

“Chinese Virus:” Why Anti-Asian Racism is So Contagious

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Chat Box and Q&A Summary

Please note that names have been removed for ease of reading. Anything in black are questions and comments from the chat box and anything in blue are additional comments from the facilitators post-session.

Thank you to our 582 attendees, for your engagement and generous sharing of resources.

CHAT BOX

Participants tuned in from across the country, and even internationally!

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Institutions</i>
Austin, TX	Arcadia University
Bellingham, WA (WWU)	Arizona State University
Boston, MA	California State University, Sacramento
Charleston, SC-- MUSC	CSU San Marcos
Colorado	Clemson University
DC area	De Anza College
East Lansing, MI—MSU	El Camino College
Las Vegas	Georgetown Law
Los Angeles, CA	Irvine Valley College
Michigan	Moravian College in PA
Northern California	Palomar College
New York Area	San Pedro University in Kupang, Indonesia
Philadelphia	Sam Houston State University in Texas
San Diego County	Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
San Jose, CA	Stanford University
So Cal	Tufts University in Medford, Mass
Southern Ontario, Canada	UC Berkeley
Syracuse, NY	UC Los Angeles
Toronto	UC Santa Barbara
Villanova, PA	University Of Houston Clear-Lake
Washington DC	University of Illinois
	UNLV
	UMASS Amherst
	U of Penn GSE
	University of San Francisco
	University of Southern California
	Western Oregon University

SHARED ARTICLES

NYTimes piece “US to Expel Chinese grand Students w/ Ties to China’s Military Schools?”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/28/us/politics/china-hong-kong-trump-student-visas.html>

BBC News printed an article yesterday titled Coronavirus: What attacks on Asians reveal about American Identity

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52714804?fbclid=IwAR2aXbu_KqMHoiR_Jq6s-wKPPD0AmOR3bTn5Li64-OODPurPIWRI0F6C0tU

Designers are 3D printing masks at home for LA hospital workers

<https://la.curbed.com/2020/4/7/21212244/face-masks-coverings-coronavirus-los-angeles>

AAJA CALLS ON NEWS ORGANIZATIONS TO EXERCISE CARE IN COVERAGE OF THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

https://www.aaja.org/guidance_on_coronavirus_coverage

St. Paul police screen 'Zootopia' as part of anti-bias training

https://www.fox9.com/news/st-paul-police-screen-zootopia-as-part-of-anti-bias-training.amp?_twitter_impression=true&fbclid=IwAR32RJud0ncPdaJ3ErNAQ-X6QPMOnUmvYqo5jdiB_GfUJW9RdyLKS7O3tX0

SHARED INCIDENTS

FYI— I posted on FB a NYTimes article and my concerns for my Asian students when 45 started calling it the “Chinese Virus” (I have a public profile of 5000)— and someone called me Jussie Smollett.

The PPP funding for small businesses requires indicating if applicant is a citizen. My husband is shinnisei Japanese and has had his green card and owned businesses for 20 years. Guess how many times his app has been rejected?

SAMPLE STATEMENTS

This statement was sent out after prompting by members of the APID/A community at U-M, but might be an example of what you have discussed: <https://odei.umich.edu/2020/05/04/a-statement-of-support-for-our-asian-community-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Arcadia University in PA shared message from our President last month to our campus community on this topic and sent additional personal message to all our international students.

<https://pac.org.uiowa.edu/response-covid-19>

From Asian American/Pacific Islander Resource Center at UC Santa Cruz

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1frkA_G57xq6Uk54JOfTc5lXnWAXOXaQVx6t_sjrdVW8/e dit?usp=sharing

Cal State East Bay

<https://www.csueastbay.edu/diversity/affinity-groups/apifsa/covid-19.html>

West Valley – Mission Community College District

<https://www.wvm.edu/Pages/news.aspx#news-collapse35>

The California State University

<https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/news/Pages/racism-and-xenophobia-in-the-age-of-covid-19.aspx>

In February our Chancellor issued a statement about the campus "Response to the Novel Coronavirus" that included the following phrase "We will follow university policies and recommendations in order to keep our faculty, staff and students safe, but this health situation does not provide an occasion to discriminate or exercise bias against people because of their countries of origin. To report a bias incident, go to...." Here is the URL:

<https://chancellor.iupui.edu/communications/statements-reports/2020/02/04-response-to-coronavirus.html>

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Develop Bias Incident Protocol and Response Team

Zoombombing Response Team

I prepared a presentation for my president's leadership folks that outlined anti-Asian racism and these concepts in early April. It was important to get them on board to step up early on in their influence.

