Supporting Our AAPI Youth

C. Beh and M. Leong
May 13, 2021

What we do

Charlene:

- Diverse Perspectives teacher
- Upcoming Leadership in a Diverse Society teacher

Michele:

- Asian American Lit teacher
- Dover Legacy Scholars
- Office of Human Rights

Together:

- Co-advise Asian American Culture Club
- Co facilitate AAPI Affinity Group for seniors
- Co-facilitate workshops on:
  - AAPI students and mental health
  - Supporting AAPI students during the pandemic

Creating a safe space to listen and be heard

- Take responsibility for creating a safe environment.
- Be mindful of your impact in spite of your intentions.
- Be aware that repeating racist slurs can cause the very kinds of pain we're working to repair.
- Ask questions for clarification.
- Make a commitment to learning.
- Try on different perspectives or ways of thinking.
- Actively listen and suspend your disbeliefs and judgments.
- Don't shame, blame, or attack a person or idea inside or outside of this space.

AAPI Educate

Historical Roots of Current, Pandemic-Exacerbated Anti-AAPI Racism

#StopAsianHate Together, Directed by Bao Nguyen

Some historical moments of anti-AAPI racism

- The idea of “yellow peril” and the perpetual foreigner
- The linking of AAPI communities and diseases
- The massacre of Chinese Americans in 1871
- The internment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II
- The rise of the model minority myth (1965)
- Anti-Southeast Asian racism during and after the Vietnam War
- The murder of Vincent Chin in 1982
- Anti-South Asian American racism and violence after 9/11

Since February 2020, **over 3800** incidents of anti-AAPI violence have been reported.

75% of Asian Americans are fearful of increased hate & discrimination toward them

¼ AAPI youth have experienced racist bullying

Physical attacks, verbal assaults, workplace / school discrimination, & online harassment

In Boston, hate crimes decreased by 14% overall amid the pandemic, **but reported anti-AAPI hate crimes increased by 79%.**

From: WCVB's Project Community: Asian Americans say COVID-19, political rhetoric added fuel to racist fire

Types of anti-AAPI racism

1) Racist language and slurs
2) Anti-AAPI gestures and behaviors
3) Microaggressions:
    a) “Lunchbox moments”
    b) Comments about names
    c) “Where are you FROM?”
    d) Messages about China and COVID-19
    e) Being confused for other AAPI students
    f) Comments about skin tone or facial features
    g) Nonsensical phrases that mock Asian languages
    h) Social media

gemma_chan
1.3M followers

View Profile

drjoshuawolrich
London, United Kingdom

Christina Lamb
Windsor

She stood apart, the lonely Queen, a masked figure all in black, head bowed under her hat.

On this gloriously sunny but most solemn of Saturday afternoons, she was not just a monarch being scrutinised on television around the world but a woman saying goodbye to the one she loved.

To her subjects, Prince Philip was the longest-serving royal consort in British history – an often crotchety figure, offending people with gaffes about slitty eyes, even if secretly we rather enjoyed them.

But to the Queen he was for 73 years her only confidant, her ice-breaker at events, the patriarch who banged heads together in their often exasperating family, the man she did the crossword with – the person who called her "Cabbage".

For her this was a great love story. "He's the one," she told her nanny, Crawfie, after

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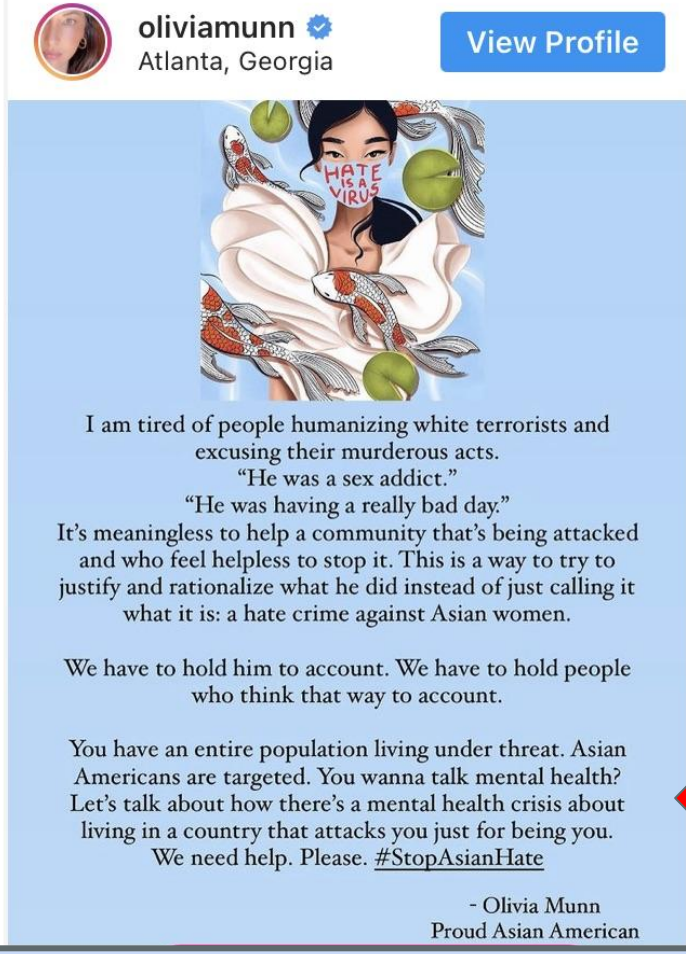
"To her subjects, Prince Philip was the longest-serving royal consort in British history--an often crotchety figure, offending people with gaffes about slitty eyes, even if secretly we rather enjoyed them."

