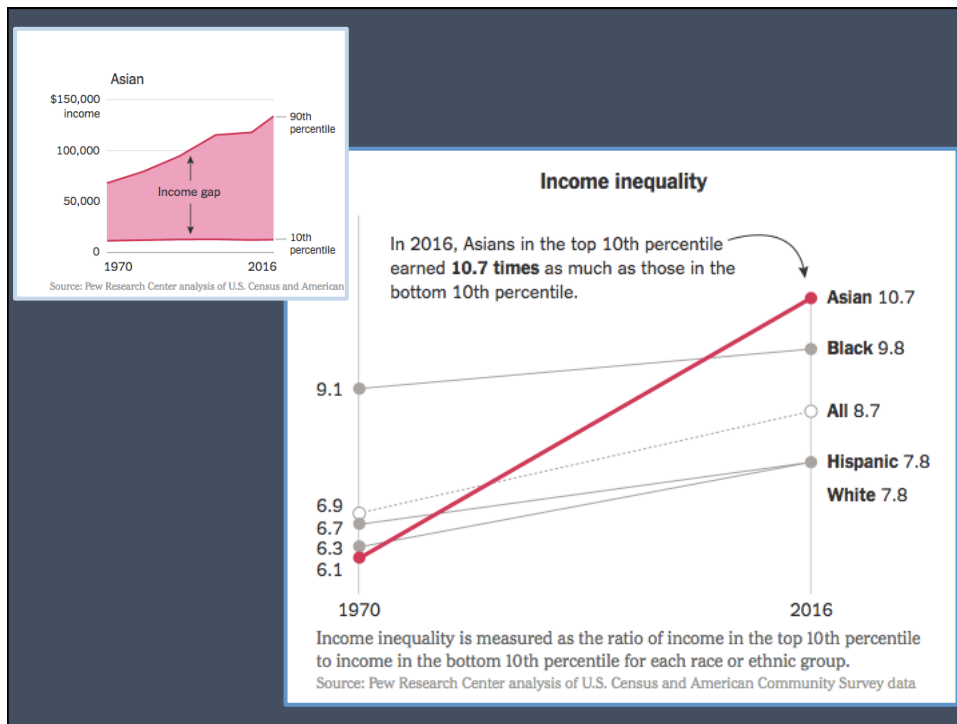


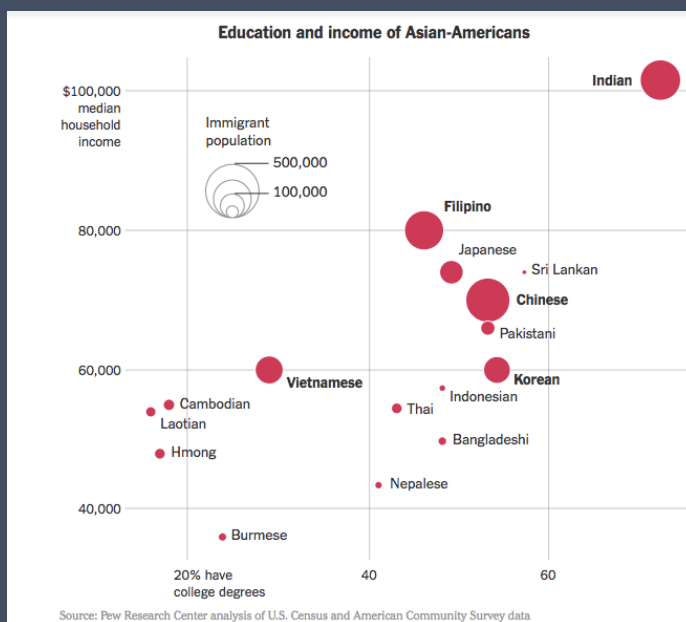
Perception of Asian Parents



Messages that reinforce the myth abound in media, pop culture and daily life, making it even more difficult to dismantle.

Myth vs. Reality





There are vast disparities in income and academic achievement between Asian ethnic groups in America. Family history and reason for migration contribute to these differences.

Implications in a Classroom

Implicit Bias

Though stereotypes about Asian Americans are “positive”, attitudes and actions toward Asian Americans are generally negative.