<http://www.facebook.com/SocialJusticeCtr/videos>

They had SJC FB Live sessions which have included "troubling uptick of xenophobic and discriminatory acts against members of the Asian and Asian American communities, we recently launched a new online platform called SJC LIVE for engaging with others about relevant social justice issues of the time." This was initially sent to the campus community via email. It also included the reporting avenues regarding these situations.

I think it's critically important, as faculty and as programs, to interrogate our syllabi and be proactive about including readings, activities, resources, assignments, etc. that actively fight against racism whenever possible.

Faculty join senate, run for leadership positions, join in student equity committees, when you can be a co-chair, seek colleagues to be an ally, accomplice, and co-conspirator.

Proactive Messaging Praxis: Since I'm teaching online now, I open my session with anti-racism statements on my PPT. or when teaching on campus to have it visible in the classroom.

RESOURCES

Bystander intervention training to stop anti-Asian/American and xenophobic harassment
<https://www.ihollaback.org/bystanderintervention/>

Bridging Research and Practice to Support Asian American Students w/ Dina C. Maramba - also a great resource!
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/15360695/2017/2017/160>

Great resource on leadership response for DEI and COVID-19:
<https://inclusiveexcellenceacademy.org/deiandcovid19/>

Q&A

- How do you address these issues in the face of "free speech" and/or "academic freedom" arguments?
 - Working with our Title IX Office & Office of Equity and Diversity, we have tried to centralize our response to offensive remarks/actions. While students have the freedom to say these things, they can be reported, and students may be asked to meet with respective offices to understand the impact of their remarks (especially as they violate our "USC Principles of Community"). At the end of the meeting, we remind them that a pattern of offensive remarks, especially to the same individual or group of people, can become harassment. Harassment is something we can act upon.
 - In the YouTube link, the question of academic freedom and inclusive pedagogy is addressed by Sumun Pendakur.
- We've been asked to put together a "back to the office" powerpoint for student employees. Would a resource like that be an appropriate place to put a slide about this topic?
 - Yes! Informing your student staff of how they can be more sensitized to what communities are experiencing and how they can be thoughtful about their interactions is a smart strategy.
- How do we communicate with the local communities who are not in the academy?
 - We (USC APASS) make it a goal and part of our mission to connect with community-based organizations and non-profits to both learn from each other and connect our students to the larger community. With these partnerships,

we've taken real steps in forming mutual support networks. We have also been able to work with community members with training, workshops, and more direct support.

- I have read and heard Asian Americans referred to as "honorary whites." What do you think of this? Can you break that down for us?
 - Yes. That relates to the idea of being on the "treadmill to Whiteness" that I share during the webinar. Respected scholar Mia Tuan writes: "'Honorary White' refers to individuals and groups who, in a racial hierarchy with Whites at the top and Blacks at the bottom, occupy a preferred, intermediate status. Originally coined to refer to some non-White and part-White groups in South Africa during apartheid, the term is more commonly used today to refer to some Asian and Latino groups in the United States." The trope leverages Model Minority status to both pit us against other minoritized groups and makes us think that, through our silence and our complicity, that we will be rewarded via the White power structure. As indicated during the webinar, that status can be revoked in an instant, rendering our status liminal and vulnerable.
- Do we believe there were specific efforts toward the Black vs Asian propaganda in shared communities like Los Angeles? If so what were the specific efforts?
 - The lead up to the 1992 LA Riots/Sai-i-gu wasn't a point-in-time event. Asian American and Black communities have long been pitted against each other as a means to maintain power structures. We saw several incidents between Asian Americans and African Americans in large urban areas (Chicago, New York, Los Angeles) including the death of Latasha Harlins. Due to immigration laws, poverty, and other factors, many Korean American opened up stores in historically Black neighborhoods. The beating of Rodney King by white police officers, and their subsequent acquittal, exacerbated this tension between two groups, resulting in interracial violence. White society and social structures (including the LAPD) essentially stood idly by, protecting majority-white neighborhoods (Beverly Hills) while letting K-Town burn, and were happy to "divide and conquer" racial groups.
- what is the book Sumi mentioned about "on the treadmill to Whiteness"?
 - [The Karma of Brown Folk by Vijay Prashad.](#)
- How do you recommend we talk to or talk with our Asian American friends, who deliberately or unknowingly, have bought 100% into the idea that their Degree, Jobs, Money, Status, or Marrying a White Person, will make them immune to this.
 - [This question is addressed at the 1:05 mark in the YouTube link.](#)
- How much of the Times/Newsweek articles are reporting on perceivable results (eg on aggregate higher test scores) vs an intentionally created rhetoric? Can you expand on how our focus on education alters how our results manifest?