gemma_chan Front page of @thetimes yesterday. The fact that this was written by a journalist who should know better, approved by editors and sent to print. To trivialise casual racism in the most widely read Sunday broadsheet at a point when the Asian diaspora is experiencing a surge of attacks is deeply irresponsible.

6. John Cho: "The pandemic is reminding us that our belonging is conditional. One moment we are Americans, the next we are all foreigners, who 'brought' the virus here."

Vivien Killilea / Getty Images



Effects of Racism on Our AAPI Students

As of February 2021, almost **7 in 10** Asian American K-12 students were still learning online only, according to the U.S. Education Department's latest school survey.

"I think it is striking that **Asian-Americans are so hesitant to send their kids back to school,**" says Russell Jeung, professor of Asian American studies at San Francisco State University and co-founder of the group Stop AAPI Hate.

Jeung and other experts say **anti-Asian racism and even violence,** as exemplified by the Atlanta-area mass shooting last month, **may be keeping some students at home.**

"Concern about the pandemic, **plus** the concern over the racism that their kids may experience on the way to school or within the classroom," Jeung says, "are **both major issues** to sending your kid back to school."

Why So Many Asian Americans Are Learning Remotely

"For the Asian American communities that are experiencing this, it just **feels like an all-out assault.**"

-William Ming Liu, PhD, and counseling psychologist and chair of the Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education at the University of Maryland.

Early research has linked the uptick in anti-Asian discrimination to **increases in anxiety, depressive symptoms, and sleep problems** among those who are targeted. Getting help isn't always straightforward. AAPI individuals are less likely to access **mental health services** than any other racial group, partly because of the **cultural bias** against it but also due to a lack of culturally relevant **approaches to treatment .**

The mental health impact of anti-Asian racism

Some things we hear from our AAPI students

- **<u>Growing up in a predominantly white suburb can be challenging:</u>**
  - They don't often see themselves reflected in their educators, in their curriculum, nor in the stories they read or learn about in school
  - Being part of a "**model minority stereotype**" keeps them from being seen as students who may need support
  - They are often **rendered invisible** during discussions of race and racism
  - Though some people treat them as **white-adjacent** when it's convenient, they often are treated as less than, barbaric, **perpetual foreigners**
- As a result, students often **suppress internalized racism** and don't fully appreciate being AAPI, and don't know how to ask for help and support

Model Minority:

The belief that all Asian American students are overachievers, especially academically

White-Adjacency/ Invisibility:

The assumption that Asian Americans aren't really POC because they're "kind of like white people"

Perpetual Foreigner/Barbarian:

The assumption that Asian Americans are not American and are barbaric.

Kim's Asian American Identity Development Model (1981, 2001)

- **Ethnic awareness**: Identity is formed through family structure, prior to integration of school & peers.
- **White identification**: Individuals actively attempt to assimilate and identify as white to avoid criticisms of differences.
- **Awakening to social political consciousness:** Individuals realize how acts of discrimination stem from the structure of race in our society. They begin to join forces with other oppressed groups to uplift & move their race forward.
- **Redirection to Asian American consciousness**: Individuals develop a sense of pride within themselves with support of their family, friends, social networks.
- **Incorporation**: Individuals establish a healthy self-concept, integrates and interacts with others outside of their own race.

“My mom [is] Korean and my dad is Caucausian….

Kids in kindergarten would make fun of me for being Asian, and when you’re that age, you don’t know how to really process that. The way you take that is, **‘Who I am isn’t good enough.’”**

Joanna Gaines

What can we do to support our AAPI youth?