Realistic Threat

When Being a Model Minority Is Good . . .
and Bad: Realistic Threat Explains
Negativity Toward Asian Americans

William W. Maddux
INSEAD

Adam D. Galinsky
Amy J. C. Cuddy
Northwestern University

Mark Polifroni
Ohio State University

The current research explores the hypothesis that realistic threat is one psychological mechanism that can explain how individuals can hold positive stereotypical beliefs toward Asian Americans yet also express negative attitudes and emotions toward them. Study 1 demonstrates that in a realistic threat context, attitudes and emotions toward an anonymous group described by only positive, "model minority" attributes are significantly more negative than when the group was described using other positive attributes. Study 2 demonstrates that realistic threat

Census Bureau offers some empirical support for this perception: As of 2002, Asian Americans had the highest median income and the highest high school and college graduation rates of any ethnic group in America, whereas incarceration rates for Asian Americans were the lowest of any ethnic group, including Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003). In addition, many scholars have noted that perceptions of Asian Americans from the perspective of other groups are qualitatively and fundamentally

Implicit Bias

Although teachers may "explicitly endorse egalitarian beliefs, they may be unaware that they harbor unconscious implicit biases"

(Casad, Flores, & Didway, 2013, p. 118)

Implicit Association Test- IAT

Press "E" for

Foreign

or


Asian American

Press "I" for

American

or

European American



If you make a mistake, a red X will appear. Press the other key to continue.

Uncover Your Biases

Debriefing

The sorting test you just took is called the Implicit Association Test (IAT). You categorized American and Foreign images with European American and Asian American.

Here is your result:

Your data suggest a slight automatic association for American with Asian American and Foreign with European American.

Chang and Demyan, 2004

Table 3. Mean Diagnostic Ratio Ratings and Main Effects of Child Race for 15 Stereotypic Traits

Trait	Asian (<i>n</i> = 186)	Black (<i>n</i> = 186)	White (<i>n</i> = 186)	<i>F</i>	Post-hoc tests (<i>p</i> < .001)
Gentle ^a	1.57 _±	1.07	1.18 _±	15.21***	A>W, B
Intelligent ^{a,w}	1.31 _±	1.07	1.13 _±	20.89***	A>W, B
Industrious ^{a,w}	1.31 _±	0.91 _±	1.05	37.85***	A>W, B
Selfish ^{a,w}	0.88 _±	0.95	1.21 _±	15.83***	W>B, A
Nationalistic ^a	1.41	1.35	1.23	0.03	
Passive ^a	1.34 _±	0.92	1.06	17.80***	A>W, B
Athletic ^b	0.91 _±	1.60 _±	1.31 _±	52.71***	B>W>A
Rhythmic ^b	0.93	1.54 _±	1.03	40.16***	B>W, A
Sociable ^b	0.88 _±	1.16 _±	1.14 _±	37.03***	B, W>A
Aggressive ^b	0.89 _±	1.31 _±	1.17 _±	19.95***	B, W>A
Lazy ^b	0.69 _±	1.16 _±	1.21 _±	35.09***	B, W>A
Unintelligent ^b	0.77 _±	1.11 _±	1.00	14.54***	B, W>A
Friendly ^w	1.06	1.14 _±	1.13 _±	1.80	
Stubborn ^w	1.04	1.23 _±	1.18 _±	6.76**	B>A
Materialistic ^w	0.98	1.00	1.23 _±	12.59***	W>A, B

Note. Mean diagnostic ratios with subscript _± are significantly different from 1.0 (*p* < .01, two-tailed; *df* = *n*-1). A = Asian; W = White; B = Black.

^a Stereotypic traits associated with Asians. ^b Stereotypic traits associated with Blacks.

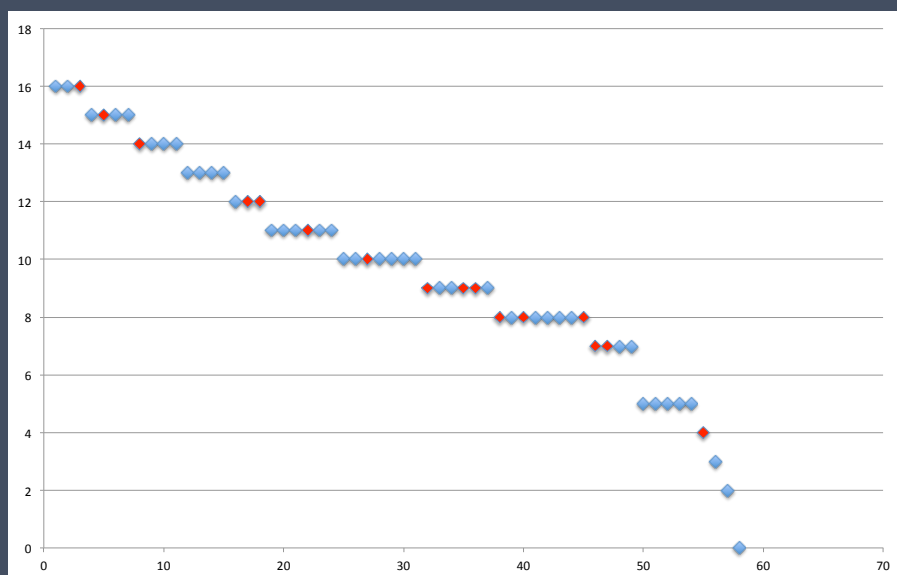
^w Stereotypic traits associated with Whites (Stangor et al., 1991; Devine & Elliot, 1995).