- Both/and! The narrative props up the American racial hierarchy. In addition, non-disaggregated test scores demonstrate an incomplete, false picture. Finally, we have the documented relationship between parental socioeconomic status and educational attainment vis a vis student test scores. A narrow focus on educational achievement without an analysis of systemic factors masks much the “Asian success story.”
- What institutional policies/limitations/barriers might keep one or a group from taking action at the institutional or department levels? (what we should look out for)
 - Critical understanding that our universities are complicit in supporting racist policies and practices. As institutions of higher education, we have the duty, responsibility, and unique opportunity to be leaders in addressing racism.
 - Lack of power, dissolution of unions/labor groups/student voice, and a belief that we exist in a post-racial society are good ways of understanding how race has been stripped from many conversations/decisions
- What are some suggestions or ideas that can me bring this to our senior leadership? I work at a PWI, in the south, and STEM institution and we have some support for our Asian American students. I have dropped the hints to a few colleagues but looking for some ways to grab their attention
 - Excellent question. One, this is fundamentally a question of student safety (physical and psychological), retention, and success. All of those are interwoven, as they are for all minoritized students. So I would begin by framing this as an opportunity to ensure that students are not losing out on learning because they are experiencing harm. It’s an excellent opportunity, also, to partner with your center for teaching and learning to ensure that they are offering pedagogical resources to faculty, so they can better support students, whether in-person or virtually.
- Oftentimes online programs (that were online before the pandemic) don’t have equitable access to programs and supports from these various departments or student affairs professionals. How can we help to bridge that gap in online programs to ensure that our students are getting the support they need when learning at a distance? For example, not being able to attend brown-bag sessions, social events, access counseling, etc.
 - Current discussion on how to safely reopen universities should include how access has increased during this time. Telehealth, online meetings, captioning services, asynchronous learning, and more accessible teaching pedagogies have all been developed in a span of weeks. All of these should be continued into the future to serve all of our students more equitably – regardless if the student is online or not, or needs reasonable accommodation to study/learn.
 - In addition, all centers for teaching and learning on all campuses need to be working with the faculty to ensure that they don’t just know how to use online

teaching tools, but that their inclusive pedagogy strategies are adapted for the environment.

- How do we unite with our Black/Latinx peers in our respective fights? Hard to tell someone of the importance of MMM and the transient nature of our privilege (certainly an issue, but less perceivably tangible) while their kind is being systematically killed in the streets, today, at overwhelming levels.
 - One approach is to ensure that we are centering Black and Latinx voices if we are trying to ally ourselves. We have to deeply confront internalized racism and anti-Blackness in our own community. Second, to be well-versed in AsAm history, so we understand how multiracial coalitions have been built throughout our time in this country. Third, helping Black and Latinx peers/colleagues to also understand that we share the experiences of global exploitation, militarization, invasion, colonization – in the past, all the way to today. I would also note that South and Southeast Asians have been targeted by the policing system and by the federal government.
- On the flip side, how do we engage AsAms to care about the struggles of our Black/Latinx communities? Many of my AsAm friends are minimally informed on AsAm struggles, let alone those of other oppressed groups.
 - This is a multifaceted issue. Critically learning about Asian American history is ESSENTIAL (hello, Ethnic Studies!), because it offers the grounding to link our struggles with others, in a local and global way. I would try to get some of your friends who are willing to join a reading group with you, so that you develop some shared ideas and vocabulary and skills.
- I'm so glad that anti-blackness (I would also add anti-indigeneity) has been named as it's linked to anti-Asian sentiments and violence. Having said that, it has been challenging to have a conversation with colleagues about COVID and its specific impacts on the AAPI community as anti-Asian violence isn't being named or acknowledged. That hurts and invalidates our AAPI community's experiences and feelings. Is it possible to talk about both? I see it as an AND not OR.
 - You are absolutely right – this is an AND, and it doesn't have to be an OR. Like any issue, however, the framing matters. Is COVID-related anti-Asian violence on the same level as policy brutality impacting Black and Native communities (or the way COVID has hit Black and Native communities)? No. BUT they are all related forms of injustice and othering – we just need to be able to approach it with nuance. Not always easy in a time in which there is so much lack of nuance!
- The issue has arisen a couple of times of distinguishing between governments and people. ""Chinese" or "Asian" peoples are not their governments. But neither is any one political perspective or behavior of incumbent politicians representative of European-descended Americans or even the Government. It's shorthand to apply the adjective for the people to the national leadership. How do you recommend talking about