Listen to and talk with our AAPI children

- Talk to them about race & racism
  - Remember to take care of yourself--process and respect our own experiences.
  - Create opportunities for your child to talk.
  - Be curious and respectful.
  - Bring it up.
  - Be open.
  - Validate their feelings.
  - Encourage their voice.
  - Remember to just listen.
  - Remind our children that these racist acts and microaggressions are wrong, and that **they are not to blame for them.**

From the William James College Guide for Parents of Asian/Asian American Adolescents &
After attacks on Asian American elders, here's how to talk to your kids about racism against us

Things all families can do to support AAPI youth

- Help them learn about the ways in which AAPIs have been a part of our country's history
  - Narratives of oppression and discrimination
  - Narratives of resistance, activism, and collaboration

Ibrahim Chowdry

Philip Vera Cruz

Larry Itliong

Yuri Kochiyama

Grace Lee Boggs

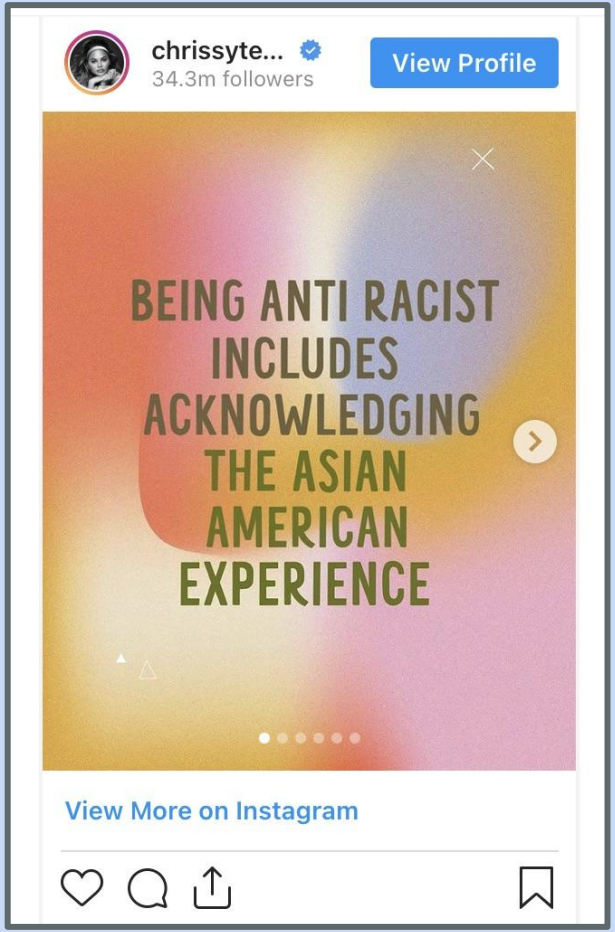
More things we can all do to support AAPI youth

- Let them know it's okay to ask for help
- Help them find spaces that celebrate AAPI identities
- Help them see positive, complicated, fully-developed AAPI representation
  - What stories do they read?
  - What TV shows and movies do they watch?
  - Whom do they follow on social media?
- Help them learn how to engage in cross-racial collaboration to dismantle racism

"What my kids don't yet realize is that they are growing up in a society that has an extensive history of racial and gender inequality, which includes the hyper-sexualization of Asian and biracial women," Cruz told TODAY. "And that the degradation of BIPOC women is correlated to physical violence and sexual assault."

Added Cruz, "If equipped with knowledge, empathy and a home that communicates freely, I hope my daughters will have a head start in life in a way that I did not."

Asian American parents say they're afraid to take their kids out in public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BEING ANTI RACIST INCLUDES ACKNOWLEDGING THE ASIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE
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Nicole Dungca
@ndungca
don't just check on your AAPI friends. read up on the Chinese Exclusion Act, US occupation of the Philippines, Japanese internment camps. listen to AAPI women when they talk about the racist, sexualized messages they've heard all their lives. we're all tired and it's just not new
1:38 AM · 3/17/21 · Twitter for iPhone

AAPI Give

Bonus feature: some resources to support AAPI youth

- See Us Unite
- Asian Americans in the People's History of the United States
- Anti-Asian Violence: What Schools Should Start Doing About It
- After Atlanta: Teaching About Asian American Identity and History
- 15 Children's Books for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Books that show Asian Americans have never been silent
- Additional Resources on Supporting Asian/Asian American Children and Youth
- Racism is a Virus Toolkit
- What does racism have to do with me? Asian American kids get talking
- Guide for Parents of Asian/Asian American Adolescents
- 13 Mental Health & Wellness Resources For Asian-American Communities