** *p* < .001. *** *p* < .0001.

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1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9
10	10	10

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Teachers **implicit biases** and preconceived notions affect their view of Asian students, which in turn **affects their treatment** of Asian students.

Consequences for Students

Consequences

- Psychological Well Being
- Educational Outcomes
- Availability of Institutional Support

PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

WHEN POSITIVE STEREOTYPES THREATEN INTELLECTUAL PERFORMANCE: The Psychological Hazards of “Model Minority” Status

Sapna Chervan and Galen V. Bodenhausen

Northwestern University

Abstract—Asian-American women's performance on a test of quantitative skill was studied as a function of whether their Asian, female, or individual identity was salient at the time of testing. In previous research, ethnicity salience was found to result in enhanced math performance among Asian women. However, the investigators relied on a subtle manipulation of ethnicity salience that likely did not in-

Failure to Seek Help

"Asian American students who subscribe to the stereotypes comprising the Model Minority are less likely to seek out assistance in times of emotional distress "

-Kim and Lee 2014

Pressure to be Perfect

"In the classroom, I'm sometimes scared to speak up...There's more scrutiny. There's more, 'what is she going to say?...' It's like I have to sound highly intellectual or something."

Christy, Korean American Student

Asian populations are often treated as a **monolith**, meaning that differences in educational background, ethnic origin, migrant status and socioeconomic status are ignored.

All of this leads to **the exclusion of Asian Americans from conversations** concerning supports for marginalized youth in schools, meaning that any programs that are developed are unable to meet the unique needs of struggling Asian American students.

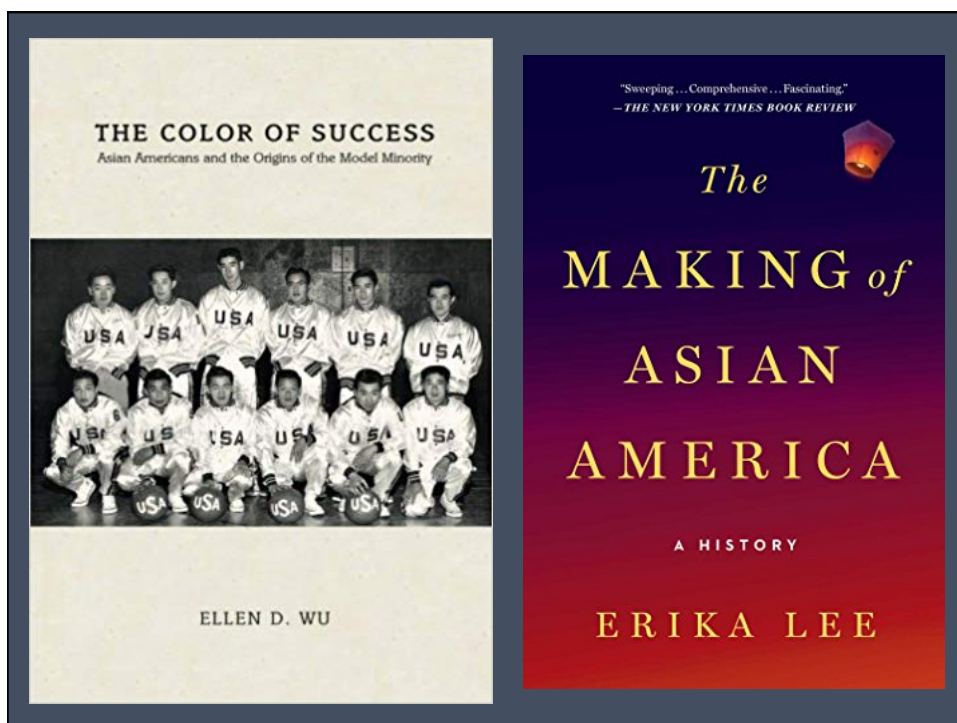
What Can We Do?

Get to Know Your Students as Individuals

- Ethnicity
- Country or countries of origin
- Migration history
- Languages spoken
- Socioeconomic background
- Family structure

Examine Your Beliefs and Expectations

- Base expectations on **individual data** rather than on stereotypical beliefs
- Take the **IAT!** (Project Implicit)
- **Read** about Asian culture and history
- Watch **Crazy Rich Asians!**



Audit Behaviors for Unconscious Bias

- Video tape your lessons, look at who you call on and how you respond to students
- Grade tests and assignments blind
- React positively to mistakes – make it ok to mess up!
- Reach out to normalize help-seeking

Acknowledge that the Model Minority myth is NOT REAL!

Reject it!

Thank You!

Any Thoughts?