government policies without using the people-group adjectives? The shorthand has a purpose, even if it can be misleading. We need to be angry about the behaviors and the mentalities but not the people modeling them, even sitting officials. I hope that was clear.

- White supremacy is an ideology, not only about White individuals.
- Can you share the link for the trainings you mentioned (bystander and de-escalation)?
 - Bystander intervention training to stop anti-Asian/American and xenophobic harassment: <https://www.ihollaback.org/bystanderintervention/>
- how can institutions better prepare or begin to prepare staff that supervise staff that identify as Asian that continue to experience harm due to the lack of cultural competencies and how it impacts the decisions that are made?
 - This is where cultural humility is a great place to start. Making no assumptions about what your Asian/Asian American staff need, ASK. “How are you? How has this affected you? How can I support you?” And don’t assume that Asians/Asian Americans are only distressed by this direction of harm. Many are equally, if not more, saddened and exhausted by the violence against Black communities, the political climate, etc. Give space for your AsAm staff members to express the multifaceted pain they might be experiencing – and be prepared to offer support and resources if and when they do.
- Do you have recommendations for the AAPI community for coping with this kind of racism?
 - On an individual-level, consider finding a mental health professional to help you develop strong coping skills and manage the stress that racism can take on you.
 - Finding community organizations and affinity groups can be a great way to find ways to engage with your identity in more affirming ways
 - Get involved in multiracial organizing or coalitional work.
- I had a quick question about data. Most schools stick with US Census and IPEDS data, which is dated (1997) and exclusionary. Do you have an idea of a list that would be more inclusive (i.e. inclusion of Middle Eastern/Arab/North African as a racial identity). What would be good groups for Asian Americans? What would be the best way to disaggregate data. Would you all be able to share an inclusive list in the resources to make sure all identities are included.
 - While we hold that race as a social construction that artificially categorize folks into groups, group identity can be politically constructed, and groups are not dependent on a country or flag, we have some opportunity to be better at disaggregation. In 2016, California signed into law the AHEAD Act, that mandated several California departments collect data on an expanded list of ethnicities (both Asian American and Pacific Islander). More information on the bill can be found here: <http://reappropriate.co/2016/09/breaking-california-governor-signs-aapi-data-disaggregation-bill-into-law/>

- The promotion of people of color who fit a particular mold seems very persistent in institutions of higher education. Namely those of us who do not outwardly combat prejudice. This seems to act as a scapegoat for inaction. How do we address this as a community?
 - This is part of the neoliberal trend in higher education. Simply appointing people of color to significant roles is NO guarantee that they are actually agents of progressive inclusion and change. It is identity over policy, identity over strategy, identity over praxis. We need to vocally call out these “wolves in sheep’s clothing” and not be silent, just because they might be from communities we are from. Otherwise, their words and actions come to represent all of us! Identity can and should inform action, but identity is not a proxy for doing the work.
- Thank you. This was excellent. Will participation result in a network that we can draw upon going forward?
 - We will loop back around to you if we move forward on that!
- how do we get access to the resources if we are not on an email list?
 - We will be posting all the resources on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, to be shared widely.

Thank you so much for attending and for your powerful engagement!